
Social change, industrialisation and public libraries: a theoretical approach

Bülent Yılmaz

The author

Bülent Yılmaz is Associate Professor, Department of Information Management, Faculty of Letters, Hacettepe University, Beytepe-Ankara, Turkey.

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Abstract

In this study, industrialisation has been evaluated in the context of social change theory. Industrialisation as a period of social change is the source of public library development. The public library has emerged as a result of the changes in educational and cultural structure caused by industrialisation. Public libraries emerged as supporting elements of basic and adult diffused education effort. The change in thoughts, attitudes and values by the effect of urbanisation made public libraries a part of the new culture that is social life. The public library is a product of social change.

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Introduction

It can be said that it is necessary to have historical consciousness about public libraries in order to understand the existence of these institutions correctly. In other words, if the existence of public libraries, the quality of their sources and their change processes are not seized correctly, a suitable service policy cannot be determined and adequate planning cannot be achieved. Thus, the importance of the right policy and planning for the construction of a modern public library cannot be neglected.

Industrialisation, as a social change, is a historical phenomenon that causes the existence of modern public libraries. In this study, the social change concept will be discussed in the beginning and then the industrialisation phenomenon will be evaluated in general. This phenomenon, that is the source of existence and improvement of public libraries, will be dealt with especially on the basis of cultural and educational elements.

Social change

The social change theory that is accepted as an important study field of sociology includes concepts such as society, social institutions and social structure. For the full explanation of this theory which deals with and evaluates the causes, results, dynamics, directions, qualities, relations, the speed of changes in societies, the elements from which it is affected and which it affects, the definitions of society and social structure concepts are required.

The term "society" is defined as "the whole people who live together on the same land and who collaborate to obtain their basic needs; community" (TDK 1992, p. 1484). Society can be regarded as an interaction process between classes, an existence that is self-sufficient and continues itself, a socio-cultural event, a social and a theoretical system. According to Kongar (1985, pp. 41-45, 46) it is a social community that lasts longer than human life, that has relative stability and that continues itself. The

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individuals that make a society are always in interaction among themselves. These actions, based on the interactions and conceptualised as “social relations”, are formed by social institutions like law, education, morality, politics and religion which determine the mentioned rules of the interaction. As it is seen, social structure occurs when social institutions organise the relations in the social system. Social structure, which Kiray (1964, p. 16) described as a whole in which social values that are caused by the social institutions, human relations and their mutual interactions affect each other, is generally used in the meaning of “system”. Therefore, the social system concept can be used instead of the social structure concept. Levi-Strauss (Moore 1963a, p. 366), Kiray (1964, p. 15-16) and Kongar (1985, p. 35) marked the qualities of the social structure as below:

- it has the characteristics of a “system”;
- it is formed by the elements that are related to and dependent on each other;
- it changes continuously;
- it has continuity, stability and orderliness.

Lange (1965) writes:

Social structure described as ordered human relations is divided into two. The relations in the production and property fields are called substructure. Other social relations which are not included in production and property relations such as religion, morality and politics and which show the presence of social consciousness are called social substructure (Lange 1965, p. 37-53).

As Kongar (1985, p. 35) also states, there is an interaction between substructure and superstructure. The nature of this interaction will be dealt with in the next section in the context of industrialisation. Social change can be defined on the basis of a priori concepts we try to define. Based on various sources, Kongar’s (1985, pp. 55-57) definition of “social change” is as follows:

- important changes that occur in the structures and functions of specific social systems;
- the change of social structure which consist of social action and interaction patterns;
- the change in the size of the society, in the harmony or balance between its parts or in the form of its organisation;
- the change of social relations;
- the change of all human relations as substructural and superstructural;

- the change of cultural structure.

In short, social change is the change in the structure of the society and consequently the change in the social structure. Social change covers social relations and social institutions too, as they create the social structure.

According to Kongar (1985, pp. 282-4), social structure is formed by the institutions and elements that show the characteristic of wholeness and being in a continuous interaction. Each element affects the others and is affected by them. Culture, economics, politics, education, law, technology, ethics, administration, religion and morality etc. are among those elements. The dynamics or the mechanism of the change lies in this interaction process. A change in one element is the result of change in others or it is the reason for such a change. As all the elements of social structure interact, it cannot be thought that one element changes independently from the others.

The process summarised concerning the characteristics of social change is evaluated by Kiray (1964, pp. 15-16) in a similar way and on the basis of three principles:

- (1) Because the elements of social structure are bound to and dependent on each other, social change does not occur indiscriminately.
- (2) The change in some elements of the social structure affects the others.
- (3) The change of one element alters all the social structures in the series.

Moore (1963b, p. 336) shows the same approach as the stated proposition in the second item above. Apart from that, Kongar (1985, p. 104) emphasises the importance of technology regarding the structure of social change. He states that the developing technology increases division of labour in the society and that this will affect the organisation of the social entities and change the social structure along with human relations. In short, the process of social change occurs as a result of mutual and chain interactions among the elements that form the social structure.

Industrialisation in the process of social change

To determine the function of industrialisation in the process of social change or its

contribution to this process, it is necessary to evaluate it in the context of “economics” which is one of the elements that creates the social change. In other words, although industrialisation creates determinative results in social, cultural, educational, technological fields, etc., it is firstly an economic concept and/or phenomenon. Therefore, understanding the impact of “economics” in the process of social change and the size of this impact is of great importance in determining the place of industrialisation in this process. Economics, defined as “production and forms of sharing that people use for survival and whole relations caused by these activities” (TDK 1992, p. 440) is considered to be key for the existence and development conditions of societies, the basis of existence and the objective condition of human existence. In other words, besides being an element that provides social change, economics is the substructural characteristic in this change. Ergun (1991, p. 61) states that the economic relationship is the basis of social transformation. In this respect, it can be said that “economics” has a fundamental value in the process of social change in view of both changing the basis of social structure and influencing other elements (education, law, art, etc.). Aron (1967, p. 179) mentions that when a society is examined sociologically, it should start from the economic situation and organisations. Briefly, economics:

- is one of the elements of social structure that creates social change;
- has a special value on the change in the other social structure elements and so, it is more effective on social change than the others.

Industry can be regarded as a new unity of equipment and a new method in production that is a component of economic activity. In other words, it is a new method and a new form in production. In this new form – in industry – machinery takes the place of the previous production system, which was based on animals and manpower, that is, agriculture and craft. Increased machine usage changed the structure of production directly and from its basis. Thus, the change process in production is called industrialisation or industrial revolution. As Kongar (1985, p. 305) also states, only the very extensive and effective changes can be regarded as “revolution”. This fact shows the extent and

influence of industrialisation in the social change process. For this reason, industrialisation is considered to be not only an economical phenomenon but also a complex process that contains various social, cultural and political qualities (Özgür, 1976, pp. 10-11).

Türkdoğan (1981, p. 37) states that world history has never ever experienced changes in such a short time as in the nineteenth century. He also adds that this was the time when the industrialisation process was practised intensively. These words show the speed of social change process depending on industrialisation.

Erkan (1993, pp. 3-4) declares that the Industrial Revolution reshaped all social and cultural structure. Timuçin (1992, p. 382) supports this idea saying that the revolution changes lifestyle. Industrial society is a new social form. Industrialisation is expressed as a structural transformation at the social level (Pollard, 1990, pp. 15-18) and a formation that causes entire changes in the economic, social, political and cultural structure of societies (Ayan, 1982, p. 10). The Industrial Revolution was the first example of an economic and social transformation that initiated entire changes in views concerning lifestyles, division of labour, possession, state policy, institutions and the aims of societies (Sahinkaya, 1999, p. 35). Çakin (1999, p. 138) also agrees that the Industrial Revolution changed the social structure totally. Kuruç (1973, p. 1) draws attention to the idea that development and industrialisation are identical and this identity is “doctrinised”.

As seen, industrialisation or industrial revolution is regarded as a new stage in history.

Stated briefly:

- Industrialisation is a phenomenon that is considered to be an economics element among other elements causing social change.
- Because the economics element has a substructural characteristic, the role of industrialisation in social change increases.

Process of industrialisation and the public library

To explain directly, industrialisation is the process of social change. Atalay (1983, p. 27)

regards industrialisation as the basic dynamic of social change. He also adds it is unnecessary to state that there is an intense relation between industrialisation and social change. Industrialisation, as an economic element, has a determinative effect in the occurrence and development of public libraries with the help of changes in the other elements. In other words, social change that is the result of industrialisation makes modern public libraries come into being as a necessity. There exist many research papers in the literature of librarianship that draw attention to the relationship between industrialisation and the public library. For example, while Hessel (1950, pp. 106-107) compares the historical development of the public libraries in the USA with that in England, he finds that in both countries, the developments that cause the existence of these libraries are the results of industrial revolution. According to Shera (1974, p. 200), among the many social conditions that caused the existence of public libraries, the economic condition is the basic element. Similarly, Murison (1988, p. 15) states that public libraries are the institutions that came into being as a result of industrial revolution[1].

Certainly, causal relation between industrialisation and public libraries is not direct and simple; rather it is a very complex process. As an economic element, industrialisation causes changes in the other elements of the social structure and the complex characteristic of the process results from all these changes.

Although generally the libraries, especially the public ones, are related to social structure elements such as politics, management, ideology, technology etc., they can be examined as institutions existing within education and culture elements. Therefore, the relationship between industrialisation and public libraries can only be understood with the analysis of the relationship between industrialisation, education and culture. Shera (1974, p. 200) determines that social institutions do not exist with the influence of just one factor. This fact seems to be true in view of the social change theory on which this research is based.

In this study, the changes that industrialisation, as an economic element, cause in the other social elements such as education, culture and related elements will

not be handled thoroughly. However, their reflection on public libraries will be evaluated.

Education and literacy

The basic social structure which industrialisation affects and changes is education. These changes play a determinative role in the improvement and existence of public libraries. That the movement of the public library was educational in the beginning (Murison, 1988, p. 42), that school as an institution and the public library existed as "relatives" (Shera 1974, p. 222) and that public libraries were a result of a free education system (Hessel, 1950, p. 103) are all approaches to the relationship between education and public libraries.

In the new production structure that started with industrialisation, the basic element is that of productivity. As a machine is obligatory for productivity in factory production, the person using this machine must be educated. In other words, in the new production system, achieving productivity, which is the basic principle for the existence and development of the system, depends upon educated labour power as well as machinery. Therefore, education has the characteristic of being a means for economic development in the industrialisation period (Moore, 1963c, p. 363). Industrialisation literacy is necessary. It is the basic/common education that is needed for professional specialisation. It is because the new production structure requires qualified, more productive and educated labour power. As Aron (1967, p. 140) states, it is impossible to increase production without increasing the talents of people. The development of talent is possible with education.

Literacy is accepted as a necessity and a mandatory and minimum standard for industrialisation in economic theories (Pollard, 1990, pp. 1-2). Kongar (1985, p. 229) explains the same relationship by saying that "the increase in the literacy rate is both a result of industrialisation and a condition for its occurrence". For example, a high proportion of literacy is one of the positive preconditions in the industrialisation of Japan, and trying to be industrialised with a highly illiterate population is a dilemma

(Pollard, 1990, p. 78, 82). “The low literacy rate was a factor that slowed down and delayed industrialisation as it meant a lack of technicians, managers or potential enterprisers” (Kemp, 1993, p. 14).

Industrialisation makes literacy an essential condition. In this context, literacy being a minimum standard for industrialisation spreads education. In addition, it causes public libraries to be an obligatory part of education. In this period, the function of education, meaning the role of school, is to make society literate, to make individuals gain technical skills and to raise the rational and problem solving manpower which the economy requires (Moore, 1963b, p. 344). Therefore, basic education related to gaining skills strategically has the effect of integrating the various skills of individuals and increasing the job opportunities and productivity (Moore, 1963c, p. 363). Consequently, basic/formal education became important and changed its content (Atalay, 1983, p. 38).

Obligatory basic education, whose content changed as mentioned above, needs the institutions that help and support it for the spread of literacy at a social level and for maintaining that basic education. The need is the basic factor that creates public libraries. This situation points out the determinative effect of industrialisation on the existence of public libraries.

Besides making literacy and basic education a “minimum standard”, the industrialisation period also requires professional/technical education because of the high-level division of labour that occurs in production and specialisation. Division of labour and specialisation are among the most important characteristics of industrial society or the industrialisation period. Aron (1967, p. 171) defines a typical person of an industrial society as being specialised and so educated for a particular job. The numbers that Pollard (1990, p. 70) provides are important to demonstrate the level of specialisation at the beginning of the industrialisation period: while there were 33,000 engineers and chemists in the USA in 1890, this number rose to 105,000 in 1910.

The presence of division of labour that improves and changes structure with industrialisation requires the technical education system to prepare for their works. The public library functions as both an institution that is a part of basic education with literacy efforts and an institution which

supports widespread technical education. Briefly, public libraries came into being because of the demand from obligatory basic education and widespread technical/professional education in the industrialisation period. While Murison (1988, p. 15) declares that public libraries came into being as a result of the Industrial Revolution, he draws attention to the related function of education reform in 1844. According to him (Murison, 1988, p. 52), education gains importance as a political demand of the labour class that industrialisation creates. Public libraries, free of charge to this class, which has economic inadequacies, are important institutions to realise this demand.

In the industrialisation period, scientific data and method based on logic and research take the place of the scholastic methods of the Medieval Age (Aytaç, 1980, p. 99, 101). It is apparent that the new methods had to use various sources, which in turn required public libraries. That is, the public library, the vital part of the new education structure, began to function by supplying and servicing many sources free of charge.

Public libraries function as agents of adult education, which is the source of the qualified and productive labour power which industrial society demands. Shera (1974, p. 183) maintains that public libraries came into being as a result of the movement in adult education. In other words, public (adult) education is the basic social element for the existence of public libraries (Sykes, 1979, pp. 68-9).

Briefly, public libraries emerged in a period when education was supported at a national level by the government, the foundations of modern education were laid, the educational opportunities were extended in a significant way, professional education emerged and when the importance of theoretical application, rather than theoretical education, was understood (Binder, 1970, p. 207; Butts, 1955, p. 93; Beck, 1965, pp. 84-93; Shera, 1974, p. 229). Apart from all these, it was a period in which the new production structure needed productive, qualified power: that is educated work power. In the context of social change theory, on which our research is based, “industrialisation” as an economic element alters the structure of the education element. This change in the education element became the basic factor in the existence and development of public libraries.

Culture and urbanisation

Another social structure element confirmed by the changes that created public libraries in the social change process is “culture”. Certainly, culture is one of the most difficult concepts to be defined. In this research, culture is dealt with on the basis of the “urbanisation” phenomenon that reflects a lifestyle of social level. It is because lifestyle means thoughts, behaviours and values in society and urbanisation creates new forms related to them. As Moore (1963b, p. 335) said, urbanisation is not only a demographic and ecological reality, but also a lifestyle. To Keles (1978, p. 6), the changes in a society’s economic and social structure create urbanisation movement. Thus, urbanisation is an expression of cultural change:

The economic element, that is, the change of production form, has a special value in the definition of urbanisation. It is because urbanisation can be defined as a transition from agricultural production to a more advanced production level (Keles, 1978, p. 6).

Urbanisation changes thoughts, behaviours and values. It creates new forms in characteristics of attitude and a new worldview particular to the city.

Urbanisation:

- occurs as a result of some economic, social, political and technological changes;
- is a two-sided phenomenon that has the power to instigate changes in society’s economic, social and political structure and in humans’ manner and attitude.

Urbanisation is a process that increases the population, which causes an increase in the number of cities and in the growth of today’s cities. This then gives way to changes in human attitudes and human relations, creating division of labour, speciality and organisation of increasing proportions in the structure of society. To state briefly:

- urbanisation means a transition to a new social structure;
- urbanisation creates changes in individuals’ and societies’ thoughts, attitudes and judgement of values;
- urbanisation is the result of social change;
- urbanisation creates a new lifestyle, that is culture.

Determining the relationship between urbanisation and industrialisation is

important regarding our context. The social change process that leads to urbanisation can be regarded as industrialisation. According to Ayan (1982, p. 45, 59), industrial revolution triggers the beginning of an urbanisation revolution and causes migration from rural areas to urban areas. As industry becomes greater, the cities get larger. Table I shows perceptible data about this growth in view of displaying the relationship between industrialisation and urbanisation. The significance of this relationship with regard to public libraries can be explained briefly in this way. Industrialisation creates the city; the people living in these cities need public libraries because urban culture and industrialisation requires them to be literate and educated.

As it is seen, the industrialisation process causes increases in the population of cities that can be described as an “explosion”. Kiray (1964, p. 16) states that it is true to regard industrialisation and urbanisation as the two sides of the same formation. Thus, these propositions can be written as:

- urbanisation is the result of industrialisation;
- urbanisation creates a new culture;
- the new culture formed with urbanisation is the product of industrialisation.

The new cultural structure that comes into existence as a result of industrialisation can be named as “urban culture” which means “written culture”. Shera (1974, p.15) utters this truth by saying “public libraries are a production of matured urban culture: that is an urbanisation phenomenon”. Hessel (1950, pp. 106-7) states that the primary condition which creates public libraries is “city structure”. Johnson and Harris (1976, pp. 331-3) declare that the public library, as an institution contributing to cultural change, is a product of this change in a historical period. Hence, the historical development of

Table I Population of some cities in England in the Industrial Revolution

Cities	1801	1841
Manchester	35,000	353,000
Leeds	53,000	153,000
Birmingham	23,000	183,000
Sheffield	46,000	111,000

Source: Korn (1953, p. 67)

public libraries in a country shows parallels with the urbanisation process of that country.

Other elements

As an economic element, industrialisation influences the other elements that form social structure, and these interactions are the source of the existence of public libraries. In this sense, the changes among industrialisation, ideology and political elements seem to be important. With industrialisation, new classes (bourgeoisie, middle class and working class), new ideologies concerning these classes (liberalism, socialism) and political parties (liberal party, republican party, proletarian party) developed. The approaches of these classes, parties and ideologies to education had an impact; public libraries formed around the concepts of right, necessity, obligation and demand (Murison, 1998; Kerlake and Kinnel, 1998; Pateman, 1994; Gutek, 1972).

The effects of a new political-ideological phenomenon like democracy, the social state of prosperity (welfare), utilitarianism, nationalism, right of political vote, making use of leisure time etc. upon the existence of public libraries is another research subject. Nevertheless, these phenomenon can be taken into consideration in the framework of social change theory. Another study by the authors (Yılmaz, 1999) takes this theme up in more detail.

To state briefly regarding this part, one of the social structure elements “economy” (industrialisation) causes social change by affecting culture and education especially which are other social structure elements, and public libraries occur as a result of this social change.

Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations of this study are summarised below:

- Social structure is a system that is formed by social relations.
- The elements that organise social relations are social institutions. Institutions like education, economy, law, administration, technology, politics, culture, ideology, ethics, art, etc. can be called the elements of social structure.

- Social change is the change of social structure.
- Social change occurs as a result of the changes in the elements that form social structure and has mutual interaction and dependence.
- A change in one element in social structure results in a change in the other elements.
- Industrialisation means a change in the economic element.
- The change in the economic element by industrialisation causes changes in the other social structure elements.
- In this sense, industrialisation brings about social change. In other words, industrialisation is a social change process.
- Public libraries emerged as a necessity and a result of the social change process, which was caused by industrialisation.
- The changes that industrialisation brought about, especially to education and culture, had determinative effects on the existence of public libraries.
- Industrialisation made basic official education and literacy a “minimum standard” especially for providing productivity in production.
- Public libraries emerged as a natural/obligatory part of the literacy and basic education effort, and they function accordingly.
- Division of labour and specialisation caused by industrialisation made professional and technical education a necessity. Public libraries also had a function that supported this kind of education.
- Public libraries emerged because of the structural change in education which itself is a result of industrialisation.
- Public libraries emerged as a supporting element of the adult education/diffused education that industrialisation created.
- Urbanisation is a product of cultural change.
- Urbanisation is the result of industrialisation.
- Industrialisation changes the element of culture by urbanisation.
- The change in thoughts, attitudes and values, that is the change in lifestyle, made public libraries a part of social life.
- Public libraries existed as a product of urban culture.

- The existence and development of public libraries depended upon the quality of the transformation processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and education.
- Industrialisation contributed to the existence and development of public libraries by changing the social elements like politics, administration, ideology and technology.

On the basis of our conclusions, we recommend that:

- Public libraries in a country should be handled as a product/result of the social change process of that country; that is, the existence and development process of public libraries cannot and should not be realised sufficiently without evaluating the social change process of a country.
- The industrialisation process of a country must be examined in order to study the social history of public libraries in that country. In other words, the history of public libraries should be discussed within the context of the industrialisation process of a country.

Despite the fact that the agenda is generally filled with discussions of the “information society”, the two proposals above can make us see the “social value of history” concerning public libraries. Such an approach brings the discussion of the “information society” into stronger focus.

Note

- 1 Certainly, before the Industrial Revolution, there had been institutions that could be called the pioneers of public libraries.

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