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MODERN TURKEY: DEVELOPMENT & CRISIS

★ CAPITAL & THE STATE IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY
★ ORIGINS & LEGACY OF KEMALISM ★ THE WOMEN'S
QUESTION & DIFFICULTIES OF FEMINISM IN TURKEY ★

Institut kurde de Paris

Editorial

The ties between Turkey and the Arab East are far more profound and significant than those of mere geographic contiguity. For four centuries (since the beginning of the sixteenth) virtually the whole of this region was included in the temporal and religious domain of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and its Caliphate.

This long political, religious and cultural association was bound to leave deep traces.

Even after the dissolution of the Empire and the abolition of the Caliphate, developments in Turkey continued to exert an influence—albeit indirect—on the rest of the region. Both Turkey and its former Arab provinces were faced by the same overriding problem: how to modernise an antiquated socio-economic structure, how to integrate into the modern world economy rather than be crushed by it. The road charted by Turkey—state-guided capitalist development under military-bureaucratic political control—was followed, a generation or so later, by most Arab countries.

Meanwhile, Turkey itself was turning its back on its long Middle-Eastern past, and looked exclusively to the west. But here too there has been some change. The Turkish bourgeoisie is now looking for a more active role in the Arab East.

Another continuing link between Turkey and the rest of the Middle East is the Kurdish problem. Kurdistan, the homeland of the oppressed Kurdish nation, remains divided between several states, notably Turkey, Iraq and Iran.

For these and other reasons, rooted in history, geography and contemporary politico-economic realities, the interactions between Turkey and the rest of the region are unlikely to diminish in importance.

This interdependence has so far received a sadly inadequate reflection in the political discourse of the left. Problems of the Arab East (and Israel) are discussed as if Turkey did not exist; and vice versa.

We in *Khamsin* have long felt that we ought to do something to help remedy this state of ignorance; but so far we have been unable to do so because we ourselves share this very ignorance. A happy way out of this impasse suggested itself when we made contact with a group of leftist Turkish intellectuals and activists, who agreed to impart to us some of their knowledge concerning their country. At our request, they later agreed to put together a special issue of *Khamsin*, wholly devoted to Turkey. We are extremely grateful to them for producing this excellent collection.

In his article 'Capital and the State in Contemporary Turkey', Turgut Taylan traces the origins of the 1980 military regime and outlines the political-economic history of the Turkish republic. He argues that the 1980 coup differs from previous military interventions in Turkey, inasmuch as it represents a 'united front' of the Turkish bourgeoisie in its attempt to break out of its *immobilisme* by a combination of severe repression and an 'opening up' of a formerly 'protected' economy.

In a challenging article, 'The Origins and Legacy of Kemalism', A. Ender argues that Kemalism—the specific form of Turkish nationalism—while overseeing the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into the Turkish Republic, was not particularly progressive, let alone revolutionary. Rather, the foundation of the republic was based on the forcible annexation of a considerable part of another nation (Kurdistan), and the repression of the workers' movement. Ender points out that perceptions of Kemalism have, to this day, been tainted by ignoring the reactionary 'original sin' of its foundation.

In her article on women, Pembenez Yorgun examines the extent and nature of women's oppression in Turkey. She argues that this oppression is incommensurable with that of women in the advanced capitalist countries of the West. She analyses in some detail the attempt by the secular-modernist Kemalist movement to ameliorate women's conditions, leading to the establishment of a Kemalist 'feminist' tradition among women in the higher echelons of Turkish society. Between this tradition and that of the workers' parties, which tried to organise women for specifically 'economic' struggle, Yorgun outlines the possible shape of a future feminist movement in Turkey, and argues that the seeds of such a movement have already been planted under the dictatorship.

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Mehmet Salâh's article on the Turkish workers' and socialist movement provides a historical survey of these two interconnected strands of the movement. Concentrating in particular on the 1960s and 1970s, he examines the exceptional strengths as well as the fatal weaknesses of the Turkish left.

In addition to the articles written and edited by the collective that prepared this issue, we are also printing an article by Ron Ayres dealing with Turkey's foreign relations, particularly in connection with Turkey's key role in the West's global military strategy.

Khamsin

Journal of revolutionary socialists of the Middle East

Published for Khamsin by Ithaca Press, 13 Southwark Street, London SE1

Khamsin 1-4 were published in French by Editions François Maspero

Khamsin 5 and 6 were published by Pluto Press Limited

Editorial Group: Haim Bresheeth, Avishai Ehrlich, Emmanuel Farjoun, Mohammad Ja'far, Moshé Machover, Magida Salman, Haim Scortariu, Azar Tabari, Nira Yuval-Davis.

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Articles and editorial correspondence: send to *Khamsin*, BM *Khamsin*, London WC1N 3XX. Authors are asked to send in two copies of their typescript, typed on A4 sheets (297mm × 210 mm) with broad margins and not more than thirty lines per page.

Subscriptions: individuals £10.50, \$16.00, institutions £14.50, \$24.00, postfree, for three issues. If paying by cheque drawn on a bank outside United Kingdom, add £1.00 handling charge. All cheques etc. to be made payable to *Khamsin*, and sent to BM *Khamsin* London WC1N 3XX.

- Khamsin* 5, **Oriental Jewry**, £3.50 each.
- Khamsin* 6, **Women in the Arab World**, £3.50 each.
- Khamsin* 7, **Communist Parties of the Middle East**, £3.50 each.
- Khamsin* 8, **Politics of Religion in the Middle East**, £3.50 each.
- Khamsin* 9, **Politics of Religion/Capitalism in Egypt**, £3.50 each.
- Khamsin* 10, **Israel and its War in Lebanon**, £3.50 each.

Single copies to individuals available from bookshops and direct from Ithaca Press. Mail, add 40p post and packing.

USA cover price \$5.00, subscription to individuals \$16.00, institutions \$25.00. Send orders etc c/o Delhi Inc., 1181 Amsterdam Avenue, NYC, NY 10027.

Bookshop orders and sales enquiries to Ithaca Press, 13 Southwark Street, London SE1. Telephone 01-407 0393.

Khamsin 11 first published 1984 by Ithaca Press

Copyright © Khamsin 1984 ISSN 0338 0181

Typeset by Red Lion Setters, 22 Brownlow Mews London WC1
Printed in Great Britain by Anchor Press Ltd and bound by Wm Brendon & Sons Ltd Tiptree Essex. Design Adrian Yeeles (Artworkers). Cover photo R. Laurence (MEPhA).

Turgut Taylan

**CAPITAL & THE STATE IN
CONTEMPORARY TURKEY**

WHEN THE military seized power in Turkey on 12 September 1980, there was a widespread feeling of *déjà vu* both within the country and abroad. For this was the third military intervention to the feeble and already restricted democratic régime of the country since its advent in the aftermath of the Second World War. 1960, 1971, 1980: even the regularity of this succession seemed to suggest that the coup of 1980 was in the nature of things.

And yet, this new intervention is markedly original in its nature with respect to the earlier ones. There is, of course, the obvious fact that the 1980 military régime is incomparably more repressive against its political opponents than the earlier ones. But more decisive in their long-term implications are other aspects. For one thing, contrary to earlier episodes which lasted approximately two years each, the 1980 junta intends to continue its control of political life at least until the end of this decade. Thus despite the new constitution promulgated in November 1982 and the November 1983 elections among the junta's hand-picked parties, there will be no democracy in Turkey in the foreseeable future. Closely linked, as we shall see, to this political aspect is the radical shift taking place in the pattern of capital accumulation and in the relations of the Turkish economy with the capitalist world economy. What is being witnessed is nothing less than a total break with the specific pattern of capitalist development dominant in Turkey since the rise of industrial capitalism. Militarily and culturally, too, the new era seems to stand for a revision of past tendencies. After having strived, since the foundation of the republic in 1923, to become a fully integrated member of the Western world, the Turkish state is once again turning its face to the Middle East.

In short, the coup of 12 September 1980 represents a radical rupture with the earlier tendencies of capitalist development in Turkey.

The fundamentally different nature of the 1980 military régime with respect to the earlier ones seems paradoxical when considered against the background of the periodic regularity of military interventions in Turkey. This seeming paradox poses two distinct questions, which need to be answered if one is to make sense of Turkish history. The first question relates to the recurrence of military episodes. What are the powerful tendencies in the political life of the country that have constantly reproduced the capacity and the willingness of the army to intervene again and again? The second question arises from the historical originality of the 1980 régime. Why has the 1980 coup become a turning point in the development of capitalism in Turkey? What is at stake in this profound mutation which the society is undergoing at present? If these two questions can be answered adequately, one can come to an understanding of both the *specificity* of the present military régime, as well as its *continuity* with the tradition of military interventions. This is all the more important since a widespread superficial approach postulates an identity among the three episodes and, hence, acts as a powerful obstacle to a clear analysis of present-day class struggles in Turkey.

This article will attempt to provide a coherent framework within which to answer these questions. The main body of the article will be devoted to the study of the period since the second war. However, the period of transition from the precapitalist era to bourgeois society having left its ineradicable imprint on the subsequent course of Turkish history, the first section will try to bring out the salient aspects of the foundation of the bourgeois republic and of the heritage of the Kemalist period. All through the article, my main emphasis will be on the process of the rise and consolidation of the capitalist mode of production and the related class struggles and alliances that have gone to shape this development, particularly within the sphere of the state. It is one of the main theses of this paper that Turkey's position within the capitalist world economy is decisive in the overall pattern of development of its economy. Hence, reference will be made frequently to changes in the world economy. Political and military relations with the rest of the world, however, will be brought into the analysis only to the extent that they are indispensable for an understanding of the specific configurations of class forces within the country itself. I am aware that this is an important limitation. It can, nevertheless, be considered as an antidote to the generally one-sided emphasis on the politico-military rôle of US imperialism in shaping the history of the Turkish state.

The transition to bourgeois society

THE BIRTH of bourgeois society in Turkey was deeply marked by the specific constellation of contradictions that besieged Ottoman society at the dawn of the twentieth century. Through a long process stretching over centuries, the Ottoman economy had increasingly been brought

within the circuit of West European capital, commodity relations had taken hold of agriculture in many regions and private property in land had made considerable inroad on public ownership of land, the main pillar of the classical Ottoman state. With the spread of commodity relations new classes came forward: an urban commercial bourgeoisie with organic links to West European capital and a new provincial class which rose on the basis of an amalgam of commercial interests and modern landed property. The old state certainly did not remain impervious to these changes, but the process of adaptation witnessed in the 19th century was remarkably hesitant and inadequate for the pressing needs of the rising classes. Moreover, reaction set in in the latter part of the century, particularly following the dissolution of the first Ottoman parliament in 1878. The Young Turk movement, which was to lead the 1908 revolution that restored parliament, was a product of this contradiction between the rising commercial bourgeoisie and the precapitalist state.

However, this struggle took place within the context of a multinational empire. From this flowed a second contradiction, grafted on to the first, which is crucial for an understanding of the subsequent history of capitalism in Turkey. This second contradiction was the product of the *ethnic structure of the Ottoman bourgeoisie*. For various historical reasons, that fraction of the commercial bourgeoisie that was organically linked to the West was predominantly non-Muslim, composed of Greeks, Armenians, former Europeans, and to a lesser extent Jews. This created an ironical situation: while Turks increasingly wielded state power, Turkish landowners and provincial merchants were economically subordinated to the non-Muslim commercial bourgeoisie. The advantageous position of the latter aroused the envy and whetted the appetite of the former, who, it should be emphasised, did *not* aspire to break from the domination of Western capital but simply yearned to take the place of the non-Muslim elements. After the 1908 revolution, which had itself brought under its banner the various nationalities in a common front, the contradiction burst forth with colossal violence during the First World War, resulting in the mass massacre of Armenians in 1915, and after the war, the Greek invasion of part of present-day Turkey and the massive exodus of Greeks from Anatolia when Greek forces had to retreat in the face of Turkish resistance in 1922.¹ This ethnic division of the Ottoman bourgeoisie was to mark profoundly the second bourgeois revolution of 1919-1923, led by Kemal Atatürk.

This revolution gave birth to a strong and centralised state that actively interfered in every aspect of social life during the following decades. This omnipotence of the state has been attributed to the age-old tradition of Ottoman bureaucratic rule; some have indeed gone further to postulate an identity between the Ottoman state and the Kemalist period. Tradition may have played its secondary rôle, but the nature of the state born out of the Kemalist revolution was fundamentally a product of the relations among the various classes of Ottoman society. And here, it was the *congenital* weakness of the Turkish bourgeoisie vis-à-vis the other classes

that was the determining aspect. There was first the interpenetration of the two contradictions already mentioned: the Turkish bourgeoisie struggled not only against a pre-capitalist state structure but also had to contend with the other ethnic components of the Ottoman bourgeoisie, politically the more able wing being the latter. Caught between two fires, its main trump was to join hands with those cadres, exclusively Turkish, of the old state machine that broke away from the Ottoman state. And once the republic was founded, the state was to be the main leverage of the Turkish bourgeoisie in the conquest of the commercial sphere controlled by Greeks and Armenians. It should also be noted that the new 'nation-state' was predicated upon a denial of national rights for the Kurdish people who lived within the borders of the new republic. Secondly, the fledgling Turkish bourgeoisie was entering the historical scene at the beginning of the imperialist epoch and strongly felt the need to resort to state protection for the promotion of its interests in the face of formidable competition from international capital. Last but not least was its fear of subordinate classes. The flimsy proletariat of the big cities and the immense poor peasantry of the countryside posed potential threats, exemplified by the Russian October revolution, to this bourgeoisie which was a specific amalgam of landed and commercial interests.² This highly vulnerable position of the bourgeoisie resulted in an *exclusivist* revolution, one in which the subordinate masses of the peasantry and the proletariat hardly participated, and when they did, they did so as reluctant soldiers against the Greek army. Out of this revolution was born a strong, repressive and active state.

Exclusivist though it may have been, it was nonetheless a real revolution: it destroyed irreversibly the political, juridical and ideological bases of the old pre-capitalist state and laid the basis for the construction of a new type of state – a bourgeois republic that paved the way for the subsequent development of the capitalist mode of production. Most of what it did it achieved through coercive means, usually intimidating its opponents, but also resorting to repression and violence against the working class movement and Kurdish nationalism. In this sense, it was a stark bourgeois dictatorship, sometimes referred to as a Bonapartist régime because of the personal powers wielded by Kemal Atatürk himself.

However far-reaching the change in the political and ideological foundations of the state, the revolution had inherent limitations, which were to prove of *decisive* importance in the future. Foremost among these was the exclusivist nature of the revolution which prevented the consolidation of bourgeois *hegemony* over the rest of society. Closely related to this first aspect was the undemocratic nature of the state born out of the revolution: here was a bourgeois revolution which was *not* a bourgeois-democratic revolution. The tension between the aspirations of the young bourgeoisie to have a say in the political process (which gave rise to the continued existence of a parliament) and its fear of the subaltern classes or of pre-capitalist forces (which resulted in the consolidation of a one-party dictatorship) created a situation where political life would constantly sway to and fro between repressive and more representative forms.

Finally, and most importantly from the view point of the future interests of the bourgeoisie, the revolution did not live up to the central task of a bourgeois revolution, i.e. an agrarian revolution which would sweep away the obstacles in the countryside to the rapid development of industrial capitalism. The nature of the bourgeoisie and its *organic* links to landed interests simply ruled this out. But as the subsequent history of Turkish capitalism shows, the Turkish bourgeoisie, and especially its future industrial fraction, was to pay a high price for this historic failure.

The period between the two world wars witnessed successive reforms in the political, juridical and ideological-cultural spheres, all of them instrumental in constructing a modern bourgeois state and in a forcible divorce from the Islamic cultural-religious world, which had been the dominant ideological environment of Ottoman society. All of this was carried out under an increasingly powerful dictatorship, where the Republican People's Party, founded by Kemal Atatürk himself, represented and synthesised the interests of the various propertied classes. The most important feature of this period for the purposes of this article is the original path which the genesis of industrial capitalism took.

The transition from mercantile capitalism to industrial capitalism was predicated in Turkey upon state capitalism. The setting to this development was the Great Depression, resulting in the contraction of the capitalist world market and the collapse of agricultural prices. The Turkish economy was, along with countries with a similar position in the international division of labour, profoundly affected, and experienced a severe crisis, especially in the agricultural sector. Political unrest convinced the government of the necessity of deflation in order to cushion the impact of the world crisis. The commercial bourgeoisie having proved its incapacity to act and foreign capital having remained indifferent to Turkish overtures,³ the state had no choice but to act as the *collective capitalist* and invest heavily. The details of the construction of a state industrial sector and of the two five-year industrial plans implemented in the thirties need not detain us here.

What is important for present purposes is to emphasise the original form of the genesis of industrial capitalism in Turkey compared to earlier experiences. The state had certainly played an important part in the primitive accumulation of capital, and particularly in the conversion of commercial capital into industrial capital, in those countries like France and Germany which followed England with a delay. This took mainly the form of the protection of 'infant' industry against the competition of cheap English manufactured commodities.⁴ The rôle of state intervention was even more marked in the development of capitalism in the latecomers of Eastern Europe such as Poland and Russia.⁵ However, in the nineteenth century, it was only in Japan that the state went beyond simply intervening in private capital accumulation and took upon itself the organisation of industrial production along capitalist lines. It was this path that Turkey was to follow in the 1930s. Here, as in Japan, state capitalism (which was to come of age in imperialist countries only after the Second World War) was the prelude to the passage to indus-

trial capitalism. The historical order of things was thus reversed: historical product of a long evolution in advanced capitalist countries, state capitalism was the precondition of industrial capitalism in Turkey. Rarely has the combined nature of capitalist development in the twentieth century taken such a striking form.

In this Turkey was not alone. The more advanced Latin American countries, such as Mexico under Cárdenas, Brasil under Vargas and Chile under the Popular Front experienced the same tendency during the 1930s.⁶ Turkey was only the purest and the most mature expression of this general tendency, not because it was economically more advanced but, paradoxically, because it was the least developed among them, with a negligible industry. This worldwide development of state capitalism in the new capitalist countries of the twentieth century is a result of the degree to which productive forces have already developed in advanced capitalism. The competition of imperialist capital simply forbids a slow development of capitalist industry in backward countries. The transition to capitalism requires, therefore, that the modern factory system be constructed by a leap over the intermediate stages. The nascent bourgeoisie being incapable of meeting the challenge of the necessary concentration of capital, it is up to the state to step in in order to secure the bases of industrial capitalism.

Towards the domination of industrial capital

THE BASIS for private industrial accumulation in Turkey was thus laid in the 1930s. But another decade passed before commercial capital turned massively towards industry and still another one before it rose to become the dominating power in the ruling bloc. And, in between, Turkish capitalism would go through a detour, when, between the end of the world war and 1960, agriculture enjoyed priority over industry in the orientation of state economic policy and became, indeed, the leading sector of the economy, until the mid-fifties.

As in the case of the turn to state capitalism in the thirties, here too the new direction came in response to the changes that arose in the capitalist world economy in the immediate aftermath of the war. Having gone through the contraction and fragmentation of the world market during the Great Depression and the devastating effects of the war on the European economies, the world capitalist system was finally preparing the ground for a new era of sustained accumulation (for what was later to be known as the 'post-war boom'). Despite considerable industrial growth in many of the backward countries for fifteen years, imperialism was prone to re-establish an international division of labour along the lines of the pre-Great Depression period. An additional factor that influenced Turkey in the same direction was the attempt of reconstructing Europe under American hegemony. The Marshall Plan, devised to this end, explicitly required of Turkey a reorientation of its economic policies, by giving priority to agricultural and mineral production. The purpose was to increase Turkish agricultural exports to Europe, where agriculture

had suffered even more than industry during the war.⁷ These requirements of the international division of labour were translated into the concrete terms of Turkish politics through the urgent needs of the economy concerning foreign aid. Already having fallen under US hegemony through the Truman Doctrine of 1947, Turkish governments hesitated little in adapting themselves to the new conjuncture.

This easy readaptation was also a product of the limitations of the state capitalism of the 1930s. Whereas massive investments drained off state revenue, the propertied classes, and in particular the landowners, paid little tax so that quite soon state investment activity came up against financial difficulties. This was the main reason why the Second Plan of 1938 was carried out much more slowly than the first and only at the expense of inflationary financing. After the war there were but two alternatives: either a turn to the primacy of private capital, and therefore momentarily away from industry, or an attack on the propertied classes. The second alternative was, of course, ruled out by the class nature of the Kemalist régime.

There had also occurred during the war important changes in the line-up of class forces inside Turkish society, changes which greatly facilitated the new turn. Successive governments of the ruling RPP had alienated the big landowners and the rural bourgeoisie through policies which, added to the effects of wartime hardships, greatly damaged the agricultural sector. The urban commercial bourgeoisie had also come into increasing conflict with the RPP since the inception of the so-called 'statism'. The clash over the Land Reform Act of 1945, itself quite harmless by international standards, acted as the immediate background to a split within the RPP. The Democrat Party which was formed on the basis of this split soon came to represent an alliance of the rural bourgeoisie and big landowners with the urban commercial bourgeoisie. This alliance, feeding upon the discontent of the peasant masses and sections of the urban proletariat, would come to power in 1950 and rule the country for ten years.

Thus, the immediate postwar period witnessed a twofold rupture in Turkish history. On the one hand, the power bloc that had ruled the country since the 1920s had burst apart to give rise to a new class alliance in which the rural and the commercial bourgeoisie were, for the first time, the dominating forces. The old bourgeois coalition formed under the iron fist of Kemal Atatürk was shattered and the RPP, which had represented a certain mode of bourgeois domination in line with the exclusivist nature of the Kemalist revolution, was cast aside like an empty shell, and along with it those political forces that represented the dependence of the bourgeoisie on bureaucratic layers and structures in the political direction of Turkish capitalism. On the other hand, this schism in the political representation of the bourgeoisie laid the ground, along with various international factors such as the fall of fascism and the foundation of the United Nations, for a *carefully engineered* transition to a two-party parliamentary system, meticulously excluding the self-organisation of the working class.

It was this new class line-up that was to be instrumental in Turkey's adaptation to the requirements of the postwar order. However, contrary to Kemalist mythology, the process of adaptation started much before the rise to power of the DP. Every single element of the new economic programme was initiated, under the pressure of the new balance of international and internal class forces, by the RPP between 1946 and 1948. The new orientation was predicated upon shifting priorities from the state sector to private capital, from industry to agriculture (and to transportation infrastructure in order to facilitate the commercialisation of agricultural products), from protection to foreign trade liberalisation. It also included a more benign attitude to foreign capital, for the encouragement of which successive administrative and legislative steps were taken in 1947 by the RPP, in 1951 by the DP, to be crowned by the Law for the Encouragement of Foreign Capital and the Petroleum Law of 1954, both written up by American 'experts'. Hence, with the exception of the idea of planning to which the RPP still clinged, the DP in power did nothing but deepen further an orientation which was well under way by 1950. But in one very significant area the DP did not break with the policies of the 1930s: although it promised, before coming to power, to reduce or even to liquidate the state productive sector (the programme of the first DP government chided earlier governments for having created an 'interventionist, capitalistic (!), bureaucratic and monopolist' state)⁸, it not only kept the old state enterprises but, in effect, expanded the state sector to twice the size in which it had found it! This blatant contradiction of DP policy is additional evidence for the absolute necessity of a large state capitalist sector for the development of capitalism in the twentieth century.

The early years of the postwar boom and high agricultural prices on the world market aiding, Turkey lived through a short period of rapid growth, especially in agriculture, in the early 1950s. But this process of the rapid expansion of commodity production and capitalism very quickly reached its limits. With the end of the Korean war, combined with the recovery in European agriculture, agricultural prices started to decline and Turkey soon found itself in a foreign exchange shortage, to which the DP government reacted by measures of renewed import control. It was in this context that a major contradiction arose, one that would eventually destroy the foundations of DP power.

Despite the relative expansion of private modern industry in the 1930s and during the war, the dominant character of the urban bourgeoisie in the immediate postwar period was still commercial, and with a few exceptions, even those capitalists engaged in industrial production had trade, foreign or internal, as their principal activity.⁹ Hence the subordinate part played by the industrial wing of the bourgeoisie in the alliance that formed the DP. But during the fifties and especially in the period following the foreign exchange shortage, which created an automatic effect of protection, commercial capital, particularly in Istanbul, turned on a massive scale to industry. This industry was predominantly concentrated in assembly processes in those branches where internal

production could be expected to substitute for imports. This, then, was the period when a new *independent* industrial fraction of the bourgeoisie was to be formed. The subsequent history of Turkey would be profoundly marked by this class fraction.

Notwithstanding the rise of industrial capital, the DP, marked as it was by its origins, its party machine dominated by the rural bourgeoisie, and its electoral audience among the masses of the peasantry, clinged obstinately to its old formula of absolute priority to agriculture over industry. Combined with the general slowdown in economic activity, itself also connected to the stabilisation programme accompanying the 1958 devaluation, this policy dealt industry a severe blow. From 1956 on, private industrial investment declined enormously.¹⁰

The ensuing dissociation of the new but well organised industrial wing of the bourgeoisie from the class alliance represented by the DP found its expression in a division within the latter. The off-shoot, a small party, soon joined the ranks of the RPP. A new coalition was thus being shaped around the RPP, with various urban layers and social forces discontented with different aspects of DP rule, and primarily with its ruthless authoritarianism, expressed most graphically, but not uniquely, in its rabid anti-communism. However, the new alliance was stricken by a congenital defect: here was an urban coalition, led by the industrial bourgeoisie and encompassing the discontented urban petty-bourgeoisie, intellectuals, students and increasingly the working class, trying to challenge a rural based party in power in a country where the overwhelming majority of the population were small-holding peasants. The urban coalition had the backing of international capital—which was becoming increasingly unhappy with the havoc wrought in the economy by the DP leadership—and was stronger in every sense, except one: it could not obtain an electoral majority. However, modern urban politics has other means at its disposal. One component of the urban coalition overstepped the boundaries imposed by the leadership: the widespread student demonstrations of early 1960 convinced the military, in the ranks of which several juntas had already been formed, to strike the final blow to the DP in power.

Mediated through a complex array of social forces, the coup of 27 May 1960 was thus the forcible solution, where other means had failed, of the contradiction between the industrial bourgeoisie and the other, hitherto dominant fractions of this class. The existence of these mediations, as we shall see, was not without its influence on the course of later history. The coup also opened the way to the rise to domination of the industrial bourgeoisie. This class would remain in power, by means of different alliances, up until the present. Again as we shall see, the form of its rise to domination was not to remain without impact on subsequent events; as in the case of the foundation of the republic, here, too, the birth marks lived on with the grown-up organism. Finally, the economic policy framework and the political régime that was constructed in the wake of the coup was but a certain contradictory mode of adaptation of the political superstructure to the requirements of the new phase of capital accumulation in

Turkey. It is this régime, with its various political, legal and ideological aspects and its economic institutions, primarily planning, that I shall henceforth refer to as the 'post-1960 system'.

Before proceeding to an analysis of this system and the new phase of accumulation that underlay it, I should like to draw attention in passing to the almost universal interpretation of the 1960 coup as simply a reaction of the 'military and civilian bureaucracy' to their loss of status, economic, social and political, after 1950. This superficial characterisation of the 1960 coup does not only abstract from class struggles. It equally distorts the position of the industrial bourgeoisie with respect to this first military intervention of the last three decades, by postulating a contradiction between the army and the *entire bourgeoisie en bloc*. The consequences are grave: the rôle and place of the industrial bourgeoisie in subsequent military interventions are, thereby, equally mystified and concealed. It is thus crucial to understand that there was not a contradiction but a *unity of purpose* between the army and the industrial wing of the bourgeoisie in 1960.

The mode of accumulation based on the internal market

THE ATTEMPTS by imperialist powers in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War to rehabilitate the international division of labour as it existed before the onset of the Great Depression was fully successful only in the newly liberated ex-colonies of Africa and Asia, and some countries of Latin America. In the case of those countries, such as Brasil, Argentina, Mexico and Chile in Latin America, Turkey and partially Iran in the Middle East, India, South Korea etc., which had undergone a certain amount of industrialisation during the fragmentation of the world market in the period 1929-1945, the postwar boom witnessed a new pattern of integration with the world economy. This was related to the further development of a certain specific mode of capital accumulation within these countries. This mode of accumulation, generally known as 'import-substitution industrialisation', I will refer to as 'the mode of accumulation based on the internal market', for reasons which need not detain us here.¹¹ The process which Turkey experienced between the mid-fifties and 1980 conforms closely to this general pattern, with certain specificities which I shall have occasion to mention. The basis of this mode of accumulation, itself a definite stage in the development of the capitalist mode of production in backward countries, lies in the concentration of capital, both foreign and native, in those branches of social production which have as outlets the internal market. The reason is easy to discover: for the new fledged industrial capital of these countries, competition on the world market with the highly concentrated and centralised imperialist capital is excluded in the initial stages of its development. The home market is a much easier playground, not only because of the proximity of the market to production sites and the much readier flow of information, but also because the state can provide native

capital with much higher protection than would be the case on the world market.

In the case of Turkey, as in some other countries, this mode of accumulation was, in fact, a heritage of the state-capitalist stage which had itself been based, with a few exceptions, on the production of consumer goods for the home market. In this sense, apart from the interregnum of the period immediately after the war, Turkish capitalism had a rather stable path of development over the half century that stretched from the early thirties to the late seventies. There were, however, important differences between the state-capitalist stage and the later period. First, obviously, private capital took precedence over the state sector, if not in absolute quantitative terms, at least in relative weight; and, qualitatively speaking, its orientation was determining in the priorities of economic policies. Secondly, the sectoral composition of industrial production changed: from the primary consumption goods of the thirties, production was gradually extended to consumer durables and transport equipment, pharmaceuticals and other chemicals, petroleum refining etc. The share of food and beverages and textiles (the two sectors which develop generally at the initial stages of industrialisation) in total manufacturing had fallen from 57 per cent in 1960 to 30 per cent in 1979, the lowest such share among Islamic Middle Eastern countries.¹² In the process, the state turned more and more to infrastructure investment and those industries which produce the widely used elements of constant capital (generally known as 'intermediate goods') such as iron and steel, aluminium, petroleum products, paper and pulp etc., where because of the high organic composition of capital and long periods of gestation, private capital did not, and could not, invest. Here was, again, on a different level, an expression of the necessity of state productive activity, which alone could hope to cope with the high degree of development of productive forces on the world scale. A graphic expression of this situation is the fact that average production scales in the state sector are as high as nine times those in the *modern* private sector.¹³ Finally, relationships with the world economy had changed considerably between the two periods: relative to the state-capitalist stage, the industrial structure of the later period was much more dependent on foreign inputs (since most of the production in consumer durables and transport equipment rarely surpassed the level of simple assembly processes), there was a greater, though not massive, inflow of foreign productive capital (of which more later) and the economy depended much more heavily on foreign money capital (credits etc.). This was, of course, a result of the radically different nature of the conjuncture ruling on the capitalist world market.

The sixties and the seventies were a period of rapid capital accumulation in Turkey. The overall growth rate of the economy, which was approximately 5.6% in the 1926-39 period and fell to 0.7% under the impact of war between 1939-50,¹⁴ rose again to 5-6% in the fifties, though this period was particularly unstable with large deviations from year to year.¹⁵ In the sixties and the seventies (until the onset of crisis in 1977) the

growth rate fluctuated between the 6-7% range. The growth of the industrial sector was higher, between 9-11%.¹⁶ There was, consequently, a marked change in the respective shares of industry and agriculture within total production. Between 1938 and 1953 agriculture had contributed approximately one half of GNP while industry's share was around 12%. Between 1953 and 1959 the shift was already perceptible: agriculture fell to 45% while industry rose to 16%. The change was truly dramatic in the 1960s and the 1970s: in 1977 industry had already surpassed agriculture with a share of 24% while the latter had declined to half its share two decades before: a mere 22%.¹⁷ One result of the rapid accumulation of capital was the concentration, and the accompanying centralisation, of capital. Although the number of small enterprises is still overwhelming in the Turkish economy, the determining sector as concerns production and employment has certainly become large-scale modern industry. By 1970 already, modern industry produced 88% of value-added (which is only a very rough indicator of new value produced) and employed 61% of all workers in industry. In the 1970s and 1980s big monopolies control most markets and large holding companies – conglomerates active in many branches of industry, commerce, banking etc. – have a disproportionate influence on economic (and political) life.

This rapid accumulation of capital was inseparably bound up with the general expansion of the capitalist world economy and can in no way be attributed to a supposed success of the economic policies pursued by the governments in power during this period. These policies were quite standard when seen in a comparative light. The main elements were: a high rate of protection of the internal market from international competition, through the simultaneous use of tariffs and quantitative restrictions;¹⁸ a fixed exchange-rate system whereby the national currency was, in general, kept overvalued with respect to its market rate; low interest rates fixed by the state, which provided industrial capital with low-cost financial funds; widespread state investment; large scale state subsidies to elements of both variable and constant capital; heavy dependence on foreign money capital (credit) etc. There was one specific aspect of the Turkish scene, however, about which a few words ought to be said. This was planning.

A combined result of the experience of the thirties and the demands of the industrial bourgeoisie and of international financial organisations in the fifties against the chaos in economic policy that reigned under the DP, the State Planning Organisation was set up in the wake of the 1960 coup. It was to prepare, under the control of successive governments, four five-year plans in the period 1963 to 1982, of which the fourth was scrapped in the turmoil of the economic crisis that set in in 1977. These plans were wider in scope than the so-called 'industrialisation plans' of the 1930s in that they were not restricted to the industrial sector but encompassed the whole range of economic and social activities. Turkish planning bore, of course, no resemblance to socialist planning in the context of socialised means of production – for, as is euphemistically put, the plans were 'imperative' only for the public sector, but 'indicative' for the

private. Furthermore, from the very beginning the planning authorities opted for a very heavy dependence on the price mechanism, with the implication that the plans were only second-rate buttresses for the failures of the law of value. With this orientation it should come as no surprise that plans in fact did not lead the economy but were, on the contrary, guided by it.¹⁹ The most graphic evidence to this effect is that every successive plan adjusted the sectoral distribution of investments to tune with the realised rates of investment of the preceding period.²⁰ Hence, the multifold 'failures' of planning (e.g. the enormous growth in foreign indebtedness at the end of the first three plans when one of the fundamental objectives of these plans was to do away with dependence on foreign resources) are nothing but the mediated expression of the contradictions of a capitalist economy.

Barriers to the accumulation of capital

THROUGHOUT this period of high growth when industrial capital flourished, capital accumulation was gradually and increasingly coming up against certain barriers. These barriers first became apparent in the late 1960s and were increasingly insurmountable by the time of the deep crisis of capital accumulation in the late 1970s. Before going on to a concrete analysis of the development of capital accumulation and class struggles during the period 1960-80, I will point in this section to the various contradictions of the process of accumulation that shaped the struggles of the period.

The post-1960 system

This system was the product of a very specific conjuncture of class struggles. Its origins can be traced, as we have seen, to the struggle of an urban coalition, led by the rising industrial bourgeoisie, to dominate the rural majority represented by the DP. Apart from planning, which expressed the domination of the industrial fraction of the bourgeoisie over economic policy, the system had as its basis the 1961 constitution and the 1963 legislation concerning labour relations. The specific aspect of the political régime established by the 1961 constitution was the attempt to restrict the powers of the rurally based majority in parliament and the government which emanated from that majority through various checks and balances, such as a Constitutional Court, an innovation relative to earlier constitutions, a high Administrative Court with extended powers, administrative autonomy to universities and state radio and television etc. The constitution also stipulated a quite advanced range of political and civil rights and liberties. It included a directive for future governments for carrying out a land reform. Finally, and most importantly, it constitutionalised the rights to form trade unions, to engage in collective bargaining and to strike, which rights were concretised through the legislation of 1963. All this should not mislead one to think that, overnight, Turkey had come to possess a full-fledged bourgeois democratic régime. Being the product of a political event controlled

by the military, the 1961 constitution had to bear its imprint. Several aspects of the constitution and notably the extended powers granted to the National Security Board (not to be confused with the 1980 military junta, the National Security Council), a body composed of the top army staff and some members of the government, gave the military a real authority over the government itself. Apart from the limitations inherent in the constitution, the shadow of the military was constantly cast over political life, be it in the form of successive abortive coups in the early 1960s or the formation of seditious military committees including members of the general staff. And, of course, the three presidents of the 1960-80 period, all of them former generals, truly acted as the Trojan horse of the military within civilian institutions. Finally, a Mussolini-inspired Penal Code and a pervasive anti-communist ideological atmosphere acted as a Damocles' sword over the political self-organisation of the working class. Despite all these drawbacks, the post-1960 system was to be the framework of the most democratic era in the history of the republic. This was fundamentally due to one fact of *colossal* importance: the massive and active entry of the working class and other labouring strata into the political scene for the first time in Turkish history.

The working class had suffered constant repression at the hands of the Kemalist leadership. Despite its demagogic rhetoric before rising to power, the DP turned out to be no better: the year following the 1950 elections, mass arrests of left-wing leaders and militants dispelled any illusions nurtured by sections of the left as to the 'liberal' nature of this party. So the working class entered the post-1960 period politically passive, organised as it was only in a trade-union structure heavily tied to the state and with no right to strike. However, the fact that it was part and parcel of the urban coalition as a passive support class, along with the influence of liberal ideas circulating in petty-bourgeois circles in the late 1950s, was instrumental in the creation of a legal framework conducive to working class activity.

But the legal framework was secondary in importance when matched against the real mobilisation of the working class. The decade of the 1960s witnessed a gradual tendency of the working class to move towards organisational, political and ideological independence from both bourgeois parties and the state. We need not go into the details of this process here.²¹ Suffice it to say that this growth in strength and militancy, accompanied by the radicalisation of the student movement and of sections of the peasantry, was crowned by the semi-spontaneous demonstrations of June 1970, when an estimated 100,000 workers marched in defiance against plans to restrict trade union liberties. This event was a watershed of decisive importance in the history of class struggles in Turkey. It implied the forceful entry into the scene of the working class and demonstrated to the bourgeoisie (and to the army) that this class was, henceforth, the main antagonist with which it had to contend.

This new strength of the working class was becoming, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, more and more of a burden for the accumulation of capital. Strikes were growing in number and militancy, new demands were being

put forward, and real wages were on the rise. One result was that, by limiting super-exploitation, these developments reduced the competitiveness of Turkish capital on the world market, since low wages are the precondition of such competitiveness for the weak and technologically backward capital of semi-industrialised countries. This, along with other factors, impeded the growth of industrial exports, which fact was to have important consequences, as we shall see. Another result was the dissuasive rôle that working class militancy played on foreign capital, which, as is notorious, requires a docile labour force, low wages and a politically stable setup in order to invest massively in a country.

Here, then, was an unexpected consequence of the post-1960 system, the historical task of which was to have been the consolidation of the domination of the industrial bourgeoisie over the rural majority. The new situation dictated that the mobilisation of the working class, of sections of the peasantry and of various other social layers be suppressed and a new straitjacket of authoritarianism be imposed on political life. This was precisely one of the missions of the military intervention of 1971-73, which, having amended many articles of the constitution and other legislation, totally failed, however, to destroy the rise of the working class movement. This movement was to experience a renewed ascendancy in the 1970s (which, incidentally, shows that the post-1960 system was not a legal but a political order of things). The resurgence of massive proletarian activity proved to the bourgeoisie conclusively that partial adjustments of the political framework were insufficient and that the entire post-1960 system had to be discarded in the interests of capital accumulation. This awareness was to be decisive in the coup of 1980 and its aftermath.

The problem of rural alliances

The limits of the Kemalist revolution manifest themselves nowhere with more force than in the sphere of agricultural property relations. We have already seen that the Kemalist state was, from the beginning, based on an alliance with the landowning classes. This ruled out an agrarian revolution and left intact the structure of property relations: a massive small-holding peasantry, some modern farms organised along capitalist lines, widespread absentee ownership and, finally, quasi-feudal relations in the Kurdish regions of the East and the Southeast. The result would be a very unequal development in agriculture: while there was a certain overall development, the real breakthrough into modern agriculture came only in the West and the South, Kurdistan and most of the centre remaining quite backward economically and socially. As a consequence, despite the fact that Turkey has generally been regarded as one of the few countries of the world which are self-sufficient in foodstuffs, the potential in agricultural production has remained far from being exploited to the full and the increase of the productivity of agricultural labour has, on the whole, been poor. This limitation influenced industrial accumulation adversely by keeping agricultural exports lower than they could potentially be, by raising the price of foodstuffs and thereby increasing

the value of labour power, by keeping the internal market narrower than it need be etc. Hence, a low agricultural surplus has been one of the essential weaknesses of Turkish capitalism. This is why the question of a 'land reform' has been haunting the Turkish bourgeoisie since the mid-thirties. But successive attempts (in 1945, after the coup of 1960, during the military intervention of 1971-73 etc.) have brought no substantial results. There are two fundamental reasons for these failures. First, as its counterparts in other countries where capitalism developed belatedly, the Turkish commercial bourgeoisie was congenitally tied up with rural property: a merchant was also a landlord more often than not. And secondly, even for those fractions of the bourgeoisie for which such was not the case, alliance with the big landowners against the threat of subaltern classes was too pressing an issue to be overlooked. The price for the industrial bourgeoisie was, of course, quite high in terms of the limits to capital accumulation.

But the problem was not only one of low growth of the agricultural surplus. Equally important were the difficulties the bourgeoisie faced in the transfer of the existing agricultural surplus to the industrial sector. Here the problems were raised to a power for there was the additional factor of the communality of interests among various rural classes. Leaving aside rural proletarians, whose ranks have been growing over the decades, and semi-proletarians and poor peasants, the other classes and class fractions in the countryside, i.e. agricultural capitalists, absentee landlords, the quasi-feudal propertied classes of Kurdistan, rich peasants and the mass of middle peasants, have put up a common front against those governments which have attempted to use the two arms in their reach for a higher transfer of value from agriculture to industry, i.e. the taxation of agriculture and the manipulation of the terms of trade of agriculture with industry by keeping support prices for agricultural commodities low. The experience of the RPP, which had tried to use both instruments during the war, taught bourgeois parties a precious lesson. Despite its attempt at regaining the confidence of rural classes by removing the bulk of wartime taxes on agriculture, the RPP was toppled by a predominantly rural coalition. The DP struck the final blow by abolishing the remaining taxes and to this day no civilian government has even attempted to impose direct taxation on agriculture. Henceforth it was to be military régimes alone that dared to take steps which ran counter to the interests of the rural majority. The last, extremely meek attempt to tax agricultural income came from the 1960 military régime but its import can be gauged by noting that direct taxation in the agricultural sector has remained below 1 per cent of agricultural revenue since then.²² As for the terms of trade of agriculture, from 1946 on these lost all contact with world prices and were, in general, quite favourable to agriculture, while the world terms of trade notoriously moved against primary commodities during the whole postwar boom period. The means used to achieve this singular result by successive governments was to keep support prices high. The notable exception to this general trend came during the military intervention of 1971-73 when the terms of

trade of agriculture fell because of low support prices,²³ while, ironically, world prices of primary commodities rose as a result of the speculative over-heating of the world economy on the eve of the recession of 1974. This, as we shall see, was one of the reasons for the failure of this régime. For the rest of the 1970s, coalitions of different political persuasion competed for the favours of rural classes by keeping support prices high, and, during certain years, extremely high. This was certainly one reason why, at the end of the decade, rural masses participated very little in the struggles that shook Turkey.²⁴

As a result of this visceral weakness vis-à-vis rural classes, and especially the big landlords (high support prices serve disproportionately the interests of the large-scale producer and even harm the poor peasant²⁵), the industrial bourgeoisie had to content itself with a low rate of appropriation of the agricultural surplus. (This was effected mainly through the inherent transfer of surplus-value from agriculture to industry due to differences in organic composition and accessorially through the high prices of industrial commodities due to protection.) Necessary for the reproduction of the political domination of the bourgeoisie, its alliance with the landowning classes imposed a serious barrier to the extended reproduction of industrial capital.

The question of foreign capital

One major difference of the Turkish case from those other countries which, in the postwar period, experienced a certain capitalist development oriented to the internal market is the relatively low rate of penetration by foreign productive capital. The highest estimate of the stock of foreign capital within the country at the end of 1979 puts it at US\$550 million.²⁶ The figure usually given of \$228 million covers only that portion which is invested under the 1954 Law for the Encouragement of Foreign Capital and, excluding other legal forms of the penetration of foreign capital, implies a deceptive underestimation. However, even this latter figure is not insignificant for our purposes, for it is this that represents the bulk, though not the entirety, of the stock of foreign capital invested in manufacturing industry (the rest being mainly concentrated in the petroleum industry). Compared with an average annual total private investment of well over \$2,000 million in the early 1970s,²⁷ this level of foreign direct investment is astonishingly low. It is true that apart from direct investment, other types of relations exist between foreign and Turkish capital, such standard relations as patents, licensing etc. It is also true that in some key sectors such as the automotive, pharmaceutical, petro-chemical, rubber industries, foreign capital, in partnership with Turkish capital, does exercise a powerful domination. Nonetheless, in the light of the experience of other countries, this specificity should not go unnoticed.

This situation is the result of a confluence of various factors. Historically speaking, the initial reluctance of foreign capital can be attributed to the fact that Turkey was one of the first Eastern, non-Christian countries to establish an independent bourgeois nation-state (based on

the repression of the other nationalities living on the Anatolian plateau, as we have seen). Not having yet accumulated the astute methods of neo-colonialism, it was natural for foreign capital to regard this strange country with suspicion and this despite the constant reassurances and signs of good-will on the part of its leaders.²⁸ A related factor was the fact that Turkey not having been colonised fully, no specific historical ties existed between it and a particular imperialist country. The postwar period might have changed this situation were it not for several important factors. For one thing, the geographical proximity of Turkey to the Soviet Union, while raising its importance militarily for Western strategic purposes, was a deterrent for would-be investors in the light of the expansion of the Soviet zone of influence in the aftermath of the war. Secondly, these decades witnessed a progressive development of democratic forms in Turkey and later a powerful rise of the workers' movement and these were not exactly what foreign capital looked for in backward countries. Thirdly, from the sixties on Turkey was much more closely integrated with capitalist Europe, and in particular West Germany, than with the US.²⁹ The European market being a very fast growing one, European capital (excepting the British) did not have the same tendency until the seventies) to move abroad as massively as did US capital. Integration hence took the form of an opposite flow of labour power from Turkey to West Germany and other countries. Finally, the economic policies pursued in harmony with the pattern of accumulation based on the internal market acted as a disincentive: particularly important was the overvaluation of the Turkish currency with respect to its market rate, which automatically decreased the buying power of foreign money capital within Turkey and hence caused the prospects of profitability to decline.³⁰ However, it should not be forgotten that this latter element was common to all countries which were in a similar position.

The consequences of this situation were numerous, but concerning the discussion with respect to the barriers to capital accumulation two can be singled out. On the one hand, a relatively low penetration of foreign productive capital implied that Turkish capitalism would find it harder than countries in an opposite situation to turn to industrial exports. Foreign firms, and especially multinational ones, have, with their global network of communications, their developed techniques of exploitation and their generally more advanced technology, a greater capacity to export to international markets, at least potentially. On the other hand, lacking foreign resources in the form of direct investments, Turkish capitalism depended to an enormous extent on the flow of foreign money capital, i.e. foreign credits.³¹ This heavy rate of indebtedness was to be the spark that kindled the crisis in the second half of the seventies.

The Turkish monopoly bourgeoisie felt, of course, quite bitter about its relative deprivation of the opportunity of association with imperialist capital. With the accumulation of other difficulties, the eradication of the causes which created this situation became increasingly urgent for the bourgeoisie.

Internal contradictions of the mode of accumulation

The mode of accumulation based on the internal market has, with the exception of some insular economies such as Taiwan and Hong Kong, been a universally necessary stage in the development of industrial capitalism in backward countries.³² However, as all capitalist development, this mode of accumulation bears inherent contradictions which build up over the years and, at a certain moment, explode with force so as to throw the economy in full crisis. Turkish capitalism was no exception. There, too, the accumulation of capital was, in an unmediated way, also the accumulation of contradictions.

We have already seen that the mode of capital accumulation in question is predominantly concentrated in those branches of industry (whether in Department two, in the initial phase, or in Department one, in the later phase) which have as outlets internal consumption. But the internal market of a single country, whatever its population, is manifestly insufficient, all the more so in an underdeveloped country, for scales of production implied by the modern productive forces as they have been developed on the world scale. Consequently, the productive units established under these conditions are inevitably smaller in scale, more backward technologically, offering much more restricted opportunities for capital's control over labour, when compared with their international counterparts. In the Turkish case, for instance, a comparison between average scales of *large* Turkish private firms and 'optimal' international scales showed that the ratio was 1:4 in steel ingots, 1:6 in aluminium plate, 1:12 in electric motors, 1:16 in cement and tractors and 1:25 in passenger cars.³³ Only in several branches of the textiles sector did Turkish scales come anywhere close to international scales. The resulting low productivity of labour implied that Turkish capital had a very feeble competitive power on international markets.

But whatever the mode of capital accumulation, every capitalist economy is inextricably connected to the capitalist world economy in a definite, albeit specific, way. Therefore, competitiveness on the world market is a *sine qua non* of the unhampered reproduction of every capitalist economy. At a certain stage the law of value imposes its rule over every national fraction of capital. The mediations of the national state or of the inflow of foreign money capital can alleviate problems for a certain while. But unless an increase in competitiveness, dependent ultimately upon the productivity of labour, is procured in the meanwhile, a crisis in the end is inevitable. This crisis of the mode of accumulation based on the internal market is a specific expression of a wider truth: that, in this age of imperialism, *capitalism in one country* is no more viable than socialism in one country.

The concrete modalities in which various countries experience this bitter truth may differ. In the case of Turkey, it expressed itself in the contradiction between the low growth of exports and the rapid growth of imports due to the assembly nature of production activities, which therefore required a high importation rate of raw materials and intermediate goods, in addition to means of production, which are usually

unavailable internally at the initial stages of capitalist development. Total Turkish exports increased by 5 per cent annually in the period following 1968, but imports soared ahead at a rate of growth of 15 per cent in the same period. The import/export ratio for the economy as a whole rose from 1.35 in the 1950s, through 1.46 in the 1960s, to 2.40 in the 1970s (an important factor for the latter period being the highly adverse change in the terms of trade, mainly due to the price of oil).³⁴ The result was inevitably a high deficit in the balance of payments, alleviated for a certain while by secondary factors, as we shall see.

There were, certainly, additional factors in the slow growth of exports and especially of industrial exports. One very important factor, generally neglected, was the rise in real wages due to working class struggles, already noted. This made impossible for Turkish capital the alleviation of the disadvantage arising from low productivity and acted as a strong deterrent against its turn to international markets. A change in the mode of accumulation was therefore predicated on the infliction of a defeat on the working class. Other factors already noted are the relatively low penetration of foreign productive capital and the mediocre development in agriculture. The rôle of the overall orientation of economic policies, generally put forward as the sole cause of the blockage of this mode of accumulation, should also be mentioned, but only as a dependent and secondary variable. These policies, notably high protection, overvalued currency with respect to the market rate and financial policies that expand the internal market, promoted the perpetuation of the existing mode of accumulation and acted as disincentives against a turn to international markets. Adequate to the needs of industrial capital at a certain stage of its development, they were transformed into so many barriers once the conditions that produced them had been surpassed.

Class struggles and class alliances

THE PERIOD 1960-1980 was not only marked by the indisputable dominance of industrial capitalism. It was also a period of extremely rapid change in the lineup of class forces and of a fundamental upheaval in the political scene. My purpose here is not to provide a detailed analysis of the complex process through which the country went in these two decades but rather to sketch a general framework in order to understand the evolution of class struggles and class alliances, which culminated in the successful coup of 12 September 1980.

The chaos of political life in this period cannot be made intelligible unless the concrete relations between *all* the different classes are taken into account. There are, however, two key factors that shaped the evolution of the political struggles and alliances of the period. One is the forceful entry into the political scene of the working class. The other is the relationship of the increasingly dominant element in the ruling bloc, the industrial bourgeoisie, to the other elements of this bloc, in particular the rural propertied classes. The history of these two turbulent decades has been moulded by the oscillating efforts of the big industrial bourgeoisie

to sail between the Scylla and Charybdis of these two social forces. The resulting formation and dissolution of class alliances and coalitions have given each phase of the process its particular hue. We shall see that the difference between the 1960s and the 1970s derives mainly from such a revision of class alliances.

The rise in the militancy of the working class, especially marked in the second half of the sixties, called forth two different, and diametrically opposite, reactions from bourgeois political forces. One was the gradual transformation of the RPP into a populist party, exchanging its image of the guarantor of the state for one in which the party posed as the defender of the weak and the oppressed. The avowed project of the new current, led by Ecevit, was the construction of a social democratic party along the lines of the parties of the Socialist International, but various historical factors, relating both to the party and to society at large, acted as powerful barriers to this project. When the coup arrived the RPP had not yet been able to establish durable organisational links with the working class.

The second reaction was *reaction*, pure and simple. Starting around 1965, there was a proliferation of so-called Associations for the Struggle against Communism, a common front of many right-wing currents. Waging violent attacks on left-wing demonstrations and meetings, these Associations were instrumental in the formation of the nucleus of what was to become the most powerful fascist party in postwar Europe, the Nationalist Action Party (NAP). This party, which was to engage in full-scale violence and murder against trade-unionists, left-wing militants, students, teachers etc. in the 1970s, in fact represented the militant wing of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois reaction against the rise of working class politics. It stood for a frontal offensive aiming at the atomisation of the class and the abolition of the political system i.e. the post-1960 system.

In fact, the industrial bourgeoisie had joined the other fractions of the class in the second half of the 1960s in criticising the post-1960 system and the 1961 constitution. The main reason was, of course, that the post-1960 system increasingly came to stand for the self-activity of the working masses. Another concurrent factor was the reorganisation that had occurred within bourgeois political forces after the 1960 coup. Overwhelmed by the rural majority represented politically by the DP, the industrial bourgeoisie had, before the coup, joined hands with the RPP and the military in toppling the former. However, with the formation of the Justice Party (JP) in place of the DP dissolved by the military, and especially with the rise to its leadership of Demirel in 1964, the industrial bourgeoisie had acquired domination within that political tradition which was the historical inheritor of the DP movement. Thus, a decade after its birth, the urban coalition was split, for the main force behind its formation was now the leader of a political movement that brought together the different fractions of the bourgeoisie and dominated the rural masses. The industrial bourgeoisie now had the majority on its side and, therefore, its political representatives came increasingly into conflict with the various checks and balances placed in the constitution

of 1961 in order to curb the powers of the parliamentary majority.

But this 'golden age' of bourgeois unity under the dominance of its industrial fraction was to be temporary. The rural bourgeoisie could not digest the new priorities of the JP with its wholesale emphasis on industrial accumulation. Demirel's meek attempts at *indirectly* taxing landed property in 1970 brought out to the open the contradiction through a major split from the JP. Another fraction of the bourgeoisie, mainly composed of the medium and small capitalists particularly of provincial towns, came increasingly into conflict with the monopoly capital of Istanbul and other big cities over the distribution of bank credits and import quotas. This conflict would lead to the formation of another political movement, the National Salvation Party (NSP), which was to gain its real momentum in the 1970s. Due to the deep-seated ties of monopoly capital with American and European imperialist capital, the NSP would increasingly criticise Turkey's relations with the West, advocate the integration of Turkey with the Arab-Muslim world and develop a fundamentalist Islamic ideology.

Thus, in 1970, the industrial bourgeoisie found itself in a contradictory situation. On the one hand, the June events, in which around 100,000 workers had participated, confirmed the serious rise in the working class movement and the general radicalisation of the mass movement. Against this the bourgeoisie had developed the twin tendencies of inflicting a defeat on the working class movement and of rolling back the post-1960 system by revising the constitution. But precisely at this moment when the bourgeoisie needed to gather its strength to impose its solutions, the forces of the bourgeoisie were extremely divided. Not fortuitously: for these divisions were an expression of the relative exhaustion of the rapid accumulation of capital in the 1960s. The industrial growth rate, which had been around 11 per cent on the average in the years between 1963 and 1969, fell in 1970 to 1.5 per cent. This was also the year of balance of payments problems and of the devaluation of the currency in August. In short, the industrial bourgeoisie had to wage a battle on two fronts simultaneously: it had to attack both the working class and the rural propertied classes. With no strong allies left for the formidable burden of these tasks, it had to take refuge once again under the coercive power of the military. The *pronunciamento* of 12 March 1971 did not abolish parliament but resulted in the formation of successive governments which were emanations of the will of the military. This second episode of military intervention lasted two and a half years.

Hegel's famous dictum that the same historical event occurs twice is amply confirmed when one compares the 1971-73 period and the 1980 military dictatorship. With one important proviso: this time it was the first episode that was a farce and the second which turned out to be a tragedy. It is not necessary to go into a detailed analysis of the ludicrous failure of the military intervention of 1971. Suffice it to say that the régime was captured in precisely the same contradictions as the industrial bourgeoisie which it represented. Having momentarily repressed the working class movement, it gradually capitulated to the representatives

of the big landowning classes and, therefore, failed to bring any solutions to the emerging crisis of the mode of accumulation (the graphic example of its failure being the frustration of the much-publicised attempt to carry out a land reform). Neither could it roll back the rising tide of working class and urban petty-bourgeois mass mobilisation which reasserted itself with increased vigour once military tutelage over political life was lifted. The pressure of European institutions was important in the return to parliamentary democracy, for at this stage Turkish capital had its eyes turned exclusively to Europe. So apart from a two-year squeeze of real wages and agricultural support prices, and various amendments to the constitution which however proved insignificant in the face of rising mass mobilisation, the 'achievements' of the 1971-73 military intervention were nil. It left the burning contradictions of Turkey intact and turned them over, in exacerbated form, to the feeble parliamentary régime of the rest of the 1970s, which itself was to crumble under the burden of these contradictions.

The twofold task of rolling back working class mobilisation and, simultaneously, rationalising Turkish capitalism in the face of opposition from the big landowning classes and the ante diluvian fraction of merchant capital thus remained on the agenda of the Turkish industrial bourgeoisie during the 1970s. But it found a different expression in the political sphere with respect to the late 1960s. The JP, which had been split as a result of its one-sided emphasis on the interests of the industrial monopoly fraction of capital, turned towards a strategy that aimed at the unity of all propertied classes and at the repression of the renewed militancy of left-wing movements. Its successive coalitions with the NSP and the fascist NAP were an expression of this strategy. The RPP gradually came to represent the other horn of the dilemma that faced the industrial bourgeoisie: it became more and more a party with a modern image, which, basing itself on the quest for a hegemony over the working class, the new layers of the urban proletariat, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the poor peasantry, promised the industrial bourgeoisie to deal with the more backward relics of the agricultural and commercial propertied classes. The result was twofold. On the one hand, the industrial bourgeoisie itself was split over the priorities of the moment and therefore over the party to be supported. On the other, the society at large experienced a *profound political polarisation* around two blocs, the main forces of which were the RPP and the JP. This polarisation was carried to the brink of civil war by mass political terror, initiated and constantly rekindled by the fascist movement. The massacre of Maraş, where more than a hundred people died at the hands of fascist-led mobs in December 1978, was a culmination of NAP strategy: it was both terror carried to the scale of civil war and a graphic illustration of the rebirth of sectarian strife between the generally conservative majority Sunnis and the generally progressive minority Alaouites in central and south-eastern Anatolia as a result of careful engineering by the fascist movement. Finally, superposed to this dramatic general context was the considerable rise of a nationalist movement with left-wing sympathies in

Turkish Kurdistan. The political situation was, hence, already explosive and none of the important questions solved when a profound crisis of capital accumulation set in around 1977.

Crisis and neo-liberalism

THIS CRISIS was the synthetic expression of all the major contradictions of Turkish capitalism. As such it combined various aspects, which should be analysed separately in order to have a clear understanding of the situation. The crisis can be considered as the complex unity of three essential moments:

1 A periodic capitalist crisis

The cyclical movement of capital, a universally observed phenomenon in capitalist economies, has also been a marked feature of the Turkish economy since capitalism became the dominant mode of production. The three cycles of the postwar period were between 1947-1961, 1962-1971 and 1972 to the present, marked by recessions respectively between 1957-61, 1970-71, and from 1977 on. All of these periodic crises resulted in stabilisation programmes accompanied by devaluations of the currency, in 1958, in 1970 and continuously from 1978 to the present. The recent crisis was thus a new episode in the lineage of a well-established pattern.

However, every periodic crisis of capital accumulation brings capital face to face with specific contradictions, along with more general ones common to all crises. The 1957-61 crisis was the moment in which the primacy of agriculture was put to trial. The 1970-71 recession was a precocious warning as to the limits of the mode of accumulation based on the internal market. Both caused severe disruptions in economic activity and contributed, in their different manners, to political upheavals. But neither was as profound and pervasive as the present crisis and especially the 1970-71 recession was short-lived. They both occurred within the context of the great postwar boom of world capitalism, whose effects soon gave Turkish capitalism a new impetus. If the periodic crisis that started in 1977 has turned out to be much deeper and long-lasting than the former two episodes, the reason is that it was articulated to, and expressed, new contradictions arising both on a world scale and within the Turkish economy itself.

2 The crisis of a mode of accumulation

It has already been argued that contradictions arising from the very nature of the mode of accumulation based on the internal market and those mediated by the political sphere gradually erected serious barriers to capital accumulation in Turkey. These barriers made themselves felt for the first time during the recession of 1970-71. We have seen that the military intervention of 1971 was an unsuccessful attempt to solve these problems of industrial accumulation. However, in spite of this failure, a host of special circumstances concurred to make the first half of the

decade a period of reinvigorated economic growth. Foremost among these factors was the effect of the overheating of the capitalist world economy, on the eve of the crisis, in the years 1972 and 1973, when the world market expanded by a leap and the prices of primary commodities were given a boost due to speculative stockpiling. This was the period of a record increase in the exports of many semi-industrialised countries. Turkish capital also benefited from this favourable conjuncture. Its total exports made an important leap, but more importantly, manufacturing exports grew to an unprecedented extent. The real growth in this specific item was practically nil in the 1960s. Between 1970 and 1973 there was a cumulative 36 per cent real growth.³⁵ In 1973 alone, the dollar value of manufacturing exports almost doubled.³⁶ This increase in exports, spectacular by former Turkish standards, has generally been attributed to the 1970 currency devaluation. Although this may have been instrumental, its effects were only subsidiary, the principal factor being the situation on the world market. The squeeze on wages during this period should not be forgotten either. A second special circumstance in the early 1970s was the immense increase in the remittances of immigrant workers from Turkey working in capitalist Europe. These remittances, which had amounted to \$1.7 billion in the five years between 1968-1972, soared, in 1974 alone, to \$1.4 billion, mainly because of the rapid increase in the number of workers who had emigrated.³⁷ These factors alleviated the effects of the 1970-71 recession and gave a new lease of life to the old mode of accumulation. But with the abrupt change in world conditions after 1974, the contradictions of this mode of accumulation resurfaced forcefully.

3 An integral part of the world crisis

The generalised crisis of world capitalism removed the last buttresses to the ailing mode of accumulation in Turkey. The impact of the crisis was felt sharply in Turkey through the drop in workers' remittances as a result of rising unemployment and stagnant wage levels in Europe, the sharp rise in oil prices in 1973-74 and again in 1979-80, the more general unfavourable change in Turkey's terms of trade with the outside world, the stagnation of exports due to the slow growth and even the contraction of the world market. But like other countries, Turkey experienced the global crisis of capitalism at a specific tempo and under specific forms. The favourable legacy of the 1972-74 period and the dramatic rise of short-term borrowing³⁸ postponed the appearance of the underlying difficulties but also contributed to the gravity of the final breakdown.

When, therefore, the crisis burst forth with unusual force in 1977, it took the form of a huge external debt of approximately \$15 billion (an amount which was quite exceptional at that time, though amply surpassed by other countries' debts since then), a large trade and balance of payments deficit and an accelerating rate of inflation. Underlying these monetary indicators was, of course, a marked recession: GNP, which had grown at an average annual 6% in the fifteen years preceding the crisis increased only by 3.9% in 1977, 2.8% in 1978 and dropped for

the next two years. The situation is even more striking if one turns to private capital investment, the single most important index of capital accumulation: this decreased constantly from 1977 on, to drop by 1980 to the level which had been reached in 1972.

The determining aspect of the complex character of this crisis was the postponed crisis of the mode of accumulation and the concurrent pattern of integration of the economy to the capitalist world economy. This, as we have already noted, was not specific to the case of Turkey but was, in fact, the general pattern in the postwar era in those backward countries where a development of industrial capitalism had occurred between 1930 and 1945. However, this pattern had been gradually changing and a new pattern of integration of these countries to the world economy coming on the agenda in the 1970s. The forerunners of the new pattern were the so-called 'export-led' economies of South Korea and Brasil (not to speak of the special cases of Taiwan and Hong Kong) in the 1960s. They were followed in the 1970s by many Latin American countries, the most spectacular changes being observed in the countries of the South Cone, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, and other Asian countries. The former mode of accumulation based on the partition of the world market for industrial commodities into well-protected national markets was being surpassed on the world scale. The general contours of a new international division of labour were slowly taking shape. Within this new division of labour, these semi-industrialised countries came more and more to specialise in certain branches of industry, such as textiles and clothing, electronics, the food industry etc. where the organic composition of capital is low, in certain segments, usually assembly operations, of the production process of other industrial commodities, and in certain branches of agriculture which have wide outlets on international markets. Which branches were to be dominant in which country depended on the special circumstances of the country in question, the principal ones being its specific geographical location and the competitiveness of its capital in these branches. The capitalist world crisis is, among other things, the forceful assertion of this new development in the international division of labour and a process through which the barriers erected by the old mode of accumulation are to be eliminated. These aspects of the crisis are, of course, no more than tendencies and the contradictory nature of the development in various countries is but another expression of the inherently contradictory nature of capitalist accumulation.

Such were the coordinates of the critical situation in which the Turkish bourgeoisie found itself in the late 1970s. The crisis was the expression of *the inability of Turkish capital to reproduce itself as a fraction of world capital*. Therefore, the internal crisis was also *immediately* a crisis of the relations of Turkish capitalism to world capitalism. A durable solution to this multi-dimensional crisis pointed to a reorientation in capital accumulation and to a new mode of insertion into the international division of labour. The internal and the external dimensions of the crisis were hence indissociable. This is what created the illusion, popular in

left-wing circles in Turkey, that the neo-liberal programme of economic policy adopted in January 1980 was simply the result of the dictates of the International Monetary Fund. Certainly, Turkey's high level of indebtedness did make governments vulnerable to IMF pressures. But the principal social force behind the radical turn in economic policy that came at the beginning of 1980 was not the IMF, but the Turkish financial and industrial bourgeoisie now united around this programme. The IMF was instrumental in transmitting to Turkey the requirements of the new international division of labour. But where it concretely determined the development of events was in its insistence on capitalist discipline over an ailing economy. It thereby tremendously strengthened the Turkish bourgeoisie in its quest for ideological hegemony.

The neo-liberal programme incarnated in the January 1980 measures aimed at a profound restructuring of productive capital in order to render its structure consistent with a new mode of accumulation oriented towards a deeper insertion of the economy within the new international division of labour. This programme, which has been and is being applied to different degrees in many other underdeveloped countries, has several dimensions: 1 Measures destined to put an end to the agonising life of those industries and capitals which are the legacy of the old mode of accumulation, foremost among such measures being restrictive monetary and credit policies, reduction of the public deficit and the abolition of state subsidies, all leading to a drastic deflation of the internal market. 2 Policies conducive to the development of those industries and capitals which promise to be competitive on the world market, such policies as incentives and subsidies for exports, constant depreciation of the currency, creation of a more attractive framework for foreign capital and a benign attitude vis-à-vis the rapid centralisation of capitals which is under way. Much remains, in this respect, to be done in such areas as the reduction of customs protection, further liberalisation of the exchange régime and the setting up of free trade and production zones, all of them pet areas of state action in the context of the neo-liberal programme.³⁹ 3 Policies that facilitate the migration of money-capital from the declining branches and firms into those in ascendancy. Basing itself on the categorical assertion that the unhampered working of the market mechanism (i.e. the law of value) is a precondition of the 'rational' allocation of resources, the programme has attempted to dismantle the traditionally high interventionism of the state in economic life. Measures that go in this direction include the abolition of price controls over the private sector, the alignment of the prices of the products of public enterprises to their market prices, projects for the reorganisation of public enterprises with a view to render them more susceptible to capitalist rationality, the liberalisation, to a certain extent, of interest rates and the exchange rate, the priority given to the formation of a capital market – an aspect which had lagged hopelessly behind in the development of Turkish capitalism. 4 Priority given to public investment in manufacturing industry. Despite the glorification of market forces, neo-liberal strategy could certainly not have dispensed with the powerful tool that

public investment has traditionally been in Turkey, making for half of all investment, this ratio rising to two thirds in the last couple of years in the context of the sharp decline in private investment. Public investment was, therefore, used as a privileged instrument in the restructuring of the Turkish economy. From 1980 to 1982, while public investment in manufacturing industry fell, in constant prices, by 26%, the corresponding change for agriculture was a *rise* of 71%. The results are strikingly clear: while in 1979 and 1980 agriculture accounted for 7% of total public investment and manufacturing industry for an average of 28%, the respective shares for 1982 were 11% and 20%.⁴⁰

Military dictatorship

THE JANUARY 1980 measures were adopted by the last government accountable to an elected parliament, a minority government of the JP that had come to office in the wake of the partial elections of October 1979. The RPP government which had preceded it since December 1977 had had to resort to stabilisation measures accompanied by currency devaluations successively in April 1978 and March-June 1979. These measures of the RPP government were criticised by spokesmen for the bourgeoisie as being too late, too meek and half-hearted.⁴¹ It is true that the RPP policies were not as bold and blatant as the January 1980 measures in responding to the demands of capital. The important point to retain is, however, that the RPP policies, adopted under the twin fires of the IMF and the Turkish monopoly bourgeoisie, already pointed in the direction of the January 1980 measures and constituted a watershed that separated the post-1977 government policies of austerity and the reflationary policies up until the end of 1977.

The JP government applied the new economic policy programme as best it could, under the direction of Turgut Özal, economic adviser to Prime Minister Demirel. But there were certain crucial measures which were integral to the success of the neo-liberal programme which it could simply not push through. Of primary importance was the necessity of the imposition of a harsh austerity on the industrial working class and other labouring strata (unproductive workers, public employees etc.) by keeping money wages under strict control. The resistance of the working class to the austerity programme, manifested in the extent of industrial disputes in 1980, precluded this. There are varying figures as to the number of strikes and of workers involved in the last few years of the decade. But all concur to show that there was a dramatic rise of trade union activity in 1980. According to one source,⁴² approximately 85 thousand workers went on strike in 1980, but many strikes being postponed by the government on various ludicrous pretexts, the real figure would be some 150 thousand. This is nearly four times the number of strikers for 1979 and incomparably higher than the quite calm 1978. It was also nearly three times the figure for 1977, which itself was an all-time historical high.

A second aspect difficult to put into effect was the imperative to keep

the support prices of agricultural commodities down. This would have been contradictory with the fundamental strategy that the JP had been following in the 1970s: having drawn the lessons of the split at the end of the 1960s, the leadership followed a policy of close alliance with the rural bourgeoisie and big landlords. Moreover the rural petty-bourgeoisie was the vast reservoir of support for this party and could not be alienated only a year and a half before elections.

Finally, the taxation system had to be radically altered. Decades of constant compromise with the rural propertied classes resulting in the practical exemption of agriculture from taxation had finally put industrial capital itself in a difficult situation through the inevitable rise in the taxes paid by wage-earners. This created a heavy burden for private big firms in the form of higher *gross* wages under the pressure of inflation. But again if this burden were to be alleviated, it had to be shifted to other classes and strata, and agriculture being ruled out, this meant alienating sizeable sections of other fractions of capital and the urban petty-bourgeoisie.

In short, the new orientation of the Turkish bourgeoisie created formidable tensions among the various classes and strata of the society, tensions difficult, if not impossible, to master within the confines of the parliamentary form of domination. In the atmosphere of political turmoil and mass terror of the late 1970s, unpopular measures on such an extensive scale would almost certainly have been suicidal for the government. The last resort within the limits of parliamentary democracy seemed to be a 'grand coalition' of the main and 'responsible' bourgeois parties, the JP and the RPP. This had the double advantage of uniting the deeply divided forces of the monopoly bourgeoisie and bringing under its hegemony the various classes and strata that were controlled by these parties. Even this solution was not without its risks: it could have radicalised the electorate and pushed a sizeable portion of the discontented towards either the myriad left-wing movements to the left of the RPP or to the fascist NAP (which never gained the full confidence and endorsement of the big bourgeoisie because of its extremely dangerous strategy of civil war). It could also have strengthened the NSP, by now a nightmare for monopoly capital and for US imperialism. Uncertain as its outcome may have been, it was nonetheless the only solution in sight and an increasing pressure was brought to bear on the two parties by the representatives of the bourgeoisie. But because of the deep polarisation of the society since the beginning of the decade and of the irreconcilability of the different interests represented by the two parties, notwithstanding their common allegiance to the industrial bourgeoisie, this hegemonic 'united front' of the big bourgeoisie turned out to be impossible to realise. This exhausted the possibilities under parliamentary rule. For the third time in its brief historical existence, the big industrial bourgeoisie was thus compelled, under the force of class struggle, to tie its fate to military rule.

The military dictatorship established by the coup of 12 September 1980 can hence be described as the repressive united front of the big

bourgeoisie.⁴³ This front was constructed around the coercive organ of the bourgeois state where the traditional political parties of the bourgeoisie had failed. The dictatorship inflicted a heavy defeat on the working class through brutal repression, the suppression of its organisations and bribing the major right-wing American-style trade union confederation into acquiescence. The urban petty-bourgeoisie was also silenced. All of this cleared the ground for the completion of the neo-liberal programme. (Özal, its architect, was, in fact, promoted to deputy premiership by the junta.) But even more important was the fact that with the defeat of the working class, the post-1960 system could finally be demolished. Following the coup, the dictatorship carried out step by step its historical mission: to create a durable framework for the restructuring of capital and to reorganise the entire political superstructure in order to create a régime adequate to the future needs of the accumulation of capital.

I shall return presently to the results attained by the dictatorship in carrying out its objectives. But it should first be noted that the junta was hardly challenged until recently and had a relatively free hand in putting its plans into effect. It is worthwhile, then, to try to answer the following question: what are the factors that worked for the consolidation of the 1980 military dictatorship as opposed to the total failure of the military intervention of 1971, whose political project was much more modest and narrower in scope than that of the present régime? The answer lies in the intrinsically different character of the historical situations in which the two régimes were placed.

1 The working class movement was indisputably on the rise when the 1971 intervention occurred. Despite the fact that there were practically no mass mobilisations during the 1971-73 period, the rise in class consciousness and militancy influenced the course of events, concretely through the mediation of its pressure on the RPP, manifested in the opposition of the latter to the military. And once the period was over, the class movement found a renewed vigour through the years 1974 to 1977, after which a host of factors combined to cause a down-turn of working class activity. Prominent among these factors was the relationship of the mass movement to the RPP. The powerful mobilisations until 1977 having been channelled to the bourgeois populist framework of the RPP, the self-activity of the masses subsided as soon as this party came to power. A considerable part of the responsibility lay with the trade-union bureaucracy and the tail-ending strategy of the various socialist movements. With the harsh austerity programme of 1980, there was a new up-turn in the activities of the working class but this new recovery lacked a political perspective. Thus when the coup came, the working class movement had not yet shed the deep demoralisation and disorientation resulting from the failure of its RPP experiment, the desolate result of so many years of militant struggles. Hence, no resistance was put up against the coup and the attacks of the dictatorship on the basic rights of the working class. Nor was there any significant opposition from the working class movement from within the country, excepting the resistance of

imprisoned militants. (It should be noted, however, that for a very long time, émigré left-wing political groups in Western Europe were the *only* ones to criticise the junta.)

2 Despite the June events of 1970 and an extremely limited urban guerilla movement in early 1971, the military intervention of the early 1970s came in an atmosphere hardly experienced by the majority of the population as unstable. This reduced much of the credibility of the alarmist discourse of the generals. The 1980 coup was, on the contrary, the culmination of a chaotic social situation in which thousands of people from both camps had lost their lives. (The most significant symptom of the total disorientation of the masses was the remarkable shift of the popular vote from the RPP to the JP in the two years from 1977 to 1979.) In the absence of a clearly formulated socialist alternative as a solution to the burning questions of society, military rule represented for a sizeable section of the population the only feasible framework which could re-establish peace and order and put an end to internecine strife.

3 At the beginning of the 1970s the bourgeoisie was yet slowly groping towards a new programme adequate for the extended reproduction of capital in Turkey. There was much hesitation and confusion among its spokesmen. And as soon as there was an upturn in accumulation, the problems were forgotten. The struggles of the 1970s and the profound economic crisis after 1977 left little doubt within the ranks of the bourgeoisie as to the necessity of a *radical* solution to the problems on its agenda and, notably, of the replacement of the post-1960 system by another more in line with the needs of capital accumulation. There was, thus, a strong and pervasive tendency within the bourgeoisie towards a more authoritarian form of class rule. The most striking manifestation of this difference in the orientation of the bourgeoisie is the nature of the reactions of the main bourgeois parties to the military régimes in power. In the first episode, both the RPP and later, and to a lesser extent, the JP put up a considerable opposition to the intervention of the military in political life. After the coup in 1980, on the other hand, both parties implicitly supported the dictatorship until the definitive banning of the former political parties, and indeed even longer, until the details of the new constitution of 1982 made clear that there was no political space in future for the leadership, at least, of these two parties.

4 At the beginning of the 1970s the pressure of European institutions for the restoration of regular parliamentary practice played an important rôle in curbing the plans of the military. For the Turkish ruling classes had, at that time, resolutely set upon a course of economic and political integration with Western Europe, Turkey being since 1963 tied to the EEC on the basis of an association agreement. But with the rise of oil prices in the early 1970s a new context came into being. After the 1980 coup Turkish capitalism increasingly turned to the oil-rich countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and Western Europe lost its once privileged position in the eyes of the Turkish bourgeoisie. This is not to say that Turkey has definitively turned its back on Western Europe; indeed, a major problem for the Turkish ruling classes will be the

reconciliation of these two sets of relations with very different, and even conflicting, requirements. But the existence of an alternative both acted as a brake on European reaction to the dictatorship and alleviated the impact of European initiatives on the consolidation of the régime in power.

5 But this was not the only, nor even the major, factor which shaped Europe's relationship to the dictatorship in Turkey. In effect, European reaction was extremely limited because of the growing rôle of Turkey, after the fall of the Shah in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, as an outpost of imperialism in the Middle East. Here, of course, the lead rôle among imperialist countries was assured to the US, staunchest defenders of the dictatorship, but the growing Atlanticism of various European governments was of not inconsiderable help to the Americans. This new conjuncture in the Middle East and the renewed hegemony of the US over Turkey, after two decades of European and particularly German influence, was of tremendous importance in the consolidation of the régime. American involvement in the military intervention of 1971 had not been lacking but its impact had been limited by Turkey's relations with Western Europe.

Provisional balance-sheet of the military dictatorship

IT SEEMS unnecessary, in the context of this article which has attempted to provide a long-term historical overview of the development of capitalism in Turkey, to consider in detail the political and economic developments under the 1980 dictatorship.⁴⁴ More appropriate would be an assessment of the place of this period in historical development. Yet it is too early for that. What will be attempted in this section will be no more than to indicate the *general tendencies* of capital accumulation and class struggle in the period following the 1980 coup.

The first important aspect is that the junta has entirely subscribed to the radical shift in economic policy started by the January 1980 measures and has gone a long way since in creating the necessary framework for a transition to a new mode of accumulation. Under the guidance of Özal, it deepened further various aspects of the programme in such domains as exchange-rate depreciation, cuts in public expenditure, interest rates and the encouragement of foreign capital. What really marks its specificity is, however, its 'success' in precisely that domain where its elected predecessor, the JP government, had failed: the frontal attack, necessary to the austerity programme, on the subordinate classes. By prohibiting all trade-union activity and entrusting wage settlements to the so-called Supreme Arbitration Board, effectively under its own control, the junta established a strict control over nominal wages and, thereby, laid the ground for a sharp reduction in real wages.⁴⁵

The petty-bourgeoisie was not spared either. Its urban component (artisans, petty commerce, liberal professions etc.) was hard-hit by the fiscal 'reform', which the big bourgeoisie had been demanding for years. This 'reform' shifted a significant portion of the burden of taxation from

the shoulders of the latter to those of the petty-bourgeoisie. These strata were also impoverished as a result of the activities of the so-called 'bankers', wildcat brokers and moneylenders. The petty savings of around half a million people were swallowed up by a number of these swindlers, under the benevolent gaze of the state, which tacitly encouraged their activities in order to force the oligopoly of big banks to relax its control on the interest rate. As for the massive rural component of the petty-bourgeoisie, the decisive element was the change in agricultural support price policy. Conspicuously above inflation rates during the RPP government in 1979 and the JP government in 1980, support prices have consistently been kept below the rate of inflation since the coup. However, it should be added that even this powerful dictatorial régime that rules in the name of the industrial bourgeoisie has not waged a frontal assault on the rural propertied classes. Witness the fact that after a fall in agricultural production in 1981, due to a ninefold increase in the formerly subsidised price of fertilisers in 1980, the price of this crucial input has been kept practically constant, i.e. this commodity was one of the very few to be subsidised by the state. Witness also the extremely limited tax burden imposed on the agricultural sector during the fiscal reform. I shall return below to the possible future evolution of the relations between the industrial bourgeoisie and the rural propertied classes. It should be noted in passing, however that this policy of the régime partly explains its popularity with the rural petty-bourgeoisie.

The combination of draconian austerity, monetarism and neo-liberalism in general resulted in the partial mastering of inflation, the meek resumption of economic growth and an enormous increase in exports. This last feature is the most significant in that it has more than conjunctural importance and lays the basis for the transition to the new mode of accumulation. Exports rose twofold between 1980 and 1982 (from \$2.9 billion to \$5.7 billion) and industrial exports soared even higher, with an increase in value of 120% in 1981 alone. The decisive factor behind this rise, truly dramatic in a time of world recession and of a shrinking world trade, was the specific position of the Middle East and North Africa. To the extent that the increase in exports was not fictitious (i.e. a turn from illegal channels to legal ones), it was a result of the buoyancy of the Middle East market. The results are striking: while in 1980 the EEC accounted for 43% of Turkish exports and the Middle East and North Africa for only 22%, in 1982 the situation had been reversed, the EEC share declining to 30% and that of the latter region rising to 45%. To this one should add the rapidly growing activities, in the region, of Turkish construction contractors, whose orders have reached an estimated \$17 billion. This overall development charts the future tendencies of Turkish capitalism as to its position within the international division of labour.

The economic record of the junta was hailed by the spokesmen of international financial capital as an outstanding success and Turkey was presented as an example of lucid policies to those countries which faced severe crises and balance of payments problems. The world bourgeoisie

was, for once, reaping where it had sown. For the Turkish experiment of neo-liberalism had received lavish financial support from the whole capitalist world. Following the implementation of the austerity programme, the IMF granted to Turkey an unprecedentedly high standby credit for three years, which was later extended for another year.⁴⁶ And in spite of the tergiversations of Europe towards the practices of the junta, imperialist countries provided Turkey with huge long-term credits and grants.⁴⁷

Despite this massive support and the repressive political régime, Turkish capitalism has not yet been able to extricate itself from the deep crisis that started in 1977. Even in those domains, such as inflation and exports, where 'success' was highly praised, the trend has inescapably deteriorated in 1983. But much more important is the dismal condition of capital accumulation. Despite a hesitant recovery in other indicators, private investment has continued its decline since 1977. Even in 1981, that much-praised year, private investment decreased by 8.8% and, according to the *provisional* figures for 1982, private manufacturing investment rose only by 0.6%. Keeping the strong propaganda bias of provisional figures in mind, it can be said, with little fear of misjudgment, that this figure will equally turn out to be negative.⁴⁸ As a consequence, unemployment has been rising steadily since the beginning of the crisis. According to official figures, it rose from 2.1 million in 1978, through 2.65 million in 1980 to an estimated 3.6 million in 1983, this last figure representing an unemployment rate of 19-20%.⁴⁹

Therefore, not even the periodic crisis is over. This is not surprising since this periodic crisis is only an aspect of the crisis in its entirety, intertwined as it is with the crisis of the mode of accumulation. And here, despite important steps, the restructuring of capital has not yet been effected to a significant extent. It is indeed very difficult to expect this restructuring to advance significantly in the near future because of the constraints laid upon the world market by the global crisis of capitalism (and lately the fall in oil prices has, to a certain extent, effaced the privileged position of Turkey's newly-found markets). Added to this is the extreme financial fragility of many industrial firms, hard-hit by the deflationary spiral into which the internal market was deliberately pushed. There have been numerous cases of bankruptcy and of mergers and takeovers, and several big firms have been taken over by the state. An immediate consequence of this fragile situation of productive capital is the extreme vulnerability of the banking system. In fact, in the summer of 1982 Turkey lived the beginnings of a financial panic and crash *à la Argentine*, but the situation was temporarily mastered at the expense of a certain relaxation of previous policies (and the replacement of Özal by another team). In short, Turkish capitalism is far from having overcome the difficulties of capital accumulation and the next deep recession in the world economy may keep in store a *débâcle* for Turkish capital.

However, notwithstanding the uncertainty of the short and medium terms, it can be said that Turkish capitalism has gone a long way in these three years in adapting itself to the prospect of a new mode of accumulation

and a new pattern of integration with the world economy. The vital necessity, for the reproduction of capital, of a mobilisation of forces toward export industries has almost gained the status of a dogma for the Turkish bourgeoisie and for most, if not all, of its political representatives. True, the January 1980 measures have recently been increasingly criticised by various sectors of the bourgeoisie (although other sectors still defend them ferociously). It should be noted, however, that the discussion is not over the goal to be reached, i.e. an 'export-led' economy, so much as over the methods and policies to be adopted in order to reach this goal.

On the political front, the junta's rhetoric concerning a return to democracy has, as was easily predictable, turned out to be a mockery. The new constitution adopted in November 1982 attests to the thinly veiled maintenance of the rule of the present junta until 1989. This constitution formally recognises political and civil liberties only to suppress them on numerous vague pretexts, heavily restricts the rights to strike and to form trade unions, prohibits legal socialist activity, equips the president of the republic with quasi-dictatorial powers (including control over the legislature), destroys the independence of the judiciary, and stipulates the full suspension of what remains of democratic rights upon declaration of the so-called 'state of exception' on such ludicrous grounds as economic crisis and natural calamity. Since the head of the 1980 military junta, General Evren, will be the first president under the new constitution, it is fair to say that the military still retains control over the political life of the country.

But it is not only the working class or sections of the petty-bourgeoisie which are forcibly excluded from political life and denied their democratic rights. The traditional parties of the bourgeoisie, the JP and the RPP, are also barred, at least for the moment, from participating in the structures of the new political régime. Only three new parties were authorised to run in the November 1983 elections, all of them headed by various figures of the dictatorship period. There have certainly been serious conflicts among bourgeois political forces in the struggle over participation in the new 'democratic' régime, but it should be emphasised that what is at stake in these conflicts is not the régime itself but the question of who will represent the bourgeoisie *within the framework of this régime*. Whether those parties which claim the legacy of the traditional bourgeois parties are later allowed to join the band or not, the new régime can be characterised, according to the old and time-proven Spanish distinction, as a *dictablanda* (mild dictatorship) replacing a *dictadura* (strong-handed dictatorship).

Herein lies the most important aspect of the balance-sheet of the military dictatorship. It has accomplished the task that no bourgeois political force was able to carry out in the last fifteen years: it has demolished the post-1960 system which was the very stake of the stormy class struggles of the 1970s. It has, thereby, sealed the victory of the bourgeoisie over the working class and set up the legal and political framework which is meant to perpetuate, to constantly reproduce, this new balance of class forces in Turkey.

But this balance-sheet is necessarily provisional. The new order will last only as long as the present balance of class forces remains unchallenged. A renewed combativity of the working class, carrying in its wake the poor peasantry and oppressed sectors of the urban bourgeoisie, not to speak of Kurdish nationalist movements, can sweep away the régime meticulously constructed by the junta over the years. The preconditions for such a mobilisation are certainly not yet in sight, but if and when it occurs, when working masses take the lead, there is no knowing in advance where the movement will stop. It may then well turn out to be the case that, either way, the post-1960 system has already been irreversibly delivered to the archives of recent history.

Conclusions

THIS LONG journey through twentieth-century Turkish history has enabled us to answer the two questions that were posed at the beginning of this article. A synthetic view of the development of capitalism and of the relations among the various classes provides the key elements through which one can understand both the periodic recurrence of military interventions and the very specific nature of the present military dictatorship.

The first feature, the periodic interventions of the military, has commonly been attributed to the 'autonomous' nature of the army and the perenniality of the Kemalist ideology of tutelage over society still permeating the ranks of this army. This type of analysis evades the decisive question of the causes of the persistence of the political and ideological phenomena that it evokes. Such forces do not arise in a vacuum but are daily reproduced by class relations, or else they cease to be determining. One has, therefore, to be able to explain both the *genesis* and the constant *reproduction* of these ideological and political features of Turkish society.

Historically, the strong and active state that was to accompany the rise of capitalism in Turkey was, first and foremost, a product of the *congenital weakness* of the Turkish bourgeoisie vis-à-vis other classes and class fractions. Its fragility in the face of competition from international imperialist capital and its violent struggles with the other ethnic fractions of the Ottoman bourgeoisie forced it to rely enormously on the former cadres of the old state. Its fear of the subaltern classes resulted in an exclusivist revolution that produced a non-democratic form of state, in the running of which only the ruling classes could participate. Its interpenetration with, and dependence on the political support of, the big landowning classes precluded an agrarian revolution and hampered future bourgeois governments in their dealings with the rural propertied classes.

All of this made the bourgeoisie viscerally dependent on the state and, in particular, on its coercive organ, the armed forces. This dependence and the ensuing absence of political and ideological hegemony was later taken over by the most modern wing of this class, the industrial bourgeoisie.

If this class fraction had recourse to the military enforcement of its interests, both during its rise to domination (1960) and the consolidation of its power (1971 and 1980), this was due both to its continuing weakness and to the feeble tradition of bourgeois hegemony over society. The *absence of an agrarian revolution* during the passage to bourgeois society brought the industrial bourgeoisie face to face with increasingly formidable problems. Caught between the backward rural propertied classes and the working class, it was again and again forced to seek shelter in the rule of the military. This abdication of political authority in exchange for victory over much feared opponents usually cost the bourgeoisie dear by unleashing an uncontrolled dynamic within the specific structures set up by the military. But, addicted to such solutions, the bourgeoisie has been an unrepentant recidivist. In short, the continuing weight of the army in political life is *constantly reproduced by the political impotence of the Turkish bourgeoisie*.

Despite this shared characteristic of the various military interventions of the last three decades, there are radical differences among these episodes, and especially between 1960 and the subsequent ones, which are as important as the similarities. A discourse that imputes these different events to the same superficial motive of the army to restore power to a supposedly independent 'bureaucracy' is the hallmark of a certain reductionism. Each military intervention was the product of a different conjuncture of class struggles and of a different phase of the development of capitalism. The historical significance of each is different, as are their immense political consequences.

The 1960 coup was the product of an urban coalition led by the industrial fraction of the bourgeoisie. A coalition that included such subaltern classes as the working class and the urban petty-bourgeoisie was the background to the introduction of many civil and political rights and liberties into Turkish political life with the advent of the post-1960 system. But the fact that this coalition rose to power only through a military coup left its imprint on the post-1960 system in the form of the quasi-constitutionalised supervision of the military over political life. Hence the contradictory nature of the post-1960 system.

The context of class struggles had changed completely on the eve of the second round. By 1971, the working class was on its way to becoming an independent political force, carrying in its wake the poor peasantry, sections of the urban bourgeoisie and the student movement. This explains the paradox that the big industrial bourgeoisie, the *éminence grise* behind the post-1960 system, tried, only a decade later, to roll back the same system. But the attempt was precocious and it was defeated for reasons already invoked.

It was only in the third round of 1980 that both the contradictions of capital accumulation and class struggles came to a head. The contradictory line-up of forces in 1971, both on the national and international level, was surpassed by the urgent need to find viable solutions for the continued domination of capital in Turkey. The result was a successful repetition of the failed 1971 intervention under changed historical

circumstances. If 1980 was the 'restoration' of anything, it was the restoration of the unchallenged domination of the bourgeoisie over the working masses – a domination that had increasingly been challenged in the two decades preceding the coup.

The radical difference in the historical significance of successive military interventions owes a great deal to the changing relationship between the bourgeoisie and the army as an institution of bourgeois society. With the development of capitalism and the rise to domination of its modern industrial fraction, the bourgeoisie has increasingly been able to mould the ideological and political tendencies of the army to its specific needs. A much emphasised aspect of the symbiosis between the industrial bourgeoisie and the army is the rapid growth, in the 1960s and the 1970s, of a large holding company tied to the military officer corps through the mutual assistance fund of the army. OYAK, as it is called, has now become one of the giants of Turkish industry, with stakes in many branches, even engaged in joint ventures with foreign capital. The ups and downs of capital accumulation were, hence, bitterly experienced by the military staff directly. However, a one-sided emphasis on this feature should be avoided carefully. The close relationship between the two social forces in question owes much more to the rôle of the army as the final guarantor of the survival of bourgeois society – and it is ultimately the massive mobilisation of the working class in the period 1968-1977 that led to the uncritical alignment of the army on the positions of the bourgeoisie.

The fundamentally different nature of the 1980 coup with respect particularly to the 1960 coup comes out all the more strikingly when its implications for the future development of Turkey are considered. This brings us to the heart of our second question: viewed from a long-term perspective, the present period will, in all probability, prove to be a turning point in the history of Turkish capitalism. A turning point with respect to the pattern of capital accumulation: after half a century of accumulation based on the internal market, Turkish capital will now be facing the fierce competition of international markets. Every single aspect of social relations will be profoundly influenced by this new orientation. Most importantly, relations between capital and labour, both on the market for labour power and within the labour process, will be profoundly marked by the new course. A turning point also with respect to the structures of the state, with the demise of the post-1960 system and the rise of a new political framework.

But also a turning point with respect to the relations among the various ruling classes. The former contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the rural propertied classes over the transfer of agricultural surplus to industry is likely to recede to the background, for agriculture and agro-industry are two areas where capital accumulation in the foreseeable future will be concentrated.⁵⁰ In other words, the Turkish big bourgeoisie is itself on the way to becoming an industrial-financial-agricultural bourgeoisie. This will alter the relations between capital and agriculture, and after an initial struggle over domination in agriculture, is

likely to lead to an exacerbation of class differentiation and new forms of class struggle in the countryside.

The relations of Turkish capital with imperialist capital will also be affected. With the new course of accumulation, accompanied by the pacification of the working class and the consolidation of an authoritarian régime, it is not improbable that the flow of foreign productive capital, especially American, should accelerate considerably. There are already signs in this direction, although highly exaggerated by friend and foe alike. The fact that Turkish capital has already penetrated commercially Middle Eastern markets gives it the advantage of being, in the words of the *Wall Street Journal*, 'a stable economic gateway to the Middle East'.⁵¹

Hence, an entirely new line-up of class forces is likely to mark the future of Turkey. This new situation points to the replacement, in the long term, of old contradictions by new ones. Aided by its increasing alliance with imperialist capital, the Turkish big bourgeoisie may be able to move out of the straitjacket of 'capitalism in a single country', but its future fate will be increasingly subordinated to the dictates of the fitful and capricious development of world capitalism. It may finally come to truce with the big landowning classes, but probably at the end of serious struggles over the new setup in the countryside. And the agrarian problem will certainly continue to haunt it by deepening class struggles in the village. But, most important of all, it will have to face, sooner or later, the most fundamental barrier to capital, in all countries and for all times. When the proletariat sheds its temporary quiescence and turns into a living political force again, it may well be the very existence of the mode of production based on capital and the whole social formation that will be on the order of the day.

References

1 To give an idea of the extent of this exodus, it can be pointed out that between 1919 and 1926, some 1.3 million Greeks left what is now Turkey. See J.P. Derriennic, *Le Moyen-Orient au XXe siècle*, Paris, 1980, pp62-63.

2 This fear of the bourgeoisie is what explains the cold-blooded murder of fifteen members of the Communist Party of Turkey, among them its top leaders, upon their passage to Anatolia in early 1921, the subsequent formation of an official communist party manipulated by the Kemalist movement, and the suppression of the only independent peasant organisation, the *Yeşil Ordu*.

3 It is interesting to note the divergent paths taken by Egypt and Turkey during the 1930s. Foreign capital, which had remained indifferent to Turkish overtures during this period, invested in Egypt. See, for instance, P. Clawson, 'The Development of Capitalism in Egypt', *Khamsin* 9, 1981 p89. The difference can be attributed to the fact that while Egypt was still under British domination, Turkey had experienced a long and bitter war and a revolution – which, independent of the intentions of new rulers of the country, discouraged imperialist capital. However, it must be added that it is rather Egypt that seems to be the exception, for Turkey's experience is much more in line with the general pattern of the 1930s, manifested, for instance, in Latin America.

4 See, for example, C. von Braünmühl, 'On the Analysis of the Bourgeois Nation State within the World Market Context', in *State and Capital* J. Holloway/S. Picciotto (eds.), London, 1978, pp171-174. Even in England the state was highly active in the process of primitive accumulation, be it through coercion applied to the new proletariat or the

colonial plunder of foreign peoples. See Marx's discussion of primitive accumulation in the first volume of *Capital*.

5 See M. Capanella, *Economia e stato in Rosa Luxemburg*, Bari, 1977, pp15-84. Also relevant in this context is Trotsky's interpretation of the specific pattern of the development of capitalism in Russia in, among others, *Results and Prospects*.

6 Other countries were to take the same route after the second world war, the prominent example being Nasser's Egypt.

7 Y. Kepenek, *Türkiye Ekonomisi* (The Turkish Economy), Ankara, 1983, p127; Ç. Keyder, *Toplumsal Tarih Çalışmaları* (Studies on Social History), Ankara, 1983, p240; Z.Y. Hershlag, *Turkey: the Challenge of Growth*, 2nd ed., Leiden, 1968, p150.

8 *Ibid*, p138.

9 Y.S. Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisadî Tarihi 1923-1950* (Economic History of the Republican Era), Ankara, 1982, p424.

10 Kepenek, *op cit*, p155.

11 There is a vast economic literature on the subject. For a useful Marxist account in English see A. Lipietz, 'Towards Global Fordism?', *New Left Review*, 132, April-March 1982. See also P. Tissier, 'L'industrialisation dans huit pays asiatiques depuis la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale', *Critiques de l'Economie Politique*, 14, new series, January-March 1981.

12 F. Yağcı, 'Turkish Manufacturing Industry: A General Evaluation', 1981, Unpublished Manuscript, Table 2, p5, and I. El-Zaim, 'The Industrial Patterns of Islamic Countries', Unpublished Manuscript, n.d., p18.

13 Yağcı, *op cit*, p4.

14 Tezel, *op cit*, p100.

15 Kepenek, *op cit*, p175.

16 *Ibid*, p353.

17 *Ibid* and Hershlag, *op cit*, p167.

18 Though protection in Turkey was by no means as exorbitant as latter-day neo-liberals try to make it seem. A single comparison will show that elsewhere protection was strikingly similar. In Brazil, nominal protection in the mid-60s, i.e. before the neo-liberal assault, has been calculated to be 99%. (See B. Balassa, 'Incentive Policies in Brazil', *World Development*, v.7, 1979, p1025.) An estimation of average tariffs in Turkey states that nominal tariffs ranged between 30 and 60 per cent but with various surcharges nominal protection reached 100 per cent (See Yağcı, *op cit*, p16.)

19 Y. Küçük, *Planlama, Kalkınma ve Türkiye* (Planning, Development and Turkey), İstanbul, 1971, pp256-61 and Kepenek, *op cit*, p300.

20 *Ibid*.

21 For an analysis of the working class movement in Turkey and the Kurdish left, see M. Salâh's article in this issue of *Khamsin*. Also, A. Samim, 'The Tragedy of the Turkish Left', *New Left Review*, 126, March-April 1981.

22 I. Bulmuş, 'Türkiye'de Tarımsal Taban Fiyat Politikası ve Etkileri' (Agricultural Support Price Policy in Turkey and its Consequences), *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, Special Issue, 1981, p557.

23 *Ibid*, pp556-57, Tables 3 and 4.

24 Y. Küçük, *Bir Yeni Cumhuriyet İçin* (For a New Republic), İstanbul, 1980, p531; Kepenek, *op cit*, p332.

25 See Bulmuş, *op cit*, pp562-64, Tables 5 to 7.

26 *The Economist*, ('Survey on Turkey'), 12 September 1981, quoted in *News From Turkey* of the Committee for Human Rights and Democracy in Turkey, No.11, July 15-October 30, 1981.

27 Converted, it is true, at the official exchange-rate and therefore somewhat over-estimated, this figure gives nonetheless an idea of the situation in the period 1972-1976. Calculated from OECD, *Turkey*, OECD Economic Surveys, Paris, 1981, p56, Table B.

28 There was, however, a considerable amount of foreign capital inflow before the onset of the Great Depression. See K. Boratav, *Türkiye'de Devletçilik* (Statism in Turkey), İstanbul, 1974, pp41-47; Ç. Keyder, *Dünya Ekonomisi İçinde Türkiye 1923-1929*, Ankara, 1982, pp89-91 (originally published in English as *The Definition of a Peripheral Economy: Turkey 1923-1929*, Cambridge, 1981); Y. Küçük, *Türkiye Üzerine Tezler*, (Theses on Turkey), İstanbul, 1978, pp48-59.

29 In the fifties, approximately 40% of foreign productive capital in Turkey originated from the US, while the West German share was around 10%. The situation was reversed in the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of 1980, US firms had only a share of 11%, while the corresponding figure for West Germany had risen to 33%. The figure for the EEC nine was 62.5%, an absolute majority. (Figures calculated from Kepenek, *op cit*, p141 and Table IX.3, p278.) The same trend was observable for foreign trade.

30 A. Eralp, 'Türkiye'de İzlenen İthal İkameci Kalkınma Stratejisi ve Yabancı Sermaye' (Import Substitutionist Development Strategy in Turkey and Foreign Capital), *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, Special Issue, 1981.

31 For a useful historical survey of Turkey's relations with international finance, see I.C. Schick/E. Tonak, 'International Finance and the Foreign Debt Dimension of Turkey's Economic Crisis', *The Insurgent Sociologist*, v.X, No.3, 1981.

32 Even those 'exemplary' export-led economies cherished by international neo-liberalism, such as South Korea and Brazil, went through this stage for shorter or longer periods. The specialists of the World Bank seem to be confused on the question of whether this stage is necessary or not. While most of them exalt the timeless merits of the so-called export-led growth 'strategy', more serious studies published by the Bank seem to feel obliged to grant, albeit elliptically, the necessity of another 'strategy' at a certain initial stage of industrialisation. For an example of this latter view, see K. Dervis/J. de Melo/S. Robinson, *General Equilibrium Models for Development Policy*, Washington, 1982, p109.

33 Figures from K. Ebiri et al., *Growth and Development of the Turkish Manufacturing Economy*, Ankara, 1979, cited in Yağcı, *op cit*, p14.

34 T. Bulutay, 'Türkiye'nin 1950-1980 Dönemindeki İktisadî Büyümesi Üzerine Düşünceler' (Reflections on the Economic Growth of Turkey in the 1950-1980 Period), *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, Special Issue, 1981.

35 Yağcı, *op cit*, p2, Table 1.

36 OECD, *op cit*, p62, Table H.

37 Kepenek, *op cit*, p273, Table IX.1, and OECD, *op cit*, p67, Table M.

38 From US \$145 million in 1974, short term credits under what was known as 'convertible deposits' rose steeply to \$1 billion in 1975 to reach \$3.1 billion in 1978. See Kepenek, *op cit*, p289.

39 Quite a lot can be learned through an international comparison of those countries which have adopted a similar programme. Most pertinent is the case of various Latin American countries. There is a vast international literature on the question. To cite only the most compact English-language source, see the special issue of *World Development* on 'Economic Stabilisation in Latin America: Political Dimensions', v.8, 1980.

40 Calculated on the basis of OECD, *op cit*, p10, Table 2, and OECD, *Turkey*, OECD Economic Surveys, Paris, 1983, p11, Table 2.

41 See for instance TÜSIAD, *The Turkish Economy 1980*, İstanbul, 1980, which is the annual report of the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, an organisation established during the military intervention of 1971-73 and propagating the most representative views of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

42 Y. Koç, 'Planlı Dönemde İşçi Hareketini Berlirleyen Etkenler' (Determinants of the Workers' Movement during the Planned Period), *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, Special Issue, 1981, p307.

43 See T. Taylan, 'Turkey: NATO's Dictatorship', *International*, v.7, No.2, March 1982.

44 For a detailed analysis of the first year of the military dictatorship, see *ibid*, *passim*.

45 There are differing estimations of the fall in real wages during the period late 1980 to 1983. Figures given by credible sources suggest that real wages are now back to their level of 1962, the year before legislation was passed establishing free collective bargaining and the right to strike (although it should not be forgotten that part of this was due to the considerable fall in real wages between 1978 and 1980). On the other hand, official estimations quoted by many foreign and Turkish bourgeois sources, point to an increase in real net wages in 1981, due to the reduction of the tax burden on wages. This contention exploits a partial view of things: it is based on Social Security sources which detail only daily wages. But it is quite well-known (and the bourgeoisie constantly reproached the unions for this) that a sizeable part of the workers' paybill is made up of benefits in kind, family allowances, social allowances etc. It is precisely these that the Supreme Arbitration Board

cut down massively. Therefore, *overall* real net wages did not increase, but, in all probability, seriously declined even in 1981.

46 See Schick/Tonak, *op cit*, p74.

47 Official capital movements into Turkey leapt from US \$0.9 billion in 1979 to \$2.1 billion in 1980, and stayed between \$1.5-1.8 billion subsequently. See OECD, 1983, p29, Table 12.

48 A single example will show the extent of the bias of new-published statistics. At the beginning of 1982, private investment for 1981 was declared to have *increased* by 0.6%, but later the figure was revised so as to show a *decrease* of . . . 8.8%! Compare OECD, *Turkey*, OECD Economic Surveys, Paris, 1982, Table 2, p10, and OECD, *op cit*, 1983 Table 2, p11. It should be noted that the OECD has used, in this case, the official figures supplied by the Turkish government.

49 Kepenek, *op cit*, p574, Table 21.4b.

50 Witness the OECD: ' . . . Turkey's principal human and natural economic potential is still relatively unexploited. In agriculture, where the majority of the people earn a living, productivity is comparatively low and could be raised through a larger endowment of resources, which hitherto have tended to be concentrated on industry. Turkey could become a considerable exporter of food, notably to the Middle Eastern and North African countries.' OECD 1983, p48.

51 *Wall Street Journal*, April 25, 1983.

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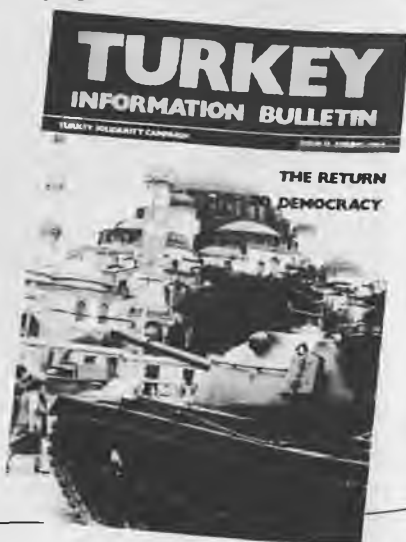
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A Ender

THE ORIGINS & LEGACY OF KEMALISM

THE MILITARY COUP on 12 September 1980 was a turning point in the history of class struggles in Turkey. The working class organisations, the socialist movement and Kurdish national movement suffered a major setback. The ruling classes have set out to consolidate this victory with measures aimed at fundamentally restructuring the state apparatus and the political institutions of the country. Decrees and laws promulgated by the junta during military rule have institutionalised the repression and restrictions of the military regime, extending its effects well into the civilian era. In fact, new laws relating to, for instance, political parties, the right of association, trade unions, censorship, autonomy of the judiciary and universities have so completely strangled the exercise of democratic freedoms and political democracy that a major and long-term struggle will be necessary to regain even those rights which existed prior to the coup.

The regime used the social and political polarisation that prevailed in the country before 12 September, and in particular the threat posed by the strength of the Kurdish left and nationalist movements, to try and justify these measures. In its propaganda the junta consistently emphasised that only a return to the principles of Atatürkism¹ would safeguard the future of the country. In 1981 the 100th anniversary of Mustafa Kemal's birth provided the junta with the welcome opportunity to raise the spectre of Atatürk throughout the country. With the voices of tens and tens of thousands of Turkish and Kurdish revolutionaries stifled in military jails, the media, public and private institutions, schools and universities vibrated unchallenged with the sayings and legends of the 'Eternal Chief'.

Above and beyond anniversary celebrations, the junta has made it mandatory that every sphere of social and political life in the country adhere to Atatürkism. The new constitution states that the 'Turkish Republic is based on Atatürkist principles'. The laws on the formation of political parties stipulate that parties can only operate in the 'light of Atatürk's principles and reforms'. The same approach extends to universities and other institutions and associations. A recent law on Turkish television and radio states that 'all broadcasts should conform to the spirit and principles of Atatürkism', not so easy, given that the majority of programmes on Turkish television are American soap operas!

In brief, Atatürkism is hailed louder than even in the days of Mustafa Kemal's reign. And yet what does this actually mean for the Turkey of today, a country that has given birth to modern classes and become truly integrated into the economic and military web of imperialism? Can Atatürkism, a legacy of the founding period of the Turkish Republic, rising under completely different historical conditions, have a role to play today, especially given that the last forty years have witnessed the conflict between the Kemalist bureaucracy and the developing bourgeoisie vying for political hegemony? To the extent that Kemalism was successful in fulfilling its historical mission of developing capitalism on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, it also became more and more of a hindrance in the eyes of the bourgeois classes. To the extent that the bourgeois classes gained strength and self-confidence they were able to challenge the role of this bureaucracy and its institutions in the running of the country. Is it therefore possible to view the present dictatorship and the role played by the military as representing a new ruling class alliance, with the military bureaucracy at the helm in a way similar to the 1920s and 1930s?

Developments show otherwise. The 12 September coup, coming in the wake of over 30 years of dependent industrialisation and consequent changes in the economic and social organisation of the country, has initiated a process in which for the first time in its history the superstructure of Turkey is being decisively shaped by the big bourgeoisie. The new constitution, legislative and executive processes, taken as a whole, could be said objectively to point to the formation of a new republic. Nevertheless the regime has found it still necessary to seize on Atatürkism, to cling to it in order to cement this transformation and bourgeois rule. This phenomenon itself is a paradoxical one. On the one hand Atatürkism crowns every aspect of legal, political and social life, providing justification for every measure taken by the junta towards establishing an authoritarian and repressive regime. On the other hand, the junta has proceeded with liquidating aspects of the same legacy that threaten to burden the unfettered rule of the big bourgeoisie (e.g. the dissolution of various institutions founded by M. Kemal including the Republican People's Party – much to the dissatisfaction, of course, of the 'true' Kemalists).

In this article we attempt to trace the genesis of Kemalism starting with the National Struggle,² with the aim of clarifying the specific aspects of this legacy that have left their imprint on the political structures and traditions of Turkey.

The National Struggle

THE END OF the First Imperialist World War brought with it the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks had taken power in the wake of the 1908 revolution³ and their sights were set on the East. Their dream was that of re-establishing the Empire on the basis of Pan-Turanism.⁴ They led the Ottoman Empire into war with expansionist plans and fought on multiple fronts on the side of Austro-Hungarian and German imperialism. The Ottoman Empire however was undergoing a process of historical decline. In reality its position within the chain of world capitalism was little more than that of a semi-colony, and this pre-determined in a historical sense the size of its gains even in the event of a victory.

In the First World War the Ottoman Empire together with Tsarist Russia constituted the weakest links in the imperialist chain. These weaknesses, however, showed key differences in the respective countries. The survival of Russian capitalism, a late entrant to the capitalist bandwagon, was threatened in face of the onslaught of a strong proletarian movement. As for the Ottoman Empire, its state apparatus crumbling, its empire breaking up under the impact of nationalist movements and encumbered with the contradictions of its inert and sluggish social formation, it was undergoing the birth pains of its integration into the capitalist chain. The only consolation for the Ottoman ruling classes was that they, unlike their northern neighbour, did not have to face a strong class enemy. This fundamental difference proved sufficient to draw the different 'destinies' of the two weakest sides in the war. While Russia changed its trajectory through a proletarian revolution, in the Ottoman Empire, the ruling classes, in spite of the collapse of their state, would engage in an attempt to save the last fort.

Formation of the ruling class bloc

The monumental losses incurred during the war, (a million casualties and the loss of territories to an extent which meant the dismemberment of the empire) and the decomposition of the central state apparatus signalled the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Following the Armistice⁵ the victorious allied armies occupied most parts of the empire and the administrative apparatus of the state was either disbanded or its effective control broken, and centrifugal tendencies became widespread. On the remaining lands of the empire the propertied classes were left to fend for themselves. It was as a consequence of this situation that the Turkish and Kurdish landlords and propertied classes initiated the organisation of local units that were to become known as 'Defence of Rights Associations'.⁶

The one other social stratum struggling to maintain its very existence under the conditions of the disintegration of the state authority was the traditional Ottoman bureaucracy. With the collapse of the Empire, the position of the once omnipotent Ottoman state bureaucracy as a ruling class was becoming a thing of the past. Henceforth, for it to maintain its

existence would only be possible on the basis of a political alliance with the propertied classes. For the first time an alliance was going to be forged between the state and sections of society outside it. This was concluded on 4 September 1919 at the Congress of Sivas. It was to be known as the Anatolia-Rumelia Defence of Rights Association, bringing together all local defence organisations. Its declared objectives were the defence of territories outlined in the National Pact,⁷ resistance to actions aiming to establish an Armenian or Greek presence on Ottoman lands, and the necessity to defend and save the Islamic Caliphate and Ottoman Sultanate. As in all social-political processes, however, this alliance contained within it the dynamics that would soon transcend these aims and lead to the creation of a new state, abolishing both the Caliphate and Sultanate in the process.

The rise to power of Mustafa Kemal

The crystallisation of the leadership of a political class alliance depends both on the nature of its constituent elements and the historical-social framework in which it takes place. A number of conditions that existed in this stage of decline and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire enabled the bureaucracy and its representative Mustafa Kemal to gain the leadership of the alliance with the propertied classes. Clearly the fact that Mustafa Kemal was the highest ranking Ottoman officer in Anatolia was directly relevant to this, and he was able gradually to consolidate all power in his person. Let us look more closely at the factors that influenced this process.

First, the indigenous Muslim bourgeoisie of the Empire was weak and powerless, and accustomed to maintaining its existence under the auspices of the state; as for the working class, it was still in an embryonic stage of development. This meant that the dynamic classes of modern society were not in a position to shoulder by themselves the cadaver of the rotting empire. None of the propertied classes, including the big landowners who had gained a degree of autonomy during the decline of the Ottoman Empire, could act as a unifying force and provide the leadership required to solve the crisis of the social formation. For the working class, this was even less of a possibility. It is in this process that the main functions of the 'Kemalist bureaucracy' became apparent. The fact that it was the last remaining part of the old state enabled it, at least initially, to play a unifying and harmonising role in the formation of the ruling class alliance.

Also, the existence of an ongoing military conflict was not an unimportant factor in allowing the bureaucracy to play a key role within this alliance, to gain administrative autonomy and eventually to form its leadership. The price the bureaucracy had to pay to establish its leadership in this situation was in fact far from insignificant as is demonstrated by the exceptionally high ratio of fatal casualties of officers to soldiers (1:13) in the National Struggle.⁸

In addition, the fact that within the Ottoman social structure the 'intelligentsia' was composed mainly of the civilian-military bureaucracy

meant that in this phase of re-foundation they were well placed to play an active and functional role. Obviously, traditional aspects of the Ottoman state structure also played a role in enabling the bureaucracy to capture the leadership of this alliance.

The rise of the bureaucracy to a position of leadership within the alliance during the National Struggle in turn allowed Mustafa Kemal to assume power as the representative of this stratum. Within the first Grand National Assembly,⁹ a large part of those participating in the Assembly (including leading figures of the National Struggle) had a perspective for a Constitutional Sultanate. The concept of a republic was not even a topic of debate within the Assembly. At the same time the greater part of the Muslim population did not envisage a state without a Sultan. Nevertheless, given that the Ottoman state was no more than an empty shell, the Assembly had become the sole centre of power. Its self-proclaimed status was that of an assembly with the extraordinary powers of the Ottoman Sultan.

Victory for the Kemalist forces, especially the capture of Izmir, compelled the Allies to sign on 11 October 1922 an armistice with the forces of Mustafa Kemal, and just over two weeks later invitations were sent for a peace conference. The imperialists – who under such circumstances can be quite respectful of international protocol! – invited the Sultan, as representative of the state, to attend the negotiations at Lausanne. This gave Mustafa Kemal, who had already gained supremacy in the ruling class bloc and, as such, in the Assembly during the National Struggle, the opportunity to go into action. He put a motion to the Assembly to ‘abolish the Sultanate and send the Sultan into exile’. Faced with the unfavourable disposition of the commission formed to study the motion, he threatened to have them all arrested. The commission’s report duly recommended acceptance of the motion, and the Assembly, under the shadow of armed guards, proclaimed the dissolution of the Sultanate. In this way, the Ottoman Empire came to an end and was replaced by the new Turkish state under the bonapartist regime of Mustafa Kemal.

From here on developments would follow the logic of bonapartist rule: those who had started out with the aim of saving the Sultanate would substitute themselves for it. On the ruins of the Ottoman Empire and under the shadow of the despotism of the ‘Eternal Chief’, the institutions of a ‘western’ Turkish Republic were gradually built. Nevertheless, no regime rests in mid-air and neither did the personal regime of Mustafa Kemal. The Economic Congress in Izmir, held in February 1923,¹⁰ documents quite clearly that the alliance between the bureaucracy and the propertied classes would (in a historical sense) carry the stamp of the bourgeoisie. The whip may still have been in Mustafa Kemal’s hand, but the bureaucracy had already been harnessed to capitalism’s cart.

The class composition of the political alliance had unmistakably determined its trajectory. While in Russia the worker-peasant alliance was able to intervene with the necessary surgical operation to destroy faltering capitalism, in the other weak link of international capitalism,

the alliance of the propertied classes led by the bureaucracy assumed the role of gardeners for the seeds of capitalism to blossom on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire.

Character of the National Struggle: myth and reality

THE EFFORTS of official ideology to portray the National Struggle as an anti-imperialist liberation struggle have also been pursued – and carried even further – by the Turkish left and labour movements. Only after the military intervention in 1971 did some sections of the Turkish left start to question this. As we have already explained, the class content of the alliance that led the National Struggle and the functions it fulfilled show that such a characterisation is completely unfounded. Although it is not within the scope of this article to give a full class analysis of the National Struggle, it is nevertheless important to see through the prevalent official interpretations. This is especially so given the role that these have played in providing Kemalism with strong ideological weapons and aiding it in establishing itself as a ‘progressive’ and ‘liberating’ movement in the eyes of future generations.

The National Struggle was not anti-imperialist

Throughout the struggle the leaders of the movement paid special attention not to enter into direct conflict with imperialist occupying forces, and set their aim as ‘the struggle to prevent Greeks and Armenians establishing themselves in the country’. Trade concessions to imperialist countries were drawn up during the National Struggle and in the Izmir Economic Congress an open invitation was made to foreign capital. The very limited flow of foreign capital following the founding of the Republic had nothing to do with ‘the anti-imperialist policies of Kemalism’, but was simply the result of the international crisis of capitalism, and the fact that Turkey did not constitute at the time a high priority for imperialist interests. Can one seriously consider as anti-imperialist a struggle that obtains the right to raise its custom duties five years after independence (1929), continues to pay its debts to imperialist countries for 28 years (up to 1951), and obtains the right to found a central bank only through an agreement made with a foreign-owned bank and applicable six years later? To characterise such a struggle as anti-imperialist is only possible for those who equate anti-imperialism with xenophobia, that is through the spectacles of the bourgeoisie, not those of proletarian internationalists.

The National Struggle was not a ‘popular movement’

The participation of the population in the struggle was extremely low. The National Struggle has been quite correctly referred to as ‘an officers’ war’ in many a war memoir. The fact that losses in the National Struggle waged against the so-called Great Powers amounted to only 9000 killed, was not the product of military genius, but a simple indication of the

limited scale of the conflict staged mainly against the Greek army (with the Allied forces declaring their neutrality in 1921) and internal revolts. Moreover, recruitment into the regular army from a population exhausted and weary from long years of war was rarely voluntary, and in many parts of the country could only be achieved through coercion. The few popular militias that were formed, mainly on the Aegean coast, to defend against the occupying Greek army, were eventually smashed by the regular forces of Mustafa Kemal.

Neither was the National Struggle a national liberation struggle

The objective of the struggle was not to free the lands on which Turks lived from foreign dominance, and establish 'the right to self-determination' for the Turkish nation. On the contrary, the National Struggle led to the establishment of a state based on the remaining territories of the Ottoman Empire, especially on the annexation of a section of Kurdistan, also of parts of Armenia and lands inhabited by Greeks and Arabs, and in which Turks were organised as the oppressor nation. The fact that the projected national frontiers could extend from Turkish Kurdistan to Greek islands in the Aegean Sea, and from Mosul to Armenia¹¹ was an open manifestation of this. To characterise a movement that establishes domination over other nations as a 'national liberation' movement can only be the viewpoint of the chauvinists of the oppressor nation.

Taking all these points into account, the National Struggle emerges as the struggle to uphold the continuation of the Ottoman Empire which, having participated in the imperialist war with expectations of conquests, nevertheless came out defeated. Under conditions that made it historically impossible for this continuation to be maintained on the old basis, and owing to the lack of a proletarian alternative, the National Struggle formed a transitional phase to the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The Turkish Republic emerging at the end of this period of transition was based on the share of territories apportioned to the defeated Ottoman state following the deals reached by the victorious countries in view of both the balance of forces among them and the existence of nationalist forces in Anatolia. It institutionalised the alliance between the Turkish propertied classes (and the Kurdish propertied classes opting to side with them) and the vestiges of the Ottoman state bureaucracy, the Kemalist bureaucracy. It affirmed the annexation of northern Kurdistan and the organisation of the Turks as the dominant nation in a re-founded bourgeois state expressing a new process of articulation with imperialism.

The consolidation of the Kemalist dictatorship

Kemalism and Bonapartism

We have already described the regime that emerged from the National Struggle as a bonapartist regime. Let us now attempt to outline which aspects of the Kemalist dictatorship most resembled those of bonapartism

and also which particular aspects were effective in shaping the foundations of the Turkish Republic. The Kemalist dictatorship appears to be based on a bourgeois democratic constitution and a parliament, but it was at the same time a personal regime that transcends these, was structured above them and shaped them as and when required. It had the appearance of being independent of social classes (the rhetoric of 'representing the people in its entirety'), nevertheless it represented the historical interests of the bourgeoisie.

It did not allow any political activity to take place outside itself and severely repressed such attempts, no matter from which quarter they originated (just as the left and workers' movement was suppressed, so was 'bourgeois opposition' as with the short-lived Progressive Party and the Free Party).¹² Society was organised from top to bottom under the control of a political structure formed mainly by the bureaucratic apparatus of the state.

The Kemalist dictatorship had at the same time, however, aspects which distinguish it from classic and modern bonapartism. First, it was the Kemalist bureaucracy's specific position within the process of the National Struggle and the tradition it had inherited from the Asiatic-despotic nature of the Ottoman Empire that established the basis for its appropriation of power in a bonapartist way.

Secondly, the Kemalist bureaucracy did not develop its bonapartism within an existing state, but on the contrary it achieved the creation of a new state in a bonapartist manner. Finally, the class relations that enabled the establishment of the Kemalist dictatorship showed singular features. For a start, neither the working class, the bourgeoisie or the pre-capitalist propertied classes carried sufficient social weight to allow them on their own or in alliance to take political power. The Kemalist bureaucracy did not gain its autonomy by taking advantage at a critical stage of either an unresolvable equilibrium in the class struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie, or of a conflict of interest within the ruling classes.

These characteristics differentiate the Kemalist dictatorship from bonapartist regimes. For the same reasons the Kemalist dictatorship was a relatively stable regime and had a high degree of freedom of movement, both nationally and internationally, compared to regimes of a similar nature.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to explain the maintenance of the Kemalist dictatorship for a quarter of a century by the continued existence of the conditions that gave rise to it. On the contrary, although the Kemalist dictatorship did not create the conditions for its existence, it did create the institutions necessary for its continuation, and furthermore these institutions were integrated and coincided with the institutions of the state. This phenomenon was the most important factor enabling the bonapartist regime to gain a relatively stable and permanent character.

The integration of the state with the Republican Peoples Party

In spite of the very specific conditions under which Mustafa Kemal's rise to power took place, the bonapartist regime did not rest automatically on solid foundations within the state apparatus. To this end a whole series of manoeuvres and new institutions would become necessary.

First, differences that existed from the very beginning in the Assembly had become further polarised following the abolition of the Sultanate. Key leaders in the army were in opposition, and for Mustafa Kemal to protect his position the influence of leading figures of the National Struggle had to be broken. In addition, the active support of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie of Istanbul had not yet been won.

These problems were to be resolved in the period leading to the enactment of the draconian Law for Maintenance of Public Order (March 1925).¹³ Mustafa Kemal started by converting the so-called First Group¹⁴ in the Assembly into a political entity. One month after the abolition of the Sultanate he announced that a People's Party would be formed and proceeded with a tour of Anatolia to organise this party. The Izmir Economic Congress that took place soon after secured him the support of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne represented a significant political victory for his leadership and his 'team'. Thus, the First Group obtained an absolute majority in the second Grand National Assembly, and then transformed itself into the Republican People's Party (RPP) on 11 August 1923, all the deputies of the Assembly joining the party. (None of the Second Group candidates had been elected to the Assembly.)

The next step in liquidating the opposition from the state apparatus would be the 'cleansing of the army'. With a law enacted on 19 December 1923, stipulating 'the incompatibility of holding both military and parliamentary office', Mustafa Kemal forced his opponents in the army to make a choice, while at the same time paying attention that commanders close to him remained in the army. With key figures in the army choosing to enter parliament the army came under the full control of Mustafa Kemal.¹⁵ Following this, the provisions of the Law for Maintenance of Public Order backed by the ruthless Independence Tribunals¹⁶ were utilised to silence the Progressive Republican Party formed by former RPP deputies and remnants of the old Committee for Union and Progress. Finally the uncovering of an assassination attempt on the life of Mustafa Kemal was successfully exploited to try leading members of the National Struggle, driving them permanently from the political arena.¹⁷ In this way, a one-party bonapartist regime was conclusively established.

Throughout this process, Mustafa Kemal had aimed to bring to the fore among the cadre that led the National Struggle those belonging to the First Group, that is his own team, thereby appropriating as a whole the heritage of the National Struggle. In fact, the initial differentiation within the Assembly between the First and Second Group was not an expression of a polarisation on fundamental issues: partisans of the Sultanate and Caliphate were present within the First Group just as

republicans were present within the Second Group. Also, the fact that the main oppositions that emerged following the Republic sprang from within the RPP, that is the continuation of the First Group, demonstrates that the original conflict was not between two politically homogeneous groupings. Nevertheless, by removing a good many important personalities of the National Struggle outside its political heritage, Mustafa Kemal gained a great degree of freedom in strengthening his dictatorship. Moreover, the identification of Mustafa Kemal and the RPP with the National Struggle would become an important ideological asset for the bonapartist regime.

For the duration of the one-party regime the RPP became the mainstay of the state apparatus and parliament, its constitution and apparatus proving to be the lever through which bonapartism, rising above the Republic's constitution and its laws, was institutionalised. Members of parliament were no more than civil servants appointed by the RPP. The degree of integration between the state and party is well illustrated by the fact that the president of the Party and that of the Republic were one and the same person.

Similarly the influence of the RPP on the formation of the Republic is clearly seen in a number of areas. For instance, the 1921 Constitution is a replica of the second section of Mustafa Kemal's 'Popular Programme' which can be said to be the main programmatic document of the First Group. Similarly, changes brought to this constitution (the 1924 Constitution) were drawn from political positions formulated in the texts of Mustafa Kemal and the RPP. Finally the famous 'six arrows' of the RPP were introduced into the Constitution in 1937 as representing 'the fundamental characteristics of the Turkish state'.¹⁸

The bonapartist dictatorship did not rest solely on the integration of the RPP with the state mechanism, however, and the strength of its brutal repressive apparatus. Again through the RPP and a form of 'populism' it was in search of social support. More exactly, it felt the necessity to consolidate its hegemony over society by gaining the support of certain layers of the population. The series of reforms carried in the Young Turk spirit of 'for the people, in spite of the people' must be seen in this context.

These reforms had a twofold purpose: that of consolidating the position of the Kemalist bureaucracy in wielding state power, and strengthening Turkey's integration within the capitalist world through a process of 'westernisation'. They were nevertheless successful in tying a number of social layers to Kemalism on a long term basis. As an outcome of the reforms the Ottoman elite was superseded by a new type of intelligentsia. The reforms had created a new 'service sector' which provided the 'Kemalist intelligentsia' with a livelihood and drew them through self-interest into supporting the regime. The creation of a social layer with a degree of authority and influence over the masses (and as a consequence privileges), in turn provided bonapartism with a social base extending into various sections of society. To summarise, for the bonapartist regime the combination of repression and bureaucratic methods

and the search for popular support constituted the dominant line of the period. In both fields the RPP acted as the principal mediator.

Bonapartism and the ruling class bloc

The formation and evolution of the ruling class bloc in Turkey was undoubtedly shaped by the dominance of a bonapartist regime in the founding phase of the Turkish Republic. Similarly, the functions of parliament and political parties were shaped in the light of the relationship between the character of the regime and the ruling class bloc.

We have already described how the nucleus of the ruling class bloc came about and how the Assembly became the place where this alliance was concretised. The first Assembly included representatives of various sections of the propertied classes and large sectors of the Ottoman state bureaucracy; it was empowered with both legislative and executive powers. In this sense, the First Assembly represented a relatively 'free' alliance of the ruling classes. However, following Mustafa Kemal's 'coup' in the Assembly this situation rapidly changed, and the ruling classes had to submit to the bonapartist regime (especially after the experience of the Progressive Party). On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal could not totally remove the Assembly and form a purely military police dictatorship.

In reality, the bonapartist dictatorship, in spite of its strength within the state apparatus and its apparent power, was never a 'popular' leadership supported by large masses. Attempts to gain popular support, mentioned earlier, remained limited as a result of their bureaucratic character. Moreover, the fact that the National Struggle had begun with a tradition of 'being led by an assembly', made it difficult for the bureaucracy, lacking social support, to dispense with it altogether. On the contrary, an assembly whose composition was determined by Mustafa Kemal made it possible for the regime to become established in a relatively stable way.

As for the ruling classes, there were a number of reasons that led them to accept this regime. Besides the weakness of the ruling classes common to backward countries and causing political structures to tend towards bonapartist or semi-bonapartist regimes, there were also specific conditions that strengthened this tendency. First, the propertied classes were not, either separately or jointly, in a position to create a political leadership capable of fighting for power. Secondly, under conditions where even the primitive accumulation of capital was extremely low, it was not possible for the propertied classes (given their historically conflicting interests) to form a stable platform of political alliances (that is after the tasks of the National Struggle were accomplished). It was not possible for the very limited social surplus to have been equitably shared between different sections of the ruling classes on the basis of a 'free' platform of compromise.

• Thirdly, the fundamental problems facing the country (heavy foreign debt, an inadequate infrastructure, antiquated public services) would have necessitated the intervention of the state even for the most liberal

economic policies. Under these conditions, and especially with the threat posed by the Kurdish national question and a yet undefeated working class (weak but nevertheless undefeated), the propertied classes had no alternative but to look towards a Bonaparte. Having once submitted to the rule of bonapartism, however, the ruling classes can not avoid restrictions being placed on their freedom of movement. This is what occurred in Turkey; having accepted under the bonapartist regime the dominance of the state bureaucracy, the bourgeoisie also had to accept the arbitrary actions of this bureaucracy and its quest for material privileges, recognising of course their own interests in a historical sense were being protected. This situation also determined the formation of the newly developing propertied classes. The new rich, the businessmen, those who moved into key positions of the economy, were to a large extent bureaucrats. Nevertheless one should not see a one-way relation here; just as bureaucrats were becoming bourgeois, the propertied classes moved into the bureaucracy (it is sufficient to recall the 'Kurdish' big landlords who became lifelong members of the Assembly) and the re-composition of the ruling classes of Turkey took place in this process of reciprocal transposition.

Kemalism and the policy of 'Etatism'

The first years of the Republic are generally referred to as the 'liberal period'. The emphasis was on developing the private sector, and state interventions were relied upon mainly to safeguard this development. The Izmir Economic Congress, the adoption of the Swiss Civil Law, the German Commercial Law, the act for the 'Promotion of Industry', the founding of İş Bankası (Work-Bank), the Industry and Metal Bank etc., were all steps aimed at basing the society firmly on bourgeois foundations.

By the end of the 1920s, however, the failure of the liberal economic policies being applied had become clearly visible. The inadequacy of the initial level of capital accumulation, the shortcomings of the infrastructure, the lack of foreign capital, and also the fact that the 'young' Turkish ruling classes could still find avenues to make a 'quick profit', all these factors had led the economy to an impasse. The great crash of 1929 was another factor that exacerbated the crisis. With the onset of the world economic crisis, the equilibrium between Turkey and imperialism and the feeble links formed up till then, suffered a major setback.

Turkey, whose economy was based on agricultural exports, with imports limited to consumer goods, saw a serious reduction in its exports, while its imports came to a standstill. Under these conditions, the only option remaining was for the state to step in. The alternative to seeing the economy plunge further into crisis was to create new factories that would overcome the dislocation of the economy. The effective intervention of the state in the economy had become imperative for the continuation of the class alliance. Above all it was necessary for the state to become a customer for the produce of the big landowners and to be able to provide them with certain goods. In brief, 'Etatism', arose as a direct response to a

crisis and not out of some given 'principles' of Kemalism. Later on when these pressures disappeared, it was in turn given up.

Nevertheless, the effects of étatist policies carried beyond the realm of economics, into that of ideology. The left in Turkey has generally been led to associate the differentiation between private and public sectors as that between capitalism and socialism. When something passes into the public sector and becomes state property, it is assumed to have been 'broken away from capitalism'. Yet, basically nationalisations made without any change in the class character of the state are only aimed at overcoming the periodic blockages that arise in the system of exploitation. The difference in a capitalist society between the 'private sector' and the 'public sector' is a distinction internal to capitalism. Nor is it possible to view the period of étatism in Turkey under a different light.

The entry of the state into the area of industrial investments had the effect of strengthening even more the position of the bureaucracy within the ruling class bloc. Just as the bonapartist regime was a factor that facilitated the transition to étatist policies, so was this move in itself a prop for the bonapartism of Mustafa Kemal. In the wake of a general feeling of social discontent, demonstrated in the popularity of the short-lived Free Party (1930), it provided the regime with strong support. Also, the fact that after the death of Mustafa Kemal, that is the disappearance of the Bonaparte, the regime could continue under the leadership of the 'National Chief' İsmet İnönü must be explained by this phenomenon. For İnönü, who had always remained in the background, suddenly to substitute himself in the place of Mustafa Kemal (to the extent of replacing Mustafa Kemal's picture on the bank notes with his own) was only possible because of the high degree of autonomy and strength the bureaucracy had gained within the ruling class bloc; that is, under conditions where the state apparatus had become an indispensable element in the running of the economy. Undoubtedly, the start of the Second World War and the establishment of martial law were further factors that helped the National Chief to maintain his position.

Throughout the bonapartist period the policies of étatism were directed at stimulating the private sector, and during this period which coincides with the structural crisis of imperialism, the efforts to create a 'national' merchant and industrial bourgeoisie proved to be significantly successful. The country witnessed the enrichment of the Turkish bourgeoisie and the primitive accumulation of capital through the official or covert support provided by the state. The war years especially were characterised by speculation, blackmarketing, hoarding, forced labour, reduction of wages, and the increase of the working day to 11 hours. The purchase of the produce of big landowners was subsidised by the state through higher taxes and non-Muslim minorities were divested of their wealth in favour of the Turkish bourgeoisie by a 'Capital Tax' in 1942. The fruits of this period are succinctly expressed in the heading of a daily paper (*Akşam*) on 10 September 1946 announcing that '2000 millionaire families are born in Turkey'.

The working class under Kemalism

The fact that the Turkish workers' movement had not participated in the National Struggle as an independent political movement would have serious consequences in shaping its traditions. In the epoch of proletarian revolutions, for the working class not to have had an active political role in the collapse of a state and in the subsequent process of foundation of a new state, and moreover for this process to have been presented as a 'national liberation war' was a factor that would severely obstruct its political development.

In spite of its weakness, the working class had in the years leading to the formation of the Republic created numerous class organisations, especially in the major towns. Significant were the close links that existed between the trade unions and the political movements. The approach of the Kemalist dictatorship, although cautious at first, would be to totally crush the workers' movement and the communist movement. This strategy progressed in a contradictory way; by promising labour reforms and creating new official labour organisations the aim was to break the workers' movement from the communists, while at the same time the workers' movement was repressed violently and bloodily at every opportunity.¹⁹

There was also a direct link between the suppression of the workers movement and the left during the first phases of the Republic, and the repression of the Kurdish national movement. Starting with the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925 the Republic witnessed successive waves of Kurdish revolts. The Kemalist dictatorship resorted to ruthless measures to repress these. Yet the Turkish 'communist' movement and the Comintern would give open support to the government and condemn the Kurdish movement in the words of the Kemalists as 'an attempt at restoration by Turkish reaction in collusion with British imperialism'.²⁰ This stand marked the Turkish left and workers' movement with the stamp of chauvinism from the very beginning. Neither did the support given from the 'left' to the repression of the Kurdish national movement provide the communist and the working class movement with any relief. Disarmed through supporting the government's war on the Kurds, it would in turn be repressed severely while the Comintern had to be consoled with a Turkish-Soviet friendship agreement. It would take 40 years for the Turkish working class to recover from this defeat.

There is one other point that has to be mentioned in relation to the position of the working class under the Kemalist regime. The foundations of a labour policy that would blossom only after 1946 were first established in this period. Towards the end of the 1920s when the strategy to crush the workers' movement had succeeded, and under conditions of high unemployment and widespread impoverishment caused by the world economic crisis, the Kemalist dictatorship set out to create fake labour organisations so as to establish control over the class. An American team of experts visiting Turkey at this time drew attention in their report to the 'advantages of forming labour organisations under the auspices of the government'. Similarly the Labour Law enacted in 1936

was aimed at the establishment of a trade union practice under the tutelage of the government. However, these projects had to be shelved with the onset of the war. They were taken up again after the war, eventually leading to the formation of the Turkish Trade Union Confederation (Türk-İş)—the largest union body in Turkey whose leadership has always remained unconditionally faithful to the state power that set it up, providing the ruling classes with enormous freedom of movement. As such, the violent repression of the workers movement on the one hand and attempts to create a controlled trade union movement on the other would become the twin bases for the labour policies of successive governments.

The annexation of Kurdistan and the oppression of the Kurdish nation

THE ROLE which the repression of the Kurdish nation and the annexation of North Kurdistan played in the formation and evolution of Turkey cannot be stressed too strongly. These in fact determine the specificity of the Turkish social formation. Kurdistan and the oppression of the Kurdish nation are subjects whose analysis is outside the scope of this article; here we will limit ourselves to assessing their role and effect in shaping the Turkish state and its official ideology.

Annexation

The political alliance of the Kemalist leadership with a section of the Kurdish propertied classes during the National Struggle had given this struggle an appearance of a 'joint Turkish-Kurdish' struggle. Nevertheless, even during the National Struggle, the tendency of Kurds to struggle for an autonomous Kurdistan, most clearly expressed in the rebellion at Koçgiri and the subsequent repression of these movements, provide us with indications of the reality behind this appearance.²¹ The official line during the National Struggle was to emphasise 'the brotherhood of Turks and Kurds', the 'inseparability of Turks and Kurds' and that 'the Assembly represents Turks and Kurds together'. This was necessary for the Kemalists in view of their alliance with the Kurdish propertied classes, and also to enable them to draw the Kurdish masses into supporting the National Struggle. The fact that the Sèvres Treaty, signed by the Sultan's Government on 19 August 1920, had already made provisions for an autonomous Kurdistan made this issue even more sensitive.

By the end of the National Struggle however, the balance of forces had changed sufficiently to allow the Turkish Republic outright annexation of North Kurdistan. Similarly, with 'victory' obtained, and following Mustafa Kemal's declaration to the Assembly on 1 November 1922 that 'the state that has been founded is a Turkish state', and especially following the Lausanne Treaty, this terminology with respect to the Kurds would end. It would be replaced by the consistent denial and denigration of the Kurdish nation.

A section of the Kurdish propertied classes which had contributed

to the oppression of their own nation for the sake of 'Turkish-Kurdish brotherhood' would adapt to the new situation and declare themselves Turkish, condemning the word Kurd as 'a debasing adjective'. On the other hand a smaller, more 'honest' section (which included Sheikh-Said) would change sides and choose to align with their own nation. Nevertheless, for the Kurdish nation, once betrayed within its own ranks, it would not be possible to recover from the defeats in Koçgiri and Lausanne on the strength of the return of some of the traitors. Starting with the Sheikh-Said revolt in 1925 and ending with the Ağrı Rebellion in 1936 all the Kurdish uprisings would be crushed by the government. The support which the Kemalist leadership had obtained from the Kurdish propertied classes during the National Struggle had proved to be crucial in the oppression of the Kurdish nation following the foundation of the Republic.

The effects of annexation on the state and dominant ideology

The annexation of North Kurdistan, and the dismemberment of Kurdistan within the frontiers of four different states, did not only result in the obvious oppression of the Kurdish nation, but also became an important element in imperialism's status quo in the region, as well as shaping each of the oppressor nation-states' formation. Starting with the Treaty of Lausanne, the common thread in a series of pacts—the Saadabat Pact (1937) followed by the Baghdad Pact (1955 and then CENTO (1959)—and bilateral agreements in the region has been anti-communist and anti-Kurdish policies. Many examples can be given of the co-operation of the oppressor nations in the Middle East on this question. The readjustment of frontiers in 1936 between Iran and Turkey so as to enable the Turkish forces easy access to the Kurdish rebellion at Ağrı, the joint bombardment by Iraqi-Turkish-Iranian planes of Kurds trying to escape into the Soviet Union following the crushing of the Mahabat Republic in 1946, the joint Iranian-Iraqi operation in 1956 to crush the revolt in Iran, The Turkish government's silence when Iraqi planes bombed Kurdish villages in Turkey (Hakari) and of course more recently Turkey's military foray into Iraq against the peshmergas in June 1983. Consequently, the problems posed by the division and annexation of Kurdistan are central to the struggle of the working class of each of the oppressor nations against the central state apparatus, as well as to the international revolutionary movement.

For the Turkish state, the Kurdish question is inseparable from that of territorial conquests of the National Struggle and the integrity of the Republic. It is part of the 'defence of the fatherland', of national frontiers, and, as such, a question of national security. If one takes into account the role of the army in the National Struggle, the tradition inherited from the Ottomans, and factors such as the geopolitical position of Turkey, the basis of the Turkish state's militarist character can be understood. The decision to hold on to an army of half a million men, and shoulder the crippling costs this entails, is due to necessities born of this situation. This phenomenon at the same time determines the army's role in the

political arena, as a function of its position within the Turkish state. For these reasons, the Kurdish question has been central in unifying the army and the state and impressing a common platform on all the forces of order irrespective of their other differences. It has been fundamental in determining the Turkish state's militarist and authoritarian character from its very inception.

Another area in which the act of annexation has had an important effect is that of the dominant ideology. Although nationalism and chauvinism constitute in general an important aspect of bourgeois ideology, in Turkey, due to the foundation of the state on the basis of the oppression of the Kurdish nation it carries a specific meaning. The existence in Turkey of a sizeable proportion of the population (approximately 20 per cent) conscious of their Kurdish origins, and yet a dominant ideology built on the total denial of this reality, has meant that this glaring contradiction and irrationality had to be covered up through a sustained cultural offensive against the Kurdish people.

A whole history, including that of the National Struggle, had to be rewritten to fit with the denial of the Kurdish nation. Following the defeats of the Kurdish rebellions, all Kurdish sources of reference were destroyed, the use of the words Kurd and Kurdistan banned, publication in Kurdish prohibited, and spoken Kurdish penalised. With the 'Forced Residency Act' of 1930, Kurds were driven from their homeland and spread throughout Turkey. The 'Turkish History Thesis' put forward by Mustafa Kemal in 1932 expounded farcical concepts, attributing to the Turkish race the origins of all civilisations and relegating Kurds to a Turkic tribe whose Turkish had been deformed through living in the mountains (the 'mountain-Turk' syndrome!). All these measures in themselves are confirmations of the irrationality of the official ideology. Here once again, in the context of Turkey, one can see in its starkest form the link between dominant ideology and the repressive apparatus of the state, and the fact that ideology can only be made dominant with the assistance of the repressive arm of the state.

Kemalism in perspective

THE KEMALIST dictatorship, as the bonapartism of the formative years of the Turkish Republic, was able to shape all the state institutions and establish itself as a tradition in the political life of Turkey. But this tradition was neither a revolutionary one nor did it represent a rupture with its Ottoman roots. It is true that the Republic gave rise to a neo-colonial bourgeois state and over a period of 50 years paved the way to the development of modern classes and Turkey's close articulation to imperialism. Nevertheless, only by situating this evolution in its historical context and looking at the totality of relations engendered by this process of re-foundation can one gain a true assessment of the character of Kemalism.

Attempts to modernise or 'westernise' the Ottoman Empire had a long history even before the foundation of the Republic. Most visible were

the measures implemented in the second half of the nineteenth century, starting with the Reform Bill of 1856, the adoption of a new Legal Code (1858), a Commercial Code (1862) and followed by the proclamation of a Parliamentary Constitution (1876). The Young Turk revolution of 1908 restored the 1876 Constitution and recalled Parliament with the aim of modernising the state and establishing a national economy. With 1908 came an era of increased social and political activity: trade unions and left organisations proliferated in an atmosphere of relatively free parliamentary politics and diminished censorship; strikes spread throughout the country and women were for the first time allowed into schools and universities. However, the Young Turks were quick to relinquish their banner of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity'. After an attempt by the reigning Sultan Abdülhamit to overthrow parliament, the Committee for Union and Progress would move towards the establishment of a one-party dictatorship, gradually putting an end to the liberalisation of society while at the same time providing Turkish nationalism with its first power base; the fruits of which would become tragically apparent with the onset of the First World War.

The Kemalists' view of political democracy never went further than that of the Young Turks. The National Assembly acting as the platform for the ruling class alliance was maintained through bureaucratic mechanisms and never gained popular support. A leader of the Turkish Communist Party, and supporter of the Kemalist government, complains in 1924 that 'our revolutionary government who aim to increase the participation of our people in the running of the state still rely on laws promulgated half a century ago during the time of Mithat Paşa for elections to the National Assembly',²² referring to the two-tier election procedure in use. The state of things in this sphere would only get worse. By 1925 existing workers' organisations and associations were banned and strict censorship applied. In 1927, Mustafa Kemal in complete control assumed the absolute power to select the candidates for the Assembly. In fact general suffrage would never be realised during the life of the dictatorship. The Turkish Republic would live until 1946 a dark period reminiscent of the despotism of Abdülhamit.

It is against this background of total repression that Kemalist reforms took place. The Ottoman tithes on the land was removed in 1926, primarily as a concession to the landed notables after the Kurdish revolt had erupted so as to ensure their support in what was going to prove the largest military conflict in the history of the Turkish Republic.²³ The Kemalists never attempted a land reform. On the contrary the adoption of the Swiss legal code served the big landowners to consolidate their ownership of land and the constitution further guaranteed this. Statistics show that land holdings did not show any significant change during the one-party regime compared to that which existed before the Republic, except for those lands expropriated from the Armenians and Greeks.²⁴

As for the 'étatist' measures undertaken by the regime after 1930 and hailed ever since by the Kemalists as one of the basic principles and a

revolutionary feature of Kemalism, we have already attempted to show that these policies were brought about by the necessity of the moment – given the depth of the world economic crisis at the time and the weakness of Turkish capital. Mustafa Kemal's position on this question is perhaps best illustrated in the words of his closest associate İsmet İnönü: 'Atatürk from the very beginning sided with private enterprise and applied this principle until his death.'²⁵

Perhaps the most radical move that can be attributed to Mustafa Kemal was the abolition of the Caliphate followed by the removal from the Constitution in 1928 of an article stipulating Islam as the state religion, and finally the introduction in 1937 of the principle of secularism into the Constitution. We must however stress that Kemalist secularism never developed a critique of religion and its role in society. During the National Struggle moves towards secularism that had started previously were reversed and religious propaganda employed to the utmost. 'Islam nationalism' was integrated into Turkish nationalism as a means of subjugating the non-Turkish Muslim minorities, while at the same time one and a quarter million Greeks were removed from Anatolia in the population exchange with Greece.

Having abolished the Sultanate, however, it was also imperative for Mustafa Kemal to disestablish Islam in the running of the country. It must be remembered that in the Ottoman Empire Islam constituted the main cultural and social force that bonded the Muslim population into a cohesive entity and the concentration of both state and religious authority was expressed in the person of the Sultan who automatically assumed the role of Caliph. Under Kemal's bonapartist dictatorship there was no question of allowing the clergy to play its traditional and prominent role. Especially under conditions where political freedoms were totally suppressed and the Kemalist bureaucracy isolated, there was always the danger that opposition to the regime would find its voice in the clergy. The clergy had to be deprived of its status and social weight, and this became the leitmotif in a number of measures and reforms instigated by Mustafa Kemal.

The various measures and reforms introduced by Mustafa Kemal have passed into Turkish literature and history as the 'Kemalist revolutions'. These include the adoption of the Latin script, the purification of the language, the reform(!) in head-gear (preventing the wearing of the fez), the replacement of the Islamic Friday with the western week end, the right to vote for women (1935), and the adoption of a modern Civil Code based on that of the Swiss.

However, the 'Kemalist revolutions' were realised under conditions where the masses were completely deprived of the means of expressing themselves, the workers' movement repressed and the Kurdish national movement defeated. It is not therefore surprising to find that the reforms did not find any significant popular approval and support. This in turn left the Kemalist bureaucracy, the elite of the Republic, as the sole defender and carrier of the 'Kemalist revolutions', distancing and isolating it from the popular masses and encouraging it to rely on ever increasingly

authoritarian and bureaucratic forms of government. This situation had implications also for the army. To the degree that a political regime is not able to establish ideological and political hegemony over society the army always becomes its main support. Similarly, in Turkey, the application of the 'revolutions' decreed in a bureaucratic manner could only be realised by the existence of a strong army (i.e. a repressive apparatus), and in this way the army became the mainstay of the 'Kemalist revolutions'. Seeing itself as the creator and guardian of these 'revolutions' became the tradition of the Turkish Army from its very inception.

In brief, Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s witnessed Kemalism in action. This became synonymous with the introduction of institutions associated with the bourgeois revolutions in the west on the one hand, while on the other hand with the blow struck against the working classes and Kurdish national aspirations, Kemalism became the main obstacle to their emancipation.

Postscript

KEMALISM, AS a political regime, left the scene of history together with the disappearance of the historical and social conditions that gave rise to it and the death of Mustafa Kemal. This is clearly visible in that even İnönü's 'National Chief' dictatorship that followed could only be sustained by the special conditions that existed for the duration of the Second World War.

The political materialisation of Kemalist ideology and tradition had become possible under conditions where none of the fundamental classes of bourgeois society had reached decisive strength, thereby allowing the petty bourgeoisie or more correctly the state bureaucracy, to intervene in the political arena as a substitute for the ruling class. Kemalism, however, in a paradoxical way was burdened with the mission of undoing the basis on which it rested. By catering for the development of capitalism and bourgeois society it also cleared the way for the political power it held to be used by its true owners.

The 1960 coup of the young officers represented the final blows in this process. It expressed the dissatisfaction of an army finding itself increasingly relegated from its traditional role and stature within the political establishment – mainly as a result of the introduction of a 'popular' dimension to the political life of the 1950s. In the 1960s the expansion of capitalism in Turkey accelerated, a strong industrial sector and bourgeoisie developed with a corresponding growth of the proletariat, both classes making their social weight increasingly felt in the political sphere. By the time the next military intervention took place in 1971 its character had already changed. The generals were no longer acting as the followers of the Kemalist tradition but as the direct representatives of the industrial bourgeoisie. In fact it would be the followers of this tradition themselves who were going to be eliminated by the military.

As for the coup in 1980 its character became completely transparent. The phraseology and hundredth anniversary speeches of the generals

could not even pretend to hide the fact that the regime of the National Security Council represented the most direct form of government the industrial bourgeoisie and finance capital had ever experienced in the history of Turkey. The 1980 coup distinguished itself from the 1960 coup as its negation, and from that in 1971 by achieving what it was not able to.

With 12 September 1980 a new period has opened in the history of class struggles of Turkey. A period in which the political structures of the country are being shaped for the first time by the big bourgeoisie. In this sense 12 September represents the true genesis of bourgeois rule, and the military dictatorship took it upon itself to destroy all vestiges of autonomous petty bourgeois political influence including that of Kemalism. What remains of Kemalism in Turkey today, apart from the nostalgia of a small section of the intelligentsia and the rhetoric of the junta, are its anti-communist, anti-Kurdish and authoritarian features which have completely fused with bourgeois ideology and bourgeois rule.

Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge an unpublished work, 'The National Struggle and the evolution of the key elements of the Turkish social-formation' (1978), as having formed the main reference to the arguments put forward in this article.

References

- 1 Mustafa Kemal took the surname Atatürk in 1934 dropping the name Mustafa, following a new law stipulating the adoption of surnames. Atatürk literally means Father of the Turks or Father Turk. The establishment has preferred to use the term Atatürkism instead of Kemalism after the latter had been given a radical connotation by the Turkish left. Mustafa Kemal was also titled the 'Eternal Chief' after 1930.
- 2 The period from 1919 up to the proclamation of the Turkish Republic on 29 October 1923 is generally referred to as the National Struggle, the War of Independence or the War of Liberation. In this article we have chosen to use the term National Struggle in preference to the others as it was the term originally employed.
- 3 The Young Turks or The Committee of Union and Progress were the force behind the '1908 Revolution' which re-established the constitution. Although they initially remained in the background, based in Salonika, after Abdülhamit's complicity in the brief counter-revolution of April 1909 they exiled him and formed the government. In the first parliament of 288 deputies that convened in Istanbul there were 147 Turks, 60 Arabs, 27 Albanians, 26 Greeks, 14 Armenians, 10 Slavs and 4 Jews.
- 4 Pan-Turanism projected a future Turkish nation consisting of Turkish speaking Muslims only, and spreading into the 'Turanian' peoples of Asia. Ziya Gökalp, the leading proponent of Pan-Turanism, became the chief theoretician of the Committee of Union and Progress after joining its government in 1909. The military exponent of Pan-Turanism, Enver Paşa, led the Eastern campaign during the First World War, escaped to Germany after the defeat in the war, attended the Baku Congress (amid protests from delegates) and headed an unsuccessful revolt against the Soviets at the end of which he was killed by the Red Army in Bukhara on August 1922.
- 5 With the Mudros Armistice of 30 October 1918 the Ottoman State acknowledged defeat. The Dardanelles and Bosphorous were opened to the British fleet and occupation by the Allies of important strategic points was accepted. The armistice also required the

demobilisation of the Ottoman Army and the surrender of arms, but these were never fully enforced.

6 Defence of Rights Associations were formed especially in areas threatened with the return of Armenians and Greeks. They were based on the notables, merchants, clergy, etc, of the locality and often coincided with the former cells of the Committee of Union and Progress.

7 The National Pact was formulated in the Congress of Sivas and accepted by the Ottoman Parliament in Istanbul on 17 February 1920. It is given as an appendix in *Atatürk: The Rebirth of a Nation*, by Lord Kinross, London, 1964.

8 S. Selek, *The Anatolian Revolution* (in Turkish), p111, Istanbul 1981.

9 On March 18, 1920 Allied forces occupied Istanbul and arrested the deputies of the Ottoman Parliament. The next day M. Kemal called in the name of the Anatolian-Rumelia Defence of Rights Association executive for an extraordinary assembly to meet in Ankara. The first Grand National Assembly convened on 23 April 1920. Its deputies were made up of members of the Defence of Rights Association but the procedure of election/selection to the Assembly is not well documented.

10 The Economic Congress held at Izmir after the Armistice was aimed to obtain the confidence of the Istanbul bourgeoisie which had remained outside the National Struggle in Anatolia. It drew up an 'economic pact' representing a series of compromises between the commercial bourgeoisie and the big landowners, with the bureaucracy acting as the arbitrators and vested with the responsibility of implementing its proposals. See S. Yerasimos, *Turquie: Le processus d'un sous-développement* (University of Paris, also Istanbul 1974).

11 For the Turco-Armenian war and ensuing peace see *Armenia*, by C.J. Walker, London 1980.

12 The Progressive Party was formed on 17 November 1924 by deputies who had resigned from the Republican People's Party. It was led by Kazım Karabekir and Cebesoy, both leading figures of the National Struggle. It was banned on 5 June 1925 following the introduction of the Law for Maintenance of Public Order. The Free Party had an even shorter life. It was founded on the instructions of Mustafa Kemal by his close associate Fethi Okyar on 12 August 1930. M. Kemal had thought of it as an intra-Assembly opposition party, but the new party proved to be embarrassingly popular commanding mass receptions on its visits outside parliament. Fethi Okyar dissolved the party on 17 November of the same year with a letter to M. Kemal in which he explained that the party threatened to 'come face to face with M. Kemal on the political arena'.

13 The Kurdish Rebellion led by Sheikh Said started on 13 February 1925 after a skirmish with the gendarmerie when ten of his men refused to surrender. The Law for the Maintenance of Public Order was introduced on 6 March 1925 giving the government the right to forbid and suppress any organisation and any publication which might encourage 'reaction and rebellion'. The law was enforced through Independence Tribunals and these proved completely successful in stamping out all opposition, however meagre, to the government.

14 The First Group (also known as the Anatolia-Rumelia Defence of Rights Group) was formed on 10 May 1921 to allow its members to function as a disciplined party within the Assembly. From its inception it governed a majority in the Assembly. According to F.W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite* (Cambridge, Mass. 1965) out of the 437 deputies in the First Grand National Assembly 197 belonged to the First Group and 118 to the Second Group—in M. Tuncay, *The Formation of One-Party Rule in the Republic of Turkey (1923-1931)* (in Turkish), Ankara 1981.

15 Kazım Karabekir, Cebesoy and Ali Fuat resigned from the army choosing to remain in the Assembly while Fevzi Çakmak and others remained in the army on the request of M. Kemal.

16 The Independence Tribunals were first formed in the National Struggle. During the period 1920-22 they sentenced approximately 47,000 people, 1054 of whom were executed; in E. Aybars, *The Independence Tribunals* (in Turkish), Ankara 1975. These Tribunals were revived after the Kurdish rebellion of 1925. After the defeat of Sheikh-Said they sentenced him and some of his followers to death. They also sentenced a large number of Progressive Party and CUP members in the period of the Law for the Maintenance of Public Order; the number of executions totalling 660, see M. Tuncay, *op cit*.

17 On 15 June 1926, an assassination attempt on the life of M. Kemal was uncovered in

Izmir. The Independence Tribunal proceeded with the arrest of 28 deputies from the Progressive Party which had been banned the previous week. Included in the list of deputies were the leading names of the National Struggle; Kazım Karabekir, Ali Fuat, Rauf Orbay, Adnan, etc. The trial was then expanded to include all the remaining influential personalities from the CUP. A long list of executions followed the trials (S. Selek, *op cit*).

18 These principles were first formulated in the 4th Congress (1935) of the RPP (the 1st Congress was taken to be the Congress at Sivas!). This was explained by the RPP General Secretary: 'The main features of the Party; those of *Republicanism, Nationalism, Populism, Revolutionism, Etatism and Secularism* have with the acceptance of the new programme become the features of the new Turkish state. These principles were included in the second article of the Constitution in 1937. E. Congar, *Atatürk* (in Turkish), p305.

19 The left and workers' organisations were confronted with severe repression during 1923 and 1924. For instance in 1924 the leaders of the Workers Progress union were arrested for May Day activities and the union was reorganised(!) by the police as the Istanbul Workers Support Fund. At the same time a Labour Law was presented to the Assembly that guaranteed the right of collective bargaining, the right to form unions and the right to strike. This never materialised, except that in 1925 one day's unpaid leave was provided with a law on the working week. For a comprehensive study and documentation on the left and workers' movement in this period see: M. Tuncay, *Left Currents in Turkey (1908-1925)* (in Turkish), Ankara 1978.

20 Aydınlık, *The Kurdish National Question in the Comintern* (in Turkish), Istanbul. Although the left did not understand the nature of the Kurdish revolt, the same can not be said for the Kemalists. At the end of the Sheikh Said trial, Mazhar Müfit, presiding over the Eastern Independence Tribunal summed up with the following words: 'Although some of you manipulated a social stratum for personal profit and some of you were guided by foreign provocation and political ambitions, all of you marched towards a single objective: the establishment of an Independent Kurdistan'. In B. Cemal, *The Sheikh Said Revolt* (in Turkish), Istanbul 1955.

21 *Koçgiri - Popular Movements (1919-1921)* (in Turkish), Ankara 1975.

22 S.H. Keymer, *Classes in Turkey* (in Turkish), p282, Ankara p75. Mithat Paşa was a skilled Ottoman administrator and reformer. He is considered to be the architect of the 1876 Constitution. Exiled by Abdülhamit before the parliament met in the same year.

23 'Turkey decreed a partial mobilisation and sent the bulk of its armed forces, 80,000 men, into the region'. Kendal, in *People Without a Country* (London 1980). Kendal's article gives an enlightening and comprehensive account of the relationship between Kemalism and the oppression of the Kurdish nation. A.C. Lou indicates military losses of 15-20,000 men in *Kurdistan and the Kurds* (London, 1965) referred to in M. Tuncay, *The Formation*...

24 S. Yerasimos, *op cit*.

25 E. Kongar, *op cit*.

Pembenaz Yorgun

**THE WOMEN'S QUESTION &
DIFFICULTIES OF FEMINISM
IN TURKEY**

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THIS ARTICLE deals with various paradoxes concerning the condition of women in Turkey.¹ The main paradox is this: while women in Turkey are deeply oppressed they do not, as might be expected, adopt feminism as the emancipatory ideology to help them in their struggle against oppression. Far from it. In spite of the high degree of oppression, and also as a consequence of this, most Turkish women accept their material conditions of life, and feminism, until quite recently, was a despised, ridiculed and rejected ideology – even among women.

On the other hand, Turkey is well known as one of the few under-developed Islamic countries where what is commonly called a 'women's revolution' took place. This was carried out by a small 'revolutionary group' gathered around Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the leader of the national independence war and the founder of the Turkish republic.

The centralised bureaucratic Ottoman state governed a multi-national society which had become, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a semi-colonised periphery of rapidly developing capitalist Europe.² Kemal and his associates, representing a section of the state bureaucracy, in alliance with the slowly developing merchant bourgeoisie, aspired to modernising the old, traditional society through drastic reforms. These reforms pertained mainly to the organisation of the state and its ideology, in order to change the dominant values and norms which legitimised the old political regime. A republican state form replaced the monarchy, its legitimacy based on the theory of national sovereignty. This new secular ideology replaced the theocratic legitimacy based on the 'Shariat' or Islamic law. In 1923 and 1924 respectively, legal decisions abolished the Sultanate and the Caliphate. Other reforms aimed at secularising

different state apparatuses (education) as well as some aspects of social life (clothing regulations forbidding women to wear the charshaf and the veil) followed. In 1926, a new civil code adopted from the Swiss replaced the old religious one, the 'Majalla'.

From this conscious effort to make a 'bourgeois revolution' from the top, women benefited particularly as a social category. Women were the most oppressed social group under Islamic law, therefore its dismissal and replacement by secular institutions ameliorated women's legal status immensely. The old system did not recognise women as full legal persons. Juridically she was a minor, her testimony equivalent to half that of a man. She did not enjoy equal rights within matrimony. Men could legally marry more than one wife, the right to divorce belonged only to men, and women had a diminished legal position concerning children, inheritance and property rights. Yet matrimonial relationships had a critical importance for women, as marriage and family life was the only acceptable form of sociability for women.

Ottoman society was segregated, women were not allowed to participate in social life.³ Within the timid modernisation process that started after the Tanzimat in the mid-nineteenth century, some measures were taken in favour of women. Primary schools started to admit girls in separate classes in the 1850s, secondary schools were opened to girls in the late nineteenth century and women were admitted to higher education after 1918.⁴ But of course only very few women, from the upper middle classes and living in large cities, enjoyed these rights and only a handful of these became practising 'professionals' before Kemal's 'women's revolution' from the top.⁵ This revolution promising women full participation in social life and establishing a new juridical system that recognised a quasi-egalitarian status for men and women, was an important progressive step. Turkey was the first Islamic country to realise this sort of transition to a secular state and remains the most successful example of this transition. These drastic changes, however, were not enough to modify the material conditions of life for the great majority of women who sixty years after the foundation of the republic still experience a very deep oppression.

Feminism is the latest western ideology to have entered Turkey. It is too early to talk about a feminist movement and extremely hazardous to try and analyse its social basis, strength, organisation, strategies and impact. At this stage, it seems more relevant to analyse the historical reasons why the arrival of feminism was so delayed, in spite of the fact that the material conditions of life for women are more oppressive here than in many western countries. I shall attempt to explain this in the third section of this article.

It is important to note another paradoxical situation. Feminism makes its first steps as a political movement in particularly unfavourable circumstances. The military regime forbids formal political struggle and so feminists have refrained from creating any formal organisation. Economic conditions are equally unfavourable, the burgeoning economic crisis with unemployment close to 20 per cent does not permit us to hope that women's working conditions will improve in the years to come. The history of western feminism shows that democracy and economic

prosperity are critical pre-conditions for the development of a women's movement. At an earlier stage of feminist struggle, suffragettes were active in the most developed and democratic societies of the age, the USA, Britain and France, and the rapidly developing German feminist movement in both its 'bourgeois' and 'socialist' forms died after the Nazis came to power in 1933.⁶ The new feminism, the women's liberation movement, developed in the late 1960s and 1970s, mainly in highly industrialised western countries where large numbers of working class and middle class women were participating in the workforce.⁷

To evaluate the prospects of development of a feminist movement in Turkey in the 1980s, I should like to describe first the oppression of Turkish women. I hope this will show the objective basis for a feminist movement in Turkey and its potential for growth, as well as some structural limits which might hinder its development. Then I shall more specifically examine the political participation of women in Turkey in order to show that party politics has been out of the reach of women in the past and to argue that in the future feminist women have to find other types of organisation to fight for their emancipation. In the final part of the paper I shall analyse some of the ideological difficulties that the new feminism confronts in the present circumstances.

Some dimensions of women's oppression in Turkey

AS TURKEY is still a semi-industrialised and underdeveloped country where a majority of the population is living in the countryside and working in agriculture, women's oppression takes varied forms, but in each their oppression is deeper than the oppression and exploitation of women in western countries. Here women are oppressed in every aspect of their lives in such a way that women's oppression is not only relative, compared to men, but a situation of total oppression which I will call 'absolute' oppression. It is a condition different in nature from the oppression of western women.

Women are oppressed physically by their working conditions which are far harder than those of western women. Their legal status, apparently the most 'egalitarian' aspect of their general condition needs important revisions in the light of recent changes in western countries, where the women's liberation movement has been rather successful in precipitating 'legal' equalities. Women's share in the use of political power is nil and, last but not least, their cultural and moral oppression is much deeper and well interiorised by women themselves.

In illustrating these different dimensions of women's oppression I shall be selective.⁸ The first and deepest form of oppression is the physical violence to which the female body is subjected. Physical violence takes different forms: beating and rape are very common in Turkey and the more one goes into rural areas and the subordinate classes, the more it becomes an ordinary and daily practice. And yet one important trait of this oppression is that neither rape nor beating are seen as undeniable signs of women's oppression. Evidence of this is the rarity of legal cases as well as the lack of systematic data and research done on the subject.

Legally, wife beating is a reason for divorce. But Turkey has a very low divorce rate, even by the standards of a developing country. In 1976, the crude divorce rate was 0.35 per 1000 population, one of the lowest rates to be found among Islamic mediterranean countries.⁹ This means that although beating is prevalent, battered women do not divorce or sue their husbands.

The same lack of 'evidence' is true of violation and rape, which is also very widespread. This problem is generally seen as related to the concept of 'honour', which is a central value in traditional Turkish culture.¹⁰ Honour refers to a man's reputation as determined by the chastity of the women of his family. The behaviour of a man's wife, unmarried daughter or sister may bring a taint to his honour in which case punishment is called for. One important implication of this value is that men control the sexuality of 'their' women. Virginity of a young, unmarried girl is the proof of her chastity and adultery for a married woman is widely considered as the most unchaste behaviour. A presumed transgression by a woman may lead easily to a 'crime of honour' in which the guilty male offender and perhaps the guilty women are both killed.¹¹ As this widely interiorised value recognises only man's honour, public consciousness is entirely insensitive to the situation of the violated woman. So much so that if the violator marries the violated girl, it is believed that there is no matter of dishonour and no legal case is constituted against him.¹²

A second dimension of physical oppression is related to child-bearing. Turkey's population growth rate is about 3% per year. In spite of the family planning policy adopted by the state in 1965, a recent fertility survey showed clearly that women were not able to control their fertility as they wished. Among married women aged 45-49, the mean number of children ever-born was 6.3 (for women of all fertile ages this mean was 3.9) and within this same age group, women giving birth to more than 7 children was 45%. On the other hand, nearly 90% of women stated that they desired 2, 3 and at most 4 children. Therefore a majority of women who have more than 3 living children had desired less children than they actually have, 57% of currently married women said that they wanted no more children, and among those who were asked whether they wanted another child at the time of their last pregnancy 38% said no.¹³

This oppression as well is related to deep rooted cultural values rather than the economic rationality of an agricultural society. According to the well established norms and values concerning family and children, women's role is to give birth to as many children as possible. Motherhood is the highest status for a woman and the more children she has the higher her value and status. This traditional culture is more widespread in rural areas where children fulfil an economically important function as unpaid household helps and constitute practically the only means of social security for the old age of the agricultural workers.¹⁴ As giving birth to a male child is more valuable from this point of view, women usually continue to have children until they have at least one boy, and if a woman fails to give birth to a boy, her husband is believed to be free to take legitimately a second or third wife, in spite of the fact that polygamy

was officially abolished by the adoption of the civil code.

Another set of impediments concerning the high number of children born to women in Turkey relates to the unavailability of modern contraceptives and to the fact that, until recently, abortion was illegal. Until March 1983, when a modification was made in the law, women, as well as those who helped them, faced severe penalties for abortion. In spite of this, as modern means of birth control were not easily available to the female (or male) population, especially in rural areas, women were forced to have abortions. Research done has shown that this is very common: more than 200,000 women have induced miscarriages each year with about 50,000 casualties (death or infirmity). 70 per cent of married women over 44 years of age have had recourse to abortion one or more times during their fertile life.¹⁵ Recourse to abortion was more widespread among women living in urban areas, but the rural majority used traditional means which increased casualties dramatically.

The new law which makes abortion legal under specific circumstances is prepared entirely from the point of view of population control. It legalises abortion within ten weeks of pregnancy, for health, social or psychological reasons if both husband and wife agree. It is too early to say whether this law will be applied extensively and will have any practical consequences diminishing women's oppression. On the one hand an important proportion of doctors are known to be opposed to abortion for either moral or financial reasons (abortions in state hospitals and clinics will be free of charge according to the law). On the other hand, the clause requiring the common agreement among husband and wife will be an impediment. It is not uncommon to read in daily newspapers that women who try to use contraceptives without the approval of their husbands are beaten savagely. The recent law has the characteristic ambiguity of giving a right to women with one hand and limiting that right by protecting traditional male supremacy with the other.

The second critical dimension of women's oppression concerns the working conditions of Turkish women. As a result of Turkey's being a semi-industrialised country, women's participation in the work force is low compared to more industrialised countries and diminishes in the process of industrialisation. In 1975, women's share in the total workforce was 35.7 per cent and this was 5.4 percentage points lower than their rate of participation in 1955 (43.1%).

Economic oppression of women has different aspects. The first mainly concerns women living in the urban sector. In non-agricultural sectors, women's rate of participation in the workforce has remained a stable 10 per cent since the 1950s. This is an exceedingly low percentage compared to industrialised countries.¹⁶ These women, who form a small 'privileged' minority among the female population of active age, are more exploited compared to men of the same position but, as they are in general working for a wage, they are less oppressed compared to the great majority of the female population. Women working as wage labourers in capitalist enterprises and the state bureaucracy face all the problems of women who occupy (in greater numbers) similar positions in developed

capitalist countries: namely they work in low paid jobs, requiring less experience in the extra-domestic economy; they are the last to be given a job and the first to be fired when there is a recession (despite the fact that male wages are on average 30 per cent higher than their female counterparts). When women lose their jobs they are not even considered 'unemployed' in official statistics, as they are supposed to return to their 'normal' status as 'housewives'.

This situation is explained both by the functioning of the capitalist economy and deep-rooted traditional values, concerning women's work. Indeed, according to the latter, a woman's normal workplace is the household, and this belief is shared extensively by working women themselves.¹⁷ Therefore when women of lower and middle classes work, mainly out of economic necessity, they themselves as well as society as a whole consider their wage as merely a subsidiary element of the family budget. Therefore their work is not perceived as a material basis for their economic independence.

The second aspect of the oppressive nature of women's work is related to the fact that housework and childcare are seen as solely women's responsibility. Traditional culture based on a traditional sexual division of labour is widespread, including among the most modernised, highly educated, urban sectors of the society. Even among apparently open-minded, radical intellectuals, the recent change of moeurs introduced through the women's liberation movement in the West, the understanding that domestic labour is shared, is unknown and the idea regarded with sarcasm and scepticism.

We should also underline the fact that the institutional framework for child-care is much less developed than in advanced countries and that at home women enjoy much less of the help of modern machinery for housework. In rural areas, it is still quite common for women to bake their daily bread, and in many urban families who could find industrially produced consumer goods on the market it is traditional to prepare jams, tomato sauce and the like at home. As a result, the housewife's total working hours greatly exceed those of an average European women, and for the small minority who work for a wage in the extra-domestic economy these are even longer and more tiring.¹⁸

Another aspect of the oppressive nature of work conditions derives from the fact that the majority of the economically active women work in agriculture. Most of them are 'unpaid family helps' who not only work on the land in addition to working in the house (where they have a lot of children to take care of and machinery is rare) but also they earn nothing. In spite of the fact they *are* actively working in the economy, their particular mode of involvement through the family household determines that these women are the most oppressed and dependent. They depend entirely on the family and the male for their living as the property belongs largely to the husband. In 1975, 88.4 per cent of economically active women were working in agriculture and 90.6 per cent of these were in the position of 'unpaid family helps'.¹⁹

In sum, women's oppression in Turkey is determined by economic

structures. On the whole, their lives are determined by their submission to the family institution and even in the exceptional case where they work in the extra-domestic economy, the work is not sufficient to gain economic independence.

It is this submission to the family institution which constitutes the material basis of women's oppression in Turkey. While the traditional extended family tends to disappear even in the rural areas, as a result of economic and social changes since the 1950s two structural elements of this type of family have remained intact within the nuclear family which is replacing it: the family is based upon extremely rigid sex roles and for women the family is the central locus of social relationships. This is the reason why marriage is quasi-universal among women in urban as well as rural areas. Only 1 per cent of urban women and 1-2 per cent in western, relatively more developed regions never marry, the divorce rate is low and marriage is relatively early. 90 per cent or more of women aged 25-29 are married and the mean age of marriage for women over 30 is around 17.6 years.²⁰

Submission of women to the family and within it to men's authority is maintained through an extremely deep-rooted culture of male domination. The language reflects this clearly. A small survey of about 17,000 proverbs and idioms showed that of 300 expressions (1.7 per cent) related to women, their role, status, assumed character and so forth, nearly all had a negative connotation.²¹ Women were despised for their incapacity to do anything worthwhile and their unreliability on such matters of honour. Two different sources of this extremely male culture are Islam and the ancient hero-based non-religious culture which worships the male as soldier.²²

Womens legal status and political participation

COMPARED TO the harsh reality of oppression Turkish women suffer in economic and cultural life mediated through the family, the legal and even political status enjoyed by women seems more egalitarian.

Their legal status especially, when regarded historically, represents real progress. As I have already mentioned, women did not have the status of legal persons under Ottoman rule. After the establishment of the Ottoman state and especially after the conquest of Byzantium which brought the Ottomans in touch with the slave structures of the Byzantine Empire, women's status had changed drastically. The harem was an institution that crystallised what Engels calls women's 'domestic slavery'.²³ Islam, which was relatively progressive at its beginning became, especially after the sixteenth century with the theocratic transformation of the Ottoman state, the principal ideological medium maintaining this domestic slavery. According to the new interpretation of religious dogma, women did not have a legal existence equal to men.

With the adoption of the new civil code in 1926, women suddenly became the legal equals of men in such domains as the 'law of persons' and 'family law'. Yet the new law had its limitations. As was the case for women in the bourgeois societies of the age, the principal limitation

pertained to the right to work. Women's general status was always considered within the framework of the marriage institution, and as the head of the family was always the husband and the law required that the wife obey the will of the head of the family, a woman needed her husband's approval in order to work (Articles 151 and 152).²⁴

In terms of political power, we should mention from the beginning that here women are in the most ambiguous situation. From one point of view one is inclined to see politics as one of the aspects of social life – similar to the legal system – where women have full equality, from another point of view, politics is that aspect of life that reflects the oppression of women in Turkish society in its 'purest' form. Let me try to explain this ambiguity. Turkish women acquired equal political rights quite early. They first obtained them at the level of local politics, then at national level in 1931 and 1934 respectively. This was prior to French women and at a time when German women had lost their rights already. Also, at that time, the parliamentary or Congressional representation of both British and American women was very low. In fact, Turkish women's representation in parliament from 1935 to 1946 was among the highest of any country: the number of women representatives was 18, 15 and 16 (4.5%, 3.7% 3.7%) respectively in the three chambers that were elected in that period.²⁵

But after 1946, the date of the transition to a multi-party democracy in Turkey, women's representation dropped suddenly to an average of less than 1% until 1980, and there were never more than 11 women (8 deputies and 3 senators were elected in 1965) at one time in parliament.

The number of women dropped so suddenly and so definitely because their representation under the one party regime was artificially enlarged for symbolic reasons.²⁶ Under a competitive party system they could not hope to have more seats than they actually had.²⁷

In the whole period from 1935 to 1980, there were only two women members of cabinet. One of them served as the Minister of Health in an 'extraordinary' government (that is, one formed during a military regime) for 11 months in 1971, and the other belonged, as the Minister of Culture to another extraordinary government in 1974 that never obtained a vote of confidence from the National Assembly.²⁸

Most of this handful of women were highly educated professionals. During the 'Republican period', the authoritarian one-party regime established the rule that politics was the affair of the elite (including women belonging to that elite). Within this elitist mode of representation, a few women, who were the 'elite of the elite' sharing practically nothing in common with the female population of the country, were either nominated or elected to office.

Clearly women never have had an important share of political power in Turkey. Moreover, the 69 women deputies to have served from 1935 to 1980 were all backbenchers. Women also played a very limited role in political parties for this entire period; no more than 10 per cent of party members were women, and women who did play a relatively active role in political parties were the representatives of special 'women's branches'.

After the military coup of 12 September 1980, women's political position worsened. In the Consultative Assembly which was appointed by the military to prepare the new constitution and the legislation concerning political parties and the new electoral law, there were only three women members. The new constitution, adopted by referendum on 7 November 1982, stipulates that henceforth political parties will not have youth or women's sections, just as they are forbidden from having organised links with trade unions or other grass roots organisations.

It is quite clear from the data presented about the participation patterns of women in politics until 1980 and from the new 'rules of the game' that women, the most oppressed section of Turkish society, will not be able to change their social status through party politics.

Particular difficulties feminism confronts in Turkey

FEMINISM OLD and new has a long history. It is interesting to note that the Ottoman Empire felt the need to reform some of its basic institutions like the army and the bureaucracy under pressure from the industrialising West at a time when feminism was making its entry into history. Selim III, the first reformist Sultan was contemporary with the great French revolution. But the aim of the reformist Sultans as well as other modernisers was to modify some state apparatuses in order to keep intact the social order of the Empire. Even after the Tanzimat, social change was very slow in coming and women's status as well as family life which determined women's place in society were unaffected by the reforms of the state. The new Republic inherited these basic structures and in spite of the much vaunted 'women's revolution' made by Kemal and his associates, women's status did not change qualitatively – as I tried to show above.

One important consequence of this situation is that feminism, as an ideology, had a very limited impact on Turkish society during all of its modern history. One exception to this is the brief period of the 1908 Revolution (the first attempt at a bourgeois revolution 'from above') when some of the women and men gathered around the Union and Progress Party defended publicly for the first time feminist principles. These first defenders of feminism were from bourgeois backgrounds, they lived in great towns like Istanbul and Salonica, they were highly educated, and most of them were the daughters and sisters of influential intellectuals of the age.²⁹

After the first world war during the period of the occupation of Istanbul, there were a few mass meetings, organised in order to protest the peace conditions, in which some prominent women participated. One of these, Halide Edip was a well known writer and the founder of the first feminist organisation. She was the first muslim woman to address the crowds. Yet her feminism was rather peculiar as she saw the family institution and marriage as the most important guarantee that women had in their lives and she, as well as other feminists, fought for modifications of the marriage law in order to limit polygamy and the right of husbands to divorce their wives without indemnity.

During the war of Independence the participation in public life of women from different sections of the society went further and some of them joined in the war effort, not only through taking jobs that men had left during the war but also as combatants, at least in the beginning, when the war had the character of guerrilla fighting. After the war, however, they returned home. In a sense, Turkish women lived for the first time what would become the experience of Algerian women and, later, Vietnamese women.

They returned home to the age of Kemalist reforms. As mentioned previously the adoption of the civil code in 1926 meant a drastic change in women's status. But this reform as well as others (such as the educational reform that gave equal rights to women at every level of education, and the abolition of the Caliphate which opened the way to reform of costume banning the veil and the charshaf while ending the religious basis of the social structure) had this important particularity: they were made by the small Kemalist minority without consent or consultation from women. This was perhaps the most clear example of 'state feminism' in history.³⁰

As the state assumed the responsibility of realising the reforms that would drastically change women's lives, women themselves did not move. This would establish the pattern for women's relation to the state in the new republican era. Feminists of this period—some of them are still alive and in their early seventies—became Kemalists, in fact more Kemalist than feminist.³¹

For these women, who founded the classical women's organisations such as the 'Turkish Mothers Union' or the 'Union of Soroptimists' and the 'Union of Women University Graduates', if the feminism of Kemalism had failed it was because after 1950, counter-revolutionary elites had taken power. In their analysis, the Democrat Party which came to office in 1950 made undue concessions to religion and traditional values and if there have been some setbacks in the ongoing process of women's emancipation, it is because of this attempt to return to the old system.

In my view, this analysis is not only short-sighted but fundamentally wrong. Kemalism was bound to fail to bring about women's emancipation because it attempted to bring change only formally (eg through laws guaranteeing equality between the sexes and the adoption of a legal framework in which women had equality in education,) but it did not make any effort to change real social relations; more than that, Kemalism discouraged women from searching for their own emancipation.³²

The next historically relevant stage for feminism in Turkey was the late 1960s. The constitution of 1961 created a rather liberal framework for political struggle. Young intellectuals turned their eyes to the West once more and eagerly studied 'new' ideologies of socialism and Marxism. One discovered the realities of Turkey for the first time in this period through the mediation of these ideologies and schools of thought. One discovered that Turkey was an underdeveloped peripheral capitalist country, that it needed planning for its industrial development and so

forth. Towards the end of the decade, the 1968 effervescence in many countries which started with protests against the war in Vietnam stimulated especially the student movement to new ideologies. Nearly all new (and old) ideologies had their representatives in the Turkish student movement of the late 1960s except one: feminism. Women were active in student movements but were deprived of their own ideology. These political groups which had profound differences of analysis as to general revolutionary strategy were united on one strategically important matter: there was a 'holy alliance' on the dismissal of feminism.

There was not a conspiracy of any sort here. What is more interesting is the fact that feminism seemed 'irrelevant'. Most of the young revolutionaries thought that women were the equals of men (as the Kemalists pretended) and that any marginal discrepancies of status, especially in the more backward regions of the country, would be ended by socialist transformation. Therefore women should fight for socialism which would bring their emancipation. They did not see the need for women to organise around their own particular oppression.

This approach remained valid in the following period (1973-1980) where different socialist groups started to form their own women's sections, following in that the classical bourgeois party type organisation.³³ Among these various movements which started to wage political war on one another, the best-organised was the IKD (Progressive Women's Organisation) a branch of the illegal pro-Soviet Communist Party (TKP). They could gather 50,000 women at a 'Rally Against Fascism' and their monthly publication sold 20,000 copies. Yet this was an anti-feminist movement, as one can guess from its organic relation to the TKP; their ultimate aim was to mobilise women around such issues as 'Motherhood', 'Women Against Fascism' and 'Women for Peace', and enlarge the basis of the party. Once more women were deprived of their own voice in a period where each ethnic or other 'minority' group had its own particular organisation or journal around which it could gather.

Ironically, the first time in Turkish history when feminist women were able to speak out their revolt in their own name, was in the period following the military coup of September 1980 which put an end to all political struggle in the country. This political conjuncture limits severely women's ability to organise and publish a journal of their own. But, paradoxically this is the first time when feminist women are gathering to form small 'consciousness raising groups', in order to understand the dimensions of oppression under which they have lived throughout the entire Republican era – to limit us only to the modern era – and to write about it modestly. They had, for a certain period, one page in a weekly journal *Somut*.

The women who are gathered around this new publication and who may possibly form the leadership of the 'likely to be' feminist movement are in their early thirties; they are educated and from a wide range of professions: doctors, sociologists, lawyers, architects, secretaries, teachers, economists. Most of them are married but they do not have the same concept of the family as their predecessors at the turn of the

century. Most of them are reluctant to have children, though some of them have. They are conscious about the difficulties of being a feminist in this society; they try to transform first their own individual lives, and most of them are unsuccessful, despite the fact that they are generally married to men that they have met in student movements, school or work circles, ie the most 'openminded and progressive men' that they could find in Turkish society. Among them unmarried women as well as those who are unwilling to get married are quite exceptional, they think generally that an unmarried woman is more vulnerable than a feminist woman who is married.³⁴ They get married to have the guarantee of being a 'protected' woman. They need this status very badly.

One of the most critical of the many difficulties confronting feminism in Turkey is the ideologically hostile environment in which feminists are starting their combat. This environment is made up of different components. One of these is the Ottoman legacy which though latent is still very effective. This legacy has its religious and non-religious elements. The non-religious traditionalists as well as the islamic fundamentalists share the idea that women's search for independence is doomed to failure because it is against the natural order of society which recognises for women an 'honourable' role: to procreate. The second opposition comes from Kemalists who think that the Kemalist Republic has done most of what can be done for women through legal reforms. Women should therefore be content with what they have and, if there is any need to ameliorate women's condition, the state will do it better, without any necessity for women to organise themselves. The current military regime adopts entirely this attitude.³⁵

The third and most aggressive opposition comes from the 'socialist left'. Whatever their divisions, socialists are united in condemning feminism as a 'divisive' and 'bourgeois' movement. Quite paradoxically, one of the signs that feminists, though they are not yet well organised, have a certain effectiveness in society is the polemic being voiced against them in many of the more leftist newspapers through cartoons, satirical essays and the like. Juliet Mitchell once wrote 'The women's liberation movement is the most revolutionary movement ever to have existed in concept and organisation. Able to make the most revolutionary statement in public without anyone seeming bothered'.³⁶ This seeming unseriousness which is the basis of the ability to escape the control of the military in power makes the feminist movement the most privileged target of the left. Here doctrinal reasons meet the tactics of political struggle under the conditions of the dictatorship, and leftists use feminism as the medium through which they try to pronounce what they cannot say publicly otherwise. Being against feminism means being socialist in the present context.

Yet one interesting point that socialists do not consider is that among the feminists in Turkey are many socialist feminists, belonging to different tendencies, who are all united in believing that in the 1968-1980 period their voices were cut down because they were women. Now they want to speak out their particular grievances. Among feminists, perhaps

the most combative are those women who once belonged to socialist organisations and who experienced the chauvinism of leftist men.

Let's try to summarise the different difficulties that feminism meets in Turkey in the 1980s. Beyond the structural limitations that come from the global aspects of the society itself (underdevelopment, semi-industrialisation, insufficient participation of women in the workforce, effectiveness of traditional islamic culture, etc.), there are political (the character of the current regime even after the limited elections) and ideological (virulence of traditional, Kemalist and leftist oppositions...) barriers that feminism must confront.

Within this particularly disadvantageous conjuncture, who are feminism's prospective allies? I think one of the most critical is the international alliance among feminists of different allegiances all over the world. Up to now, feminists in Turkey looked to western feminism for their source of theoretical analysis. This was both inevitable and disappointing. Feminists in Turkey feel that they desperately need a theory of their own, to analyse their particular situation, to struggle with different currents opposed to feminism, to formulate issues in order to mobilise the mass of women. They know perfectly well that neither 'classical socialist theory in its rigidly codified version of class struggle first, and class struggle for all forms of exploitation and/or oppression', nor 'bourgeois developmentalist theories' are sufficient for their aim. But as feminism as a movement does not have its own historical experience here, it is bound to look elsewhere, where this history and praxis exists, to borrow relevant key concepts. But the theoretical confusion that reigns among socialist feminists of western countries does not make this easy for them. The 'patriarchy versus domestic labour' debate is certainly passionate, but Turkish feminists, though trying to grasp its subtleties are mostly sceptical about the validity of these theories as the historical background and social and cultural conditions of their country are deeply different from developed capitalist-christian or more correctly secular societies where the main body of this theory is produced.

Without a reliable theory of their own how can Turkish women develop the right fighting strategy? Here the main dilemma is choosing or being forced to choose a strategy to fight on all fronts. In the name of the purity of their own ideology, and because they are attacked from left and right, feminists can hardly achieve a mass movement alone and therefore risk remaining an elitist intellectual opposition current, the equivalent of the 'elite of an elite' position that a few politically active women assumed in the Kemal period. So what alliances should feminists form? With whom and under what conditions? To decide on this matter of priorities (democracy first, socialism first, development of a civil society first, etc) as well as the concessions to be made (in a broad anti-military front feminism risks losing its identity, as it does in collaborating with different civil forces within their respective institutions, parties, unions, associations etc.) is an extremely complicated problem demanding great political maturity. It is too optimistic to expect this from a newly born 'movement'.

What I can say at this stage is only this: feminism must create its own identity in necessary conflict with all main oppositional currents in our society – Islam-traditional, Kemalist, socialist. Among these, the only current that could be convinced to support feminist objectives in the long run – were they able to develop a suitable discourse – is the socialist movement. Turkish feminists have to be able to convince them that feminist struggle is not necessarily contradictory to class struggle and that mobilising women for their own liberation brings a new momentum to this, as well as new strength. But to be able to achieve this specific aim, it is necessary to fight first for the democratisation of the society and also to try and democratise the socialist movement itself. This subtle and complicated search for the best strategy seems to represent the most interesting and promising political effort in Turkey's recent history and only feminism has the potential (with its principles of non-hierarchical leaderless organisation) to democratise the left if feminists can succeed in becoming a valued interlocutor for the movement.³⁷

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- 4 Niyazi Berkes, *Secularisation in Turkey*, Montreal, 1974.
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- 9 *Marriage Statistics*, DIE, and Ned Levine, 'Social Change and Family Crisis: the Nature of Turkish Divorce' in Kağıtçıbaşı *op cit*.
- 10 See J.G. Peristiany, Ed., *Honour and Shame: the Values of Mediterranean Society*, London, 1965.
- 11 S. Özgür & D. Sunar, 'Social Psychological Patterns of Homicide in Turkey: a Comparison of Male and Female Convicted Murderers', in Kağıtçıbaşı, *op cit* p350.
- 12 There is no systematic study of rape or beating of women in Turkey. But some demographical studies show that the percentage of young mothers is very important. It

should be noted that the minimum age for women to marry is 16 (lower than 18 which is the age at which civil status is acquired). Women younger than this need their parents' approval. It is suspected that among the important number of mothers of 12, 13 or 14 years old are many raped women.

13 *Turkish Fertility Survey*, Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies, 1978, pp102-108.

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17 Oya Çitçi, *Kadın Sorunu ve Türkiye'de Kamu Görevlisi Kadınlar* (Women Public Servants), TODIAE, Ankara, 1982.

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19 Active Population Statistics, DIE.

20 *Fertility Survey*, p53. See also Serim Timur, *Türkiye'de Aile Yapısı* (Structure of the Family), Ankara, 1972; Alan Duben, 'The Significance of Family and Kinship in Urban Turkey', in *Sex Roles, Family and Community*, *op cit*.

21 Şirin Tekeli, 'Halk Değişlerinde Kadınlara Bıçile Değer' (The value of women in proverbs), *Somut*, 19, 20 June 1983.

22 There is not yet any systematic study of the male chauvinist content of religious and secular-military value systems. Islam might not differ much from other great religions such as Christianity or Judaism. For an analysis of their content see Simone de Beauvoir *La Deuxième Sexe*, volume 1, part 2, Paris, 1949; also, Georges Duby, *Le Chevalier, la femme et le prêtre*, Paris, 1981.

23 Frederick Engels, *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, New York, 1972. For a description of women's life in a harem see Lady Mary Montagu, *L'Islam au peril des femmes; une anglaise en Turquie au XVIIeme siècle*, Paris, 1981.

24 Let us note that since the military coup, a commission has been established to modify the civil code. Feminists are demanding the alteration of articles 151 and 152 to bring full equality of rights for women, as well as the abolition of the 'head of the family' statute. Lastly, we have learned that the commission will postpone its deadline for achieving the preparatory work to 1984. We cannot predict anything yet. There is a small chance that it will bring these changes to satisfy middle class women and to consolidate the image that the military are the legitimate followers of Kemal, as they have already attempted with their 'progressive' changes made to the law prohibiting abortion. (See my comments on this law on page 74.) This situation creates a problem for feminists concerning the correct attitude to adopt to the military regime. Up to now, their tactic has been to formulate issues from their own perspective and therefore to criticise the measures taken or proposed by the military concerning women. They have always addressed public opinion and never directly the military authorities.

25 Tekeli, 'Women', p300.

26 *Ibid*, pp298-299. The author argues that political rights given to women aimed at something more than bringing women into political participation: to demonstrate in a symbolic way that the political regime of the time, a one-party dictatorship, was different in nature from the one party fascist dictatorships spreading in Europe after the First World War. Indeed, it was very significant that women not only acquired the right to vote in 1935, but there were 18 women deputies elected in the election following in the same year. This symbolic 'democratisation' of the Turkish political regime contrasted with what was happening to women's political participation in Nazi Germany.

27 *Ibid*, p301. Indeed, for the entire period of 1961-1977 the total number of women candidates for national elections was 351, and their 'handicap factor' was 2:1, only twice that of the male candidates in the same period. This was due to women more often being candidates for smaller parties with less chance of election to parliament.

28 *Ibid*, p304.

29 Tekeli, *Kadın*, pp264-267. The first book bearing on feminism was published in 1910. The writer, Celal Nuri (a man) was a prominent intellectual of the Union and Progress

Party. The book summarised the claims of the suffragettes and defended feminists.

30 One can advance the hypothesis that Kemal and his followers were not making these reforms because they were fervent believers in women's rights or that there was any pressure from women coming in this direction. Rather, these reforms, as well as the political ones to follow (see note 26, above) had a critical significance from the point of view of the stability of the newly created political regime. For a minority that waged war against established institutions, in order to get and keep power, women's status had a strategic importance. Wasn't it at the same time that the newly established Soviet regime was launching a fight against the *charshaf* and veil in order to revolutionise the women of the Asian steppes, still under the domination of feudalism and Islam? But there, the authorities were trying to mobilise masses of women whereas in Turkey they wanted not their mobilisation but their passive approval. This they succeeded in obtaining. Therefore, through women's changing status a fatal blow was dealt to the religious authorities. See also Gregory J. Massell, *The Surrogate Proletariat - Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia 1919-1929*, Princeton, 1974.

31 Tezer Taşkıran is one of these women. See her book in English, *Turkish Women*, Redhouse, 1970. She was also a deputy for three terms.

32 Tekeli, *Kadın*, p284. Women lived a very interesting episode of this discouragement in the 1930s. When they were convinced that women would be given the right to vote in coming elections, the Women's Union tried to organise a rally to support it. The Istanbul branch of the single Kemalist party, the RPP, immediately requested the Union not to organise a demonstration requesting that the women have confidence in the government to do what was best for women.

33 The Turkish Workers Party was an exception, refusing to have separate organisations for youth and women.

34 See note 20 above on the marriage institution.

35 See note 24.

36 Mitchell, *op cit*.

37 Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments*, London, 1979.

Mehmet Salâh

THE TURKISH LEFT IN PERSPECTIVE

WHEN THE TURKISH armed forces general staff took power in September 1980, suspended all political and trade union activities and rounded up tens of thousands of political activists, it encountered no resistance from the masses who had been organised in their hundreds of thousands or even millions in the previous two decades. Posing as the saviours of the nation, the guardians of law and order and the sole force able to stop bloodshed, the generals benefited greatly from the passivity of the masses who became a totally 'silent majority' in the days following 12 September 1980. No protest came from either the universities or the factories which had been in the front line of the mass mobilisations before the coup. The acquiescence of the masses was expressed most dramatically in the response to the call of the military authorities of the most experienced and militant sections of the working class, organised in DISK (Revolutionary Workers Union Confederation). After having arrested the executive committee of DISK and the presidents of its affiliated unions, the Istanbul martial law authorities made a call through the press, radio and TV to the trade union activists of DISK at every level, from shop stewards to branch organisers and trade union representatives in the factories, to give themselves up to the military authorities.

Before the deadline, thousands of workers responded positively to this call, creating long queues in front of the main building (and notorious prison) of the Istanbul martial law command. These were the workers who had first started trade union struggle in the early 1960s or who had engaged in unofficial strikes and factory occupations and had bloody confrontations with the security forces; these workers, the vanguard of the working class, had had considerable experience of trade union strikes, general

strikes, sit-ins, demonstrations during the turbulent years of the 1960s and 1970s. Now they were humiliated waiting in queues to give themselves up to the butchers of the basic democratic rights of the working class.

Having inflicted such a heavy blow to the morale of the working class vanguard, within weeks the generals were able to make a fatal assault on the Turkish left as a whole. Before 1980 was out, two decades of revolutionary struggle in Turkey by young but giant political organisations and groupings, with their massively circulated press and their weak but tumultuous control of mass organisations of around a million people, ceased to exist. The September coup and its aftermath is the most striking proof that the Turkish left movement in the period of its explosive growth was nevertheless suffering from serious weaknesses.

It is these weaknesses—of theory, politics, organisation, continuity and tradition—stemming mainly from its own past, from the nature of the class struggle in the country, and from the problems of the world workers' movement as a whole, which I will attempt to analyse in this article through a survey mainly of the last two decades of the Turkish left. I will also venture to explain whether these weaknesses will endure, or whether the Turkish left is on the way to political maturity.

We can delineate four periods in the history of the Turkish left covering the history of the modern Turkish republic. As there was virtually no socialist legacy inherited from the period of the Ottoman Empire, we shall also take into our consideration of the last 60 years starting with the collapse of the Empire, the struggle to establish the new order. The first period begins with the end of the First World War and ends on 27 May 1960, four decades of a low level of class struggle, and only marginal left political activities. As far as the development and nature of the Turkish left political movement and workers' mobilisations are concerned, it makes sense to consider 1918-1960 as one period.

The second and third periods are the decades of the 1960s and the 1970s. They represent different levels and forms of class consciousness, different types of revolutionary organisations and different theoretical problems. In this article I will dwell mainly on these two periods because they correspond to a phase of extremely severe class struggle and of political and economic crisis, a phase in which the Turkish left took its present shape and orientations. The 12 September 1980 coup opened a fourth period about which we obviously cannot yet speak definitively.

The Turkish left up to the 1960s

WHEN THE Turkish Communist Party (TKP) was founded in Baku in the Soviet Union in June 1919, Turkey was already in the throes of a liberation war and heading towards a bourgeois revolution under the leadership of young officers of the dispersed Ottoman army which had been defeated and disarmed by the victors of the First World War. The first attempt by Turkish communists to join the liberation war and participate in the shaping of the new Turkish state was fatal. Almost the

entire leadership of the Communist Party was annihilated immediately after entering Turkish territory in Trabzon, a city in the north east, in January 1921. During the same months, the leader of the National Assembly in Ankara (and commander-in-chief of the regular military forces) Mustafa Kemal, was busy eliminating the peasant-guerrilla forces which had been formed independently of his government in order to fight against the Greek occupiers and their indigenous feudal allies. These forces, headed by Ethem and called the 'Green Army', had become an obstacle to Mustafa Kemal's bourgeois cadres' aim of establishing an independent bourgeois republic.

Despite his rather good relations with the newly-formed Soviet Union, it was not difficult for Mustafa Kemal to eliminate his left rivals within a few months. From then on this bourgeois leadership, which enjoyed the active support of the majority of the military and civilian Ottoman bureaucracy, the then socially and politically strongest force in society, carried out its plans and realised a republic in 1923 whose political life was dominated by a one-party system.

After the foundation of the republic the Turkish communist cadres were composed of the remnants of the Russian-born TKP, those who had become communists in Germany during the workers' mobilisations towards the end of and after the war, a handful of cadres from the liberation war, the left circles of Ankara and the communists of Istanbul, who had certain relations with the workers' movement in that city. They held their second congress in 1925 in Istanbul and united and reorganised the party. From then until after the 27 May 1960 coup the TKP cadres while carrying out only meagre and inefficient clandestine organisational activities encountered the harsh repression of the state apparatus and experienced again and again arrest, torture, persecution and prison.

The workers' movement of the country in this period of almost four decades was no more animated, experiencing just a few modest mobilisations—all of them crushed without mercy by the Kemalist state. Towards 1925, when unionisation among workers became active and intense, the government, using the pretext of a Kurdish uprising in the east, made an assault on the workers' organisations and banned them for good. In 1932 when a second party (a party led by Kemal's close associates) was allowed to organise and take part in elections, Izmir, the then second biggest industrial city, became the scene of workers' mobilisations. Yet along with the demise of this 'second Party' farce, the workers' mobilisations soon dwindled. The last wave of the workers' movement occurred in 1946, when İnönü, then president of the republic, under the impact of the end of the Second World War, pledged to form a multi-party system and the famous ban on the organisation of activities on a class basis was lifted. It was this chance that paved the way for organising trade unions, which had been forbidden since 1925. In the next few weeks, the industrial centres witnessed a wave of unionisation activities. Tens of thousands of workers organised in trade unions. Six months later the martial law authorities (martial law had been in force since the beginning of the war) banned unionisation, made arrests and started the

usual persecutions. The 1950s, despite the foundation of the first trade union confederation TURK-İŞ, with the collaboration of US trade unions under the conditions of the Cold War, saw no important workers' mobilisations. If we add to this short, yet complete, list of workers' mobilisations over these four decades the 'arrests of communists' in 1925, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1932, 1937, 1946, 1951, 1957¹ it is not difficult to imagine the poverty of the theoretical, political and organisational legacy, and the infertile development, of Turkish communism. We should not forget also the severity of the punishments meted out to communists, keeping them for long years behind bars and causing long periods of stagnation in clandestine organisational activities. One has only to recall that the famous Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet served more than 15 years in prison because of alleged communist activities and Hikmet Kuvılcımlı, another communist veteran, served more than 20 years. Under these circumstances the party faced dispersion many times. It was not able to hold a congress for a long time, let alone regularly. Its last congress was held in 1932.² Thus on the eve of 27 May 1960—the date of the coup which was to open a new era in the development of the Turkish left—the TKP consisted of divided groups of ex-party member circles, none of them claiming to be the party, and an 'external bureau' based in Eastern Europe, with broadcasting facilities but without any influence in Turkey.

It was against this backward and sterile social and political background and in a state of near-complete organisational collapse that the TKP cadres witnessed the novel development of the post-1960 period. The two main left tendencies that emerged in the early 1960s were completely independent of these cadres. One was the populist-inclined TIP (Turkish Workers Party) which was formed by trade unionists and left intellectuals who had no real political past, tradition or experience. TIP kept its distance from the TKP cadres for the sake of 'legality'. The second tendency was Yön (Direction) which was a follower of the state-sponsored Kemalist 'revolutionism' of the last forty years. In these circumstances Kemalism, which had inspired the young officers of the 27 May coup, flourished as almost the only revolutionary tradition of the past. Most TKP cadres joined the chorus which said that Kemalism and its so-called fortress 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals' had not exhausted its revolutionary potential.

The fact that the majority of TKP cadres were forced to accept various Comintern analyses of Kemalist Turkey as 'anti-imperialist' and 'progressive' shaped these cadres' positive understanding of Kemalism. Yet even those who in the 1930s had analysed Kemalism as a reactionary bourgeois ideology and had no expectation at all from the 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals' changed their stance after 27 May 1960!³ Perhaps the young 'Kemalist' officers' coup and the ensuing developments dazzled the old communists, accustomed as they were to prisons and four decades of stagnant and lifeless political and social conditions.

1960s: heyday of the Turkish left

THE RISE of the Turkish left movement, for the first time in the history of modern Turkey, became possible in the context of the new political order brought about by the 1960 military coup. What had been the cause of a handful of Communist Party members during the previous 40 years, emerged in this new period as the mobilisation of tens, even hundreds, of thousands, with new forms, new slogans and new organisations. With the 1960s Turkey entered a twenty year period in which almost every form of class struggle was experienced by millions of people: from the youth movement to upheavals in the army, from working class movements to urban guerrilla activities, from civil servant unionisation to unrest and the organisation of activities in the police force. The roots of this development go back to the 27 May 1960 coup which, unlike the subsequent coups of 12 March 1971 and 12 September 1980, was organised and made by young officers, and resulted in a new constitution which unleashed a strong students' and workers' movement, powerful mass organisations and mushrooming left publications.

The formation of the TIP by 15 trade unionists in February 1961 and the publication of the weekly *Yon* (Direction) in December 1961 marked the emergence of the Turkish left as a new political force. The founders of TIP were from a tendency of militant trade unionism with left political inclinations that emerged in TURK-İŞ, then the only trade union confederation. They were stimulated by the post-27 May 1960 Constituent Assembly containing trade union representatives and the preparation of a constitution that included the right to strike and to engage in collective bargaining. The formation of TIP by trade unionists heralded the developments in the working class during the coming period. Although TIP's founders lacked political experience and any socialist past, with only quite limited trade union experience, they were nevertheless trade unionists on the eve of the new era, who were claiming their 'place in the sun'. It was certainly no coincidence that this generation of trade unionists were to form DISK—a new militant trade union confederation—in 1967, and lead the trade union movement in the 1970s. The formation of TIP was the first sign of these developments.

The TIP started uncertainly, in the first few months it ran the risk of withering away by virtue of sterile internal struggles. The founders of TIP called on left intellectuals to join the party to overcome this. With this intellectual injection the Turkish Workers Party found its real identity. From then on the left intellectuals, those who had stayed out of the Communist Party before 1960 and those who had become leftists under the impact of the new period, set their stamp on TIP together with its trade unionist founders. After this turning point TIP began a continuous rise reaching its climax in the 10 October 1965 general election. In the 1963 local elections the Party had access to the radio for the first time. With its own publications, weeklies, monthlies, leaflets and the like and with the support of some columnists of certain dailies,

the Party rapidly made itself felt on a national scale. The talk about socialism that could be heard on the radio, the widespread left publications, the leading headlines concerning the TIP in the biggest Turkish dailies and even the symbol of the Party, Çark-Başak, (Çark: wheel of a machine, Başak: ear of grain) and its main slogan 'Land to the peasants, Jobs for all' were all dazzling novelties of a new era. The more or less unitary nature of the party and the high morale of its cadres made it strong enough to defend itself against violent right-wing attacks during this period of growth.

In the 1965 general elections the TIP gained 3 per cent of the votes cast. This was significant in the sense that socialism was gaining legitimacy in Turkey. The low proportion of working class votes in this 3 per cent, however, indicated the weakness of the party's class base. With the help of an election system that protected small parties, three hundred thousand votes gained TIP 15 seats in parliament. The TIP leadership, dizzy with this election 'victory', was now absolutely convinced that the party as the political organisation of the working class was on its way to becoming one of the most powerful forces in parliament by the next election. Within a few years, however, the absence of a powerful trade union movement with a long history, the political immaturity of the young Turkish working class, and the political and theoretical impotence of the TIP leadership revealed the bankruptcy of these parliamentary illusions.

In the mid-1960s, as a party with a brief history, TIP seemed to be a very strong and healthy organisation with a promising future. After the general election in 1965, it had about ten thousand members, a 15 member parliamentary group and an impressive press. Almost all the Turkish intelligentsia of recent decades and all the energy of revolutionary youth flooded to TIP. Despite these positive points, however, five to six years after its formation, its existence within the working class was close to nil. Its relations with the class did not go much further than the trade union affiliation of its founders. Moreover, neither the party's orientation nor its style of work was directed to developing these relations. Having tied itself to the parliamentary mechanism, TIP tended more strongly to populist propaganda aimed at the peasantry and the middle classes. An interesting indication of this new orientation was the change in 1969 of the party's symbol from 'Çark-Başak' to a portrait of a man who looked like a peasant. Parallel to this new class orientation the party leadership increasingly proved unable to educate young cadres who were rapidly turning to Marxism. This incompetence would later be one of the main factors that laid the ground for theoretical confusion and unhealthy splits.

To sum up, the TIP was to lose its particularity as the unique central organisation of the Turkish left within a few years. To a certain extent though, it served as a school for the young generation that had met Marxism only in the early 1960s. What the young militants received from this school, however, was anti-imperialism with a nationalistic content, populist-democratic perspectives and some vague conceptions

of socialism and Marxism, rather than working class politics in the true sense.

In the same year as TIP was founded, a new journal called *Yon* was launched in Istanbul by a group of left-inclined intellectuals who regarded themselves as neo-Kemalist. In its first issue *Yon* published a manifesto signed by 531 prominent intellectuals explaining its ideas concerning 'rapid economic development' and 'Westernisation as the aim of Atatürk's revolutions'. This was to be the second important current within the Turkish left in the early 1960s. *Yon* presented its 'nationalist development model' as the 'third way' against both 'capitalism' and 'communism'. According to this theory, Turkey was a country where the working class was still weak, where the masses were easily manipulated by 'collaborationist-comprador-landlord' forces via the parliamentary mechanism. This 'model' which was based on nationalisations, land reform and state planning would be realised not through the classical parliamentary road but by a Constituent Assembly formed by a 'national front' under the leadership of 'nationalist-revolutionary' officers, technocrats and intellectuals.⁴

In a very short time the journal reached a circulation of 30,000. Although it did not maintain this, its later circulation of over 10,000 proved the widespread influence of Kemalist ideology in that period. *Yon* had a great impact on the majority of Marxist-inclined intellectual/student circles, some left circles in the RPP (the Republican People's Party, founded by Mustafa Kemal himself) and also later on, within some political groupings in the armed forces. Despite its considerable strength in the beginning, however, with the emergence of both the MDD (National Democratic Revolution) movement in 1967, a movement that claimed to be Marxist, and also the 'left of centre' current in the RPP, *Yon* lost its power within the Turkish left towards the late 1960s.

While TIP and *Yon* were ascendant, the workers' movement, independently of them, was advancing its own way. The working class was in the process of becoming one of the most important social forces in Turkey's future. This fact was manifested in the increase in trade union membership. While in 1963 this was only around 300,000, by 1968 it exceeded one million. Of course the real quantitative strength of the working class was well above that. Due to the restrictions in social security legislation, an important part of the urban working class, those workers in small industry and all of the rural proletariat (both sectors could be counted in millions) had neither social security coverage nor the possibility of being unionised.

Even so, the mobilisation of even a limited section of the working class was enough to make itself felt in every domain of the country's social life. This rapid and lively period of unionisation was accompanied by workers' actions, such as strikes, slow-downs, and sit-ins, although it should be admitted that in this first stage working class actions did not reach tremendous dimensions. In the five years between 1963 and 1968 there were 320 legal strikes with the participation of 40,000 workers.⁵ This official figure does not include the number of workers who participated

in unofficial strikes called in Turkish 'direnis' (resistance), which flared up because of the long legal procedure that was indispensable for official strikes. According to a rough estimate (official statistics for this do not exist) about 70,000 workers were involved in 38 unofficial strikes. In addition to the increase in the *number* of workers involved in industrial action, the struggles which took place were much harsher and in bigger factories—most of them with more than 1000 workers.

The militants of the socialist movement played no role in these mobilisations. These were typical spontaneous explosions of the working class often going beyond the limits set by the unions. In these years the socialist movement and the workers' movement were marching along different paths; this was to continue in the post-1974 period.

Although in 1967 DISK was founded as a second trade union confederation under the leadership of trade unionists who at that time were members of TIP, this was not a turning point signalling the convergence of the socialist movement with the workers' movement. The foundation of DISK, however, marked the beginning of militant trade unionism in Turkey. From 1967 until 12 September 1980 DISK remained the most important trade union organisation of the Turkish workers' movement. This organisation, putting forward militant trade unionism as an alternative to the extremely bureaucratic trade unionism of TURK-IŞ, raised, albeit not very clearly, slogans expressing the desire to integrate the workers' movement into the socialist movement. When it was founded, DISK had only 30-35 thousand members while TURK-IŞ had almost one million. In the years following, DISK and TURK-IŞ were differentiated as organisations covering two different generations of the working class. TURK-IŞ with its huge membership was well entrenched in state concerns most of which were 20 or 30 years old, dating from the period of so-called *étatisme* in the 1930s. These enterprises, which worked principally in the production of steel, textile, cement, coal and sugar, had been, due to state planning, spread all over the country, rather than concentrated in certain industrial centres, and they covered the backward sections of the working class. These workers, who numbered hundreds of thousands, neither led nor participated in the upheavals of the 1960s. It was not until the mid-1970s that these sections of the working class became involved in the working class movement, and then only to a limited extent. On the other hand DISK gained strength rapidly in the private sector plants which were the product of the late 1950s and 1960s. These private enterprises with their relatively modern production technology were concentrated in big industrial centres such as Istanbul, Izmit and Izmir in the more developed western part of the country. The lack of job security and the various methods of labour intensification practised in these enterprises, together with the other economic problems concerning such things as wages and working hours, contributed to the exacerbation of the trade union struggle, and the workers turned inevitably to DISK.

The acceleration of the development of the workers' movement with the foundation of DISK coincided with the emergence of new currents in

the socialist movement which were soon to dominate the scene. These new elements were the socialist youth movement of the sixties and the MDD (National Democratic Revolution) movement of old TKP members. We should now examine these.

Emergence of the revolutionary youth movement and the MDD

The three phenomena of the 1960s that shaped the revolutionary youth movement, which culminated in the guerrilla activities of the early 1970s, were the youth mobilisations of the early 1960s, which triggered the 27 May coup and continued on issues such as Cyprus and US bases in Turkey into the mid-1960s, TIP which acted as a school for young revolutionaries, and the MDD movement.

Towards the end of 1967, a handful of old cadres from the TKP launched a weekly called *Türk Solu* (Turkish Left) which claimed to be the voice of all national and democratic forces in Turkey ranging from the representatives of the proletariat to those of the national bourgeoisie. On the theoretical level, it successfully articulated the so-called revolutionary potential of Kemalism with the Stalinist stagist understanding of the revolution. According to the MDD, Turkey still had feudal aspects and was under the hegemony of US imperialism. The first revolutionary step should therefore aim to eliminate these forces and create not a socialist but 'a fully independent and truly democratic Turkey' as it was expressed in the MDD's main slogan. This was to be created by a front of all national classes and layers from the proletariat to the national bourgeoisie. With its Kemalist revolutionary tradition, which was not yet exhausted, the 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals' was to have an important, or more accurately, a leading, role in this revolution through their junta taking power. The MDD never put forward any concrete suggestions about the problem of the party, it limited its organisation and activities to agitating among young, left intellectuals through its weekly and monthly publications.

The MDD movement levelled severe criticisms at TIP, accusing it of being opportunist for rejecting the idea of revolution by stages, condemning its tactic of alliances and for ignoring the revolutionary potential of the 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals'. It was this theoretical critique which attracted support, particularly from those young militants who were in the process of breaking with the TIP.

TIP increasingly confined itself to parliamentary activity and had started to take a negative stand towards militant youth activities such as university occupations and anti-American actions. While the TIP leadership were warning the youth that '*fascism might come*' as a result of their activities, the MDD movement, on the contrary, encouraged them. This was decisive for these young revolutionaries, who regarded militancy as the only criterion of being a revolutionary. That is, contrary to the TIP's 'legalism', the MDD represented a certain 'revolutionism', though not a proletarian one, to which the young generations were ready to devote themselves.

Further, despite its tail-endist character and theoretical backwardness, the MDD, because of its leadership's origins in the TKP, was able to present its ideas under the guise of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy—with abundant references to Marx, Lenin, Mao et al. Given that the TIP leadership lacked even the minimum Marxist theoretical knowledge required from them as leaders, and that the young militants had an ardent inclination towards, though little knowledge of, Marxist theory, the MDD's superficial orthodoxy was convincing enough for them to appear to be the only true Marxist political current.

It shouldn't be ignored also, that the young militants, despite their sincere faith and orientation towards Marxism, were still suffering the effects of their own past. The MDD line which gave great prominence to the 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals' role as the bearers of 'the revolutionary potential of Kemalism' was consistent with a residual Kemalist nationalism. Thus, now with a theoretical line on which to base itself, the revolutionary youth movement grew stronger day by day and took on a massive character. It created the unique and *sui generis* revolutionary youth organisation, Dev-Genc, of a few thousand young socialist activists, which could mobilise considerable numbers of university youth. The activities of Dev-Genc went further than the domain of the university youth properly speaking. They organised not only boycotts and university occupations, but also actions against the US Sixth Fleet, agitation in rural areas, support for strikes and unionisation, struggle against armed fascist aggression, ideological struggle against the TIP leadership, and so on. In this process in the last years of the 1960s, the revolutionary potential of the youth movement was to be transformed into a political movement which would give birth to the guerrilla organisations of 1971-72.

The period of splits in the Turkish left (1968-71)

The late 1960s were marked not only by the escalating revolutionary activities of the revolutionary youth movement and the working class but also by numerous splits on the Turkish left. These splits produced within three years more than half a dozen socialist groupings or organisations. They were inevitable given the enormous problems that the young revolutionary movement faced.

First and foremost the Turkish left was taken by surprise by the variety, complexity and intensity of its own struggle and was confronted by the gigantic question of how to lead it. While facing such crucial problems it went through a continuous and rapid theoretical development. Lacking a specific theoretical-organisational tradition, each new element of progress or even confusion in the theoretical arena opened the way for new disagreements and, given the low theoretical level, prepared the basis for a new crisis. Also, of course, the splits and crises of the international workers' movement took their toll on the theoretical development of the Turkish left, and not in a constructive or positive manner. The Sino-Soviet dispute, the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the mounting guerrilla movements in Latin America are just some of the

elements which attracted most attention on the Turkish left.

In 1968, on the eve of this period of splits, the two main forces on the Turkish left were TIP which was in a period of stagnation, and the MDD. The MDD was grouped around two publications, consecutively *Türk Solu* and *Aydınlık*, and mainly influenced the most militant sections of the socialist youth movement with limited but steadily increasing control over certain TIP members, particularly in Istanbul and Ankara. The other main left group of the early 1960s, *Yon*, ceased publication in 1967, but its cadres launched another journal called *Devrim* (Revolution) in 1969. It transformed itself into being the voice of the radical officers' grouping in the army without having the influence among Marxist circles that *Yon* did in its time.

Then TIP, while it had been suffering internal struggles and with the ideological assault of the MDD movement on the issue of 'revolutionary strategy', experienced a sudden split in its own leadership. When Czechoslovakia was invaded by Soviet troops in August 1968, the sections of the left gathered around TIP were particularly seriously shaken; this was not the case for the MDD movement. The latter hailed the invasion as a 'revolutionary intervention against the reformist tendencies that were under the control of the CIA'. In TIP, the party chairman, Mehmet Ali Aybar, openly denounced the invasion. This was the first and clearest opposition to the official Soviet line in the Turkish left's history. Another wing of the party—which was to dominate and take the leadership later, in October 1970—supported the invasion and launched a big attack on the chairman's line. In later years, the group around Mehmet Ali Aybar reached almost a version of Eurocommunism with their slogans of 'smiling socialism' or 'democratic socialism'. The other current would stick to a pro-Moscow line. From that point on these two currents were no longer decisive forces in the socialist movement.

The MDD's first split happened in the early 1970s. One of the groups dominated by young university academics criticised the extremist practices of the youth movement praised enthusiastically by the MDD movement, and accused the MDD of not accepting the leading role of the proletariat. This group split from the MDD and became Maoists in the months that followed; it has stayed loyal to the Chinese line up to now.

On the other hand, among the young militant cadres, tendencies towards armed struggle and guerrilla warfare were rapidly growing stronger. This orientation was to accelerate their rupture with the MDD line. Neither the MDD's so-called orthodoxy or its anti-parliamentarist stand meant much anymore, the young militants started to regard themselves as the best Marxist-Leninists and the best fighters. Furthermore, these prospective 'guerrillas' became more aware each day that the political calculations of the MDD were dependent on a radical junta taking power. Thus it was not because of their proletarian line or Marxist-Leninist consciousness but because of their sincere faith in the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism that they began first of all to take their distance from the MDD and finally to split from it. One of the two main groups which went on to form guerrilla organisations announced its

differences with the MDD in a relatively sophisticated theoretical manner. In a pamphlet it declared that on the issues of conceptions of the revolution, party building and hegemony of the proletariat it totally opposed the MDD line. This group was to form the THKP-C (Turkish People's Liberation Party-Front) a few months later. The other group which was to call itself THKO (Turkish People's Liberation Army) declared its differences by immediately starting guerrilla war and regarding itself as an *army*. Three years after its emergence therefore the MDD movement gave birth to both Maoist and 'Focoist' tendencies. It is these tendencies which would leave their mark on the following decade.

While the Turkish left was in crisis the mass mobilisations in the country and particularly the workers' movement were gaining more and more of an impetus. The period between 1968 and 1971 was the most militant period of the working class in recent history. This is illustrated by the official and unofficial strikes that took place in 1968, of the 40,000 workers who participated in these 80 per cent were involved in unofficial actions. Influenced by the rising student movement with its university occupations, workers were involved in more factory occupations in these years. 1970 was the year that marked the high point of the workers' movement. While 25,000 workers participated in official strikes, most of them being workers in big factories, 60,000 workers were involved in unofficial ones. In the same year more than ten big factories were occupied and severe clashes with the police took place during these occupations. 1970 was also the year of the biggest devaluation Turkey had yet seen. Parallel to these workers' and student mobilisations, in the rural areas, from time to time, the resentment of the poor peasants combined with the agitation of the militants of Dev-Genc and turned into massive protest actions. For the first time in the history of Turkey—and the 1970s would not witness such actions—certain sections of the poor peasantry, particularly the small farmers engaged in agricultural export production, took part in mobilisations. At the same time white collar staff organisations grew stronger. Teachers succeeded in organising a 100,000 strong general strike. Organisation within the military structures accelerated and intensified. A lot of plotting was taking place in this area and left currents had a certain influence, particularly in military schools. Turkish society was in such a state of ferment that in the summer of 1970 there was even a strike attempt in the riot police over wages and conditions!

In June 1970, the biggest workers' action yet seen broke out. In Istanbul and Izmit more than 150,000 workers responded to the call of the DISK leadership by leaving their workplaces and taking to the streets to protest against a bill that aimed to eject DISK from the trade union scene. The size of this action forced even the DISK leadership to take a step back. While the marching workers were on the streets in their tens of thousands, the DISK chairman was making a 'return to your workplaces' call. But it was already too late! Workers, casting aside all police and military barricades, continued their marches. These two-day long demonstrations in which three workers and a policeman lost their lives, were only

stopped by the declaration of martial law in Istanbul and Izmit. This was followed by the arrest of the DISK leadership and hundreds of workers and students.

Towards guerrilla warfare

It is interesting to note that while the workers' and mass movements were unfolding, a significant sector of young socialists, who can be regarded as the best element of their generation in every sense, turned towards guerrilla struggle in organisations with imposing titles but which had, in reality, ludicrously weak material forces. Compared to other, fatal, unsuccessful guerrilla struggle experiences in various countries, the conditions that would in a way 'legitimise' the young militant revolutionaries' orientation towards guerrilla struggle did not exist in Turkey. There was no stagnation in mass mobilisations, neither was there powerful reformist-syndicalist control over the workers' movement, nor was the left movement stuck in the limitations of parliament. In the Turkey of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the non-existence of an influential reformist Communist Party, the weakness of the trade union bureaucracy in DISK, the unfolding of workers' and mass movements and the bankruptcy of reformist currents provided healthy prospects for a young revolutionary vanguard. Ignoring these favourable circumstances, however, the revolutionary youth adopted guerrilla struggle. This orientation not only brought about the heavy defeat of this generation but left its deep imprint on the younger generation of the 1970s.

Thus the reasons for the 1971-72 guerrilla wave were not 'classical' but 'original' ones. This originality stemmed from the fact that the young revolutionary generations of the 1960s had put their mark in a striking fashion on the main gains of the revolutionary struggles of recent years. Particularly in the period between 1968 and 1970, the accomplishments of Dev-Genc in various fields of the class struggle and their serious contribution to the theoretical discussions of the Turkish left put these young militants in the front rank of the left movement. During this period these experiences provided them with a rapid political education and a certain level of maturity. The lack of real leadership from the older generations on the theoretical, political and organisational levels led these young revolutionaries inevitably to see themselves as the sole true vanguard of the socialist movement. They became extremely self-confident.

It was that sense of being the vanguard, from theoretical struggles to practical battles, which influenced significantly the Dev-Genc cadres in launching guerrilla struggles with their insufficient forces at the end of 1970. It was also not surprising that cadres totally lacking the experience of a political organisation, in a period of that kind of upheaval, would choose a form of struggle so clear-cut, uncomplex and also romantic. We should point out too the effect of the ideological framework of the political movement in which these young revolutionary cadres had received their political education. As we have mentioned, the MDD movement in essence placed all its hopes for social transformation on forces outside the

working class. From start to finish it worked as a group of people around two publications aiming to be influential in student intellectual circles and took no notice of the organisations or struggles of the working class. It would have been impossible therefore for the young generations coming from that tradition to have quickly turned to the working class and create appropriate forms of organisation and struggles. Understandably, even the workers' uprising of 15-16 June did not sufficiently influence young cadres to take the path of working class politics. It might have hastened their break from the MDD, but the 'revolutionism' they put in the place of the MDD's tailism was not that of the working class, it was that of rebel guerrillas.

Although it made a great impact on the Turkish revolutionary movement in general, the guerrilla upsurge of 1971-72 was on quite a small scale. The nucleus of its cadres, overwhelmingly students, was hardly more than a few hundred. It continued no more than eighteen months (September 1970 to March 1972). Five to ten bank robberies where small amounts were confiscated, the kidnapping of one businessman, one child held for ransom, the kidnappings and assassinations of the first counsellor of the Israeli embassy and three British technicians, a couple of months of rural guerrilla action by a team of 25-30 people which ended in the first armed clashes with gendarmes: that really sums up this entire guerrilla wave. Nevertheless, despite its small size, this guerrilla period was accepted as the climax of the class struggle in the history of modern Turkey by later generations and attracted great sympathy. In a country that until then had seen no war for almost 50 years, had barely experienced 'peaceful' class struggles in the previous five to ten years, had not witnessed political assassinations and lacked even a powerful non-political underground world, this romantic armed rebellion of young revolutionary militants, though small, left a deep impression on the following generations and would thus have a significant influence on the 1970s.

12 March 1971 coup and the transformation of the Turkish left

THE REPRESSION brought about by the 12 March 1971 military intervention was to be a turning point for the Turkish left. The relatively legal conditions of the ten years between 1961 and 1971 ended very abruptly. The activity of the mass organisations was halted, left political organisations were banned, mass arrests, militants being hunted, raids, persecution—almost all young revolutionary cadres had to face this reality for the first time. After the suppression of the guerrilla activities, the revolutionary movement was silent, with the exception of a few minor self-defence resistance actions, for the following three years. All the left activists, from the TIP leadership to the founders of *Yon*, from the MDD leaders to the militants of the guerrilla uprising and the new vanguards of the recently emerged radical Kurdish movement were behind bars till the 1974 amnesty.

The repression experienced particularly by the young guerrilla-oriented militants produced the new revolutionary consciousness of the 1970s. First and foremost, the 12 March coup and its aftermath put an end to illusions concerning Kemalism. What had happened in the army, presented as a revolutionary force by both *Yon* and MDD for almost the whole previous decade, was a terrible disappointment for some and provided important political lessons for the others. In the months preceding the 12 March 1971, political activities in the armed forces, with the preparation of various plots and juntas, were at boiling point.

With the exception of TIP almost all the Turkish left, to varying degrees, had positive expectations of these plots. Some left forces were even in co-operation with them. Those preparing or embarking on guerrilla warfare were no exception. Their approach was quite different to that of *Yon* and MDD of course, in that they did not see these developments as decisive for their guerrilla war. Yet it must be admitted that under the influence of their 'MDDist' past they too nurtured some positive expectations of these so-called 'revolutionary Kemalist' cadres.

When the 12 March generals (most of whom could be regarded as sincere Kemalists) forced Demirel to resign, they were applauded by almost the entire left whose expectations reached their climax. In a short time, however, the same generals launched an assault on the left and the young army officers as well. While the assault on the left was conducted by banning left political party activities, suspending trade union life and performing a bloody counter-guerrilla operation, the attack on the dissident officers consisted of massive lay-offs and arrests. It was so severe that the armed forces—in which radical ideas attracted widespread support in the 1960s—witnessed no such politicisation in its own ranks in the crisis years of the 1970s.

These developments, occurring within a few months, not only proved that Kemalism contained no revolutionary programme but also demonstrated the incompatibility of putschist methods with revolutionary aims. The myth of the revolutionary potential of Kemalism and its 'layer of military and civilian intellectuals' was laid to rest in the eyes of the socialist cadres.

The same period also witnessed an 'awakening' from the guerrilla romanticism which had mesmerised young militants in recent years. The military and political failure of the guerrilla activities of 1971-72 involving the loss of some of the best cadres of this generation could not be disguised. From this point onwards, although an overwhelming majority remained active politically, almost none of these former guerrillas were involved in this form of struggle. Yet this was a bizarre awakening. The guerrilla upsurge, despite its defeat, had great prestige among young revolutionaries and attracted some sympathy from the masses as well and the ex-guerrilla leaders therefore preferred, hypocritically, to make use of the legendary memories of this period rather than to make a sincere and open critique of the guerrilla experience.

Although this cynical use of the past grew stronger in the post 1974 period, one point did become clear to these cadres when they were in

prison. After the defeats of their 'parties', 'fronts' and 'armies' which had consisted of university students, their 'armed propaganda' actions in the cities and rural guerrilla activities in the mountains, their theoretical works concerning 'people's war', 'guerrilla warfare' and 'peasant revolution', the guerrilla cadres could not easily claim to be working class socialists. They could not explain their defeat as simply due to the strength of the enemy or lack of sufficient preparation or by some tactical faults. It must be admitted that in this repressive period, and perhaps particularly under the impact of prison conditions, young revolutionary cadres frankly confessed these negative points in one way or another.

Yet these positive sounding changes did not lead to such constructive improvements as perhaps they should have. Although the generation of the 1960s became aware of their main weaknesses in that period they did not succeed in acting more politically and theoretically mature in the following one. Neither the theoretical accumulation nor the practical experiences of the movement in general proved sufficient for such a development. When the revolutionary cadres faced the new upsurge of the post-74 period, frank confessions concerning the fundamental weaknesses of the Turkish left ceded their place rapidly to the zealous so-called orthodoxy of the new orientations—Maoism, pro-Moscow communism or the 'heroic' memories of recent guerrilla adventurism. This quick re-shaping of the Turkish left resulted in the Kemalist illusions of the 1960s being replaced by RPP liberalism—which influenced not only socialist cadres but also the masses in their millions. At the same time in place of the 1960s generation's romantic guerrilla adventurism came the stupid armed struggle hopelessness of the 1970s practised by thousands of young militants. Dreams of 'peasant revolution' on the scale that existed during the 1960s were no longer, instead the revolutionary cadres were to make serious political and ideological concessions to the trade union bureaucracy. In the confusion of their orientation to the working class, the left presented the trade union bureaucracy as working class 'heroes' and helped its ascent to the detriment of the workers' mobilisations.

Martial law was lifted in 1973 and the army 'returned to barracks'; the RPP emerged from the elections of the same year as the biggest party of the country; and the revival in the workers' movement together with the resurgence of the student mobilisations occurred in the following year. Having now shouldered full responsibility in the new decade, the 1960s' cadres had to find solutions which required no substantial extra endeavours, and thus the three main new tendencies of the 1970s started to emerge—Maoists, pro-Soviets, and the independent left.

1974 and its aftermath: new upsurges and new orientations

1974 WAS the year of transition from the 12th March repression to the revolutionary upsurges of the 1970s. Under the coalition government of the social democratic RPP and the Islamic fundamentalist NSP (National

Salvation Party) 1974 saw a partial amnesty releasing the majority of political prisoners, the formation of TSIP (Turkish Socialist Workers Party) as the first legal party of this period, a revival of left publications and the rapid development of trade union activities. The first shock was not late in coming. In the summer of 1974, Turkey invaded one third of Cyprus. The invasion was immediately followed by the declaration of martial law, and a ban on strikes. It also caused a giant wave of chauvinism which embraced the whole of society from top to bottom. This wave was so strong that all trade unions including DISK, the professional associations, together with employers' organisations not only approved the invasion but launched campaigns to support it in every sense. Consistent opposition to the invasion in the socialist movement was rare.

After the Cyprus invasion, the RPP-NSP coalition collapsed when manoeuvres for a new election by the RPP failed. From then on Turkey entered a period of parliamentary crisis which would be accompanied in later years by a severe economic and social crisis lasting until 12 September 1980. In May 1975 the formation of a National Front government with the major participation of the fascist party was followed by a rapid development of fascist terror and the speedy growth of fascist armed gangs. In these difficult conditions the socialist movement and workers' movement started an ascent which culminated in 1977.

In this new period the workers' movement began to experience an awakening on a *national* scale that had only happened in certain industrial centres in the 1960s. This paved the way for DISK to organise in Anatolia and among the municipal workers of various towns and cities and among textile and metal workers in certain areas. It could not make the same gains in some of the newly built, big industrial centres of Anatolia. For example, in the coal mines of the north-west where hundreds of thousands of workers are employed and where big workers' mobilisations had taken place from time to time, DISK managed to recruit no one. In two different cases, in the Seydisehir aluminium production plant and the Iskenderum steel complex employing tens of thousands of workers, DISK, having had certain initial successes, later faced a terrible setback following the attacks of fascist gangs. The most important cause of these failures was the weakness of the local left cadres in these districts who were too inexperienced to accomplish the enormous task of organising the workers in the face of fascist aggression.

DISK was nevertheless on the way to becoming a powerful workers' organisation of hundreds of thousands of workers. In the early years of the post-1974 period, an orientation to DISK was the cause of various unofficial strikes. The figures for workers' mobilisations speak for themselves. In 1974 for example, despite martial law and various bans on strikes, the number of workers on strike was more than eighty thousand. The next year while this figure passed one hundred thousand, there was also a leap in the number of unofficial strikers. That same year, the mini-general strike of 60 thousand TURK-IŞ workers in Izmir was an indication of the effect of recent developments on TURK-IŞ. Despite the

fact that a new social-democratic movement emerged within it, however, TURK-İŞ never became the centre of the working class mobilisations. This role was played by DISK with its membership of 300 thousand from 1968 until 12 September 1980.

In 1976, there were more than 200 official and unofficial strikes, a general strike of more than 100 thousand DISK workers against the formation of the State Security Courts and May Day was celebrated in Istanbul for the first time in 50 years, by hundreds of thousands of workers challenging an official ban. The following year a skilful provocation by the secret services using the feud between the left groups (mainly between Maoists and pro-Soviets) turned the May Day demonstration of over half a million into chaos, leaving 37 dead. Also in 1977, elections took place in which the RPP, having officially adopted 'social democracy' in the 1970s under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit, was widely regarded as the representative of all the progressive forces. Workers were in a great majority in RPP meetings in the big cities. The landslide victory of the RPP in the big industrial centres proved that the workers' illusions in the RPP were stronger than ever at that time.

Together with the workers' mobilisations, the social and political mobilisation throughout society in 1977 reached high tide. Student youth while intensely active in the political arena waged an enormous struggle against fascist militants. Civil servants, from whom the right to form trade unions was taken away, formed various mass organisations of hundreds of thousands. Teachers, at that moment, had one of the largest and most active mass organisations in the country. Technical workers such as engineers and architects formed mass organisations which had significant influence on social and political life. Added to these, the 1970s witnessed the formation of the most interesting mass organisation of all in Turkey: the Police Solidarity Association with its 40 branches and 15 thousand members declared itself one of the democratic mass organisations. The last congress of the association, held before the RPP government closed it down, was attended by the representatives of various progressive organisations and socialist parties who made speeches to the congress—as had become the tradition in the congresses of all the democratic organisations!

To sum up, when Turkey saw a new RPP government in 1978, around one million workers, civil servants, toilers and students were organised in mass organisations that were under the control of various socialist groups, parties and currents. The members and sympathisers of these groups could be counted in hundreds of thousands. We can now say a few things about the main currents of the Turkish left movement of this decade.

The rise of the TKP

The TKP (Communist Party of Turkey), a small, isolated political organisation before 1960, and an 'external bureau' in the 1960s without any supporters' milieu inside Turkey, became one of the most powerful left currents in Turkey within a few years in the 1970s. The TKP had a

huge youth organisation, the first ever formed women's organisation, great influence, or even dominance, for a time over DISK and various other mass organisations, and a widely read press including a daily. The rocketing influence of this current, which enjoyed the enthusiastic support of certain sections of university youth, petty bourgeois intellectuals and the DISK bureaucracy, was one of the most striking phenomena of the 1970s. One reason for this novel development has already been pointed out: its function as a ready-made solution for cadres desperately in need of a new orientation at the outset of this period. Although the TKP's external bureau cadres did not enjoy any respect from, or have the confidence of, the young revolutionary generations, they had sufficient attraction as the 'sister party' of the 'World Communist Parties' at a time when the bulk of the Turkish left turned its face towards the two main currents of the international workers' movement. On the other hand the increasing influence of reformist illusions which paralleled the ascendancy of the RPP stimulated the left petty bourgeois intellectuals to orient to the TKP.

As for the TKP's domination of DISK, it stemmed from the feeling among the trade union bureaucrats of being obliged to make a choice among the various left currents. The increasing politicisation of the workers forced the trade union bureaucracy to give up the stance of referee which had been the most convenient guarantee of their power when the influence of left groupings was minimal. Now in every affiliated union, in every branch and in almost every plant the organising activities and worker militants of various socialist groupings could be seen. In these circumstances, given that the politicisation among DISK members was quite strong and positive on the one hand, and the power struggle among these groupings tended to be quite harsh on the other, the trade union bureaucracy faced the necessity of adopting a clear political position. They naturally inclined to the TKP which had important international relations in every field (including the international trade union movement), the potential for rapid growth, a reformist political programme and slogans that were not too disturbing. In a way this was a kind of repetition of the activities of the trade unionists who had formed TIP in the early 1960s. The second time, trade unionists (even some of the same personalities) ventured to take another political step forward which, however, proved no more successful or fruitful than the first.

It was in the period of the TKP's greatest influence on DISK that the militant trade union movement suffered severe organisational problems. For almost three years DISK was the scene of purges through various non-political manoeuvres – from violence to bureaucratic tricks and from making alliances with the bosses against politically advanced workers to forming rival trade unions in some branches. The anti-democratic traditions of the Turkish left, in a field such as trade unionism, where not only political interests but also extraordinary material interests were at stake, was to take the most extreme and disgusting forms. Except for the RPP and the TKP, all currents on the Turkish left were the subject of these purges. 1978, when the alliance between the left wing of RPP trade

unionists and the other left groupings ended the domination of the TKP, was not the end of the anti-democratic practices which suffocated DISK and caused great demoralisation among workers. Moreover, this time the same methods were to be applied to the TKP itself.

The TKP during the decade of the 1970s, together with the other less influential pro-Soviet currents such as TIP and TSIP, brought its full weight to bear on the political developments of the 1970s by its anti-democratic tradition and practice, and classical reformist politics.

The Maoists and Enver Hoxha followers of the 1970s

The second main current on the Turkish left of the 1970s were those choosing the ideological dominance of the Maoist wing of the world Communist movement. While *Aydınlık*, which split from the MDD and became Maoist immediately in 1970, continued its activities slowly but steadily with a political party, the TIKP (Turkish Workers-Peasants Party)—who though not massive had a weekly and then a daily paper—the aftermath of 1974 witnessed the emergence of various Maoist, and later pro-Albanian groupings.

These new Maoist tendencies originated mainly from the guerrilla movement. When these rigorously anti-reformist, extremely sectarian cadres looked to the outside world to find an 'international revolutionary bulwark' on which to base their new theoretical line it seemed to them that the Soviet line, with its old age reformism and its policy of peaceful coexistence, was a startling example of 'revisionism'. China's so-called revolutionary intransigence, though in a process of softening, attracted most of these cadres. Also under the impact of the goal of their recent past, 'peasant revolution', they could easily come to terms with Maoist ideology. In addition, the Maoist 'people's war' theory enabled them to make a guarded critique of their recent guerrilla activities while not losing them the opportunity of benefiting from its prestige.

These groupings, which were called such names as 'Halkın Kurtuluşu', 'Halkın Birliği', 'Halkın Yolu' (People's Liberation, People's Unity, People's Way) took on a massive character in quite a short time. The total circulation of their weeklies was over one hundred thousand which gives an indication of their widespread support.

They had great influence among university youth, certain young sections (students, unemployed and non-proletarian toilers), of shanty-town dwellers in the big cities, and also in some rural areas. The influence of these movements among the industrial proletariat was always extremely weak.

Towards the end of the 1970s, these organisations transformed themselves into followers of the political line of the Albanian state. From the outset, these cadres had had some problems stomaching the People's Republic of China's foreign policy and the 'three worlds theory' on which it was based. When the Albanian Labour Party first criticised this theory at its seventh congress in November 1976, these movements while not directly aiming their criticism at Mao followed suit. After Enver Hoxha adopted a clear stand towards Chinese policy in 1978, the bulk

of these movements became, within a few months, perhaps the second biggest movements following Enver Hoxha in the world after the ALP itself.

It should be noted that there was another Maoist movement which had existed since 1970 and followed the armed struggle path stubbornly and which assumed a massive character on the same class basis as the others during the 1970s. TKP-ML-TIKKO (Turkey Communist Party—Marxist, Leninist-Turkey Workers, Peasants Liberation Army) having rejected the 'three worlds theory' from the beginning, insisted in a way on the classical Maoist line of the late 1960s.

The independent left

The third biggest grouping on the Turkish left of the 1970s was of organisations which could be classified 'independent'. These tendencies, with leaderships from guerrilla movement origins, first implanted themselves among university youth and young petty bourgeois intellectuals. In a short period, however, they gained a massive character in the big cities and the backward regions of Anatolia. This 'independent left' movement consists of three main tendencies. The one which has to be mentioned first is Dev-Yol (Revolutionary Path) which claimed the whole heritage of the guerrilla movement of the early 1970s and presented itself as the continuation of the THKP-C—the famous guerrilla organisation of that period. The strength of the legend of the guerrilla movement was quite effective in putting its stamp on the orientation of the new generation of young revolutionary students.

Yet, along with its prestige, the memories of the guerrilla movement's defeat were still very much alive. This was especially true for the leadership cadres. For this reason, the bulk of the 'true followers' maintained for a long time that the conditions for guerrilla struggle were not mature enough. As a result Dev-Yol experienced an early split which gave birth to the Dev-Sol current (Revolutionary Left) who immediately started their 'armed propaganda'. It was after this split that Dev-Yol rapidly took on a massive character. It formed grassroots organisations in plenty of Anatolian cities and towns, in the shanty-towns of the big cities and among university students. The circulation of its journal (a bi-weekly) reached 100 thousand.

Despite its size, this current remained a petty bourgeois youth movement, far from the working class. Although Dev-Yol had an important function in the armed resistance against fascists on a neighbourhood basis because of its militant and massive character until the 12 September coup, this form of struggle—which was daily and lacked any form of central leadership—did not lead to the political maturation of its cadres. As far as theory was concerned this movement was unable to score any advances. Under the strong influence of the armed struggle theory of the past guerrilla movement, it went no further than making some minor revisions to that illusory theory.

If Dev-Yol was in the centre, the other organisations of the independent left were at two opposite ends. Kurtuluş (Liberation) having a

leadership with a guerrilla movement tradition, levelled serious criticism of its guerrilla past. While opposing Maoist and pro-Moscow currents rigorously it strove to establish a more 'orthodox' Marxist theoretical base, studying Lenin through Stalin in particular. This current was differentiated from the rest of the guerrilla tradition by the fact that it took theory seriously. There was no corresponding difference, however, in the social base of its supporters. It also had its base in the youth movement. It remained a smaller current than Dev-Yol because of its critical approach to the guerrilla movement and its relatively higher theoretical level.

At the other end of the spectrum of the independent left were the 'followers' in the true sense of the word of the guerrilla movement. These cadres, almost all of them university students, began 'armed propaganda' actions in the mid-1970s. Oddly enough, however, these 'armed propaganda' organisations did not take much part in the active resistance to the fascists which was the most pressing and vital issue of the time. The tight structure of their illegal organisations did not allow them to participate in a struggle as such. They inclined rather to assassinations of the leaders of the fascist movement, USA military officers, police chiefs, and the like.

These groups called themselves by striking names, the above mentioned Dev-Sol, THKP-C (Turkey People's Liberation Party and Front), MLSPB (Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Squad), HDO (Revolutionary Vanguard of the People), yet in spite of their abundant—and some of them really spectacular—actions, they scored no political gains and could not manage to grow stronger in this period. They were accused by both left and right of being responsible for 'anarchy'...

I should emphasise that I have pointed out only the main organisations and tendencies of the Turkish left. There existed tens of organisations, groups, journals, paper circles legal and illegal. Yet all of them, over 40, can be considered within these three main orientations.

The Kurdish left

There was another phenomenon on the left in the 1970s which should be taken into account independently—the Kurdish revolutionary movement. The armed uprisings by the Kurdish liberation movement in the Turkish republic in the 1920s and 1930s—the last one in 1937—and the massacres following ushered in a long period of silence. Of course, before 1960, there were arrests, persecutions, imprisonment and exile for 'Kurdish separatists' just like the famous 'Communist arrests'. Yet these did not correspond to a revival in the Kurdish left or Kurdish liberation movement. In the 1960s, however, the developments in Turkey were felt in Turkish Kurdistan (or Northern Kurdistan). The first indication of this was the relatively serious support for TIP in this part of Turkey. In the same period, a series of 'Eastern Meetings' or 'Demonstrations for the East' which raised the problem of underdevelopment and were held in the main cities of northern Kurdistan were an indication of this awakening taking a massive character. The late 1960s witnessed the first attempts of young Kurdish revolutionaries (who were students in Ankara and Istanbul at that moment) to organise. They formed the 'Revolutionary

Eastern Culture Associations' which became gathering places for Kurdish militants. A short time later, following the 12 March coup the martial law authorities attacked and repressed both these Kurdish militants in the big cities and the political vanguard in Northern Kurdistan.

Under the powerful influence of Kemalist nationalism, in the 1960s the Turkish left approached the Kurdish problem with nationalist prejudices. The only current with a relatively positive position on this problem was TIP. For that reason a considerable number of Kurdish militants stayed members of this party for a long time. Then the early 1970s' guerrilla movement, by virtue of its independent character and its rebel nature, drew many Kurdish militants into its ranks. However, the desire and inclinations of these militants to organise in their own independent organisations was in the process of strengthening. In the next decade, the fruits of this process led to the emergence of various Kurdish revolutionary organisations.

What happened in Northern Kurdistan in the 1970s, in contrast to the rest of Turkey where the workers' movement rose up and began to merge with the socialist movement, was the rapid politicisation of students, middle class intellectuals and the peasant masses on the basis of national consciousness. Many of the revolutionary Kurdish organisations which emerged became massive in quite a short time. In a way, Northern Kurdistan in the 1970s was like the 1960s in Turkey. Everything concerning left politics was quite novel for the Kurdish masses and also for young Kurdish revolutionary militants. Despite the absence of any tradition among the past generations, Marxist ideas were greeted with great enthusiasm. Almost all political groupings regarded themselves as Marxist. Another important difference between the Kurdish left and the Turkish left was the fact that in Northern Kurdistan, the three main tendencies characteristic of the Turkish left—pro-Soviet, Maoist and independent left—could not be observed. The left groupings which could be regarded as 'independent' were in a small minority. As for the Maoists, they were incomparably weaker than the Turkish Maoists. The influence of Soviet communism was strong, however, and almost all the main organisations regarded the Soviet Union as the leader of the world socialist movement. This strong tendency towards Soviet communism was, and is, perhaps because of the living memories of the past defeats of Kurdish uprisings against the Turkish state and the belief that the Soviet Union might be a decisive factor in their ultimate success.

The Kurdish left, after experiencing rapid growth towards the late 1970s, fell into a serious crisis. All the left groupings despite their enjoying widespread support, could not respond to the theoretical, political and organisational requirements of actual events. Their enthusiastic embracing of Marxism could not immediately overcome the cultural backwardness, the lack of theoretical traditions and the weakness of the workers' movement which aggravated the problems of the Kurdish revolutionary movement. On the other hand, the Turkish left was not in a position to guide the Kurdish revolutionary movement in these difficult times because of its own problems and increasingly growing

crises and demoralisation. Integral to these problems, the severe assaults of the state apparatus and fascist forces on the Kurds, and the feud between left groupings which sometimes led to bloodshed, pushed the Kurdish left as a whole into an impasse, or rather a degeneration, leading up to 12 September 1980.

Towards 12 September 1980

IN JANUARY 1978, a defection by eleven MPs from the JP aided the formation of an RPP government. This was one of the last temporary solutions to the political crises that had been gathering pace since 1974. The RPP government was formed at a time when workers' mobilisation was at a peak, mass organisations were their most active and powerful, and also the fascist movement was on the offensive. With its utopian demagogic programme and its slogans of 'democracy', 'peace' and 'social justice', the RPP had been the 'people's hope' since the period of repression in the early 1970s. Now this party was in power at a time of severe economic crises and of political and social polarisation. In these circumstances, the masses expected solutions to two urgent problems of the day, first a reverse of their progressive immiseration and second, a halt to fascist terror. The RPP, not unexpectedly, failed to provide an answer to these problems. The continuous decline in living standards occurred during the period of the RPP government which practised IMF prescription. As for fascist terror, just recalling that the Kahraman-Maraş fascist massacre which claimed more than a hundred lives happened in the same period is sufficient testimony. All these corresponded to an extraordinary stagnation in the mobilisation of the masses. For the masses, by virtue of their fatal confidence in and expectations of the RPP were not now keen to go into struggle. For example, in 1978 the number of workers involved in official strikes was only 10 thousand. This was below the figures of the pre-1968 period. The fall in unofficial strikes was even more drastic.

Not surprisingly, the incompetence and failure of the RPP government did not mean the masses turned to the socialist movement. Quite the contrary, the disappointment of the masses with the RPP pushed them into demoralisation and apoliticisation. Apart from the figures concerning strikes or strikers and other indications of mass mobilisation, there were also some more important developments showing the depth of this demoralisation. First, in this period the continuous increase in DISK's membership since its foundation stopped and gave way to a decrease. Many inter-trade union conflicts resulted in the victory of independent trade unions. Coupled with this was the lessening support of the masses for the socialist movement. In the local elections of December 1979 the worker masses who had supported the RPP in the election two and a half years earlier overwhelmingly showed their reaction to RPP governmental policy by not casting their votes in the election. The most striking example was in Istanbul. In this heartland of the working class, the RPP's vote fell by almost 50 per cent. The socialist

tendencies who stood were able to gain only 3 per cent countrywide. This was no more than the number of May Day demonstrators who were organised and led by socialists just a few years before . . .

These conditions caused severe crises in the socialist groupings. In the late 1970s the Turkish left experienced its most serious splits and internal crises. These internal fights, which brought neither theoretical development nor different orientations, caused only more demoralisation among revolutionary cadres.

When a new MC (Nationalist Front) government was formed by the leadership of the JP and the fascist NAP (National Action Party) there seemed to be a revival in workers' mobilisation. Unofficial strikes occurred in which tens of thousands of workers were involved and some of which resulted in major clashes with the police, but this was only temporary and exhausted in a short time. Given that the famous '24 January measures', which were announced in 1980 by the government, caused an abrupt and dramatic fall in the living conditions of the masses, even this revival was insubstantial. In the following months the working class tended to use its legal right to strike. The response was 'legal' government strike-suspension.

On the eve of the 12 September coup, around 50 thousand workers, a majority in DISK, were on strike. Yet these strikes lacked morale and discipline utterly. Not only the bosses but also trade unionists were waiting for the workers' patience to be exhausted and their consent for unfavourable contracts. The agitation of the socialist movement was meagre and inefficient on this matter. In some months hundreds of thousands of auto, rail and textile workers, most of them TURK-İŞ members, were on the eve of new strikes. The 12 September coup was not too late . . .

The aftermath of the 12 September 1980 coup

THE LOSSES suffered by the Turkish left from the 1980 coup were immense. Although here is not the place to give a full account of the effects of the repression, we should draw attention to one loss above all which has most affected the movement and will have long-term consequences—the marked absence of moral support and sympathy, even passive, from the masses of whom they claimed to be the leaders and political vanguard. This indicated that the Turkish left had lost something of the legitimacy gained during the 1960s' struggles and consolidated in the early years of the post-1974 period. While it was true that the masses did not regard the Turkish left as mature enough to be a candidate for power in either of these two decades, because of its influence on mass organisations and its leading role in mass struggles, at least it had been regarded as a serious political force. The aftermath of the 12 September coup proves that this posture of the Turkish left has been exhausted in the eyes of the masses.

The masses' impassivity in the face of the savage attacks on the left by the Turkish state did not, of course, come out of the blue. Facing this

reality under the much more difficult circumstances of illegality, imprisonment, detention or trial, however, has been incomparably less bearable for the left. For this reason alone, the coup, with all its shocking effects, will have long term consequences—if not necessarily entirely negative.

In the years preceding 12 September 1980, the programmes and slogans of the Turkish left, the method of its fight against fascists, its style of work in mass organisations, had all contributed in their own way to the terrible outcome of the coup. The Turkish left was wholly unsuccessful in convincing the masses of the credibility of its leadership. First and foremost, the left was unable to put forward a coherent political programme, particularly as an alternative to the RPP's. When RPP liberalism was ascendant socialists had two extreme stands towards it, the one the mirror-image of the other. Either they encouraged the masses' expectations of a prospective RPP government by their assessments or slogans (expressing their own expectations of it), or they denied the urgent demands of the masses while they were supposedly struggling against illusions in the RPP. Dreaming that problems could only be solved with slogans like 'the only way is revolution', 'people's war' or 'power lies through the barrel of the gun' together with hundreds of others, the left could neither politically orient nor politically educate the masses.

Secondly, the nature of the anti-fascist struggle itself functioned to isolate the revolutionary cadres from ordinary citizens who themselves had been the subject of the fascist terror. For the left groupings never undertook anti-fascist struggle as part of the struggle of the working class and other toiling masses. Despite their rhetoric the anti-fascist struggle was waged solely as a means of establishing the dominance of this or that left grouping in any particular locality. The reason was obvious—to encourage the masses' participation in anti-fascist struggle required, apart from experienced political and also military leadership, and traditionally trusted organisations, a measure of democracy in order to 'civilise' the competition between left groupings. The Turkish left was utterly bereft of a meaningful democratic practice, therefore a struggle which had to be isolated from other revolutionary groupings necessarily had to be isolated from the masses too. The famous so-called 'liberated zones' in some districts of some cities where the revolutionary movement was strong enough to control many aspects of the daily life are a striking example of this. These zones were 'liberated' not only from the police and fascists but from the other left organisations as well! It was this weird anti-fascist struggle, or self-defence, which only burdened the revolutionary cadres with its unbearable weight, and led the masses to turn to other forces, more 'serious' and 'trusted', to protect themselves from fascist terror and death. First the RPP and later the armed forces...

The famous so-called 'armed struggle' waged from the mid-1970s onwards was another cause of the alienation of the Turkish left from the masses. Among contemporary examples, it is difficult to think of examples of such a struggle which despite extraordinary sacrifice brought

about *no* positive results. The guerrilla activities gave neither morale to revolutionary cadres, created no enthusiasm, sympathy or even interest in the masses, nor caused panic among the fascists and police forces. In fact, they only provided considerable material for right wing demagoguery about 'anarchy' and 'terror' . . .

The last but not the least important factor in the tragedy of the Turkish left was the disastrous internal struggles in the mass organisations and particularly in DISK which had a devastating effect on the relations between the left political groupings and workers and other toilers. Having witnessed such deleterious power struggles waged with violence or gangster-like methods in their *own* organisations, and having seen the same kind of trade unionists coming to power time and time again under different political labels, the workers started to feel alien not only from these organisations and left groupings but from politics as well.

These negative points in combination, whose effects were apparent long before the military coup, led to the abrupt rupture between the masses and left groupings immediately after the 12 September coup.

The balance sheet of two decades: one step forward in the 1960s and two steps backwards in the 1970s?

AFTER 20 YEARS of struggle will the Turkish left be able to draw positive lessons from its theoretical impasse, its political incapability and the bad memories of its relations with the masses, and start to build anew again? A close look at the last two decades might illuminate today's developments and the prospects for tomorrow.

Despite the limits imposed by Stalinist and Kemalist influence, the 1960s was a period of rapid and productive development. Marxist theory in general was a subject of great interest in those years. In this decade—the first ascent of the Turkish left—the young cadres' enthusiasm for Marxist theory, the left intellectuals' intensive contributions in this field, and the existence of dialogue among various different groupings all contributed to healthy development in the theoretical domain. The same period was also marked by a serious concern with the outside world and an awakening internationalism contravening the nationalist prejudices originating from the traditions of Stalinism and Kemalism.

Throughout the 1960s the Turkish left experienced relations with the masses which were healthy and improving. At the outset the enthusiastic interest of the middle class intellectuals and some sections of the Kurdish and Turkish peasantry towards TIP was noteworthy. The socialist cadres responded to this by vivid and impressive propaganda and agitation. Later on, young militants successfully leading large student masses and some sections of the poor peasantry, together with some limited relations with workers, were also important experiences for the maturing Turkish left. These relations in some sense prepared the masses for their most severe and successful street fights with the police, factory occupations or unofficial strikes accompanied by severe clashes.

The 1960s were notable for the enthusiasm and strength of the fresh

revolutionary wave, the weakness of RPP liberalism, the absence of the trade union bureaucracy's control over the newly-awakened working class, and the absence or low level of factional feuds—at least those being settled with firearms—all in sharp contrast to the next decade.

The 1970s were quite different. Marxist theory was no longer a subject of enthusiasm. After 1974, the ready made formulas and solutions of the pro-Soviet, Maoist and guerrilla movements of the early 1970s were enough to explain every problem. Not that the Turkish left failed to write or discuss anything in this period. On the contrary, it did more than was necessary, writing on every subject and every problem—but only shallow comments putting forward the position of this or that grouping. The positive effect of the left intellectuals of university circles who were eagerly involved in the 1960s no longer existed. With the disappointment of the 1971 defeat these cadres withdrew into their academic milieu in the 1970s.

In the same period the Turkish left's concern with international problems went no further than translating items of pro-Soviet or Maoist literature. Although the effect of Kemalist nationalism diminished considerably in the 1970s, compared to the previous decade the decline of internationalism on the left represented another backward development. The international revolutionary events which shocked the world in the 1970s were watched only passively by the Turkish left—as if they were happening on another planet! For example, neither the Portuguese revolution nor the collapse of the Greek or Spanish dictatorships were the subject of discussions or seen as the opportunities to draw theoretical lessons. A few years later, the rise of Eurocommunism attracted no serious attention, it was watched with amazement as if it was lightning in the still sky. Other important developments, such as the Lebanese civil war and the decline in the Palestine liberation movement received nothing more than simplistic rhetoric of the 'long live...' variety. Perhaps consciously, the Vietnam-China and Vietnam-Cambodia wars were not taken into account. Towards the end of the decade neither the Iranian revolution, nor the Nicaraguan revolution, nor the invasion of Afghanistan managed to excite the attention of the Turkish left.

To sum up, a few more remarks about the political maturity of the revolutionary cadres and their ability to lead the masses are appropriate. As already mentioned, during the 1970s these cadres displayed no more creativity in this domain. Their connection with the working class was made only *through* the trade-union bureaucracy. On the other hand, the peasant mobilisations of the 1960s were not witnessed in the 1970s. As for the student movement, it was no longer a unitary mass movement, but now consisted of various 'zones of influence' among this or that left grouping. As a result, there are only a few examples of mass confrontation with the police, street fights, factory occupations or militant unofficial strikes in spite of the depth of the economic and social crises and the growth of the revolutionary movement. In these circumstances the revolutionary cadres' relations with the masses could not have been improved. And how would it have been possible for them to grow

politically more mature? The 1970s' 'guerrillas' were another striking example of this backwardness. These were bizarre guerrillas—from the leadership to the rank and file—who started political activity as 'guerrillas' in a territory which could not employ so many guerrillas! . . .

We can discern a strange or ill-fated development of the Turkish left in its last two decades. The revolutionary movement seemed to go no further than the point it had reached by the late 1960s. It is as if the Turkish revolutionary movement developed backwards during the 1970s or, rather, in this decade there was an uneven relationship between the political maturation of the vanguard, the degree of mass mobilisation, and the depth of the social crisis.

What does the future promise?

BEFORE SOME final words on the prospects of the development of the Turkish left, we should first glance at the working class. Without doubt the working class will put its stamp on any new political and social revival much more powerfully than in the 1960s and 1970s. In the future, the orientation of the bulk of the Turkish left to the proletariat—and the indications are there now—will be an important factor in the social mobilisations of the next period. After the experiences of the last two decades, the working class will be mature enough to shoulder a leading role in future struggles. The increasing numerical strength of the working class is also another factor in this estimate. According to 1981 official statistics, the number of insured workers has already reached 2,154,000. This figure does not cover either workers in small industry, most white collar workers, or workers in certain sectors such as health and military production. Neither does it cover the agrarian proletariat. The proletariat now consists of at least 25 per cent of the economically active population.

Although with its 20 years of struggle, the working class can no longer be regarded as young, it should also not be forgotten that the Turkish working class, despite two decades of intense experiences, mainly of trade union struggle, still lacks sufficient political experience. It is worth noting that, despite the tumultuousness of the last period, the working class never experienced any organisation on a mass scale other than trade unions. It has never seen the organisational forms with which it could taste both democracy and power. It does not have such memories. Its relations with the political forces in existence in the last two decades provide further proof of this weakness. As a class the workers have always been remote from the political organisations and always in the minority in their membership. For example, the RPP, despite its strong influence on two trade union confederations, and its rapid transformation towards social democracy, could not organise workers *en masse*. The organisational embodiment of its relations with the working class went no further than party 'workers' committees'—which can be found in any bourgeois political organisation. Neither were the socialist groupings any different in this respect. Among hundreds of thousands of readers of the socialist

press, worker readers consisted of a small minority of only 5-10 per cent. The fact that the Turkish left movement has no tradition of *ouvrierist* currents is another interesting indication of this weakness. Despite this negative background, with integral to its numerical strength its concentration in certain industrial areas, its nucleus who have been in the cities for a few generations, its being in a rapid process of cultural development and its not being under the strong influence of religion, the Turkish working class is on solid ground for political maturation.

On this, of course, everything will depend on the Turkish left. Without hesitation one can say or rather hope that after the crushing defeat of September 1980, the Turkish left will emerge in the near future having undergone important changes in every sense.

While there are not yet strong indications of such changes, there is one important factor in the life of the Turkish left whose consequences should bear fruit in the medium term. For almost the first time in its history, the left has been experiencing exile conditions in large numbers. Never has there existed so many Turkish exiles in the western countries. Looking at the history of the Turkish left we can say that the handful of TKP exiles who returned brought nothing to the Turkish left except, of course, Stalinist so-called internationalism, or rather nationalism, and, under the haunting influence of the experiences of the Comintern parties, anti-democratic organisational forms. Now, while Stalinist Communism is in crisis, the West might provide an important political education for the Turkish exiles who can currently be counted in thousands. It is rather striking that this Turkish exile existence is the first since the 'Young Turks' flooded to western Europe towards the end of the nineteenth century. That generation's few decades in Europe left their imprint on Turkish political thought and life for almost the whole of the next century. Of course it is too early to speak of today's generation in this way.

If almost half of the vanguard of the Turkish left is in exile, the other half is in prison, experiencing directly the most harsh terror of the dictatorship. In spite of all the brutal repression, the prisons have been almost unique heroic centres of resistance to the 12 September dictatorship in the last three years. Though with concentration camp-like conditions they are not the places for theoretical education as to a certain extent the 12 March prisons were, it is in the prisons where the militancy and determination for struggle is alive and continues to be kept alive.

After the theoretical, political and organisational bankruptcy which all factions of the Turkish left faced to some degree, a new era is ahead. A wide range of cadres are aware of this and admit it explicitly or, in most cases, implicitly. This is particularly clear for the cadres who entered the revolutionary movement in the first years of the 1960s. They now face a second and more severe defeat. A new era requires new tasks. First and foremost given the depth of the theoretical impasse they face in one sense the task of learning 'from the beginning'. It is a gigantic task and whether these cadres are ready is not clear.

More than ten years ago, the then TIP leader Mehmet Ali Aybar during

the time of his condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, recommended young revolutionaries to read not only Lenin but Kautsky, Rosa Luxemburg and others as well. He was immediately condemned and his advice regarded as anathema by almost all enthusiastic young militants. Of course, he himself had read none of them properly and maybe for that reason he was not convincing, but it must be admitted that since then the Turkish left has neither expanded its theoretical horizons nor its tolerance to different and new ideas. Also since then, it has received no recommendation such as Aybar's. Perhaps now such a recommendation could be put forward more convincingly. With the pressure of a gigantic impasse, the 1960s generation in particular, might look towards different approaches to Marxist theory. It is possible that these cadres might not be able to stomach such an approach, forcing them to read from the beginning, to study meticulously and to learn in a humble mood, yet in a way it can be said that the era of alchemism has already ended for the Turkish left. If that generation does not start to study the 'natural sciences' of working class politics, not only shall we experience terrible new losses for the Turkish left as a whole, but also this generation itself will vanish without a useful legacy in spite of its having experienced the two most tumultuous decades in modern Turkish history.

References

- 1 For the arrests up to 1932, see H. Kıvılcımlı, *Parti ve Fraksiyon* (Party and Fraction); for the others, see A. Sayılğan, *Solun 94 Yılı* (94 Years of the Left).
- 2 See *TKP 5 Kongresi* (1983) (Documents of 5th Congress of Turkish Communist Party), London, 1983.
- 3 For the analysis openly advocating Kemalist revolution and its repression of the Kurdish uprisings see Ş. Hüsnü Değmer, *Seçme Yazılar* (Selected Writings). For the opposite analysis see H. Kıvılcımlı, *Yol*, written between 1929-1933.
- 4 For a detailed exposition of this perspective see Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* (The Social Order of Turkey).
- 5 Figures for official strikes taken from the State Statistics Institution, the Ministry of Labour, and also from the published reports of various trade unions. Given that these figures often show discrepancies I have taken the average between them for each year. For the unofficial strikes, as no official statistics exist, I have based my figures on the publications of various left organisations.

Ron Ayres

TURKISH FOREIGN RELATIONS

AFTER THE Second World War, first Britain and then the USA took responsibility for supplying Greece and Turkey with military and economic aid. In President Truman's 'Message to Congress', 12 March 1947, the 'dangers of Communism' were spelt out. The US on behalf of the West was to take immediate action to support Greece and Turkey in their fight against internal revolution and external threat: 'I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own ways . . . Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as the East.'¹

The Turkish bourgeoisie and its political representatives were pushed into the US sphere of influence in the period immediately after the Second World War because of the 'threat' of socialism and what was regarded as Soviet expansionism. Arms were required for security, to defend this independent capitalist state from 'communism', yet Turkey was financially weak and in no position to acquire expensive weapons. As Turkey was strategically vital to the West, American and Turkish bourgeois interests coincided, and military aid was made available which financed the transfer of arms.

Turkey and the USA have been members of the same military alliance in the post-war period, but it has been the latter, as the supplier, that has largely determined the form and volume of the flow of arms. The USA satisfied part of Turkey's demand for arms because it was in America's interest in its struggle for world hegemony. This important determinant of the transfer of arms does not mean that there has always been a coincidence of aims between Turkish military and political leaders and US governments, nor has it prevented contradictions arising for both

countries. Nevertheless, the US has been willing to take on the burden of supplying arms to Turkey because of its strategic interests in the country.

The Strategic Value of Turkey

THE US MILITARY assistance programme for Turkey was intended to reinforce anti-communism and encourage support for the West, and the USA in particular, against the Soviet Union. The strategic importance of Turkey to the United States lay, and continues to lie, in its geographic position, the country's military forces committed to NATO and the facilities and bases it makes available for American use.²

Turkey's geographic location at the eastern end of the Mediterranean where it controls the vital straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles puts it in a unique position to regulate the flow of Soviet naval vessels to and from the Black Sea in time of war. Under the Montreaux Convention, Turkey has to be notified in advance if any warships intend to use the straits and all submarines must traverse only the surface, thus giving continuous intelligence information on Soviet shipping which would be made available to Turkey's allies. In wartime Turkey has the right to close the straits thereby preventing the movement of Soviet naval forces from the Black Sea, where one third of Soviet warships are based, into the Mediterranean.

Turkey became a member of NATO on 15 February 1952, and brought into the alliance the second largest military force after that of the USA. Turkey's army is composed of approximately 485,000 personnel, plus another 525,000 trained army reservists and about 110,000 para-military forces. The full-time soldiers are formed into more than 19 division equivalents and Turkey also contributes about 20 squadrons of aircraft to the military alliance. In the view of General Haig, the former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Turkish forces tie up at least 20 divisions of the Warsaw Pact and could tie up at least 30 more divisions along a Balkan front as well as bottling up Soviet naval vessels in the Black Sea.

In support of its NATO role Turkey has made various facilities and bases available to the United States. These military installations permit US intelligence collection, provide logistics support facilities, early-warning radar monitoring and are the site of numerous US Defence Communications System terminals. In addition Turkey provides the US with several airbases, port facilities and a number of important supply and storage depots. Since the loss of American facilities in Iran the Turkish bases have become even more vital in support of US and NATO-related activities.

Military and Economic Aid

Since 1948 the US has provided Turkey with substantial military and economic assistance (see Table below). Indeed Turkey is the third largest recipient of US military and economic—behind Israel and Egypt—although this has not been sufficient to keep Turkey fully effective as a military force. Much of Turkey's weaponry is old and obsolete and below

minimum NATO standards. The US has achieved its strategic objectives in Turkey relatively cheaply. Much of the military and economic assistance provided by the USA was probably recorded at inflated prices and most of the military equipment was second hand or surplus to American needs. At the same time Turkey, being a member of NATO, was required to share the costs of the military alliance and undoubtedly bore a disproportionate share of the burden which was not fully compensated by American financial and military help. Between 1950 and 1974 Turkey consistently committed between 5 and 6 per cent of GNP to defence representing between 20 and 25 per cent of the Turkish budget.

US Military and Economic Assistance to Turkey, selected years, 1948-73, in US \$ million at current prices

<i>Year</i>	<i>Military Assistance</i>	<i>Economic Assistance</i>
1948	72.0	50.0
1951	58.5	35.2
1954	219.9	41.9
1957	208.1	179.0
1960	86.9	103.3
1963	155.0	237.0
1968	122.0	110.0
1973	148.7	71.0
<i>Total 1948-74</i>	<i>4519.7</i>	<i>2803.9</i>
1975	109.1	4.4
1976	—	—
1977	125.0	.2
1978	175.4	.8
1979	175.0	50.3
1980	252.0	198.0
1981		574
1982		700
1983		755

Source: IMF Balance of Payments Yearbook, *Turkey Sheets*, October 1954; Department of Defence, *Military Assistance Facts*, Washington, 1963, pp.30-31; Agency for International Development, *US Economic Assistance Programmes, 1948-69*, Washington, 1970, 1980; *US Economic Assistance Programmes, 1976, AID*, Washington.

As with all the major military aid programmes abroad the US also sent a military assistance advisory group (MAAG) to Turkey which had the job of providing essential instruction in the use and maintenance of equipment. A major function of the MAAG was to administer the American military grant aid programme which was vital to maintaining US influence and control and also ensured that the training given to Turkish soldiers provided a maximum exposure to US and Western values.

A major consequence of the military alliance for Turkey is that an enormous level of scarce domestic resources have had to be committed to defence. The defence burden has posed special problems for a weak capitalist state and this has created contradictions for the US. The US has wanted to minimise its level of aid to Turkey but not to impose so large a military load that domestic conditions are destabilised. In periods of economic difficulty in Turkey the US has generally responded with increased economic assistance. In the 1960s the US managed to form a consortium, including the OECD and the World Bank, which relieved the Americans of some of the cost of providing financial support for Turkey.

It is informative to consider US economic assistance to Turkey in more detail since it was very closely linked to military objectives. In a speech delivered at Harvard on 5 June 1948 Secretary Marshall described how vital it was for the US to provide Europe with economic aid, which became known as the Marshall Plan.

Hovey has stressed that there is a complementary relationship between economic and military assistance. 'Economic assistance can provide the wherewithal for military assistance recipients to pay troops, and purchase supplies.' US military assistance, Hovey explains, was given to provide arms and equipment supplied, of course, by the US, but it was not designed to pay for troops or food consumed by the military, since these were regarded as the responsibility of the recipient government. The relationship between economic and military aid is clear. 'Military assistance pays for the costs of equipment, supplies and training, and economic aid provides the budgetary support necessary for local purchases and pay and allowances of foreign forces.'³

Between 1949 and 1971 the US gave over \$2.5 billion to Turkey in economic assistance, almost entirely 'tied' to US goods with over three-quarters of the funds being administered through the Agency for International Development (AID) and predecessor agencies, and the remainder under PL 480. The details are given in the Table below. Approximately 82 per cent of AID economic aid between 1949 and 1962 was in grant form, but from 1963 loans became more important as they replaced grants for general imports. Under the terms of the grant programme Turkey was required to deposit into a 'Special US Counterpart Fund' Turkish lira at the official rate of exchange for each dollar of grant aid provided by the US for general commodity imports. Ninety per cent of these deposits (95 per cent prior to 1952) were made available to the Turkish government for mutually agreed projects, and ten per cent to the US government to meet administrative and other costs in Turkey. Up to 1962 about 80 per cent of the 'Counterpart Funds' were used within the Turkish national defence sector, in the form of additional military programmes, although from 1963 the funds were on a much smaller scale and were used for general budgetary support or to finance development projects both in the public and private sectors. Details on the utilisation of Counterpart Funds (not presented here) confirm that up to 1962 US economic aid was largely used to release Turkish domestic resources which could then be put into defence.

**US Economic Assistance to Turkey
1949-71 in \$m**

Year ²	Total US Economic Aid	AID ¹ and Predecessor Agencies			PL 480 Agricultural Aid
		Total	Loans	Grants	
1949	5.2	5.2	5.2	—	—
1950	48.7	48.7	40.0	8.7	—
1951	35.2	35.2	20.0	15.2	—
1952	86.3	86.3	15.3	71.0	—
1953	54.2	54.2	4.5	49.7	—
1954	41.9	41.9	—	41.9	—
1955	86.1	59.8	—	59.8	26.3
1956	115.4	87.8	20.0	67.8	27.6
1957	179.0	109.3	25.0	84.3	69.7
1958	112.6	63.7	25.0	38.7	48.9
1959	167.1	131.9	—	131.9	35.2
1960	103.3	68.7	0.8	67.9	34.6
1961	126.0	100.3	1.5	98.8	25.7
1962	188.1	104.9	22.8	82.1	83.2
1963	237.3	155.8	86.2	69.6	81.5
1964	148.8	99.0	64.5	34.5	49.8
1965	152.9	113.3	103.6	9.7	39.6
1966	126.6	112.8	108.1	4.7	13.8
1967	132.2	110.3	106.8	3.5	21.9
1968	110.2	101.6	96.9	4.7	8.6
1969	109.5	88.6	85.1	3.5	30.3
1970	106.9	69.2	65.9	3.3	50.7
1971	106.9	77.6	73.9	3.7	33.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>2512.0</i>	<i>1926.1</i>	<i>971.1</i>	<i>955.0</i>	<i>481.2</i>

Notes:

- 1 AID is the Agency for International Development
- 2 US Fiscal Years, ending 30 June of indicated years.

As was pointed out above, after 1963 loans came to replace grants for general imports. Between 1963-71 total AID economic assistance amounted to \$928.2 million of which \$791 million was in loan form, that is 85 per cent of the total. Direct US economic assistance was supplemented by pledges of over \$2 billion between 1963 and 1970, and a further \$1.3 billion between 1970 and 1975 by the previously mentioned American-West European economic consortium. This level of economic aid meant that Turkey ranked sixth among the major recipients of economic assistance during the 1960s, and created a dependency on external financing which continued into the 1970s.

The Changing Alliance

Despite the enormous level of economic and military assistance granted to Turkey there have been tensions within a changing alliance. The

relative importance of the two countries for each other varied with the course of the Cold War but was affected most deeply by the invasion of Cyprus and the ensuing US arms embargo of 1975. During 1963-64 when there was open conflict between the two communities in Cyprus the Johnson letter to Ankara led to much acrimony. In 1974 after an abortive Greek-backed coup against President Makarios Turkish troops invaded Cyprus, the island was divided and the troops, numbering about 20,000, remain to this day.

The American response in 1974 was to condemn the Turkish action which was followed by a Congressional decision in July 1975 to stop all military aid to Turkey pending withdrawal of Turkish forces from Cyprus. Turkey responded by unilaterally rescinding all US-Turkish defence cooperation agreements.⁴

The arms embargo hit Turkey very hard because she was almost totally dependent on the US for her arms. In response to the embargo Turkey turned to other NATO partners—Britain, France, West Germany, Italy and Norway—to obtain necessary arms. In spite of Turkey's serious balance of payments' problems, which caused both IMF and NATO officials to express deep concern towards the end of 1977, the country was spending more on defence each year. The estimate for military expenditure for 1977-78 was \$2.63 billion, which represented nearly 30 per cent of the budget, and in addition Turkey was paying \$500 million annually on acquiring arms. As the tension over Cyprus and the Aegean dispute increased after 1974 Turkey was compelled to continue buying heavily from abroad. Of the other NATO countries only West Germany provided any military assistance, about \$100 million a year, partly through its official military aid programme and partly through guaranteeing credits on arms exports to Turkey. The Turkish economy in the second half of the 1970s was in a serious crisis, however, and guarantees were difficult to find—postponing the acquisition of some of the arms that Turkey wished to import.

The arms embargo was finally lifted in September 1978, without any progress having been made on the Cyprus question, partly because of American concern about Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union and the Middle East. During this period cultural exchanges between Turkey and the Soviet Union increased and agreement was reached on expanded levels of economic aid mainly to finance large infrastructural projects. It is estimated that Turkey received about \$650 million in aid from the Soviet Union between 1967 and 1979, most of it provided after 1974.

Turkey also turned more towards the Arab World in the late 1970s and was therefore forced to take steps to disengage from visible identification with US policy objectives in the region.

Since the arms embargo was lifted in 1978 US-Turkish relations improved considerably although there is still inevitable tension between the two countries. A new Defence Cooperation Agreement has been signed worth \$2.5 billion in economic and military assistance between 1980 and 1983. The Reagan administration has set aside the costs of supporting its needy ally but Congress has shown less willingness to provide

the financial assistance required by Turkey because of the Greek, Armenian and human rights lobbies in the US. The US has, however, little choice but to continue its support for Turkey which could be worth over \$700 million in 1984 and several billion dollars over the next few years.

The problems between Greece and Turkey and the determination of the present Turkish regime to pursue a more independent foreign policy vis-a-vis the Middle East have been additional sources of tension for US-Turkish relations. A key issue in the negotiations between the two countries concerns the rules under which the US could operate its Turkish bases and the exact purpose for which they will be utilised. Turkey has continued to maintain a distance from US Middle East foreign policy—at least in appearance—which explains the reluctance to become involved in any rapid deployment force and the public insistence that the US bases be used only for NATO-related operations.

There are also tensions arising from Turkey's 'neutrality' in the Middle East. Turkey was the first NATO member to give diplomatic recognition to the PLO but Ankara has continued to maintain friendly relations with Israel, if only at second secretary level, despite pressure from Arab states. In the UN emergency resolution protesting at Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights the Turkish delegation abstained, indicating that Ankara is still tied to the Western alliance.

For the moment the Turkish state and the United States need each other, despite the tension in their separate foreign policy objectives. Because of the strategic value of Turkey as a NATO ally, especially since the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the US seems likely to continue shouldering the burden of economic and military assistance to Ankara for the foreseeable future but there is a conflict in this too. The sectional interests in American domestic politics ensure that there is a sizeable gap between the amount of assistance the US administration is able to provide and the level that Turkey demands. This will continue to be a source of tension in the future. The greatest source of tension for Turkey, however, is in her relations with other NATO allies, the EEC and particularly Greece.

Turkey and the EEC

TURKEY FIRST applied for an agreement with the EEC in July 1959 but it was not until September 1963 that negotiations were completed. One of the reasons for the protracted discussions was the difficulty of reaching an agreement that was both economically realistic and acceptable to Turkish aspirations.⁵ Despite the potentially important market for the EEC, Turkish association posed a serious problem. Its industry was still in the early stages of development and could not face free competition yet the Community feared that cheap Turkish agricultural products would flood the market and that the country would require considerable economic assistance.

In the event, agreement was reached with the EEC (the Ankara Agreement) whereby Turkey could ultimately become a full member after

having gone through preparatory, transitional and final stages. During the first five years of the preparatory stage the EEC gave concessions to four basic agricultural exports and a loan of \$175 million, however these were marginal to the needs of Turkish capital. In 1970 an additional Protocol was signed which provided for free access of all Turkish industrial products except textiles and petroleum (which were the most competitive) and there was a slight improvement in the terms relating to the export of Turkey's agricultural products. Turkey was also given a new loan of \$175 million over five years, but the total impact was negligible and the conditions regulating the transition phase were eroded in a very short time.

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 was condemned by the EEC governments and brought relations with Turkey to a low point. Furthermore, the economic crisis following 1973-4 had a deleterious effect on Turkish trade with the EEC. Whereas in 1973 Turkey's deficit on the balance of trade with the EEC was a mere \$500 million, in 1975 it had increased to \$1.7 billion. The dream of prosperity and economic advantage to Turkish capital through its associate status was turning sour.

Since the mid-1970s the contradictions between the EEC and Turkey have deepened and the importance of the respective markets for each other have declined. In 1975 44 per cent of Turkey's total exports and 49 per cent of its imports were with the EEC, by 1982 these figures were down to 30.5 per cent and 28.2 per cent respectively. In 1981, for the first time, the Middle East and North Africa became the most important markets for Turkey's exports (up nearly four times in value over the previous three years). In 1980 22.3 per cent of Turkey's exports were with the Middle East and North Africa (imports 40.7 per cent) but in 1982 exports had risen to 45.0 per cent of the total (imports 42.2 per cent). This growth of trade with the Middle East does not mean that Turkey is becoming independent of Europe. During 1983 total export growth slowed down and the early indications are that trade with the Middle East was no exception. There is some concern at Turkey's ability to keep up the present rate of expansion of trade with the Middle East and it is likely that Europe will again become Turkey's major market.

The accession of Greece to the EEC in 1981 did not help relations with Turkey, particularly since the latter is not scheduled for full membership until 1995 at the earliest. But there are other points of conflict which leave Turkey's relationship with the EEC in a divided and tentative state. The conflicts can be reduced to two basic, albeit linked, issues—the human rights question and the membership problem.

The governments of the EEC have been under pressure to be critical of the loss of human rights and freedoms that occurred after the military coup on 12 September 1980. Concern has been expressed about the dissolution of political parties and trade union organisations and the imprisonment and loss of rights of their leaders by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. Human rights groups such as Amnesty International have brought a great deal of bad publicity to the dictatorship in their reports on torture and brutality to political prisoners. The

European labour movement has also been very effective in organising opposition to the imprisonment and trial of the 52 (now 78) members of DISK, and this was very influential on the Mitterrand government in France.⁶ France, in fact, has long created difficulties about Turkish membership, apparently concerned about her European credentials,⁷ but no doubt also worried about the effect on agricultural production in France.

Some EEC member states, notably Britain, West Germany and Belgium have been openly more sympathetic to the military dictatorship. These countries have generally followed US foreign policy. In the 1980s while EEC aid for Turkey was withheld during 1981 the West German Bundestag voted in December to provide \$165 million assistance for the junta.

The EEC is still, at time of writing, refusing to release aid worth \$510 million to Turkey because the blatantly undemocratic elections of November 1983 have failed to convince even the Commission that democracy has been fully restored.⁸ The Council of Europe is still not satisfied with the political situation in Turkey and is reluctant to readmit a Turkish delegation to the parliamentary assembly for the first time since before the coup.⁹

The second conflict between Turkey and the EEC concerns membership. Originally in the 1970 Protocol it was envisaged that Turkey would become a full member of the Community in 1995. European fears of the consequences of Turkish membership at that time partly related to the weakness of her industry and the economic burden this would impose on other members but also to the danger of the market being flooded with cheap agricultural products. These problems are still relevant and are the source of continuing conflict. There has been the dispute over cotton exports to the Community which led to temporary restrictions on imports from Turkey in 1981 and 1982, and has still to be resolved. There are other issues too. When the additional Protocol was signed there was an agreed timetable of Turkish commitments towards the Community. Beginning in 1973, over a period of 12 to 22 years, Turkey was to abolish all tariff and other barriers with the EEC and harmonise its external tariffs. Because of the threat that these obligations posed for Turkey's national capital the original timetable could not be met and full membership would not now take place until the year 2000. It is another part of the Protocol, referring to the right of free movement of labour in 1986, which is particularly worrying to EEC countries, however, given the level of unemployment in western Europe.

Nowhere is this conflict more apparent than in West Germany. It is clear that the ruling coalition in Germany regards it as impossible to assimilate or even integrate the Turks and is in fact already collaborating with Ankara in deporting political refugees, while, at the same time, laying the basis for a programme of repatriation of West Germany's 1.6 million Turks.¹⁰ The logical answer would be to abrogate the Treaty of Association between Turkey and the EEC, and thus end the threat of the free movement of labour in 1986. This is a very delicate issue particularly since workers' remittances are going to continue to be vital to Ankara in closing the gap in the trade balance.

The contradiction the EEC faces in relation to Turkey is that while the military contribution of their NATO ally is highly valued the economic burden that Community membership would bring is a price they would rather not pay. The problem facing the West is that if the EEC were to refuse a fully democratic Turkey the opportunity to negotiate, membership of the military alliance too may be threatened. The human rights issue and the membership problem inevitably become linked.

Turkish-Greek Relations

THE MOST INTRACTABLE Turkish foreign relations problem is that of Greece and Cyprus,¹¹ a dispute which has wide significance to the West because of the involvement of two NATO allies. The underlying tensions created by the form of the 1960 independence agreement for Cyprus nearly precipitated a war between Greece and Turkey in 1963-64, during the 1970s relations deteriorated even further as the historical, ethnic, religious and cultural differences re-emerged over two main issues. The Cyprus problem once again became prominent and there was a new dispute over the Aegean Sea (including the control of mineral rights on the continental shelf, territorial sea limits and air traffic space). There were also a number of other issues that were separate yet related to the main areas of dispute: the remilitarisation of the Aegean islands after the Cyprus invasion,¹² the manner in which minorities (Greeks in Turkey and Turks in Greece) have been treated, the military command structure within NATO, and the entry of Greece into the EEC which was completed in 1981.

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July 1974 after President Makarios had been removed from power following a coup led by Greek army officers marked a new more dangerous period in Turkish-Greek relations. War was avoided, the arms embargo was imposed (1975) and removed (1978) but no progress has been made on the island. Events since 1974 have led to a stalemate on the Cyprus problem.

There can be no simple solution to the Cyprus problem largely because the dispute is manifested at several levels, but also because the years of conflict and violence have left the two communities in a state of mistrust. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence for northern Cyprus in November 1983 was only recognised internationally by Turkey and Bangladesh and has provoked a flurry of Western diplomatic activity, supposedly aimed at persuading Turkey to reconsider its support for the 'independent' state.

Conclusions

TURKEY'S GEOGRAPHICAL and strategic position at the eastern end of the Mediterranean where it controls the crucial Turkish straits, at the crossroads between East and West, means that both the Soviet Union and the US value Turkish support very highly. Since the end of the Second World War Turkey has been firmly in the orbit of the Western alliance though in the past decade a number of events have occurred which have

strained the relationship with the West. At present Turkey is surrounded by actual or potential conflicts with Greece, Cyprus, Syria, the Soviet Union, and to the east Iran and Iraq, both with dissatisfied Kurdish minorities, are at war. Turkey has been more isolated in the world community since the Cyprus crisis of 1974 and the 1975 US arms embargo yet the current regime needs the West for political, military and economic support while also wanting to increase its links with the Islamic world. There are, however, inevitable tensions in trying to follow a foreign policy which tries to bridge the Islamic and Western worlds, not least the widespread anti-American feeling in many of the Arab countries.

The West is also divided in its attitudes towards the present government in Turkey. While the US has been an ardent supporter of the Evren dictatorship, this hasn't always been the case among the Western Europe states. Furthermore, while the West is more than willing to accept Turkey's military contribution within NATO it is becoming increasingly clear that the countries of the EEC are reluctant to take on the large economic burden that Turkish membership would involve. Despite General Evren's strong anti-communism, the conflict of foreign interests between (and within) the West, and the US in particular, and many of Turkey's neighbours, means it is likely that Turkey's rulers will try to pursue a balanced international position to contain the potentially explosive contradictions that threaten Turkey. Finding a path through these complex foreign relations might conceivably be possible with a united country but with intractable domestic contradictions to face, the Turkish government will not find easy international solutions.

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