

The Socialist in Fork in the Road: Marxism and Socialism in Kemal Tahir

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ABSTRACT

In this study, Kemal Tahir's thoughts on Marxism and socialism are discussed in comparison with the left orthodoxy of the 1960s. The main motivating factor for the study is that Kemal Tahir's distinctive features from the orthodoxy of the period in terms of his thoughts on Marxism and socialism and the emphasis on his criticism will make an important contribution to the literature. Therefore, it focuses on the question "What are the features that differentiate Kemal Tahir's view of Marxism and socialism from his contemporary intellectuals?". Due to the characteristics of his intellectual heritage, the study has been prepared through the literature review based on careful examination of primary sources and the comparative method that provides determining the context of the data. The main argument put forward by the study is that what makes Kemal Tahir original and different in terms of his thoughts and criticisms is his understanding of Marxism in particular, and of science or scientific way of thinking in general sense. From the point of the socialist thoughts and movements, this study that presents the left orthodoxy of the 1960s on issues such as Marxism, socialism, society, the issue of development, the strategy of power and the envisioned socialist order within a theoretical and conceptual framework consisting of "high modernism", "scientism" and "political religions" contains the ideas of the party and opinion leaders of the three most representative and influential formations of the 1960s: Turkish Labour Party, National Democratic Revolution Movement and Yön (Destination) Movement. While Kemal Tahir's thoughts differ from these formations at some certain points, it should also be emphasized that despite all its differences, they have a paradigmatic similarity with the orthodoxy of the period in terms of her modernization strategy based on the distinction between culture and civilization.

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