

This thesis aims to analyze the specific concepts of modernization in three chosen countries. The specific countries, which are being analyzed in this thesis, are: Turkey under the rule of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), Iran under the rule of Riza Shah and Syria until the rule of Baath Party in Syria in the beginning in the 1960's, especially during the Army-Party convergence period. At least in specific cases of Turkey and Iran, authoritarian modernization under different leaders attempted to change the society by the ways of westernization. The goal was to transform the society by changing its features and character of the system. In some areas and some countries, some of the desired social and political reforms were successfully achieved. On the other hand some reforms were not successful because of various internal and external challenges. This work tries to analyze the processes of modernization driven by authoritarian regimes in these countries, their accomplishments and failures. Political development took different forms and was pulled by different circumstances. These three Islamic countries vary in their success and failure. I consider Turkey to be an example of a successful transformation. Iran under Riza Shah was not so achievement due to errors in process and sequence of the reforms. Situation in Syria was partly different, but on the other hand shared some features of the previous attempts. However I chose these three examples due to features they have in common. Not only the authoritarian modernists shared similar ideas and hopes, but these countries had also a common history and in some areas similar political development too.