The Power of the People

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic in 1923 under the rule of Atatürk and his Republican People’s Party, Turkey embarked on extensive social, economic, cultural and administrative modernization programs which would lay the foundations for modern day Turkey. The Power of the People shows that the ordinary people shaped the social and political change of Turkey as much as Atatürk’s strong spurt of modernization. Adopting a broader conception of politics, focusing on daily interactions between the state and society and using untapped archival sources, Murat Metinsoy reveals how rural and urban people coped with the state policies, local oppression, exploitation, and adverse conditions wrought by the Great Depression through diverse everyday survival and resistance strategies. Showing how the people’s daily practices and beliefs survived and outweighed the modernizing elite’s projects, this book gives new insights into the social and historical origins of Turkey’s backslide to conservative and Islamist politics, demonstrating that the making of modern Turkey was an outcome of intersection between the modernization and the people’s responses to it.

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The Power of the People

Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923–38

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Contents

Map of Turkey | page ii
List of Figures | vii
Acknowledgments | ix

Introduction: Toward an Infrahistory of Republican Turkey | 1

Part I  Everyday Politics of Peasants
1  The Price of the Republic for the Peasants | 21
2  Raising Voice and Rural Discontent | 44
3  Resisting Agricultural Taxes | 63
4  Social Smuggling: Resisting Monopolies | 76
5  Theft, Violence and Banditry | 97
Concluding Remarks | 120

Part II  Everyday Politics of Urban Labor
6  The Price of the Republic for the Working Class | 125
7  Labor Discontent | 138
8  Survival Struggles and Everyday Resistance | 152
9  Violence, Protests and Walkouts | 178
Concluding Remarks | 191

Part III  The Power of Popular Culture
10  Hotbeds of Opposition to Secularism: Mosques, Coffeehouses and Homes | 197
11  Informal Media vs. Official Discourse: Word of Mouth, Rumors and Placards | 222
12  Neither Fez Nor Hat: Contesting Hat Reform | 234
13  Negotiating Anti-veiling Campaigns | 244
14 Old Habits Die Hard: Tenacity of Old Lifestyles in New Times  262
Concluding Remarks  282

Epilogue: Infrastructure of Turkey’s Modernization  286

Notes  297
Bibliography  347
Index  383
Figures

Illustrations

1.1 Peasant boy ploughs the field with a mule  page 23
1.2 Road tax obligators doing road construction  26
4.1 Women peddlers in Ankara in the 1930s  91
5.1 Livestock thieves in Gediz, 1936  103
5.2 Bandit Zühtü, his friend Abdullah, his wife Feride and the security forces  112
5.3 A bandit with his wife and infant child  113
6.1 Child spinners  131
8.1 Workers of Sümerbank Kayseri Textile Factory being searched for stolen goods  155
8.2 Street petition writers (arzubâlcı)  165
10.1 Preachers learn the Latin alphabet in the Nation’s School  202
12.1 People wearing flat caps sideways  242
12.2 A man taking off his hat and wearing a skullcap while performing ritual ablution before prayer  242
13.1 Women and men in the bazaar of Sivas wearing traditional clothing in 1935  258
13.2 Women in Afyon wearing local style çarșafı vote in 1935  258
13.3 Istanbul’s poor women in Topkapı in 1937  259
14.1 People visiting the Eyüp Sultan Tomb in 1929  280

Graphs

1.1 Prices offered to peasants, 1928–34  33
3.1 Levied and collected direct taxes, 1925–30  64
6.1 The nominal and real wage index, 1914–39  129
Tables

5.1 Banditry in numbers, 1923–32 99
5.2 Number of crimes that damaged the public order, 1932–4 100
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