



# THE ARMY AND THE RADICAL LEFT IN TURKEY

MILITARY COUPS, SOCIALIST REVOLUTION  
AND KEMALISM

ÖZGÜR MUTLU ULUS

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# ABBREVIATIONS

## General

AP	Justice Party
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CHP	Republican People's Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Dev-Genç	Federation of the Revolutionary Youth (of Turkey)
DİSK	Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions
DP	Democratic Party
FKF	Idea Clubs Federation
IPSD	Society for Struggle against Unemployment and Cost of Living
ITU	Istanbul Technical University
Kominform	Communist Information Bureau
Komintern	Communist (Third) International
MBK (CNU)	Committee of National Unity
MGK	National Security Council
MHP	Nationalist Action Party
MIT	National Intelligence Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
ODTU	Middle Eastern Technical University
OYAK	Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund
PDA	Proletarian Revolutionary Enlightenment
SR	Socialist revolution
THKO	People's Liberation Army of Turkey
THKP-C	People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey
TİP	Workers' Party of Turkey
TKP	Communist Party of Turkey

TKP/ML	Communist Party of Turkey/ Marxist-Leninist
TKP'nin Sesi	Voice (Radio) of the Communist Party of Turkey
TÖB-DER	Confederation of Teachers' Unions of Turkey
TUDEH	Communist Party of Iran
Türk-İş	Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions

### **Bibliographical**

IISH	International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
TÜSTAV	Türkiye Sosyal Tarih Araştırma Vakfı

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1 Research goals and questions

To a child even the most ordinary, sterile life can seem like always being tuned in to the Discovery Channel. When I was seven I made one of my most unpleasant discoveries – when smoke comes from chimneys on a hot sunny day it is not good news at all. I woke up on a typical hot late summer's day, 12 September 1980 to be precise, and saw smoke coming from many houses in my home town of Bursa. I looked out of the window in wonder at the busy town of Bursa and saw nothing but military trucks driving around the town amid fumes all day long. I learned to my amazement that books were being burned, which these were and why they were being burned. My parents, typical middle-class, left-inclined 'intellectuals', decided to gamble with their lives and not to burn their copies of these books. All the works of Marx and Lenin and some by Mao or Stalin just stood in the living room on top of the TV shelf for the next few months, hovering over the scenes of the military tanks and generals like a time bomb. We were lucky. They had looked for my mother, who was an administrator in the Association of Teachers Union of Turkey [Türkiye Öğretmenler Birliği Derneği: TÖB-DER], at her school, but she had already escaped.

Those who play cards professionally claim that luck is just an illusion – one really needs to know how to play. Politics, Thomas Hobbes once suggested, is like a game of cards: the players must agree which suit is to be trumps. In politics, he added, whenever no other suit is agreed upon, clubs are trumps.<sup>1</sup> The army's role in the Middle East is sometimes explained by this fact, the atrophy of politics and the diffuseness of economic groups lead to violence as the *prima ratio* of politics.<sup>2</sup> Whether such was the case in Turkey in 1980, it was obvious from the start, at least from the announcement of the military takeover, what the clubs were set against. That was why everybody burned some books, but not others. That was why the extreme right with its combat squads (the Grey Wolves), who were also arrested, were quite in a state of shock. The Chief of

Staff and the Commander of the coup d'état, General Kenan Evren, explained later that the takeover plans were drawn up to combat the working-class unions with their 15–20,000 militant members and the extreme leftist groups.

Only fifteen years earlier most socialists, however, had assumed that Turkey could never be like Greece – ruled by a fascist junta. The majority of the leftists in 1960–71, reminiscent of Hobbes rather than Marx, actually believed in the revolutionary potential of the armed forces for the transformation of the government into a quasi-socialist regime. The present work aims to provide answers to the causes and the consequences of adopting revolutionary lines built on, favouring or expecting revolutionary action from the Turkish army. Why did the leftists assume that the Turkish armed forces, as part of the NATO army, would overthrow the present regime in order to replace it with a socialist one? How did they formulate their views on the political role of the army and reconcile these with Marxism or leftism? Why was such a strategy so overwhelmingly advocated by most leftists including overtly revolutionary communist ones? As we know with hindsight that the socialist wave of the 1960s was terminated by a reactionary military intervention in 1971, something which the left did not expect, what does such an inaccurate assumption tell us about the nature of leftist movements?

The study examines the discourse and the perspective of the radical leftist movement on the political role of the military in 1960–71 through a descriptive historical analysis by proposing answers to such key questions as these. The discourse and perspective of each leftist group active in the 1960s has been examined by means of a textual analysis complemented by a study of simultaneous actual practice to see how political thought had an impact on organizational forms, sometimes to the extent of establishing juntas by military officers. The textual analysis will show us the mentality of the left, and how contemporary social and political realities were interpreted. This can help us understand not only how the ideology of the Turkish left was drawn in its age of 'take-off', but also its characteristics, especially in terms of international Marxist movements. The actual practice, on the other hand, will lead us to the consequences of the revolutionary lines constructed on the initiatives taken by the army. This will provide us with a clear idea of the trajectory of the leftist movement as the following decade, the 1970s, took up the legacy of the 1960s. As many leftist circles and their revolutionary ideas had their roots in this period, the impact of the 1960s was widespread in the following years.

The impact of the 27 May intervention and the reinvention of Kemalism, the Ba'ath and Nasser regimes in the neighbouring Middle East countries and the liberation wars conducted by nationalist armies in African or Asian countries will be considered, as well as the tradition of the leftist movement

in Turkey, and especially its relation to and understanding of Kemalism for a clarification of conjectural versus structural and/or historical factors in the affirmation of military interventions. After all, the ambivalent and even supportive attitude of the left to the 28 February 1972 intervention shows that such approaches could not be explained purely by conjectural developments (as has generally been argued by the participants of the movement in the 1960s) and the opportunity for a left-inclined intervention in the 1960s. I suggest that the intermingling of international developments, such as the Castro regime in Cuba, Nasser's regime in Egypt and the Ba'ath regimes in Syria, with internal developments – the 27 May coup and the liberal constitution that followed – all contributed to the ideology of the leftists. However, internalization of the Kemalist ideology (as nation-state-building ideology), the Communist Party of Turkey [Türkiye Komünist Partisi: TKP] tradition, and the traditional lack of a class struggle paradigm in the leftist movement were the underlying and main determinants.

One of the significant problems in analysing the leftist movements in the 1960s is the sectarianism of the Turkish left. Why the left cannot maintain unity in Turkey has perhaps been one of the most widely posed questions. The analysis of the leftists' perceptions on the role of the army will also shed light on fractionalization and its causes in the 1960s. One of my central arguments in this book is that the factions were mainly determined by different approaches to the political role of the army. This was also the case for the years towards the end of the decade, with divisions seen to be due to a different position on the issue or sectarianism being justified by assumedly different approaches. However, these were later understood as differences in strategies, first of all the parliamentary road versus the revolutionary road to socialism, and in later years the preference for a popular war versus urban and rural guerrillas. Even though the Turkish left is notorious for its ability to steadily continue a form of organization, the divisions in the 1960s and how they were acknowledged were extremely important because of their relevance for attitudes towards the army. An interesting feature of the leftist movements, which is also important for the following periods, was that the revolutionary circles had built their revolutionary theory and practice mainly on the support of intervention by left-wing military officers. Only the Workers' Party of Turkey [Türkiye İşçi Partisi: TİP] had advocated a parliamentary road for transition into socialism and rejected transformation initiated through a coup. This was actually one of the grave paradoxes of the left: revolutionary currents had advocated carrying out a revolution, or more simply a change of order, through the initiative of the 'forces of order'. The work will explain the basis of such a paradox and how it was overlooked as the role of the army was understood within a different

conceptualization, especially under socio-political categories such as 'military-civilian intelligentsia', 'national bourgeoisie', 'intermediary layers', 'vigorous forces', 'Jacobin petty bourgeoisie' or 'nationalist revolutionaries'.

## 2 Outline

The work covers the period between the two successful military interventions of 1960–71. The new constitution after the 1960 coup that expanded democratic rights and freedoms gave the ultra-left, which up to then had had to operate mostly underground, an opportunity to exist legally. Marxist or quasi-Marxist movements, which are generally referred to in Turkey as the 'left' or 'extreme left', expanded and diversified enormously during the 1960s. All movements that defined themselves as 'radical leftist', those with a socialist or revolutionary agenda and that have generally been regarded as such, have been included in the analysis. The left-of-centre party, the Republican People's Party [Cumhuriyetçi Halk Partisi: CHP], which underwent an indeterminate and problematical twist after the mid-sixties mostly under the impact of the TİP, has not been included. These radical leftist movements generally define themselves as 'socialist' hence I have used the terms 'left' and 'socialist' interchangeably throughout the work.

Even though the Communist Party of Turkey was one of the oldest political parties, remarkably, basic Marxist books could only be translated and published after 1960. Leftists could then formulate their opinions and debate in a relatively free environment, particularly in the new political journals or newspapers, which determined the course of action in the following periods. Apart from the TKP being tied to Moscow, all other groups were independent radical leftist or diverse socialist movements, and communism was still subject to penalty. However, apart from the TİP there was a lack of organization. Communists who were criminally convicted due to their political allegiance could not establish a political party nor become members of one, hence the opponents, or outside supporters of the TİP gathered around journals, societies, clubs and associations, and towards the end of the decade in party fronts which were referred to as the 'guerrillas'.

The difficulty in analysing the approach to the political role of the army is related to the fact that, as could be expected, there was no thematic discussion of the question by the actors involved. Sometimes the political role of the army was tackled directly, but at other times it was only hinted at in speeches or written material. Moreover, a subject that seems very unlikely or unrelated, such as the discussion of the economic mode of production of the Ottoman empire, could have implications, or a concealed agenda, concerning the political role of the army. Yet the role of the army was the bottom line of almost all

discussions, separations, and divergence, but this can only be reconstructed by following passing clues and hints spread throughout speeches, recorded conversations and articles, and by making an overall assessment of the development of each group. The role of the army was generally discussed under revolutionary strategy, as revolutionary actors or especially as the revolutionary vanguard. Moreover, it was discussed under the guise of various concepts, such as the role of the 'military-civilian intelligentsia', 'national bourgeoisie', 'intermediary layers', 'vigorous forces', 'bureaucracy', 'Kemalists', 'petty bourgeoisie', 'Jacobin petty bourgeoisie', 'state servants', 'nationalist revolutionaries', 'Young Turks army' and even 'bourgeois bureaucracy' in a political revolutionary movement. As a result of the quantity of such concepts and the inconsistency in their use, I have chosen to conduct a chronological analysis rather than a thematic one; this also helps the analysis of changes in mentality and corresponding variations in terminology.

Each chapter is devoted to one single movement among the radical left. As the Turkish left has a tendency to split infinitely, with group membership being rather fluid, the positions of the actors were determined according to the main ideological movements which were reflected by some sort of separate organization. As each chapter is devoted to a single movement, all the chapters will start by providing general information on the particular movement under discussion. Where necessary brief background information will be provided to place the position of the movement in the 1960s more effectively, as in the case of the TKP. The approach taken to important developments such as Colonel Talat Aydemir's failed coup attempts, the Cyprus conflict, the 1965 general election and its results, the workers' revolt of 15–16 June, and finally the 12 March intervention will be considered for each of the movements. A brief survey of the political role of the military in Turkey is provided before the chapters on socialist movements, especially for readers unfamiliar with the history of Turkey. This chapter is based entirely on secondary literature as it is intended only as a general introduction.

The first chapter about the particular movements is a survey and analysis of the *Yön* movement, generally regarded as a 'left Kemalist' movement. It was formed and developed around a political journal, *Yön*, which became increasingly popular and influential in the mid-1960s. It is followed by the *Devrim* movement, the offspring of *Yön*. *Devrim* was the journal of the 9 March junta, a conspiracy consisting of retired and active military officers and civil intellectuals, the main cadre of *Yön-Devrim* writers. Though these two movements are intertwined they are examined separately as there were elements within *Yön* opposed to *Devrim's* strategy, and a larger group of actors were involved in *Yön* than with *Devrim*. Most importantly, the

conflicts within *Yön* itself led to the adoption of the *Devrim* strategy, which needs further clarification.

Doğan Avcıoğlu, the main thinker within both *Yön* and *Devrim*, had influenced the younger revolutionaries perhaps more than the basic Marxist works. Even the classics of socialism and communism were only translated into Turkish in the mid-1960s and they were not widely circulated, unlike Avcıoğlu's popular book, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* [The Order of Turkey]. The book was very influential in shaping the view of the younger generations who lacked any ties to a socialist or communist tradition. Avcıoğlu did not consider himself to be a Marxist, and he is generally perceived as an elite Jacobin whose political mission ended with the 12 March intervention, which, however, undermined his influence in the socialist movement of the decade.

The next chapter is devoted to the most important socialist party in the history of Turkey – the TİP. The party is of essential importance as it was the first openly socialist party to gain seats in parliament, with only a few, but very intelligent and vocal members, such as Çetin Altan, Behice Boran and Mehmet Ali Aybar. The TİP significantly managed to establish a federation of revolutionary workers' trade unions [Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu: DİSK] under the leadership of trade unionists in the party. The party pulled together diverse groups, trade unionists, socialist intellectuals, Kurdish socialist intellectuals and Alevites. However, it was dissolved, mainly because of the reaction of the leftist group that implicitly favoured the intervention of the army for a socialist conversion and the inability of the party to cope with these reactions. The TİP was actually an aberration in Turkish leftist history as it advocated socialist revolution as a contemporary revolutionary stage. The socialist revolution discourse, however, was mainly set against the leftists supporting the initiative of the army.

The chapter on the TİP is followed by a study of the National Democratic Revolutionaries [Milli Demokratik Devrimciler: NDR]. The NDR was born initially as an ideological rival of the TİP. Its first leader, Mihri Belli, was a TKP convict, who actually considered the small group led by him to be the 'real TKP'.<sup>3</sup> This group did not recognize the external bureau of the TKP, which was tied to Moscow, nor its appointed General Secretary, Zeki Baştımar. The problem was also due to a political disagreement and the resulting leadership struggle between Belli and Baştımar, which had led to a huge dispute and split in the TKP when it was on trial during 1951. The TKP was factionalized into camps supporting 'Zekiciler' and 'Mihriciler'. Mihriciler in particular accused Baştımar of speaking to the police. Baştımar had preferred a political defence and therefore admitted that many of those on trial had TKP membership. However, he had not actually revealed the identity of very important members who were to be influential in

the 1960s, particularly Behice Boran and Sadun Aren.<sup>4</sup> Belli claims to this day that he had actually opposed the order of the ‘Soviet bureaucracy’ to establish TKP outside Turkey with Zeki Baştımar its General Secretary.<sup>5</sup>

Belli was close ideologically to the *Yön* circle in his perspective on the army, and also had a personal relationship with Doğan Avcıoğlu, especially up to the late 1960s. The NDR circle published political journals such as *Türk Solu* and *Aydınlık* and founded one of the most important leftist publishinghouses of the time, the Sol Yayınları. NDR managed to attract university students through the ‘Idea Clubs’ founded initially by the TİP around the years 1968–9. This was actually the main success of the NDR. However, the movement immediately started to factionalize in early 1970. The sixth chapter will include all the splinter groups born out of the NDR strategy – sometimes in reaction to its Machiavellian expectations for the army to carry out the national democratic revolution ideology – namely the People’s Liberation Party-Front of Turkey [Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Parti-Cephesi: THKP-C], the People’s Liberation Army of Turkey [Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu: THKO] and the group initially defining itself as Proletarian Revolutionary Enlightenment [Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık: PDA].<sup>6</sup> The chapter will question particularly whether there was a break or continuity in the splintering of the NDR movement with reference to the approach to the army.

This will be followed by a study of the line of the TKP, External Bureau. The TKP consisted of a small group acting abroad linked directly to Moscow. It naturally had very little impact, but it needs to be studied, however, as the TKP suddenly became one of the most important socialist/communist movements when it moved to Turkey in the 1970s. Furthermore, as communism was still subject to penalty in Turkey it can also provide a perspective on the condition of the left under ‘free’ conditions, and an indication of the perspective of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the hostility among the TİP and the NDR movements was partly due to the conflict between two representatives of the TKP, ‘Zekiciler’ and ‘Mihriciler’. Some leaders in the TİP, such as Behice Boran, Sadun Aren and Nihat Sargın, were close to Zeki Baştımar.<sup>7</sup> The TKP external bureau had strongly supported the TİP and, as strongly, opposed the NDR movement in the 1960s.

Chapter 8 covers the perspective of the Kuvılcımlı circle, mainly through the various works of its leader, Dr Hikmet Kuvılcımlı. At the time Kuvılcımlı was one of the oldest socialists/communists in Turkey, a member of the TKP in the 1920s. However, he had a critical attitude towards the party and was ousted by TKP members. He established his own legal party, which was active only for a very short time, and had a small but devoted circle of followers from the 1950s onwards. Even though their influence was always limited, their

ideological impact is important, especially since Dr Kivılcımlı was one of the most productive writers within Turkish socialism, aiming to produce original theses for Marxism and the Turkish left. He was one of the very rare individuals within the socialist movement to have dealt in depth with the development of social classes in Turkey throughout its history. Many of his works are devoted to the study of the potential of the Turkish armed forces for socialist conversion and its origins in Turkish history. He was highly respected, especially by younger generations, and he was perceived as one of the ideological and moral fathers of the revolutionary movement together with Mihri Belli. Furthermore, Kivılcımlı's statement on 12 March 1971 in the *Sosyalist* newspaper is one of the best-remembered pieces on the attitude of the left toward the army as he is assumed to have hailed the intervention. Even though this chapter appears to deal with the perspective and attitude of one revolutionary intellectual in Turkey, unlike the other chapters, which focus on movements or organizations, it should be emphasized that 'Doktorcular' as a group or a movement are deeply attached to the ideas of Dr Kivılcımlı, and it is the dedication to his (and his close comrades') ideas that brings these people together and which has made them a separate socialist movement in Turkey from the 1930s up to this day. Therefore, even though one cannot conclude that all his ideas were binding on every member of the group (as in any other movement surveyed in this work) it can still be argued that his views are representative generally of the perspective of a group rather than that of an individual.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, after a brief summary of the main points, an evaluation based on the findings will be made of the movement in the 1960s with its implications for a socialist movement in the following decades.

### 3 Sources and earlier literature

The main source material for the work consists of a rich collection of leftist political journals published during the period 1960–71. Most theoretical and political discussions were carried out through these journals. The major journals and political newspapers used for this study are *Yön*, *Türk Solu*, *Sosyal Adalet*, *Devrim*, *Sosyalist Gazete*, *Aydınlık*, *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık* and *Yeni Çağ*.<sup>8</sup> As well as journals, daily newspapers, party leaflets and programmes, party discussions (of the TİP and TKP), speeches and congress decrees, the radio programmes transmitted by the TKP from abroad are also among the primary sources. The rich archival collections in Amsterdam's IISG, especially the collections on Dr Kivılcımlı and the TİP, have been consulted and used along with these other printed sources. The books of the prominent left leaders such as Behice Boran, Mihri Belli, Doğan Avcıoğlu, Hikmet Kivılcımlı, İdris Küçükömer and the collected works of Mehmet Ali Aybar and Mahir

Çayan have also been generously used. When necessary and possible these written materials have been supplemented by interviews. Interviews were conducted with Mihri Belli, the leader of the NDR line, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, the chair of Dev-Genç and one of the leaders of THKP-C (and the only survivor of Kızıldere), Nihat Sargın, General Secretary of the TİP, Mehmet Emin Yıldırım, a follower of PDA, Ruhi Koç, one of the Dev-Genç leaders, and Zülfikar Özdoğan, a TKP member in the 1970s. Ruhi Koç as a young revolutionary was involved with a military junta in the late 1960s. A number of interviews with prominent leaders that have already been published have been used to illuminate some of the problematic issues. The memoirs of both the leftist actors and the military officers who joined conspiracies with the leftist movements are also among these complementary sources, and have been used to present the personal opinions of the actors involved. It should be emphasized that the present work makes references only to the sources which were published before 2007 as the research was completed by that time.

# THE TURKISH MILITARY IN POLITICS: A SHORT SURVEY

## **1 The Turkish army and the founding of the republic**

The Turkish military emerged as a modernizing force during the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> At the time the Ottoman empire was losing its territories in Europe and the Crimea, and to save the empire and to compete with the Western powers the Ottoman elite considered reorganizing its army and navy according to European (mostly British, French and Prussian) standards. The Ottomans established new schools, brought military instructors from Europe and adopted new courses. Mathematics and science, medicine and European languages were introduced into the military curriculum for the first time. However, the new schools (School of Medicine 1827; War College 1839; Civil Service School 1859) not only brought new technologies and scientific knowledge to the empire, but also Western ideas and ideals of constitutionalism, liberalism and nationalism, so that military cadets and officers were among the first converts to such liberal European ideas.

A few years later, students at the Ottoman army medical college founded the Society of Union and Progress. In 1903, 1904 and 1906 the graduates of the Army Staff College showed that they were convinced that the old order had to be overthrown if Turkey was to survive in the modern world. As a consequence the Turkish military achieved its first coup d'état of the century by deposing Sultan Abdülhamit II in 1908. The Sultan toppled the Young Turks in the following spring, but the military rescued them with a second coup d'état.

The triumphant Union and Progress [İttihat ve Terakki: İT] officers adopted Turkish nationalism and founded secret societies from which the first nationalist leaders emerged. After the Ottoman defeat of 1918 in World War I, the ranking generals on active duty, such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Kazım Karabekir and Ali Fuat Cebesoy, co-operated with local civilian leaders in organizing the Defence of Rights movement in Anatolia. The group led

the Turkish War of Independence and created the Republican People's Party and the first republic of Turkey. The republic, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, carried out wide-ranging legal, social and cultural reforms.

However, Mustafa Kemal was convinced that the interference of the military in politics damaged both the prowess of the army and the political system. He therefore asked all the officers who had fought with him to choose between a political and a military career. Most preferred politics and resigned from the army. Army officers were not only barred from sitting in parliament but even from voting in Kemalist Turkey.<sup>2</sup> It was thought imperative to separate the military from mundane political strife.

Former officers, though, did occupy many key positions in the government and in the CHP. Politicians with a military background constituted a major bloc of about 20 per cent in the Grand National Assembly during single-party rule.<sup>3</sup> Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha, later known as Atatürk, became the first president of the Turkish Republic and was re-elected three times. İsmet Pasha, victorious general at two decisive battles in the War of Independence and later known as İnönü, succeeded to the presidency upon Atatürk's death and was re-elected twice. The position of chief of staff was not subject to ministerial control, and generals on active duty continued also to serve as provincial governors just as in Ottoman times. Civil authority was subordinated to military command during prolonged periods of siege (in the Kurdish populated provinces in the 1920s and in Istanbul throughout World War II).

Apparently, these large numbers of politicians with a military background represented the military interest while the armed forces command (under Marshal Fevzi Çakmak) was able to effectively shield the army from direct political influence. Involvement with politics, or with anything that could disseminate political ideas among the armed forces, was forbidden, with military officers not even being allowed to read newspapers and books on political subjects. They were instructed to follow Atatürk, and maintain and defend his reforms. The principles of Atatürk thus formed the intellectual framework of the military officer.<sup>4</sup> Even though the role attributed to the armed forces was that of complete subservience to civilian rule, the military did assume as their self-image the role of guardian of Kemalist ideals and chief protagonist of modernizing reforms, which was also the ideal of Atatürk himself. The military was formally entrusted with the duty 'to protect and look after' [*korumak ve kollamak*] the republic in Paragraph 35 of the Army Internal Service Law promulgated in 1935.<sup>5</sup>

The Turkish armed forces were more or less cohesive prior to 1960. They were a highly disciplined, privileged and obedient arm of the state directed by civilian ministers in the cabinet and enjoyed popular esteem. Integration

into NATO (1952) and participation in the Korean Conflict, however, stimulated a sense of pride and identity with the West.<sup>6</sup> From 1945 onwards, the transition into multi-party politics caused friction within the military and also compelled military officers to revise their attitudes towards civilian rule. The number of politicians with a military background within the Turkish Grand National Assembly declined to levels of 3 to 5 per cent with the foundation of new parties.<sup>7</sup> Instead, professionals such as lawyers and doctors, but also businessmen and tradesmen, appeared as new actors on the political stage.

The transition led to the establishment of new parties and a new political arena with fewer restrictions on the expression of political ideologies. The strict rules concerning the apolitical attitude and beliefs of military officers were also undermined as policies became more liberalized. Military officers were then also able to choose to support a particular political party openly. A considerable number of military officers, after retiring, became members of different political parties. These developments laid the grounds for the emergence of factions organized according to different, and often diverging, intellectual frameworks within the armed forces. The military increasingly had to face internal strife, diverging conceptions of its role and ideological factionalization reflecting what was common to Turkish politics as a whole.

## 2 The 27 May intervention

### 2.1 *The 27 May intervention interpreted*

Multi-party politics brought new challenges; politics became unpredictable with regard to the status of the armed forces. When the Democrat Party [Demokrat Parti: DP] won the election with an overwhelming majority in 1950 and forced the CHP into opposition, the members of the armed forces split into two main camps: those who accepted the change and declared their loyalty towards the new civilian government and those who became distrustful of civilian rule. The conspiracy against the DP started as early as 1954,<sup>8</sup> and the army finally toppled the DP government on 27 May 1960. Colonel Alparslan Türkeş announced on state radio that the Turkish armed forces had intervened 'to end a fratricidal quarrel' and to 'save democracy from its crisis'. The DP was highly popular among the mass of the peasants, but was equally unpopular among intellectuals, university students and scholars, who welcomed the intervention with a sense of relief and freedom. The rural parts of Turkey, however, remained annoyed and silent.<sup>9</sup>

The discontent of the Turkish army with the DP government is generally explained in terms of the government policies with which the military strongly disagreed. These policies can be categorized as follows: (1) increasing authoritarianism; (2) ambivalence toward modernity and secularism; and (3) ultra-conservative social and economic policies.<sup>10</sup>

The repressive policies of the Menderes government towards the opposition (CHP) and the unconstitutional laws which restricted civil liberties were the main sources of resentment among officers as well as intellectuals. The same is true for the resentment aroused by the use of the armed forces for policing purposes during the last months of the DP administration. The Turkish upheaval, in particular, reflected the army's refusal to let itself be used any further as a tool of Menderes' repressive politics.<sup>11</sup> As the Democrats attempted to use the army to suppress the CHP, they destroyed the last barrier to military intervention: the army tradition of neutrality.<sup>12</sup>

One of the most frequently heard charges against the DP regime was that its leaders betrayed the Atatürk revolution, more specifically its principle of secularism. This had a different and much more comprehensive meaning in Kemalist Turkey than in the West. Kemalist secularism did not limit itself to the separation of religious affairs from political ones. It was a rationalist, scientific-minded, anti-traditionalist and anti-clericalist secularism. Any digression from this understanding would be condemned as 'abuse of religion for political power' and a betrayal of the Atatürk reforms.

The discontent of the military with the economic policies of the Menderes regime has also generally been explained by socio-economic factors. According to one interpretation, rampant inflation and the worsening of the economic condition of military officers, among the groups which suffered most directly and visibly, was one of the major causes. During DP control, private enterprise had flourished as a result of a policy of economic liberalism and extended credit facilities. Social justice was not one of the main considerations for the Democrats. The tax system placed the main burden of public services on salaried personnel, not least because no tax was collected from the agricultural sector, and tax evasion in commerce and industry increased to unusually high levels. The modest increases in salaries could not match the growing inflation. The officers felt humiliated by their situation. They also wanted reform in the armed forces to match the material resources of the NATO armies.<sup>13</sup> Apart from material interests a further cause of resentment for some of the officers was policies that favoured a small wealthy minority at the expense of social justice.

According to one interpretation, 27 May was a restoration of the old powerholder class, the reaction of the bureaucracy or Kemalist intelligentsia's statist ideology to the rising bourgeoisie. However, studies made by scholars and writers such as Çağlar Keyder, Murat Belge and Sungur Savran suggested an opposing interpretation – that the 1960 coup was reformist and again represented the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie while the DP represented the interests of the commercial and the rural powers.<sup>14</sup> It was not only the

intellectuals, university students and military officers but also the industrial bourgeoisie who felt resentment against the DP regime, particularly because of the economic crisis in 1957–8 and the regulations introduced by the DP in 1958.<sup>15</sup> The coup provided the means to organize the state, the law and other national resources so as to allow transition into a new model of accumulation of capital based on industrial production. The liberal constitution of the 1960s and the establishment of a state planning organization aimed to provide the legal and governmental control required to provide the basis for this transformation. The interventions of the bureaucracy were interpreted as representing the class interests of the industrial bourgeoisie.

As we shall see in the following chapters, however, the leftist intellectuals in the 1960s perceived the 27 May coup as a restoration of Atatürkist reforms. The ‘progressive’ army had deposed the rule of the DP as it was a reactionary retrogressive regime dominated by the comprador bourgeoisie and feudal landowners. The Atatürkist army had prevented their plan of establishing a dictatorship and had undertaken democratic reforms by imposing a new liberal constitution that lifted the ban on the formation of socialist parties and trade unions. Therefore, the 27 May coup was defended and plans to extend the framework of the coup by another coup to achieve the transition to socialism were drawn up based on this understanding by some leftist groups.<sup>16</sup>

### *2.2 Disagreement and further coup attempts*

The National Unity Committee [MBK] was founded about two weeks after the coup. There was initial confusion about its make-up, but finally, as revealed on 12 June 1960, it consisted of thirty-eight officers, including five generals and a majority of majors. About twenty members of the MBK could have been classified as radicals.<sup>17</sup> Radicals stressed social reforms as being among the most important problems of the country, while the moderate group tended to emphasize education and secularism.

On the same day as the coup five law professors under the leadership of the President of Istanbul University, Siddik Sami Onar, were brought to Ankara and charged with the duty of drawing up a new constitution. The public view was that there was collaboration between the CHP and the military. The DP was disbanded on 29 September.<sup>18</sup> The ‘non-partisan’ Constituent Assembly that convened in 1961 to write the new constitution and electoral law was composed primarily of CHP delegates (over two hundred out of about two hundred and seventy-two members).<sup>19</sup> A new permanent constitution and electoral law were prepared by a group of seven Istanbul university law professors with the support and guidance of a group of intellectuals. One of the acts of this new constitution was to lift the ban on the formation of trade unions and socialist organizations.

Meanwhile, the MBK was deeply divided over the question of gradually returning power to civilians, and this became clear after 27 May. Several cliques had been formed within the MBK by the autumn of 1960 and it suffered from a fundamental dilemma – whether to carry out basic social reforms or to return power to a democratically elected civilian government as soon as possible. As the MBK finally committed itself to the latter goal, the measures taken to secure the former goals – socio-economic reforms to achieve modernization and a just distribution of welfare – were not able to survive for long.<sup>20</sup> Kemalist tradition played a role in the final result, but apart from this, not all the civilian political leaders and institutions had been discredited at the time of the coup. İsmet İnönü in particular, a veteran military hero, was widely popular in the armed forces. The presence of Gürsel, the former Chief of Staff, as the new president and İnönü as the head of the government during the first three years after 1960 provided a strong guarantee against a new military intervention.<sup>21</sup>

As noted by political scientists, the 1960 coup was also exceptional in that the moderates within the junta were victorious over the radicals.<sup>22</sup> The radicals, however, did not form a cohesive ideological bloc and included a range of ideologies from exponents of the ultra-left to those of the ultra-right. The role of Colonel Türkeş, who was one of the most acclaimed officers within the MBK, was more or less essential in bringing about the final victory of the moderates over the radicals. He served as deputy minister to Gürsel after the coup. Observers thought that Türkeş might oust Gürsel in the same way as Nasser had Nagib in Egypt.<sup>23</sup> Türkeş had been tried for Pan-Turkism and for holding views related to Nazism during World War II, but he was released without being convicted. He was among the most vocal of the radical group, however, and unlike some other generals he was not inclined to the left but to the ultra-right. He started to effect a plan called the ‘Culture Union’ in October. This was a super-ministry formed by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs as a medium for a totalitarian cultural programme free from political pressure and with authoritarian powers. This extremist plan was resisted by both the civilian politicians and the moderates in the MBK. Gürsel announced the dismissal, retirement and temporary exile of fourteen members of the MBK on 13 November. General Madanoğlu had played a central role in the putsch of these fourteen members.<sup>24</sup> The radicals were also out of favour because of their insistence on an extended period of military tutelage, and the controversial firing of 147 university professors. These fourteen military officers (known as ‘14’lüler’) were dispatched as ‘political advisers’ to various Turkish embassies overseas.

After the ousting of the fourteen members in November 1960, high commanders formed a secret organization to exercise influence over the MBK.

The military was quite anxious about a similar movement arising again from younger officers outside the chain of command and, therefore, tried to take preventative measures.<sup>25</sup> The Turkish Intelligence Service was reorganized in 1963 to make it more effective, and a separate Intelligence department was even set up to spy on conspiracies among junior officers.<sup>26</sup> The Silahlı Kuvvetler Birliği [Union of Armed Forces]<sup>27</sup> was established at the same time and intervened in politics with a series of ultimatums during 1961–2. Most importantly, the military assured itself of a constitutional political role with the founding of the National Security Council [Milli Güvenlik Kurulu: MGK]. The MGK was founded in December 1962 to advise the government and the president on both domestic and foreign matters. The chief of staff and commanders of the forces were formal members of the MGK. This body rapidly extended its influence in the state and sometimes acted, and still does, as the real power centre instead of the government.<sup>28</sup>

The Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund [Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu: OYAK] was founded as a large mercantile holding company by special law after the 1960 coup. This was to turn the ‘man on horseback’ into a capitalist.<sup>29</sup> Since the 1970s OYAK has become one of the largest Turkish companies.

There were two more coup attempts led by Colonel Talat Aydemir on 22 February 1962 and 20–21 May 1963. Radical officers were frustrated by what they termed the sterility of the MBK rule and the lack of progress after restoration of parliamentary rule. Even though the first attempt involved a substantial number of colonels and some generals it failed. Aydemir led another unsuccessful attempt, but this time the government was much more determined to put an end to such actions. The insurrectionists were brought to trial before a military court, and two of their leaders (Aydemir and Gürçan) were sentenced to death and executed.

The radicals, having tried and failed twice, had lost their once strong position in the armed forces. The era of unity on the surface and cohesiveness within the officer corps ended with the coup in 1960, and the corps split along doctrinal lines. Underground military conspiracies surfaced periodically throughout the 1960s. Thus, the 1960 revolution ‘failed to bring stability to Turkey, disrupted military cohesiveness and incited future counter-coups.’<sup>30</sup>

### **3 12 March 1971: intervention through an ultimatum**

The final intervention during the long decade was on 12 March 1971. The government was displaced through an ultimatum including a ‘threat of violence towards the civilian authorities.’<sup>31</sup> Social scientists have not been able to define the origins of the coup clearly. Long-term causes for military intervention include student and worker discontent about social and economic inequities and a broad framework of intellectual and political permissiveness.

More immediate precipitators of the coup were the activities of urban guerrillas who committed acts of sabotage, bank robberies and kidnappings.<sup>32</sup>

As Turkey entered the 1970s, parliament seemed incapable of dealing with the domestic strife caused by increasing polarization among the people. The Justice Party [Adalet Partisi: AP] leader and prime minister Süleyman Demirel was himself suffering from a loss of prestige and political power thanks to a scandal involving his brother, rising inflation and a currency devaluation (from 9 to 15 lira to the US dollar) brought on by a balance of payments problem. The officers, as in pre-1960, were unwilling to be used as a police force to quell social unrest, which they saw as a result of the economic policies of the AP and its incompetent leader.<sup>33</sup>

However, evidence also suggests that a main reason for the military intervention was to prevent a seizure of power by a radical leftist clique which included top military officers.<sup>34</sup> The date of the coup, 12 March, was closely related to this conspiracy, which had been planned to take place on 9 March. The military commanders had met on this same date and the radicals were defeated by negotiation and an ultimatum promising reform proclaimed on 12 March. Support for this hypothesis lies not only in the date, but in the fact that a large number of officers retired, transferred or were arrested or purged from the ranks immediately after 12 March and for several months afterwards.

Turkey's top military commanders actually met regularly during the end of the 1960s to discuss the nation's problems through the Military Council [Askeri Şura] and the MGK. However, as domestic strife increased, the senior generals and admirals began conferring more frequently with the Supreme Command Council [Yüksek Komuta Heyeti]. The Supreme Command Council met on 10 March 1971 to discuss the deteriorating situation and apparently reached the decision that some kind of military intervention was indeed necessary. The memorandum of 12 March was signed by the Chief of the General Staff, Memduh Tağmaç, and the three top commanders, Faruk Gürler (land forces), Muhsin Batur (air force) and Celal Eyicioğlu (naval forces). The memorandum blamed the parliament and government for driving '[our] country into anarchy, fratricidal strife and social and economic unrest'. The generals demanded a 'strong and credible government within democratic rules' to carry out reforms. Otherwise, under its duty to 'protect and look after' the Turkish Republic, the armed forces were determined to 'take over the administration of the state'.<sup>35</sup>

When the government resigned on 19 March 1971, a new non-party coalition government was entrusted to Dr Nihat Erim, a professor of international law at the University of Ankara and a member of the CHP, although he was opposed to the left-of-centre course of the CHP. Erim vowed to take speedy action on social and economic reforms and elimination of social unrest and

disorder. The cabinet of twenty-five members was composed primarily of technocrats, professors, ambassadors, engineers and financial and medical experts, as well as two figures with a military background who held important posts. Various cabinets ruled Turkey until the next elections in 1973, with the generals intervening time and again to alter the composition of the government, but were unable to undertake any effective changes in the social and economic systems.<sup>36</sup>

When the urban guerrilla activities and the student disruptions did not abate, martial law was declared in eleven<sup>37</sup> of Turkey's sixty-seven provinces on 26 April 1971. Three of these provinces were Kurdish-populated cities, the others the largest cities with the greatest number of university students, urban workers and urban guerrilla populations.<sup>38</sup> A state of emergency remained in effect for almost two and a half years in some areas. However, although calm was not restored easily the situation did become calmer after the intervention, matched with an excess of military zeal and countless reports of the systematic torture of suspected leftists, which was contrary to the expectations of the leftists, as will be explained in the following chapters. Martial law was gradually lifted, however, during 1971–3. Thousands of people, principally suspected leftists, were detained, arrested, tortured, tried and jailed.<sup>39</sup> These included prominent writers, journalists, trade unionists, party leaders and officers. The TİP was disbanded by court order, and its leader, Behice Boran, was arrested and sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

The liberal constitution of 1961 was blamed for causing the excesses of politics and the extremist movements in the 1960s. The constitution, regarded as being too permissive in terms of leftist ideologies – which were a 'luxury for Turkey' according to Premier Erim – was amended. While conservative, even anti-secularist literature and sects flourished in rural areas, left-orientated literature was confiscated, and left-inclined professors and journalists were harassed and given stiff sentences. Social calm was restored only on the surface, and by means of actually physically destroying the leading cadre of the main left guerrillas. However, political strife and civil violence increased after the mid-70s, only to be finally ended by the military coup of 12 September 1980 led by Chief of Staff General Kenan Evren.

Considering the history of the Turkish Republic during the last forty-five years, one could well assume that leadership in politics and participation and/or interference in government are significant and successful extra-curricular activities of the Turkish military.<sup>40</sup> The armed forces have risen as an autonomous power, and both civil political powers and state bureaucracy have surrendered power as a result of recurrent coups.<sup>41</sup> The military became an important partner in economics as well as politics through OYAK, an organization which

rivals state and private companies both in wealth and in size, and by a variety of organs in effect under civilian governments, most importantly through the MGK. Both OYAK and the MGK as military organizations further blur the distinction between civilian and military spheres of activity. The Turkish republican regime has generally been defined as a 'praetorian republic' because of the sharing of power by the armed forces and civil authorities.

The armed forces have not only become an important economic and political power, but also almost a ruling class formed by a closed caste. The military has apparently managed to obtain public consent for its role as a neutral arbiter of power in protecting the republic and common interests rather than those of certain groups and classes – in a sense protecting the Turkish nation. The armed forces not only emerge as the most trustworthy organ of society and politics in polls and surveys, but confidence in and mythologization of the armed forces as the hero, both when there are economic problems or social upheavals or natural disasters such as earthquakes, can also easily be observed qualitatively.<sup>42</sup> The leftist movements which are supposed to rival the position of the armed forces ideologically are, however, still ambivalent and divided on the subject, even though much has changed after the 1960s.

# BETWEEN KEMALISM AND THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENTALISM: DOĞAN AVCIOĞLU AND *YÖN*

## 1 Introduction

The *Yön-Devrim* movement<sup>1</sup> was the strategy of a radical leftist group active in political life through the publication of two journals *Yön* (1961–7) and *Devrim* (1969–71). The strategy prevalent in Turkey in the 1960s aimed at a radical transformation of society through military intervention to prepare the grounds for transition to socialism. This line represented the radicalization and politicization of intellectuals<sup>2</sup> as well as of the military corps itself.

The movement and especially its perception of and attitude towards the army influenced different classes and groups and shaped the leftist political arena of Turkey during the decade, though it was more in the nature of the intellectual activity of an increasingly narrowing cadre. This was an ideological movement of a group of intellectuals mainly engaged in the socio-economic, cultural and political aspects, or, from their point of view, problems, of Turkey. The contributors had differences of opinion. This was one of the strengths of *Yön*, which permitted a freer flow and exchange of ideas contributing greatly to arousing the interest of Turkish intellectuals in economic, social and political issues.

The general framework of the movement is described in this chapter and a picture drawn of its evolution that focuses on the vital question of how the army was perceived, and how this perception affected the political actions of this group and its relations with other leftist centres of the time. It has not been acknowledged by writers on the *Yön* movement that the views of the editor and main writers changed during the decade. For this reason, I prefer a chronological analysis of the movement focusing on the changes and continuities of the strategy involving military action. Up to the mid-1960s *Yön* – whose

circulation reached 30,000 in 1963 – was and has been to this day one of the most influential of the politically inspired journals in Turkey.<sup>3</sup>

## 2 Politics after the 1960 intervention: vigorous forces as the revolutionary vanguard

Though *Yön* managed to attract a large number of intellectuals who contributed with regular or sporadic articles,<sup>4</sup> it was founded by a small group of intellectuals, journalists and young academicians, in particular Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mümtaz Soysal, İlhan Selçuk, İlhami Soysal, Hamdi Avcıoğlu and Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu.<sup>5</sup> The two main founders were actually two young academics, Doğan Avcıoğlu and Mümtaz Soysal, who met in 1957 and shared a similar worldview. Avcıoğlu was the editor and main ideologue of *Yön*.<sup>6</sup>

*Yön* introduced itself as a weekly newspaper of ideas and art [Haftalık fikir ve sanat gazetesi]. The weekly appeared in Ankara and comprised twenty-four pages (later reduced to twenty and then sixteen pages) in large format. The editor, Doğan Avcıoğlu, wrote regular editorials. A survey taken among Ankara University students in 1965 showed that *Yön* was their favourite magazine and it was the most widely read periodical among student leaders, scoring 40.4 per cent, followed by the popular weekly *Akis* with only 16 per cent. *Yön*'s circulation was reduced to about 6,000–7,000 in 1965. The first issue appeared on 20 December 1961 and the last on 30 June 1967.

*Yön*, literally 'direction' in Turkish, was intended to show the direction Turkey should take to find its way out of its economic, political and social problems. This was naturally regarded as socialism.<sup>7</sup> *Yön* had used the taboo word 'socialism' for the first time in the 1960s and presented it as a model of development.<sup>8</sup> *Yön* broke the taboo on the use of the word in its very first issue. Doğan Avcıoğlu used the term when he declared firmly that in the second half of the twentieth century socialism was the only road for underdeveloped countries. According to *Yön*, the basic problem affecting Turkey was economic development and the political crisis actually reflected a distorted and backward economic structure. This was declared in the launch manifesto of *Yön* as a form of declaration for those who were in agreement to sign. The statement drew great attention and caused much excitement. It explained that the 'final solution of the problem of education, the enlivening of Turkish democracy, the realization of social justice and the establishment of a democratic regime on firm foundations' depended upon the success of rapid economic development.<sup>9</sup>

The statement was not completely original; some of its principles had already been expressed in the *Kadro* magazine about thirty years earlier, and there were other not completely new ideas. The statement was also quite modest, as it did

not claim to encompass the solutions to all problems, but aimed at opening up a debate. However, in terms of its timing, content and especially the character of those signing it, it provoked attention both locally and abroad.

*Yön* was radical in its determination that the political crisis of Turkey was an outcome of the distorted economic structure of the country and only through radical reforms in this area could Turkey's problems be solved. In other words, a change of order, or put simply socialism, was required to overcome the socio-economic problems. Socialism was interpreted more or less in a technocratic manner as a method for rapid development in social justice.<sup>10</sup> Development was measured by assessing the rate of growth. *Yön* devoted a great deal of space to proving that socialism or socialist methods worked as a development method. Avcıoğlu, for example, compared socialist countries such as China and the Soviet Union, where he argued that the growth rate was 6–7 per cent and 12 per cent respectively, with Western countries such as France, Germany or even the US, where it was between 0.9 and 2.5 per cent. He believed that even countries like the US were starting to suffer under a liberal economic system, and that the US's early economic boom was the consequence of socialist methods adopted during World War II. The liberal capitalist system in these terms was defined as unproductive, leading to many social and economic problems, such as a high level of unemployment in rich countries. As a result, *Yön* acknowledged that socio-economic problems such as famine, unemployment and homelessness would disappear through development, thus bringing about real democracy and social justice.

The *Yön* circle drew attention to their demand for social justice [sosyal adalet], which they thought could be achieved in Turkey through 'Turkish socialism'. *Yön* engaged in the adaptation of Turkish socialism first through the elite and then through the popular classes. Interestingly, it was emphasized that the Turkish military sided with those desiring social justice and rapid development, and there was an implied warning that the present unequal distribution of national income could otherwise lead to communism.<sup>11</sup> Though Turkish socialism meant different things to different people, it was generally emphasized that it was a brand of socialism specifically suitable for Turkey and other underdeveloped countries, and was actually very different from communism. For Turkey, it was an eclectic ideology based on Kemalism and labourism, which was actually more like *étatisme*.<sup>12</sup> Kemalism, the ideology of the nation state, was a third source of justification for socialism. As noted above, Kemalism was perceived as reconcilable with socialism, as it embodied the essence of socialism. Socialism was then just an advanced form of Kemalism. *Yön* actually claimed that the founder of the republic, Atatürk, was personally

never against socialism and that if the conditions had been right he could have defined himself as a socialist.

Though labourism or any form of socialism seemed very remote from the concepts of Kemalism, *Yön* claimed that *étatisme*, an economic principle already applied in Turkey, could be a basic ingredient of Turkish socialism, and that this was reconcilable with Kemalism.<sup>13</sup>

*Yön* emphasized that this was a new interpretation and application of *étatisme* that was different from the current practice, regarded as state capitalism. State intervention in politics benefited the capitalist classes and was actually intended to build a capitalist class through the influence of state initiative, but the policy now advocated would instead benefit labour. Thus, it was defined as neo-*étatisme*, which could be an intermediary solution to transcend capitalism and to build socialism in the shortest way possible. Kemalism, especially with its principle of *étatisme*, even though this was not the current practice,<sup>14</sup> maintained the link between the contemporary capitalist system and a future socialist one. Socialism, however, could only be a later option for Turkey, since there was as yet neither a major industry nor a strong working class.<sup>15</sup>

The intermediate period leading towards socialism through a broader practice of *étatisme* directed at the public good, which was itself regarded as a transitory period, was defined in various terms, such as the non-capitalist development road, the transition period from capitalism to socialism, the national liberation-type development road and the national revolutionary development model. Even though *Yön* considered this programme Turkish-style socialism and the current revolutionary stage as Kemalism,<sup>16</sup> the programme for this transitory period corresponded with what was known in leftist literature as a national democratic revolution stage. *Yön's* strategy for transition to a socialist regime was basically an adaptation of a more recent Soviet project of non-capitalist development. This focused mainly on the elimination of pre-capitalist classes and the ending of any existing ties with imperialist powers. In this respect, one of the initial and main pillars of the revolution was to be an agrarian reform to end the exploitive and semi-feudal relations in the land-holding system, mainly through redistribution of land. Especially in the eastern parts of Turkey, mainly in Kurdish populated areas, *ağas* owned a large proportion of the land and even a number of villages. Many articles in *Yön* questioned the limitation of the economic and related political power of the *ağas* (owners of large estates) and the reapportionment of land by distributing it to peasants (though with generous compensation for the *ağas*) who owned very little or none. There was a degree of difference on what should come next. While Mümtaz Soysal claimed that every peasant should be given his share of the plot of land and that co-operatives should only be formed later, Avcıoğlu

regarded the establishment of broad co-operatives as the immediate task, both for the abolition of the exploitation of peasants and for increasing agricultural productivity. Lively discussion on agrarian reform continued in *Yön*, focused on the need for change in the semi-feudal production methods by abolishing the *ağalık* system and the eradication of money lenders and middlemen, especially in the south, east and south-east regions of Turkey.

In these terms, *Yön* advocated that the initial step of the reform programme should be land reform in order to break down the economic and political dependency of the peasantry. According to Avcioğlu, land reform was to be backed up with education via co-operatives and trade unions to generate consciousness in the peasantry.<sup>17</sup> The next stage consisted mainly of a massive drive towards industrialization. *Yön* considered that a working class would be formed through industrialization, and generating consciousness through their organizations would form the objective conditions required for the advance to socialism.<sup>18</sup>

This transitional regime was defined as a national democracy – neither a bourgeois nor a socialist democracy but a transitional stage between the two. The difference was based on the character of the class holding power – in a bourgeois democracy the bourgeoisie ruled, and in a socialist democracy the working class did. However, in a national democracy all the national forces, in other words, all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces, would share power. Though workers and peasants would be allocated a greater share of power and importance, ultimately the power would be invested in a National Front [Milli Cephe].<sup>19</sup>

The National Front and the non-capitalist development road strategies adopted by *Yön* were the main theoretical scenarios, in which the military were given a very central position. The non-capitalist development road was formulated by Soviet Union ideologues for Third World countries where both the working class and the bourgeoisie were weak in order to bring about socialism through a transitory period under the leadership of *any* democratic class, whether workers or peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, progressive intellectuals, revolutionary military officers or the national bourgeoisie. The non-capitalist development road advocated a state-centred but mixed economy, agricultural reform or land reform, modernization through industrialization and improvement in education and health systems. These were generally regarded as an alternative development model for Third World countries in comparison with the capitalist road to development with a parliamentary system as advocated by Western countries. The view proposed Soviet aid to new states opposing imperialism. The model actually raised important questions about the Marxist class theory of the state and class alignments and class contradictions.<sup>20</sup>

This conceptualization gained still more ground in the Cold War era, especially when the Soviet Union (in 1957) noted the inequality of countries worldwide and accordingly defined imperialism as the main enemy.<sup>21</sup> This was a new theory espoused by the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and communist parties orientated towards it. The two-stage theory of revolution was replaced by an evolutionary concept of the 'non-capitalist development road' made possible with the existence of a powerful socialist bloc. It was argued that in the Third World the bourgeoisie was weak and the working class had not yet become a leading force. Instead, through Soviet aid there existed possibilities for the creation of National Democracy ruled by a United National-Democratic Front under the leadership of *any* democratic class, including revolutionary military officers. The main criterion of the National Democracy state of was its opposition to imperialism and co-operation with the socialist bloc. It was not clear how new regimes would eventually proceed beyond capitalism.

The basic contradiction was between the imperialist countries and the Soviet bloc, rather than the class contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It was assumed that the Soviet Union would protect the colonized or dependent countries. In this context, the theory of the non-capitalist development road advocated that through the intervention and leadership of the army – the most modern and dynamic force in Third World countries – the new democratic, nationalist and progressive states could evolve into socialist states after victory in the wars of independence. Such an approach was brought to the attention of communist parties after military interventions in Iraq, Egypt and Indonesia. The views of Soviet ideologues on the military in what they termed backward countries was that if the military attained consciousness of its special importance in society and accepted its historical missionary and vanguard role it could act as a body that was above the class divisions and embodied the ideals of the nation.<sup>22</sup>

In a view very close to that of the Soviets, although it was not a communist organization tied to the USSR, *Yön* declared that civil and military intellectuals were destined to change society from above, and that they could keep their position of leadership if they changed their mentality with respect to the development of society. These groups had proved that they were decisive in the final analysis by the intervention of 27 May 1960.<sup>23</sup> However, according to *Yön* they were 'unaware of major problems' and 'devoid of a development philosophy'<sup>24</sup> and 'mistaken over the diagnosis.'<sup>25</sup> The main indication of this was their adherence to the classical parliamentary system that according to *Yön* was unworkable in a backward society since parliamentary democracy could not break down the feudal system and ensure independence. The main strategy of

*Yön*, then, was to change the social structure through a military intervention that would break the dependency of workers and peasants on the hegemonic classes. Even though this sounds rather contradictory, the aim was to build 'real democracy' and attain absolute economic and political independence. This strategy was called *revolutionarism* in contrast to the parliamentary method, which was regarded with disdain as parliamentarism [parlamentoculuk]. The revolution was to be carried out under the leadership of the vigorous forces [zinde kuvvetler] as it would be in all Third World countries.

Socialism could be an option for the working class and the peasantry after this transitory period. This transitory stage was defined as the *minimum programme* or the *national democratic revolution programme* with all socialists and the vigorous forces being called to unite around it. In this respect, Avcıoğlu, commenting on the 27 May military intervention, argued that vigorous forces mostly consisting of the petty bourgeoisie were the 'pioneering force of economic and political independence'.<sup>26</sup> As the national democratic revolution (NDR) mainly consisted of democratization and nationalization of the means of production, Avcıoğlu advocated that if: '[apart from the working class] there are other powerful classes or groups that are strong enough to nationalize the means of production and weaken the basis of imperialism, such a movement that weakens capitalism and imperialism can easily transform into socialism after a period'.<sup>27</sup>

This emphasis on the vigorous forces as the vanguard of the NDR was explained through the change of the main antagonism in Third World countries. Avcıoğlu explained in the manner of the Soviets that in current times, in the Third World countries, the main contradiction was not between the bourgeoisie and the working class as in Western countries, but between imperialist and dependent countries. Turkey was considered a Third World country, still semi-feudal and semi-dependent, hence the theory was applicable to the Turkish situation. According to Avcıoğlu, vigorous forces were deeply conscious of the condition and were convinced of their power and talent to lead the liberation war.<sup>28</sup>

### 3 Socialism as a development model

As mentioned above, the *Yön* circle regarded socialism as the only model for development to a state of freedom and social justice. Two major aspects were emphasized in this respect. First, development through capitalist methods would require a fascist or at least a quasi-fascist state, in other words simply lead to the oppression of people by the use of violence,<sup>29</sup> and second, in a semi-dependent country (even through oppression) development could not be attained without cutting links with imperialism, which was impossible

if the present capitalist system supported by the US was protected.<sup>30</sup> Given these premises, to assure development, the first prerequisite was to outlaw imperialism and break any existing ties with world monopolies. This could be maintained through the seizure of state power so as to control the economy by *étatiste* policies and the nationalization of all firms, companies, infrastructure, banks and transportation systems. Imperialism was defined as US imperialism, and the state of Turkey was compared to other Third World countries with the claim that even though Turkey was the first country to wage war successfully against imperialism, by trying to follow a capitalist path afterwards through contact with the imperialists it could not develop and eventually fell behind. Other Third World countries following a socialist order, on the other hand, were able to develop rapidly. *Yön's* arguments on this issue were based on the dependency theory<sup>31</sup> and works by prominent Marxist writers such as Oscar Lange and Paul Baran. Its most recognized practical model was that of a neighbouring country – and like Turkey, a predominantly Muslim country – Colonel Nasser's Egypt.<sup>32</sup>

Socialism was introduced, then, almost not as a political system, but as an effective and just model and almost a prescription for the current miseries of Turkey and the other underdeveloped Third World countries. *Yön* tried to prove this in articles comparing the economic models, policies and growth rate in capitalist versus socialist countries as well as by resorting to 'scientific' proofs. Remarkably, a photo of the great physicist Albert Einstein was printed on the cover page together with his statement that 'in the age of space socialism is the only road'.<sup>33</sup> Another example was the discussion by three professors, Enver Ziya Karal, Bahri Savcı and Sadun Aren, who had more or less agreed that Turkey could be rescued by socialism. The approach of the *Yön* circle was in a way a continuation of the Young Turk tradition which had basically asked how Turkey could be saved.

The understanding of the current class struggle in Turkey also differed as a result of a model that was built on the conflict between imperialist and dependent countries. *Yön* perceived the struggle as between *progressive intellectuals* who first became aware of the situation versus *conservative forces*. Though *Yön* made affirmative references to Kemalist ideology and Atatürk, it also emphasized that the lack of an economic philosophy and programme meant that in the meantime revolutionary changes in the social and economic structure of Turkey could not be carried out. Consequently, Turkey had fallen under the hegemony of conservative powers, an alliance of comprador bourgeoisie, local gentry and feudal landlords [ağas] which had become the internal agent of US imperialism. The policy change after World War II was a result of the rising bourgeoisie's partial hegemony over the state as well as rich capitalist

countries' use of military and economic aid as a means to export their system and create a bourgeoisie dependent on these monopolies in Turkey.<sup>34</sup> Unlike the Western bourgeoisie, the Turkish bourgeoisie could not carry out social transformation (a bourgeois revolution), as they were not developed enough. The bourgeoisie had relations with land, hence could not eliminate feudalism and carry out industrialization, which could lead to development. The bourgeoisie in Turkey were instead busy with trade and unproductive production, mere profit-seeking adventures, and furthermore depended on foreign capital and relations and hence were condemned as *comprador*. In this respect, *Yön* led a relentless campaign against the bourgeoisie and feudal landlords as obstacles to the progress and independence of Turkey. The anti-bourgeois drive was directed at the rich merchants, bankers, factory owners, local capitalists and their illegal gains and foreign capital.<sup>35</sup>

The masses formed by the workers and peasants were, however, under the ideological and economic hegemony of these powers. Avcıoğlu defined this situation metaphorically as a Gordian knot [kördüğüm].<sup>36</sup> He pointed out that there was a *paradox* as people were following and supporting enemies of the people but ironically were against the powers defending the people. Avcıoğlu warned that unless this Gordian knot were untied Turkey would be like 'a tree standing upside down'. The use of this metaphor actually implied an intervention by force, presumably the military, as the Gordian knot, according to the myth, was cut through by the sword of Alexander the Great.

As the working class and labourers were under the influence of the hegemonic ideology of this 'contra-revolutionary conservative power circle' and devoid of political consciousness they were not yet agents of change as in Marxist socialism. Hence, the responsibility fell on the intellectuals to lead and be the ideological spokesmen of the current stage of the struggle that was regarded as Turkey's War of Independence and prepare the cadres. The *Yön* movement can be defined as elitist, as its advocates believed social developments and politics were determined, or drawn up, by a group of military and civil intellectuals. They recommended also relying on the workers, but initially on the petty bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats – important in their role as state administrators – and especially military officers.

These were the general views expressed in *Yön*, and the ideological sources of their strategy that was based on action by the military. However, the strategy of the *Yön* group changed, adjusting itself to the political developments of the era. The following section focuses on the change and continuity in the views, discourse and strategy of the *Yön* movement, in order to cast light on the general political factors and the mentality of its receivers (the *Yön* circle) and explain the attitude towards the military, especially in the late 1960s.

#### 4 *Yön* pushing for reforms

The *Yön* circle in its early stages actually still believed that the current centre of power could implement radical reforms especially if they were backed by extra-parliamentary opposition – mainly intellectuals and especially the military. This was the main role delegated to the armed forces, to support or push the present government into carrying out radical reforms. Thus, *Yön* tried to persuade the CHP in government and the bureaucrats and ex-MBK members now in parliament as life-time senators on the one hand to prepare a reform programme, and on the other hand to unite opponents around this reform programme. According to *Yön*, the opponents were the progressives (military, workers, intellectuals and bureaucrats), the *vigorous forces* versus the *reactionary forces* of the ağas, bourgeoisie, local gentry and their political representatives who supported the status quo. Hence, the discourse of *Yön* focused mainly on opposition among progressives versus reactionaries, or reformists versus defenders of the status quo.

The *Yön* circle actually doubted that a radical reform programme would be implemented by the current government, where the majority was held by the conservatives. However, their hopes still rested in the government as it was led by the elderly İsmet İnönü – the commander and victor of the West Front during the Independence War and one of the main founders of the republic – and therefore one of the most prestigious members of the revolutionary civil and military intelligentsia cadre. *Yön* tried to influence Prime Minister İnönü directly through various editorials<sup>37</sup> to convince him not to seek the support of the merchants and local gentry within the party to implement a reform programme, but to rely on the vigorous forces, with the armed forces as its most important or powerful constituent.

*Yön* considered the armed forces mainly as a state organ, but emphasized at the same time that the Turkish army was *special*. The Turkish army had a different structure from other armies as it consisted of commoners originating from the lower classes, not from the aristocracy or the bourgeoisie as did Western or South American armies. Moreover, the Turkish army had a revolutionary tradition and a historical mission towards progress owed mainly to Atatürk.<sup>38</sup> Thus, *Yön* advocated that the armed forces could support the implementation of reforms for a rapid development in social justice. The social justice movement that gained momentum after the 27 May military intervention proved that the armed forces were willing to put an end to the poverty of the people.<sup>39</sup> *Yön* further suggested that the military could be used as a security force against the reactionaries who would try to prevent the implementation of reforms.

There was actually a basis in the military for *Yön*'s suppositions about the army. At that time the military was still in turmoil, as the intervention by

junior officers in 1960 had not settled socio-political demands, particularly from the radical bloc.<sup>40</sup> A group of dissatisfied officers led an abortive coup attempt on 22 February 1962 under the leadership of Colonel Talat Aydemir.<sup>41</sup> Though it is not known whether the *Yön* group and Aydemir had direct links, there was clearly a close similarity in discourse.<sup>42</sup> Colonel Aydemir had stated that his attempt aimed at initiating radical reforms to establish social justice, which he believed would bring real democracy. There are some indications that the *Yön* circle at least was informed.<sup>43</sup> Just one day prior to the attempt, Avcıoğlu's editorial emphasized that progress depended almost inevitably on the army.<sup>44</sup> And in the first article following the 22 February attempt Avcıoğlu warned İnönü that he was using his 'last chance' and that 'vigorous forces' were 'waiting impatiently for a sign from the leader'. Agricultural reform, especially in the landholding system to remove the vestiges of feudalism, and a new tax reform to establish social justice were cited as among the most urgently needed reforms. The carrying out of these reforms was acknowledged as the test awaiting the İnönü government.<sup>45</sup>

*Yön's* involvement with the army in this period was more indirect. *Yön* tried to influence the military with their ideas, and in the meantime to persuade the CHP in government to make reforms using the support of the military. Actually, *Yön* used the armed forces as a stick, warning the government that if reforms were not undertaken the military itself could take direct action.<sup>46</sup> However, the government did not carry out the reform programme *Yön* was advocating; especially disappointing was the way the Development Plan prepared by the State Planning Organization (SPO) turned out. *Yön* had had extremely high expectations of this planning institute. The majority of SPO experts had signed the *Yön* manifesto and they were among regular readers sharing similar opinions.<sup>47</sup> Actually, of all the forces involved in 27 May and its supporters, the SPO was the organization with the means to meet the demands for social justice, planned development and *étatiste* policies. Prime Minister İnönü seemingly supported these demands. He had assured leftist intellectuals and the radicals in the military that when the plan was prepared ('by genial socialist boys of the organization') their demands would be met. However, the plan was a complete disappointment as a result of pressure from the right-wing parties. The experts hitherto praised by İnönü resigned from the SPO as well as from the party, blaming İnönü for remaining passive and continually making concessions to the opposition.<sup>48</sup> SPO experts declared that under a capitalist system, planning was 'nothing but a joke' and only under a non-capitalist system could planning work efficiently.<sup>49</sup> Frustrated, *Yön* changed its position towards the CHP and its leader İnönü, and bitterly claimed that the old Turkey was trying to survive 'in the shelter of İnönü', who

had become the 'most powerful spokesman of the status quo forces'.<sup>50</sup> This marked the end of hopes in the CHP and its leader İnönü, and a change of strategy was hinted at by the remark that it also meant 'the hopeful beginning of new developments'.<sup>51</sup>

### 5 Organizing opposition: the founding of the SKD

The *Yön* circle planned to establish a party that was to advocate a staged transformation from capitalism to socialism. They did not think of joining the TİP on account of its emphasis on class leadership. The *Yön* circle argued that during the present conditions of classes and forces insistence on the leadership of the working class would *alienate* forces that could adopt socialism in the long term.<sup>52</sup> Vigorous forces would not accept the leadership of the working class under the present conditions. Instead of a political party, they founded the Socialist Culture Society [Sosyalist Kültür Derneği: SKD], which resembled the Fabian Society.<sup>53</sup>

The SKD was founded by forty-one members in early 1963 (probably in the first days of January). Among these members were the *Yön* founders Doğan Avcıoğlu, Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu, İlhami Soysal and Mümtaz Soysal. Senator Niyazi Ağırnaslı, Türkkava Ataöv, Şevket Süreyya, syndicalist Seyfi Demirsoy, writer Müşerref Hekimoğlu, Adnan Başer Kafaoğlu, Aslan Başar Kafaoğlu (from SPO), economist Attila Karaosmanoğlu, Assistant Professor İdris Küçükömer, Professor Cahit Tanyol, an assistant at the time, and Mahir Kaynak, a secret service agent (as revealed after 1971), were among the other members.<sup>54</sup>

The Proclamation of Establishment of the SKD contained a stronger condemnation of the political and economic order. Parliamentary democracy and capitalism were portrayed as the source of all the evils of the last decades. While the manifesto of *Yön* had more or less centred on similar problems facing Turkey with the discourse being based on such concepts as Atatürk revolutions, social justice, development and *étatisme* as appropriate remedies for the socio-economic and political problems of Turkey, the proclamation of the SKD also included moral considerations and hence defined socialism as the *only* just, ethical, democratic, humane and efficient model for social justice to develop in Third World countries. It was emphasized, strikingly, that this was also an ideal of the Turkish Republic: the failure of the capitalist and parliamentary democratic system to ensure development would accentuate class conflicts, which also meant departing from the republican ideals of creating a classless society. It was stated that after World War II Turkey had tried to install a capitalist system and develop through this. However, despite partial interventions of the state, the capitalist system could not ensure rapid

development. Moreover, capitalism damaged the socio-economic balance between different groups in Turkey leading to sharp class differences. Socialism was presented, then, not only as a remedy for social and economic problems, but actually as the only democratic way to prevent extreme social conflicts. The capitalist development road, however, led to severe class differences and consequently aggravated conflict, disrupting democratic rights and freedom. Socialism could alleviate or eliminate class differences arising in underdeveloped capitalist countries.<sup>55</sup>

In this respect there was a call to ‘constructive intellectuals’ and those concerned with ‘social problems’ to unite around an ‘understanding of socialism’ under the principles of ‘nationalism, freedom and democracy’. It was emphasized that freedom was *real freedom* if it had the goal of liberating people from their living conditions so as to let them live an honourable life. It was also emphasized that ‘Turkish socialists’ considered ‘labour and human life’ as the ‘highest form of value.’<sup>56</sup> The socialists of Turkey did not aim to abolish private ownership, but regarded the state as the main body responsible for sustaining rapid development and maintaining social justice in a country. They defined their objective as that of building a socialist mixed economy to prevent further exploitation of the people.

A sort of elitism was explicit in the proclamation, as it delegated the mission of organizing society and liberating the people to the intellectuals. The class struggle was not perceived as the mover of history, but rather as an outcome of a distorted capitalist system, to be eliminated by a more egalitarian state-controlled economy. An interesting remark was made about the republican ideal, that of creating a classless society, but was actually a corporate-state ideal intended to lessen the struggle of the labouring classes of the Kemalist regime, and the *Yön* cadre was undoubtedly well aware of that. Still, their aspiration for a classless society, though an ideal of communism – a stage more advanced than socialism and non-existent in the current world – implied the will to pass over and eliminate class leadership (or dictatorship as the Marxist-Leninist terminology put it) of the working classes, actually the best bulwark against class-war and communism.<sup>57</sup> The appeal was aimed largely at non-Marxist civil and military bureaucrats.

The *Yön* circle had the intention of turning the SKD into a social-democratic party.<sup>58</sup> This model resembled the strategy of the Fabian Society. The journal *Yön* probably had the same function as *Fabian Essays*, and the SKD was also established along the lines of the Fabian Society, and like the Fabians the members imagined establishing a party that defended a staged transformation from capitalism to socialism.<sup>59</sup> Essays on the Fabian Society and the Labour Party were actually published in *Yön*.<sup>60</sup> The aim was to make socialism

a legitimate ideology, and to prepare the ground for a broad-based socialist party. However, because of differences about the class vanguard the SKD was actually a rival to the TİP with a separate line on socialism.<sup>61</sup> Behice Boran, one of the leaders of the TİP, criticized the intellectuals founding the SKD for not accepting the special role of the working class in a socialist struggle and instead favouring the cadre of intellectuals, experts and technocrats in their ideology.<sup>62</sup>

The SKD had three offices: a central one in Ankara and others in Istanbul and Diyarbakır. Its main activities were panel discussions and conferences entitled ‘Saturday Meetings’ planned by Avcıoğlu. These were very influential, especially among university students and intellectuals; the conferences were full of military officers, civil bureaucrats, writers, academics, students, teachers and politicians. Saturday meetings centred on two main themes: (1) to demonstrate the inability of capitalism to sustain development; and (2) to disseminate the view that the transition to socialism could be carried out only by reformulating Kemalism.<sup>63</sup> The integration of Kemalism and socialism in principle would prioritize the interests of the whole of society instead of a special group, and valuing labour as the ultimate reality would combine with Atatürk’s principles of populism, *étatisme* and revolutionarism.<sup>64</sup> Hence, the movement was defined by *Yön* as a *democratic national liberation movement* [demokratik milli kurtuluş hareketi] and the *Second National Liberation War* [İkinci Milli Kurtuluş Savaşı].

This society was to be turned into a socialist party with a programme based on Kemalism, to attain the transition to socialism with membership made up of university students and civil and military intellectuals, though the plan was never actually realized.<sup>65</sup> Perhaps it was due to the political non-commitment of *Yön* to parliamentary democracy, or at least its ambivalence about the strategy. Essays examining General Nasser’s regime, for example, were published almost alongside essays on the Fabians, and the *Yön* cadre pragmatically, and more than that, opportunistically, supported conspiracies within the military during the same period. Such an attitude became explicit with the new developments in politics: the pardoning of DP members who had received prison sentences and were in a Kayseri prison, and the second intervention attempt by Colonel Aydemir. *Yön* opposed the pardoning, and printed provocative essays as well as photos of marching students and young cadets with the slogans ‘no pardon to the murderers’ and ‘army–youth together’, reminding the coalition of opposition by youth, the educated middle class and the army to the DP before the military intervention in 1960.

As was revealed later, several juntas were being established within the army, one of which was under the leadership of Colonel Aydemir. Mümtaz Soysal

later explained that close liaisons [sıcak temaslar] were established with these juntas and the *Yön* circle.<sup>66</sup> Strikingly, *Yön* even published pamphlets from the Aydemir junta.<sup>67</sup> Mümtaz Soysal explained that they were trying to turn the coup into a people's movement by 'building a bridge between the junta and the masses' via the leadership of *Yön*.<sup>68</sup> They believed that by following a social economic policy that improved the living conditions of people, in other words by establishing a populist regime governed by a junta, this could be assured.<sup>69</sup>

The release of the imprisoned ex-President Celal Bayar in March 1963 and his welcoming in Ankara by huge crowds triggered Colonel Aydemir, and his junta intervened unsuccessfully for the second time on 21 May. *Yön* was closed down for fourteen months under martial law for publishing essays supporting a military intervention. The length of *Yön*'s sentence was directly related to its publicity – since 1946 no press medium had been closed down for as long as fourteen months. *Yön* had lost its first gamble to move along a non-capitalist road as soon as possible with the intervention of the armed forces. Some of the intellectuals hitherto supporting *Yön* joined the ranks of the TİP after this failure.

### 6 Organizing an anti-imperialist common front

*Yön* reappeared on 25 September 1964. It then devoted its energy almost exclusively to forming an anti-imperialist common front, which was to take political shape especially in the next government after the general election of October 1965. Though *Yön*'s theory and strategy, defined as the non-capitalist development road, was based on the dichotomy among the imperialist powers and dependent nations, the anti-imperialism issue became more explicit with concrete political proof of political dependency in the form of the intervention of the US in Turkish policy on Cyprus. President Makarios of Cyprus had announced on 30 November 1963 that the private legal rights of Turkish inhabitants of Cyprus would be abolished. Turkey was getting ready to send troops in response to attacks on Turks by Greek Cypriots. US President Lyndon B. Johnson declared (in a notorious letter) that Turkey could not take military action with US arms without the approval of the US. Prime Minister İnönü did not hesitate to declare that 'a new world would be built and Turkey would become a part of it'.<sup>70</sup>

An anti-imperialism wave arose from this political conflict among the two countries. *Yön* was very influential in raising what it called the 'anti-imperialism flag', especially among university students, with a Coca-Cola boycott for example. *Yön*'s famous Coca-Cola boycott was generally consented to in the universities. The boycott had started after issue no. 119 of *Yön* with the slogan 'Cola is a poison, don't drink it'. Instead of Coca-Cola, a Turkish brand

of soda was sold in the university canteens. Aydın Çubukçu and Ertuğrul Kürkçü, student leaders of the time, explained to Atılgan in an interview that *Yön* raised an awareness of imperialism among the youth.<sup>71</sup>

*Yön* called to all those standing in the 'nationalist, real Atatürkist, leftist camp' to wage a 'Second Liberation War' against imperialism and its local collaborators. In this respect, *Yön* tried to generate consciousness against imperialism by using concrete examples to show how the 'US had exploited Turkey socially and politically', but 'fundamentally economically', and how Turkey had become a 'new colony', making the US a 'state within a state'.<sup>72</sup> Several SKD conferences were held repeatedly emphasizing that relationships with the imperialists and foreign capital were the main obstacles to the development of Turkey. Yet it was not possible to wage war directed only against this foreign enemy, as Uncle Sam had created, with his capitalist order, the internal supporters of its system through a large network of businessmen, administrators, lawyers, professors and writers. The war against imperialists must also be waged against internal collaborators in imperialism.

*Yön* reformulated anti-imperialism rhetoric with the notion of 'real nationalism'. This was more likely the case as it was very much the habit of the right-wing parties to accuse any leftist organization or movement of communism, and hence having links with foreign powers (the Soviet Union) as mouthpieces of Moscow. This accusation had a doubly emotional impact, as Russia had formerly been the traditional, geopolitical enemy of Turkey. *Yön* emphasized, however, that the real betrayers of the nation were those who collaborated with the US in the exploitation of Turkey, defining them as the 'lackeys of US imperialism'.<sup>73</sup> According to *Yön*, Turkish people were polarized politically into 'pro-American' versus 'nationalist', 'leftist' versus 'rightist', 'fake Atatürkist' versus 'real Atatürkist' camps. The struggle against the imperialist US and its internal collaborators was to be carried on by all 'national forces' appropriate to the national democratic revolution discourse.

As anti-imperialism was the main discourse of the TİP as well, these two leftist movements were able to unite around a common goal for the first and last time during the decade.<sup>74</sup> This friendship and mutual support grew stronger particularly after the chair of the TİP, Mehmet Ali Aybar, had visited the headquarters of *Yön* in November 1964 and made a call to all modernist vigorous forces of Turkey to unite. The two separate movements united under the goal of the Second National Liberation War or the second Kuvay-ı Milliye, the term used by the TİP. Referring to the nationalist historical source of the *first* National Liberation war was popular at the time. Atatürk's picture with his war cap on was one of the most enduring images of the period both in *Yön* and in the party buildings of the TİP. His motto about the war waged against

imperialism and capitalism was continually being quoted. *Yön* courageously published *Kurtuluş Savaşı Destanı* [Independence War Epic] by the famous communist poet Nazım Hikmet, who had died in the diaspora in the Soviet Union, partly also to prove that socialists were genuine nationalists.

One of the important political events of the time was the reaction of the CHP to the US. The CHP joined the anti-imperialist front by accusing the new leader of the AP, Süleyman Demirel, because of his close relationship with the US. Meanwhile, just a few months before the 1965 election, the CHP announced that it was a left-of-centre party. This caused *Yön* to change its position on the CHP yet again, trying to bring the party into a more clearly radical anti-imperialist and leftist line.

With these developments, the *Yön* circle was perhaps for the first time optimistic about the potential for parliamentary democracy to overcome imperialism and backwardness. The circle eagerly tried to bring the TİP and the CHP into co-operation. The strategy at the time was to convince the TİP to build a closer relationship with the CHP so that the two parties could form a coalition government after the election, united around an anti-imperialist line. Initially, this effort was met with a negative reaction by the TİP, accusing *Yön* of trying to portray the CHP as a socialist party even though the CHP and the AP were not materially different, so that such an emphasis would only result in stealing the TİP's votes in favour of the CHP. *Yön* writers defended their position, stating that they had never had any illusions about the party – imagining that it could become a socialist party – yet the support given to the CHP by the military and bureaucracy would greatly help the socialist cause if they could act on an anti-imperialist line and not react against socialism.

What changed the situation and the reaction of the TİP was not such an understanding but the consequence of physical abuse of both parties by supporters of the AP and the CHP's strong stand against it. The AP attacked all the fortresses of the left, condemning *étatisme*, anti-Americanism and communism, and tried to exploit the religious and nationalist feelings of the masses. The AP's accusations and allegations were directed at all of the left, but more obviously at the more powerful political rival at the time, the CHP. One of the most important slogans of the party as the election drew near was intended to show the CHP as a communist party.<sup>75</sup> There was not just political rhetoric, however; the AP used physical violence through the anti-communist associations [Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri] it was supporting.<sup>76</sup> The CHP leader, İnönü, took a strong stand against these and threatened that if President Cemal Gürsel (former chief-of-staff) did not resign as honorary chairman of the Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri and take the necessary measures to prevent violence he would take up the issue personally to 'struggle against the

SS'. This powerful message, implying that anti-communist associations were fascist forces resembling Hitler's SS squads, coming from a respected historical leader was incredibly effective. Just one day after this declaration President Cemal Gürsel did indeed resign from these associations.

İnönü's strong position against the attacks from the right apparently evoked sympathy and increased the likelihood of future co-operation. The *Yön* circle invited the TİP leader Mehmet Ali Aybar into their central office and put three questions to him. According to Aybar (like *Yön*), Turkey's most critical problem – that of independence – could only be resolved if the powers desiring full independence were victorious in the elections.<sup>77</sup> The TİP cited student organizations, the SKD, the Federation of Teachers, *Yön* and other leftist journals as the anti-imperialist powers. Furthermore, Aybar implicitly revealed that the TİP might form a coalition government with the CHP after the elections. Aybar's answers were found to be convincing. *Yön* started to support the TİP as strongly as possible in the coming election, expecting victory for the CHP and the TİP.

### 7 Elections and disillusionment: direction of *Yön* settled

Hopes for the elections were high and so was the disappointment following the results. Unexpectedly for *Yön*, and all predictions, the AP received 52.9 per cent of the votes, comparable only to the earlier victory of the DP under the leadership of Adnan Menderes. The AP did not need to form a coalition having gained 240 seats, and the CHP, which *Yön* thought would get about 35–40 per cent, received only 28.27 per cent of the votes but thanks to the election regulations won 134 seats.<sup>78</sup> Other right-wing parties received about 12 per cent of the votes. According to *Yön*, such an outcome left no hopes of a coalition in the next election, either. They did not think that the socialist TİP now having the chance of being represented in parliament for the first time ever with fifteen members and with 3 per cent of the votes meant very much.

The results of the election were the turning point for *Yön* as the strategy favouring a military intervention to bypass the capitalism stage was settled. This led to one of the two founders of the movement, Mümtaz Soysal, separating from the *Yön* movement. Two critical and completely contradictory essays were published in the first issue of *Yön* after the election, one written by Mümtaz Soysal and the other by the editor, Doğan Avcıoğlu. Soysal, analysing the result of the election, argued that the clear victory of the AP would quickly lead to the strengthening of political polarization and hence, with a degree of optimism, invited socialists to take part in a long struggle.<sup>79</sup> According to Soysal, the socialists needed to work hard and patiently prepare the ground for

a transition by reforms through a parliamentary road in the future; in other words, he advocated transition through social democratic methods.

The other essay, unsigned but obviously written by Avcıoğlu, did not agree with this at all. According to this essay, the victory of the AP meant that Turkey would more firmly follow a pro-American policy and the results of the election revealed again that '20 years of parliamentary experience' safeguarded 'the rule of compradors and landowners' against the revolutionaries. As the election law was to be changed there was no possibility that the TİP could join parliament after the 1969 election, either.<sup>80</sup> That was a clear declaration of why and how parliamentary solutions would not work for Turkey. The strategy of the TİP, influencing people ideologically and getting their assent to their party programme and coming to power through the votes of the people, was regarded as *poor romanticism* and the results of the election were ridiculed as the *bankruptcy of romantic populism*. Avcıoğlu emphasized that the TİP actually obtained their votes from intellectuals and the youth who would otherwise have voted for the CHP. Furthermore, when the TİP addressed the crowd as if workers and laymen were listening the actual listeners were the elite, even high-society women, whereas just a few blocks away, a crowd of 20,000–30,000 workers applauded Demirel. It was emphasized again in this essay that the people had no trust in socialists – who promise land and work – thanks to a 'traditional mistrust'. Thus, the only way to get the assent of the people was to give them land or work directly. Hence the plan was to come to power through anti-parliamentary methods and gain the support of the people by initiating changes that would favour them. Hope lay in a probable reaction of the military to the victory of the AP (heir to the DP). It was expected that this victory would activate the military and bring forth an intervention similar to that of 27 May. Hence, socialists were warned to get ready, not for a long-term struggle by democratic means as Soysal advocated, but for revolution [ihtilal].

These two essays evaluating the result of the elections and published in the same issue of *Yön* were based on two completely different strategies by which socialists could seize power and fulfil their objectives. The *Yön* circle was in favour of the anti-parliamentary strategy and hence Mümtaz Soysal separated from the *Yön* movement. His writings appeared in *Yön* only very rarely after that date. That implied as well the dissolution of the tension in the movement between parliamentary methods or a short-cut, military-backed 'revolution', in favour of the latter.<sup>81</sup>

The *Yön* circle put forward two major justifications in defence of their new strategy. First, change through the parliamentary route was not an option for Turkey, as because of the social structure of the country only traditional right

parties could come to power. The view was based on, or backed up by, the results of research by expert political scientists such as Jacques Lambert and Maurice Duverger. These were complemented by the findings of the field work of some Turkish sociologists such as Mübaccel Kıray and İbrahim Yasa. According to the analyses made by these political scientists, parliamentary democracy would, as a rule, bring conservative parties to power in underdeveloped countries. The findings of the field work of the sociologists in various parts of Turkey supported these views: 'ağas and sheiks', especially in the eastern regions of Turkey, controlled the peasantry through economic and ideological tools. They had control over the elections, hence people had no influence in politics through the voting system. Even in more developed regions semi-feudal links still ruled daily life and determined the results.<sup>82</sup> Thus, as there seemed to be no possibility for the left to win over the right in the elections, *Yön* concluded that:

Unless radical reforms are in effect in social structure, Western political institutions would be nothing but a deception that preserves the hegemony of conservative powers.<sup>83</sup>

Socialists were also excluded from a parliamentary victory as a result of social mentality. The masses had lost their trust in the military-civil intelligentsia. *Yön* blamed the military-civil intelligentsia, however, for their incorrect political and economic policies. The Tanzimat modernists and İT leaders and even the Kemalist cadre suppressed the people, led them into wars, and even brought imperialist powers to the homeland. Moreover, the Kemalist regime was accused of alienation of the masses, not initiating changes to favour them and continuing state repression in the meantime. As a result, of all these people identified modernist powers with repression by gendarmes and tax collectors. Under these conditions the military-civil intelligentsia could only maintain mass support by following a true modernization programme. In other words, they could only 'win the hearts of people' by 'enriching them directly'. As the working class was not developed other revolutionary routes were not possible.

### **8 Co-operation with an 'old-guard' for NDR**

Meanwhile, the anti-imperialist front vision dissolved mainly as a result of strategic differences. The TİP had not despaired of the parliamentary system; from the party's point of view the election was certainly not a defeat: though only getting about 3 per cent of the votes party members rejoiced at having a chance to be represented in parliament just a few years after the founding of the party. The party was not even organized yet in all districts, which led to the belief that people could easily become supporters of socialism within the next

one or two election cycles. This optimism had nothing in common with the disillusionment of *Yön* in a parliamentary regime.

The other probable ally of the anti-imperialist front, the CHP, on the other hand, was in chaos. Party members were sceptical and uneasy about the left-of-centre course. While a group defended the abandoning of a left-of-anything course, others advocated a more radical leftist change-of-order approach. These groups were represented by Professor Turhan Feyzioğlu from the right, and the Minister of Labour Bülent Ecevit from the opposition on the left. *Yön* was naturally very hostile to Feyzioğlu<sup>84</sup> and supported Ecevit. The Fourth Extraordinary Congress of the CHP on 28 April 1967 ended with victory for Ecevit's team.<sup>85</sup>

While working to build new alliances in the CHP by supporting Ecevit's group, *Yön* had also searched for other allies on the left, and began to develop a partnership with the famous 'old guard', convicted ex-Communist Party member Mihri Belli. Belli had earlier (in 1962) published an article in *Yön* under the pen name Mehmet Doğu. He called for the building of a united national front to struggle for democratic revolution under the leadership of vigorous forces. This ideological similarity brought Avcıoğlu and Belli together in 1965. They translated a book by the French Marxist Roger Garaudy which was published in *Yön*<sup>86</sup> under the title *İslamiyet ve Sosyalizm* [Islam and Socialism].<sup>87</sup> Belli later had some essays published in *Yön* under a pen name, E. Tüfekçi, or old guard. One of his most important pieces of writing conveyed his ideas on a National Democratic Revolution which had hitherto been announced by Avcıoğlu.<sup>88</sup>

Belli's contribution to NDR was an extension of the leftist movement that depended on the initiatives of the military in a revolution and consequently formed the first real division of the left. Belli rose to be the leader of the NDR movement and formed a small but determined group within the TİP which became more vocal after 1966. Unlike the TİP,<sup>89</sup> NDR adherents, just like the *Yön* circle, claimed that Turkey had not completed its democratic revolution yet, and in a situation where the working classes were weak, the strength of other forces – vigorous forces – could be used to realize democracy and independence and carry out a transition programme. The struggle within the two groups of socialists, the NDR versus the TİP, continued in *Yön* as well, with a series of discussions under the heading 'Discussions of Socialism' in which the current revolutionary stage, strategies and agents of the movement were discussed by both parties.<sup>90</sup> The discussions centred on three main questions: (1) was Turkey in an NDR or socialist revolution stage? (2) Who would be the leader of the revolutionary struggle – the working class or the military-civilian intelligentsia? (3) How would power be seized – through parliamentary or revolutionary methods? Leaving aside for the moment the TİP's

central position and the NDR opposition within the party backed by Belli (to be returned to in Chapters 5 and 6), *Yön*, as could be imagined, advocated that Turkey was in a national democratic revolution stage (as the goals of democratic revolution were not yet fulfilled), hence the struggle would be led by the military-civilian intelligentsia, who would seize power by force. The NDR would attain full economic and political independence, eliminate vestiges of feudalism and secure speedy and planned development through the enlargement of state initiative. The NDR strategy was nothing but 'the continuation of a big awakening occasioned by Mustafa Kemal's arrival in Samsun on 19 May 1919'.<sup>91</sup> These measures would theoretically work in favour of the interests of the people and prepare the ground for the transition to socialism.

*Yön's* position centred on the revolutionary potential of the army as explained within the NDR strategy. *Yön* reiterated that a non-capitalist development road would fit perfectly into Turkish society thanks to the peculiar historical development of its social and political structure. The peculiarity of Turkey was regarded as 'the problem of intermediary layers'.<sup>92</sup> Avcioğlu explained that as a result of 'specific situations' in Turkey, 'very important strata' which were not a 'class' had actually strengthened their position in a situation where the 'hegemonic classes' were relatively weak. These 'intermediary layers' [ara tabakalar] could become relatively autonomous (from the 'original classes'). Avcioğlu, adopting this Bonapartist view,<sup>93</sup> claimed that the *army was above the classes and ruled over the state* and was the *most powerful organ against the bourgeoisie and imperialists*. The officers were traditionally progressive and their interests lay in modernization and rapid development. On the revolutionary role of the army, Avcioğlu added:

As their important roles in social life, they adopt a historical mission pressurizing them to play a leading role and exceed their private interests. These strata, when the bourgeois shows failure in development and when the social pressure from the masses increases, are liable to choose a non-capitalist development road.<sup>94</sup>

Referring to the TİP's use of the term 'the representatives of an Ottoman-style authoritarian state, *kapıkulu*, the traditional ruling class',<sup>95</sup> Avcioğlu remarked that it would be better to appreciate them only as the intermediary layers rather than as the determining factor in political life. As long as these strata were conscious of their strength, they could prolong their independence. Owing to the social and political structure of Turkey, the army became a conscious political actor and the problem for the socialists was to find ways to direct this power for a socialist cause.<sup>96</sup>

Avcıoğlu blamed the TİP in this sense for remaining within the boundaries of 'classical socialist analysis' in terms of classes, and leaving aside an important group that determined the fate of Turkey. The cadre which the TİP despised as the heir to an Ottoman-type totalitarian state had overthrown the comprador campaign, which was regarded as an Ottoman state during an anti-imperialist struggle.<sup>97</sup> He stressed that the fate of the current anti-imperialist struggle was not going to be determined by the working class, but by this 'revolutionary cadre'.<sup>98</sup> In his polemic against the TİP and especially Aybar, Avcıoğlu claimed that even the 'Americans' were aware of the fact that the army, a section of the bureaucracy, and İsmet İnönü were the main obstacles against the AP and pro-American policies.<sup>99</sup> He also warned that vigorous forces or intermediary layers would *not* join an action where working-class leadership or socialism was over-emphasized, and could even react against socialism, which would bring the end of the movement.<sup>100</sup> In this respect, the strategy of the TİP was based on a miscalculation of revolutionary powers and the current situation. Apparently, the success of revolutionary action depended on the military – either their support or their neutralization. As the armed forces were the strongest forces against the bourgeoisie, feudal powers and imperialists, their position would determine the result.

After clarifying its national front policy and the specific revolutionary role of the Turkish armed forces, though evidently there was no such front of any kind, *Yön* ceased publication on 30 June 1967 probably because it had fulfilled and overcome its *raison d'être*: the 'direction' of Turkey was publicized satisfactorily, and the direction for the *Yön* movement was finally determined. Now it was time to get ready to organize the 'revolution', which was a coup d'état.

# REVOLUTION THROUGH THE NARROW DOOR

## 1 Introduction

When *Yön* ceased publication its writers, especially Doğan Avcioğlu, İlhan Selçuk and İlhami Soysal, were renowned not only as prominent writers of the time but also as very prestigious representatives of a political movement. For years *Yön* had been the meeting place of all influential socialists and leftist intellectuals, where diverse issues centred on the socio-economic and political problems of Turkey were discussed. Doğan Avcioğlu, despite the common accusations that he was a communist and/or a junta supporter, was highly regarded even by CHP members and was elected as the CHP's Consultation Committee Member.<sup>1</sup> The discussions of socialist strategy had influenced many socialist intellectuals, young people and army officers. As was its aim, various army officers and the higher ranks of the bureaucracy were regular readers of the journal, so that *Yön* had been quite successful in attaining its initial goals.<sup>2</sup>

Doğan Avcioğlu's remarkable two-volume *Türkiye'nin Düzeni: Dün-Bugün-Yarın* [The Order of Turkey: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow] enhanced the prestige and influence of the *Yön* circle even further. This was one of the most important and popular books to have been published by a leftist revolutionary at that time.<sup>3</sup> Avcioğlu's historical analysis and political thought had particularly influenced the younger generation. His work on the 'order of Turkey' was in a sense a bridge that linked the *Yön* and *Devrim* movements. While ideas that fell within the major trend that had already been pursued in *Yön* were developed and synthesized, the extra-parliamentary strategy with the military as a striking force was formulated on the basis of the past and present conditions of Turkey. Avcioğlu admitted later that he had written the book under the specific conditions of the pre-1970 period<sup>4</sup> addressing the work to the army and some sections of the bureaucracy who were supposed to play a

‘striking force’ [vurucu güç] role in a revolution [ihtilal].<sup>5</sup> The work explains why Avcioğlu advocated revolution through a coup, because the restrictions that he saw meant that the door to a popular struggle or a working-class revolution was closed. This chapter, therefore, starts with a short summary of the main points of this book that clearly demonstrate the concept of moving towards the revolution which would change the order of Turkey. This will be followed by an analysis of the journal *Devrim*, a provocative publication with the main intention of pushing young military officers in particular into taking action and sustaining mass and socialist support for such a coup. The chapter ends with a discussion of the practical consequences of the views of the *Yön-Devrim* circle and a description of the civil-military conspiracy that the *Yön-Devrim* circle engaged in during the later 1960s.

## **2 *The Order of Turkey: the manifesto of the ‘Nationalist Revolutionaries’***

The two volumes of Avcioğlu’s work analysed the historical development of Turkey in terms of its social, economic and political order through a sort of a Marxian tool of analysis. In this sense it was the first broad Marxian analysis of Turkish history, probably one of the basic reasons for the popularity of the work. Yet Avcioğlu’s problem was an inversion of the Marxist revolutionary paradigm, framed not as a political demand, but as a modernist question for Turkey: how to develop Turkey.<sup>6</sup> That was the question that had been raised by *Yön’s* manifesto as explained in the previous chapter. Avcioğlu reiterated that development could be attained only by ascending to an independent status by social revolution.<sup>7</sup> Revolution itself was articulated, then, not as an ideological and political demand, a socio-political consequence of a class struggle, but as a socio-economic prerequisite for development. Readers were reminded that the objective of attaining modern civilization was ‘the work of Atatürk’. However, Avcioğlu remarked that reaching the level of Western states had been misunderstood at the time and that, therefore, more or less Western political institutions had been adapted to Turkey. Avcioğlu criticized this approach and advocated that development necessitated an economic philosophy and a programme, and capitalism was not a suitable option for countries changing to capitalism at a late stage which were then inevitably suffering under neo-imperialism.<sup>8</sup>

In order to demonstrate the effect of imperialism Avcioğlu started the book with the rather startling claim that Turkey<sup>9</sup> could have leapt forward and started an industrial revolution.<sup>10</sup> He explained that although in terms of its inner dynamics the Ottoman state was well equipped for transformation into an industrial society, the intervention and exploitation of foreign

powers and the wrong politics of the rulers of the time had reduced Turkey to a semi-colonized status, becoming an open market for the West.<sup>11</sup> The army and civil intellectuals were the first to become conscious of the situation and hence were the first and actually the only force to react against colonization, the old order and the ruling elite of the Ottoman state. The Independence War waged against the invading powers, or the imperialists, was carried out under the leadership of the military-civilian intelligentsia, whom Avcioglu regarded as *nationalist revolutionaries*. They were the agents of a national democratic movement carrying out a bourgeois revolution.

The nationalist revolutionaries, the Kemalists, who had founded the republic, had two main objectives and recurring themes: first, nationalism or the assurance of independence in social, economic and political matters, and second, attaining the same level of development as Western countries. However, the lack of a radical economic programme had resulted in a retreat from these objectives. The Kemalist elite believed that the country could be transformed by reforms in law and education, and by a culture based on Western models. They had fallen into the same error, Avcioglu noted, as had the intellectuals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by misunderstanding the problem of development, which they had framed around the question of what to take from the West and what to reject. That was futile in a semi-colonized country, when everything including the culture, the value systems and the mentality was directly imported or reinforced from the West. Development could be achieved, however, only under an independent status, which depended on a radical change in the social order. Avcioglu emphasized that this new order would determine its own value system.

Though political independence had been achieved with the Independence War the social order could not be changed because of the social and economic structures that had been inherited from the old regime, and as a result independence was lost again. Avcioglu drew this conclusion from the way in which the classes were formed and relations between them both before and after the war. The military-civil intelligentsia had to collaborate with local gentry and ağas in their struggle against foreign powers because of the circumstances of the day. Inevitably, after victory, state power was to be shared with these local gentry,<sup>12</sup> and naturally the regime represented their interests.

The civil-military leaders could not undertake bourgeois reforms to end the pre-capitalist class rule because of the class content of the ruling class. Most important of all, land reform could not be carried out as a result of the reactions of the local gentry and feudal ağas. Yet another problem was that there was no such demand from the masses. Peasants were politically unconscious and weak, as they were scattered throughout Anatolia in remote places for

safety, and, anyhow, land was plentiful. The working class was negligible in quantitative terms. Avcıoğlu asked in this respect, apologetically, 'as there was no movement below, depending on which social powers was the Ghazi to liquidate the remnants of pre-capitalist order by a revolution?'.<sup>13</sup>

This question, however, clearly displayed the eclectic political thinking of Avcıoğlu, based on Marxism and Kemalism, as unlike the Kemalists and generations of Ottoman revolutionaries Avcıoğlu did not believe that a society could be organized and changed entirely from above, independent of the social classes and the class struggle. The civil or military elite could only have a guidance role – the actual determinant was the class struggle. However, in the meantime, in contrast to the Marxist proposition, Avcıoğlu considered that the Kemalists who carried out a bourgeois revolution could choose a socialist system even though there was no such political agency to carry out a socialist revolution.

Avcıoğlu emphasized that the civil-military leaders did not actually have an alternative at the time as there was no working class, and even the Soviet consulate asserted that Turkey could not become a socialist state. Avcıoğlu added that at the time the Soviet Union itself was following a capitalist order, up to the end of the NEP (New Economic Policy) period. However, the situation had completely changed; as things stood the success of the socialist system over the capitalist one was obvious. None of the problems stated was insurmountable. Industrialization and improvements in agriculture would change the conditions of the people. The demand for land was high and the will to change their fate prevailed in the masses. Hence today it was possible for the nationalist-revolutionist movement to activate the masses and break the circle of the coalition of the conservative powers and to attain a development level equal to that of modern states.<sup>14</sup>

Avcıoğlu again proposed in this respect the non-capitalist development road, though this time he preferred to use the term the 'Nationalist Revolutionary Development Road' [Milli Devrimci Kalkınma Yolu] to indicate the same model. This model was a third road, differing from both the communist and the American model, as it was not the dictatorship of the proletariat but against the coalition of conservative powers. He reiterated that nationalist military-civilian intellectuals, generally with a petty-bourgeois background, would play a leadership role in this model of development.<sup>15</sup> Avcıoğlu also emphasized that even the most authoritarian regimes depended on the support of social classes. The MBK did not recognize this fact after the 27 May coup and did not try to construct a social base and win mass support.<sup>16</sup> As a result, it was inevitable that the new regime would fall under the influence of the already hegemonic classes (Avcıoğlu cited businessmen and Masons).<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, a capitalist development method, based on foreign subsidies and foreign capital, still persisted.<sup>18</sup>

According to Avcıoğlu, the major obstacles preventing Turkey from becoming a developed modern state were the imperialist powers and their internal collaborators. Imperialism prevented the development of Turkey. Avcıoğlu reiterated that since 1947 Turkey had had no independent foreign or socio-economic policies. The Americans had laid down conditions for their financial aid, including having a say in the areas that they were assisting, such as military matters,<sup>19</sup> in agriculture<sup>20</sup> and in industry.<sup>21</sup> Gradually, the US, through its financial aid and subsidies, had gained increasing influence in the decision-making of many sectors of Turkish life. Avcıoğlu blamed Turkish industrialists, who, according to him, were comprador industrialists and had no interest in developing national industries.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, very little changed in agriculture, with the income of the peasants remaining very low,<sup>23</sup> and as a result, the government was not even able to obtain sufficient taxes to channel into industrialization.

Avcıoğlu meticulously studied the process of the change in the economic system, Turkey becoming capitalist in different sectors, in land, industry, trade, etc., portraying in particular an extreme exploitation of the masses, workers, small land-owning peasants and landless peasants who were living almost in a state of serfdom. He especially emphasized the collaboration of the state and government, particularly after 1950 by the right-wing parties then in power, in maintaining the immense degree of pauperization and exploitation of the masses by the unproductive, parasitic, profiteering and extravagant<sup>24</sup> capital owners, beys and ağas.<sup>25</sup> He noted that the bourgeoisie in Turkey, unlike in Western countries where they played a revolutionary role and liquidated the pre-capitalist hegemonic classes thus assuring development, had formed an alliance with conservative pre-capitalist classes, namely ağas, traders and usurers.<sup>26</sup> Turkish industrialists, thanks to their dependence on foreign firms for capital, technical skills, machinery, patents and raw material, were defined by Avcıoğlu as contractors [*müteahhitler*] for foreign firms, and hence he regarded them as compradors. This coalition of the conservative powers through its professors, advisers, lawyers, representatives in the media, bureaucracy, political parties and widespread franchises in Anatolia was increasing the power of its classes, with the extra prestige of 'industrialist' etiquette. Significantly, this hegemonic class coalition in agriculture, trade, finance and industry retained mass support and even the support of the working class, as the last election had demonstrated. This coalition was bolstered by American loans, as the Americans were committed to the protection of the status quo.

Avcıoğlu drew attention to the attempt of the Americans to seduce the military by increasing the living standards of military officers, especially through

OYAK.<sup>27</sup> Avcıoğlu stated that he did not acknowledge this as a problem, as he thought it was impossible to reduce the Turkish army to a colonial status through material offers, as the military had a strong Atatürkist tradition. He intended actually to demonstrate how:

Coalition of conservative powers co-operating with foreign capital carry out a planned struggle to strengthen their bases to build their hegemony over the military-civilian bureaucracy and to degenerate trade unions. That is actually what Marxists call the 'class struggle'. Yet that struggle is not made by the working class, but by internal and foreign capital.<sup>28</sup>

The class struggle of the reactionary coalition supported by American capital was, then, set against the bureaucracy and the working class. However, that seems to contradict what he had stated earlier, that the state represented the interests of the hegemonic class. Why was there a struggle among the state officials and the hegemonic conservative coalition? Such a question cannot be answered satisfactorily, just as the transition after World War II was not explained adequately.

Leaving that problem aside for the moment, Avcıoğlu reiterated that those who first became conscious of the fact that the American model of capitalism would not work were the nationalist Kemalist strata, the young, teachers, officers, state servants and the self-employed, simply defined as the progressive powers.<sup>29</sup> As capitalism set its opposing powers to action, the progressive powers would be backed by the working class<sup>30</sup> against this class hegemony of conservative powers to change the order. Avcıoğlu constructed a nationalist-revolutionist development model with this approach to class alliances, but as that model depended on the change of order he explained that such a radical change might possibly not be achieved through a parliamentary regime. The conservative powers would triumph at the ballot box.<sup>31</sup> The transition to a multi-parliamentary regime had put Turkey under the domination of American imperialism (with its Turkish compradors such as Demirel)<sup>32</sup> and the consequence was the *anti-democratic multi-party dictatorship of capital*. An authoritarian regime, such as the early republican regime Atatürk had founded, would in essence be more democratic, as it would grant Turkey its full independence and bring forth a more egalitarian society.<sup>33</sup> Hence, Avcıoğlu stated once again that nationalist revolutionaries must play a leadership role and initiate changes through a revolutionary party and organized masses.<sup>34</sup>

In this respect, Avcıoğlu warned that the military or civil servants must not be regarded as bureaucrats, as he stressed that bureaucrats tended to be conservative. Hence he regarded civil or military state officials as *petty-bourgeois*

*revolutionaries* as they had fought previously during the Independence War against the (Ottoman) state bureaucrats and the feudal powers.<sup>35</sup> It was very obvious here that Avcioglu did not see the Turkish armed forces essentially as a security force of the state, but almost as an autonomous body epitomizing the ideal of the nation. The military officers originated from a similar class (the petty bourgeoisie), and were equipped with the same ideology (Kemalism as the radicalism of the petty bourgeoisie) as other civil intellectuals. The political attitudes of the officers were hence to be determined above all by these characteristics. While the state then represented the interests of the hegemonic classes that were regarded by Avcioglu as the conservative powers, the army represented not the state but the nation. How the army derived its autonomy was not explained adequately though, and Avcioglu referred to some of the state officials and officers as bureaucrats. There was a certain problem in the work; it was as if what determined the political role and action of the military depended on the ideological choices of the officers themselves, which challenged the previous argument of the revolutionary essence and role of the military in Turkey.

The work perceived the Turkish army, then, as being imbued with a nationalist ideology as a result of its role in nation-building. The army was anti-imperialist and revolutionary as a result of the specific historical and socio-economic circumstances of Turkey. Avcioglu argued that a non-capitalist development road would suit the interests of Turkey. In the next fifteen to twenty years most of the problems besetting Turkey could be solved, and a total change in the regime would make Turkey one of the leading countries in the world.<sup>36</sup>

Avcioglu's book was a call to nationalist revolutionaries – and to real revolutionaries, not mere reformers – to bring about the change of order and cease imitating the US. Even though Avcioglu sounded very convincing and eloquent in his views, there seems to be a major paradox in the work itself, as he had argued for changing the regime and the function of the state mainly through the officials of the state – specifically the military. Understandably, he perceived an inter-elite rivalry among the rising bourgeoisie and the ideologically powerful state officials and the military, yet he failed to clarify this central point. Avcioglu himself argued that the power was shared with – or rather vested in – the pre-capitalist classes and the republican state had tried to create a bourgeoisie, through a policy of *étatisme*. If there had been a power change in 1947, and as Avcioglu himself used materialist conceptions, then what was the socio-economic base of this?

According to Avcioglu's interpretation the nationalist revolutionaries were incomparably weaker than the capitalist and pro-US forces. Avcioglu cited pre-capitalist classes, rich medium-sized and small landowners,

artisans, the lower middle class, numerous experts, trade unions, technicians and bureaucrats as supporting the conservative powers, and, furthermore, they were backed directly by the US superpower, foreign capital and large firms. The labouring classes were under the ideological hegemony of these. The revolution, then, would depend on a few intellectuals, civil servants and very largely the military officers, but the whole army was not revolutionary, however. Moreover, even though Avcioğlu trusted in the anti-imperialist, modernist, progressive, populist and reformist tradition of the military, its anti-Americanism was also dubious. There was no evidence for a reaction of the army against the US. Though there might very well be anti-American junior officers, the higher-ranking officers would not stand against the US, otherwise they could have reacted earlier in 1960, when Turkey became a member of NATO.

It was also questionable whether the interests of the civil and military bureaucracy, intellectuals, working class and poor peasantry coincided in the programme of a national democratic revolution for rapid development. Avcioğlu advocated broad state planning, the control and nationalization of the main means of production and distribution in order to revolutionize the order of Turkey, in other words to put the Turkish economy, which seemed to him to be in a state of total chaos as a result of divergent and self-seeking interests, into some sort of order. In this sense Avcioğlu advocated an authoritarian populist regime ruled by a military-civil coalition after a coup d'état to attain rapid development. Such a regime would necessitate oppression of the labouring classes and deruralization so would apparently not meet the demands of these classes or improve their living conditions immediately. In any case, the popular classes would be again kept out of power, as under the present democratic regime. Avcioğlu, however, planned a broad education programme to generate political and class consciousness in the labouring classes (both urban and rural) so that they could become a political force in the years to come.

Despite problems with his work such as these Avcioğlu was quite successful, especially in getting the attention of the intellectuals and the young, and his work was a bestseller in 1968–9. Along with popularity, Avcioğlu won one of the most prestigious Turkish awards, the Yunus Nadi prize. As Avcioğlu based his opinions on how socio-economic changes in Turkey should take place, with extensive details based on field research, he was at least very successful in describing the failure of the present system to cope with its socio-economic and political problems. His work was also news in foreign countries; the American consulate had quickly asked for a translation of the book, and *Time* magazine, for example, called it the political event of the last months.<sup>37</sup> The

book, just as Avcıoğlu had intended, attracted the attention of the young and, and as we will see below, even some of the military officers.

### 3 The media of the junta: *Devrim*

Avcıoğlu and his associates waited for the results of the 1969 election before starting publication of the political newspaper *Devrim* [Revolution]. The share of the votes for the CHP and the TİP had decreased in favour of the AP, and the AP had gained enough seats to form a government alone.<sup>38</sup> That confirmed, in a way, the foresight of *Yön* and *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* that in a backward country like Turkey the representatives of conservative powers would always triumph at the ballot box.

The first issue of *Devrim* was published on 21 October 1969 again with a manifesto, 'Revolution Manifesto', which announced that after the election nothing had changed in Turkey, but Turkey is a country that must change and the strategy to change Turkey was determined just as the title of the journal suggested – that is, by revolution.<sup>39</sup> That revolution was actually to be a chain of reforms in the social and economic systems as outlined in *Yön* and in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* to be superimposed after a military takeover, theoretically by a revolutionary party.

Meanwhile, the *Yön-Devrim* circle (Avcıoğlu, İlhan Selçuk, İlhami Soysal and Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu) tried to get into contact with military officers after the 1965 election to actualize their theory and strategy.<sup>40</sup> They got in contact with the famous commander of 27 May and popular senator of the times, General Cemal Madanoğlu, and his associates.<sup>41</sup> General Madanoğlu, senator for life at the time, was well known for his radical views, similar to those of the leftist movements of the period. The relationship with some of the military officers was expressed in *Devrim* as the unison of the sword and political thought [Fikir-kılıç kenetlenmesi]. The civilian group needed the swords to seize power, as they did not believe in a long-term struggle of organizing the working class and bringing about change through parliamentary methods. The military, it seems, needed political thought to achieve a revolution as expressed by General Madanoğlu, and one of the key men of the junta, Osman Köksal.<sup>42</sup>

The weekly political newspaper *Devrim*<sup>43</sup> was then a 'brawly medium for the direct seizure of power' continually calling for revolution with an aggressive tone. The *Devrim* circle tried to convince both officers and the public to assent to their programme (laid down week to week, an elaboration of the general ideas presented in Avcıoğlu's *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*) and agitate the military, especially junior officers, to take action and justify a probable intervention by displaying Turkey's entrapment in the present parliamentary system.

In this sense it represented the utter disappointment and final desperation of a much smaller clique with the present system. A slogan quoted from Mustafa Kemal, 'A circle of reformers cannot carry out a fundamental revolution'<sup>44</sup> appeared under the title of the newspaper, *Devrim*, clearly implying that Turkey no longer needed lukewarm reformists, but real revolutionaries like Mustafa Kemal. *Devrim's* anti-establishment drive was right from the first issue a more radical thrust against the coalition of reactionaries in which it lumped together Prime Minister Demirel, Vehbi Koç, and even the 'big pashas' supporting them.

The founders of *Devrim* were Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu, who was once more the owner, Doğan Avcıoğlu as general director, Uluç Gürkan (who was a student of the Military Academy at the time) and Hasan Cemal as main editors.<sup>45</sup> Popular journalists İlhami Soysal and İlhan Selçuk were among the main writers. The initial circulation of 50,000 for the first issue was very high, but it dropped gradually.<sup>46</sup> Though not the initial intention,<sup>47</sup> *Devrim* was not able to gather as wide a cadre of writers as *Yön*. Other frequent writers along with the core cadre were Çetin Altan, İlber Ortaylı, Uğur Mumcu, Oktay Akbal, Nejat Özön, Nimet Arzık and other famous writers<sup>48</sup> who contributed from time to time. More strikingly, writers with military origins who were generally associated with the 'Madanoğlu junta',<sup>49</sup> such as Cemal Madanoğlu, Osman Köksal, Dündar Seyhan, Mucip Ataklı, Suphi Gökseytrak, Yılmaz Akkılıç and Kemaş Tüfekçioğlu, also contributed from time to time, in a sense revealing involvement with a military conspiracy.

Of particular interest was the fact that people associated with the old guard such as Mihri Belli, Erdoğan Berktaş and Vahap Erdoğan who had hitherto acted with Avcıoğlu and the *Yön* circle, were no longer involved. Mihri Belli<sup>50</sup> and his associates had separated and formed another leftist movement. To differentiate itself from the popular movement of the time which was centred on Mihri Belli and was known as the 'National Democratic Revolution', the *Yön-Devrim* movement introduced its revolution as the 'National Liberation Revolution' [ulusal kurtuluş devrimi].<sup>51</sup> *Devrim* was very different from *Yön* as it was no longer an arena where different views on socialism, theory and methods were discussed. It aimed only to address the military officers.

*Devrim* devoted its pages to showing how and why democracy in Turkey did not work. The evils of the present parliamentary system, such as the misuse of authority by Prime Minister Demirel, scandalous rumours involving his brothers and their relations with US imperialism were presented regularly.<sup>52</sup> The Turkish way of democracy was continually attacked sarcastically, with pejorative terms such as sweet democracy [cici demokrasi] or Philippine

democracy [Filipin Demokrasisi].<sup>53</sup> Though not affiliated to the *Devrim* circle, the famous journalist, writer and ex-TİP member of the National Assembly Çetin Altan, still at that time the high priest of the extra-parliamentary opposition,<sup>54</sup> provided a close-up of the decadence inside parliament in a regular column devoted to his parliamentary entitled, 'When I Was a Deputy' [Ben Milletvekili İken].<sup>55</sup>

The US and NATO were attacked sharply through a series of articles written by Avcıoğlu entitled 'The Turkish Army and the United States 1947–1969'.<sup>56</sup> Avcıoğlu emphasized that the US was trying to build a dependent relationship through the Turkish army, as shown by the Cyprus crisis. Moreover, NATO war plans left Turkey open to a nuclear threat from neighbouring USSR if Turkey was to continue its membership of NATO. Meanwhile, one of the demands in the revolution programme which was affirmed time and again was the establishment of what was termed a national army.

Imperialism was also thought to have support from the religious movements in Turkey, with the intention of safeguarding the dependency relationship and the semi-dependent status of Turkey. The young journalist Hasan Cemal wrote about 'reactionaries' currently warning how the Islamist powers who were tied to the imperialist powers were trying to sabotage Turkey from the inside. The emphasis of this was that they were aiming to abolish Atatürk reforms and push Turkey into darkness to provoke nationalist and secular sentiments within the military.<sup>57</sup>

*Devrim*, like *Yön*, was also introduced by a manifesto, 'Devrim Bildirisi: Karanlık bir Gidiş' (though this was not open to signatories). The manifesto was a call to duty to Kemalists to change the path of the nation from an anti-Kemalist to a Kemalist direction, and was accompanied by a visual symbol of Atatürk with his sword and war cap on. However, to clarify the difference from the Kemalist regime and to prevent fears of what might become a Jacobin clique, the statement 'Revolution not against people for people, but with people for people' was printed underneath the picture.

The manifesto was in effect a short summary of the main points advocated in Avcıoğlu's *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, starting with a presentation of the crisis within the current system caused by the anti-Kemalist course [antikemalist gidiş] and warning that that this would lead to darkness. The *Devrim* manifesto summarized the Kemalist project yet again, as attaining civilization through revolutions in a state of independence. Atatürk had perceived that such a goal could be attained by a change of order through the liquidation of medieval institutions, but unfavourable conditions meant that he was only able to carry out 'superstructural revolutions' such as the abolition of the sultanate and the caliphate, and establishing the principles of secularism, rationality and

scientific knowledge to guide all institutions. Though there was a will to carry out 'substructural revolutions' as well, they had been prevented by the coalition of conservative powers. Kemalism, however, degenerated after 1945.

The manifesto made a call to all Kemalists to continue the Kemalist revolution by attaining the goals of Atatürk, that is of full independence and civilization. The manifesto repeated the argument that the internal coalition of conservative powers with the protection of foreign powers prevented Turkey from acquiring its full independence and becoming modern. The current form of democracy worked in favour of these powers, and instead of the national will [milli irade] (the will of the labouring powers) the will of this privileged minority [mutlu azınlık] had been represented, so that the present system was not in essence a democracy, as argued in detail earlier in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*.

Another significant point that revealed the causes of the new strategy and the position of *Devrim* vis-à-vis the parliamentary system was the inevitability of reconciliation with conservative powers under the current system. The manifesto claimed that even those parties which advocated a change of order (implying the path of the CHP under its new leader, Bülent Ecevit) could not really undertake these revolutions, as in order to be successful in the elections they were continually forced to make concessions to the coalition of conservative powers. These parties were forced to seek the support of ethnic or sectarian-based groups, and generally put ağas, brokers, usurers and Alevite religious leaders<sup>58</sup> in their lists, which brought about a rapid degeneration of the parties. The manifesto explained that it was exactly the reason why Atatürk himself had preferred the ideal of attaining independence and civilization in exchange for formal institutions of democracy, and in fact his single-party regime was for this reason in essence much more democratic. The manifesto added that the only way to build real democracy in Turkey was through a revolutionary party that could abolish the economic, political and ideological hegemony of the coalition of conservative powers over the masses. However, it was noted that the party must depend on the conscious and organized support of the labourers, as a cadre separated from the masses would inevitably be overcome by conservative powers and their powerful foreign collaborators. *Devrim* proclaimed this to be the *historical duty of Kemalists*.<sup>59</sup>

Kemalism was regarded then as a semi-successful national democratic revolution aimed at fulfilling the objectives of bourgeois revolutions. The class objective of the bourgeois class in Western countries had been overtaken by the revolutionary-nationalist civil-military intellectual cadre.<sup>60</sup> Though it sounded paradoxical on the surface, it was reinforced by the statement that since necessary reforms could not be undertaken by the parties of the present day, only nationalist revolutionaries defined as the military-civilian intelligentsia

could open the doors to a politically libertarian society [siyasal özgürlüklü toplum].<sup>61</sup> It was emphasized that such a transformation was not a Marxist action, although the consequences would work in favour of the labouring classes and the petty bourgeoisie. Uğur Mumcu declared, for example, that the road to power, especially for the working class and the peasantry, was through Kemalism.<sup>62</sup>

The leftist source of this idea was the dominant Soviet theory at the time that advocated a transitory passage into socialism through maintaining independence under the leadership of the military. *Devrim* made its source explicit, probably to elicit the support of Turkish socialists as well as to convince the USSR, by publishing an analysis of the political developments in the Third World by Professor G. Mirsky (introduced in *Devrim* as a Soviet view)<sup>63</sup> that was based on this model. The model was introduced for Third World countries (African, Asian and Latin American) where neither the bourgeoisie nor the proletariat was strong enough to establish their dictatorship. Because of the weakness of these basic classes it stated that civil and military intellectuals of petty-bourgeois origins gain a relative hegemony and take a direction either for capitalism or socialism. The essay discussed and evaluated developments in Egypt, Syria, Libya, Burma, Algeria and Peru from this perspective, paying attention to the political actions of the military. It was noted, for example, that in Peru the military was no longer a supporting force for the conservatives. That view implied that, in conflict with the Marxist-Leninist view, any classes other than the basic modern classes, and especially the military, which owed its power to the state, could act as a main agent and *choose* the social, economic and political system for their nation.

Obviously, *Devrim's* strategy was influenced directly by these movements, especially by the success of the populist military regimes in some Third World countries. In *Devrim* as in *Yön*, various models of military regimes, or the attempts by young officers to act as nationalist revolutionaries, were examined through the diverse experiences of Cuba, Libya, Brazil, Chile and Peru.<sup>64</sup> It was emphasized that civil and military cadres had carried out radical social and economic transformations for development, such as land reform and nationalization of industries, very efficiently with mass support (or class support). The military officers of these countries had realized that none of these could be achieved through parliamentary institutions and had, therefore, taken back control.<sup>65</sup> The difficulties facing the officers were also a point of concern, and it was reaffirmed that the military could only play a revolutionary role in a strong body formed by the civil and military cadre with mass support.

According to *Devrim*, such movements were gaining momentum, especially in South American countries, and these countries were struggling against US

imperialism, which was a rising trend in the world. The *Devrim* circle argued that in all underdeveloped countries, the military was able to play a revolutionary role, and suggested similar authoritarian populist regimes.<sup>66</sup> *Devrim* also drew attention to the relationship between these countries and the USSR, in other words the support allocated to these regimes by the Soviet Union. *Devrim* was aware of the meaning of an intervention in international terms and implied support of the USSR in case of an action, though that was naturally not emphasized. The relationship with socialism was also for that reason. It was emphasized that advancing from these revolutions to socialism was possible at the current world conjuncture, implicitly with the support of the USSR<sup>67</sup> or at least with separation from the US bloc. In other words, it was possible to advance from Kemalism to socialism, as in this statement by a retired military officer:

Of course Kemalism is not socialism. Yet, with Kemalist principles of populism, *étatisme*, secularism, nationalism, and anti-imperialism and its positivist, modernist ideology that value above all intellect and labour, it conceives a possibility in its ideology to transform into socialism in today's Turkish and world conjuncture.<sup>68</sup>

Apparently, the two ideologies of Kemalism and socialism were seen not as mutually exclusive systems but more or less as phases of the same political development. Kemalism was perceived as a state-building ideology, but not as a nationalist bourgeois ideology. Kemalism, but not exactly its past practice in the early republican regime, was considered essentially a radical leftist ideology that therefore coincided well with the principles of socialism.

Strikingly, despite the prevalent Kemalist terminology on the surface, in terms of discourse, a more Marxist line could be clearly observed in *Devrim* compared to *Yön*. Basically, the concept of revolution was defined in a Marxist manner, as a change in the mode of production, and more interestingly perhaps as the overthrow of the hegemonic classes from the ownership of the means of production.<sup>69</sup> The *Devrim* circle emphasized that class positions were determined by the mode of production that they were volunteering to change in Turkey. It was very clearly stated that in Turkey the capitalist mode of production was hegemonic, and revolution was the change of these capitalist relations of production to the socialist one, which could be effected when political and economic power rested in the proletariat.<sup>70</sup> Other attempts to reconcile the class conflict were opposed as a means of supporting 'sweet' democracy. Still, *Devrim* did not claim that their strategy would allocate all power to the proletariat, but highlighted how the overthrow of the present regime and

its hegemonic classes would, or could, theoretically pave the way for such a transformation.

Such an interpretation of revolution coincided well with the programme of Kemalism, thus it was not contradictory for the *Devrim* circle to define themselves as Kemalist or 27 May supporters as both fitted the same model. *Devrim* advocated that though one of the principles of Kemalism was reformism [inkilapçılık], Atatürk could not carry out the radical social and economic reforms on account of the class formation of the time, as explained above in the section on *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*. The pressure of the local gentry and feudal ağas, and the weakness of the working classes, meant that Atatürk could not realize such transformations. A change in class hegemony was necessary, not only from a socialist point of view, but also from the Kemalist one. Socialism was in this respect 'the only economic philosophy' by which Kemalist aspirations could be realized. Even modernism and secularism, the principles of Kemalism, could only be truthfully adopted by the masses through radical transformation in the land system. The *Devrim* circle perceived a mechanistic, shallow and deterministic relationship between the substructure and the superstructure, and accordingly the influence of religion was considered to have been directly imposed by the economic base.

A more Marxist course compared to early works in *Yön* reflected the radicalization of the petty bourgeoisie and the Turkish left during the 1960s, especially after 1968. Moreover, it was triggered particularly by recent political developments, such as the political competition between the CHP and the *Devrim* circle. It seems that the emphasis on socialism and a more Marxian interpretation of Kemalism was intended to separate the *Devrim* line from the centre-left ideology of the CHP under its new leader, Bülent Ecevit. As noted above, the *Yön-Devrim* circle had a close relationship with the CHP and *Yön* had supported Ecevit in his competition against Turhan Feyzioğlu for leadership of the party. However, when the CHP took a more leftist stand after Ecevit became party leader and advocated a change of order [düzen değişikliği], which was mainly reforms in the socio-economic structure and not essentially different from the programme of *Yön-Devrim*, a conflict of interest rose. *Devrim* started to emphasize that none of these reforms could be carried out by a parliamentary regime in a backward country like Turkey.<sup>71</sup> In order to differentiate itself from Ecevit's course, *Devrim* used more radical terminology with respect to the programme they advocated. Instead of the concept of land reform [toprak reformu] for example, hitherto used in *Yön* and in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, the term 'land revolution' [toprak devrimi] was used in *Devrim*.

The discourse on revolution and its class content was also used to differentiate *Devrim* from the position held by the CHP, among other things.<sup>72</sup> The

*Devrim* circle claimed, for example, that the CHP was not planning to change order but to protect the status quo. Its parliamentarism had priority over its revolutionarism.<sup>73</sup> Ecevit was criticized personally, especially for not being a true socialist.<sup>74</sup> The populism [halkçılık] of the party was a metaphysical populism depending on the reconciliation of classes. It was emphasized again that it was not the formal democracy of the regimes but the class essence of the rule that mattered; a criticism that had been directed at the TİP before.<sup>75</sup> Of course, in the strategy of *Devrim* itself, the class issue was highly problematic – how the working class would share power politically in a regime governed by the military (though Avcıoğlu preferred to regard that as a ‘people’s dictat’) was very uncertain.<sup>76</sup>

Ecevit was also criticized strongly for his statements about the military, especially for his warning of the possibility of a military intervention favouring big business and the US.<sup>77</sup> Strikingly, it was emphasized that though there had been reactionary pashas from the nineteenth century on they did not represent the Turkish army.<sup>78</sup> It was a nationalist Kemalist tradition that pervaded the armed forces and differentiated it from the armies of African, Asian and South American underdeveloped countries (contradicting earlier statements on new developments in these regions) which acted as guardians to imperialism and the local comprador bourgeoisie.

The *Devrim* circle’s plan to use the armed forces as a striking force against anti-revolutionaries was also implied in their opposition towards Ecevit and the CHP. Ecevit and the party were denounced for not understanding that during substructural revolutions a class struggle was unavoidable, as the classes losing their interests would fight against revolutions with all their strength. Ağas and capitalist landholders, for example, would fight against land reforms and could even provoke the middle and richer peasantry, though their lands would not be appropriated, to join their ranks. Understandably, the military was expected to fight against these anti-revolutionary powers, and the success of the revolution then depended on their strong action. Avcıoğlu explained in this vein that revolutionary law required a merciless struggle and that Atatürk was aware of this, so he could fight against the enemy successfully. But the CHP and especially Ecevit were acting in a weak, passive and indecisive manner.<sup>79</sup>

*Devrim* was more relaxed in its attitude towards the TİP at the time, probably because it was no longer an important rival – the party had almost dissolved as a result of inter-party conflicts – and more so because they believed that intellectuals within the TİP would be needed post-revolution. The efforts of the party members to organize and enlighten the proletariat were praised, but in the meantime they were asked to concentrate on the concrete problems of revolutionary regimes.<sup>80</sup> In this sense, all socialists were called on to support

the anticipated intervention. This was related to the fact that the support of a military action for a leftist cadre such as themselves was explained mainly in pragmatic terms: it was clear that the economic and political system was bankrupt and inevitably the army would intervene.<sup>81</sup> Hence, the short-term tactic for socialists was to divert their energy to influencing this alternative power bloc, the military, in ideological terms. Avcıoğlu addressed the socialists in this way, asking them to take part in the anticipated action to draw the military into a reformist, progressive stand, closer to socialism. He explained:

[If the armed forces] do not get the conscious and organized support of people, and cannot depend on a strong revolutionary cadre, they may not act decisively. The revolutionaries should stop dreaming and by a realist approach take sides with this power with all their strength, as it is evident who will fill the power vacuum. If we are real revolutionaries we cannot escape from making the choices that life enforces on us only because we wish for more. We will rest on our big dreams and sharp revolutionary ideals, letting the forces that can be influenced be dragged towards the gang of *reactionary external forces*, or we will refuse to accept this as 'fatal destiny' and try with all our strength to bring about what is possible. The revolutionary action in Turkey will be realized by *passing through this narrow door*.<sup>82</sup> (Emphases added.)

*Devrim* regarded the armed forces as a vital force that would be the determinant of the course of politics in Turkey. The *Devrim* circle established a relationship with a military junta planning to take over on 9 March 1971 based on this line of thinking and the theoretical, strategic and tactical base as outlined above.

#### 4 Between theory and practice: 9 March or 12 March?

The core cadre of the *Yön-Devrim* circle was apparently involved in a military conspiracy later known as the Madanoğlu junta. *Yön-Devrim* joined the junta as a civil section in Ankara in 1969, where the meetings were held secretly, generally in the homes of C. Reşit Eyüboğlu, Doğan Avcıoğlu, İlhami Soysal or Osman Köksal.<sup>83</sup> The junta was modelled on the Committee of Union and Progress (İT) as an underground secret organization consisting of active officers, retired officers and civilians acting under the National Revolution Party. Under the regulations adapted from the İT, the General Assembly governed the junta, in which Madanoğlu himself was the Chair of the Revolution General Council, and Avcıoğlu the General Secretary.<sup>84</sup> The initial aim of the junta was to establish a broad base of patriots among the working class, youth and military.<sup>85</sup> New members were accepted after detailed scrutiny, and like the procedure in the İT,

all members were obliged to take an oath on the 'flag, Atatürk and rifle'. Atatürk was exchanged for the Koran used in the İT oath.<sup>86</sup>

The scope of the Madanoğlu junta has been a continuing issue of debate, whether it involved high commanders, or more specifically whether it was backed by a hierarchical chain of command under the leadership of the commanders of the land and air forces, or whether it was just a small independent clique, one of the radical conspiracies among others involving only a few young officers and retired servicemen.<sup>87</sup> In all the scenarios, 9 March is regarded as being the intended intervention date of the radicals in the military.

Apparently, while the Ankara wing of the junta was trying to organize in the army, the *Yön-Devrim* circle tried to get in touch with certain intellectuals and leftist organizations to persuade them to join their illegal National Revolution Party, which was to be turned into a single party after the intervention. In this respect, contact was established with leftist organizations. *Devrim*, or the Madanoğlu junta, had established relations, especially with the youth who were going to be the pillars of the revolution. In this respect, the youth 'guerrilla' group THKP-C<sup>88</sup> was going to participate in the 9 March intervention with its own forces, and with the task of getting hold of the police central headquarters.<sup>89</sup> Understandably, a similar contact was established with another youth guerrilla group, THKO, and its famous leader, Deniz Gezmiş. Gezmiş escaped after the famous bank robbery in Istanbul on 8 March 1971 with the assistance of the *Devrim* circle.<sup>90</sup>

Avcıoğlu, meanwhile, prepared the programme of the revolutionary party (the vanguard party), which was to be established about thirty or forty days after the intervention. The party was to be formed by the most enlightened strata of workers, peasants and intellectuals with the aim of building true people's power and paradoxically to keep the army out of daily politics.<sup>91</sup> A populist regime would be established through the party to carry out a revolution rather than leaving matters to a junta ruling from above. Avcıoğlu outlined the two main tasks of the revolutionary regime: the first was to solve social and economic problems to create a more just society and maintain the support of the people, and the second was to educate the masses ideologically.<sup>92</sup> The party programme was introduced in a series of essays in *Devrim* and collected in a book entitled *Devrim Üzerine* [On Revolution] written by Doğan Avcıoğlu and published in February 1971, just a month before the intervention. The book mainly concerned problems besetting the present-day Turkey, relating to foreign trade and foreign politics, agriculture, industry, the banking system, education, planning, etc., with Avcıoğlu's solutions written in a plain, concise manner.

Meanwhile, a new constitution – ‘Revolution Constitution’ – was prepared<sup>93</sup> and presented in January 1971 to Commander of Air Forces Muhsin Batur, who was nicknamed the Flying General after his habit of flying jets over Ankara as a warning sign to the government in power. This popular general claimed that he had found the dossier with the draft constitution, suggestions for the Board of Ministries, Board of Judges and Prosecutors, and a Revolutionary Court that generally represented the ideas of Doğan Avcioğlu to be too radical and hence refused the plan.<sup>94</sup> Some other military officers<sup>95</sup> claimed that Batur himself had demanded the preparation of an intervention plan and a programme as well, and that the plans in the dossier were no more radical than those he had suggested.<sup>96</sup> The officers in the air force had actually responded to Batur with a written declaration in February 1971 that they were not communists as Batur implied.<sup>97</sup>

It seems that the news of the Madanoğlu conspiracy and *Yön-Devrim*'s involvement was well known, and many people believed in the potential of the cadre, to the extent that even the most powerful entrepreneur, Vehbi Koç (who was regularly attacked particularly in *Devrim*), had invited Avcioğlu to his house and tried to build good relations with him.<sup>98</sup> Yet there was actually little hope of success as for a long time the conspiracy had been under close scrutiny by the infamous National Intelligence Service [MIT], and especially as the military forces involved were sent for duty to various separate districts. The Madanoğlu junta suspected espionage activity and the existence of agents within their clique. An official of the Soviet consulate had warned Doğan Avcioğlu that there was an agent within the junta.<sup>99</sup> Though the junta became more alert, they could not identify the identity of the agent, as ironically the MIT agent Mahir Kaynak, who had disguised himself as a socialist academic,<sup>100</sup> was one of the most trusted of General Madanoğlu's men. Kaynak had meanwhile recorded several secret meetings and reported all developments to his superiors.<sup>101</sup> The *Devrim* circle had also learned by pure chance and through the TİP that the activities of their journal were under investigation by the MIT and hence opened a lawsuit against the Intelligence Service as their freedom of communication was impeded.<sup>102</sup>

The *Devrim* circle also had internal disputes. One of the main thinkers, journalist İlhan Selçuk, wanted to separate from the movement as he did not want to be involved in a military takeover, thinking it would be too risky. He believed that the ‘9 March junta’ was not strong enough in the military and he thought it would be much better to give up the intervention plan altogether. He feared most of all that military rule could rapidly turn into a fascist regime.<sup>103</sup> Doğan Avcioğlu, though, insisted on carrying out the attempt, as he thought it was too late to change the plans.<sup>104</sup> According to the testimony of

İlhami Soysal and Doğan Avcıoğlu the Madanoğlu junta had already collapsed in June 1970 as a result of inner strife.<sup>105</sup> Actually, the disappointment and despair of *Devrim* was evident in the issue of the first week of March, which claimed that Turkey was heading towards fascism.<sup>106</sup>

Despite this a memorandum of 12 March 1971 was greeted excitedly by *Devrim* and was hailed with the proclamation that the army had stopped the anti-Kemalist course.<sup>107</sup> This was followed with a full-page article headed 'The Army and the People' discussing the military intervention, again with the basic assumption that the military played an increasingly progressive role in many developing countries.<sup>108</sup> In following issues, though, Nihat Erim's civilian government was criticized for being formed from big pashas together with right- and left-wing technocrats.<sup>109</sup> In these terms, as it did not depend on mass support, the government was found unfit to carry out real reform, though the military itself was not directly opposed and, perhaps because of this, *Devrim* was not closed down immediately. The basic goal of the *Yön-Devrim* strategy – to use the force of the army within its dispute with the hegemonic powers and to pull it to a more revolutionary position – was reiterated after the intervention as well. İlhan Selçuk, for example, explained just one month after the intervention that the state which actually represented the interests of the hegemonic classes could be used as a tool for revolutionary actions during army interventions.<sup>110</sup>

This lukewarm support continued until the military showed its iron fist against the left. When martial law was declared in eleven cities on 26 April the witch hunt named 'operation sledgehammer' [balyoz harekatı] started. Anyone associated with the left, including legal TİP party leaders such as Behice Boran and Sadun Aren, was arrested, reaching a total of 547 people in the first five days of the operation.<sup>111</sup> Even those who had sent donations to Dev-Genç were arrested and subjected to torture in various secret centres belonging to the MIT.<sup>112</sup> On 27 April *Devrim* was closed down together with the newspapers and journals *Ortam*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Akşam*, and after that the TİP, Dev-Genç and the parties and bodies of the 'extreme left' and 'extreme right' were closed down.

In the days that followed the intervention swiftly turned into a power conflict among the high commanders, who were divided along conservative/progressive or status quo/radical reformist lines. The reformist Gürler-Batur wing, disillusioned with the government's inability to carry out social and economic reforms, held meetings to intervene once again and govern directly for a period.<sup>113</sup> Reactionary officers gained control with the support of the MIT, however, and started fighting against two other strong generals, Faruk Gürler and Muhsin Batur. The MIT arrested military officers and civilians

associated with the Madanoğlu junta and tortured them, apparently to force them to testify against Generals Batur and Gürler for their involvement with a Marxist-Leninist junta.<sup>114</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu, İlhan Selçuk and İlhami Soysal were subject to torture in the notorious 'Ziverbey Köşk' of the MIT in Erenköy, Istanbul.<sup>115</sup> Together with military officers they were charged in a military court in January 1973 with planning to violently overthrow the government in favour of a Marxist regime, leading to disorder in the army.<sup>116</sup> Extraordinarily, the identity of the agent and probably agent-provocateur<sup>117</sup> Mahir Kaynak was exposed in court by the MIT, much to his amazement.<sup>118</sup> However, his tape recordings and the testimony of espionage activity were not accepted as evidence, and because of the lack of substantial evidence the prisoners were cleared of all charges.<sup>119</sup>

Whatever the character of the intended intervention of 9 March, whether it was the free will of some lower-ranking colonels involved in conspiracies or hierarchical plans which changed throughout the course, the 12 March intervention rather than 9 March marked the end of the *Yön-Devrim* movement and its strategy.

# THE WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY: THE LONG ROAD TO SOCIALISM

## 1 Introduction

The Turkish left was divided into two basic groups in the 1960s – those striving for a socialist revolution (SR) on the one hand and those striving for versions of NDR on the other. Peculiar to the Turkish left movements was the fact that this split was centred on the role of the army in a leftist movement. Advocates of the NDR differed from those supporting SR mainly in their attitude towards the Turkish army, in their expectations that a military coup would pave the way for a socialist transformation.

The main supporter of the SR was the TİP, which advocated, naturally, as it was a legal party participating in local and national elections, a parliamentary road to change under the vanguard of the working class, or more specifically its representative organization the TİP. Apart from the TİP SR had little ideological support from the left.

The discourse and attitude of the TİP to the political role of the military is discussed below. The party did not have a unanimous view on the role of the army throughout the decade, and divisions in the party occurred with support for an NDR increasing and gaining strength after the mid-1960s. Party leaders also had different and changing views on the subject. The chapter will outline these developments, explain their relation to other leftist movements and conclude with an overall assessment of the party's position.

The examination of the political thinking of the TİP on the political role of the military is, however, not an easy task, as the party never had a regular press organ of its own. It published a bulletin, *Sözcü*, when the party was founded but this generally contained organizational matters and declarations on policy rather than ideological discussions. Later on, *Sosyal Adalet*,<sup>1</sup> a semi-official

organ of the party, reflected the views of the party and published the opinions of the TİP leaders.<sup>2</sup> There were other journals<sup>3</sup> published by TİP members and sympathizers, most importantly a fortnightly journal, *Dönüşüm*, published in Ankara by university students who were TİP members and sympathizers under editor Ataol Behramoğlu.<sup>4</sup> *Emek* was published by the party secretary-general, trade unionist Şaban Erik, in Ankara in 1970.<sup>5</sup> As well as these journals, official programmes of the party are also significant sources for understanding the views of the TİP on the military, although they do not always agree with the pronouncements made by the party leaders.<sup>6</sup> Material published by the party leaders has been used alongside journals, party programmes and speeches, as well as an oral interview conducted by Nihat Sargin to survey the eclectic and sometimes overtly contradictory views of the party on the political role of the military.

## 2 Socialist revolution discourse: TİP as the vanguard

The TİP was the largest and most durable of the legal socialist parties in Turkey; earlier doctrinaire parties were either illegal or ephemeral, or both. It was also the first party with a real ideological base to enter nationwide elections, and forced other parties to define themselves ideologically more clearly.<sup>7</sup> The TİP was founded by a group of trade unionists<sup>8</sup> on 13 February 1961. This was the first time representatives of the working class itself had established a political party – before this socialist parties were founded and led by intellectuals. Yet the party actually owed its prestige and success mainly to Mehmet Ali Aybar<sup>9</sup> a well-known lawyer, writer, scholar and leftist activist,<sup>10</sup> who was appointed chair of the party on 9 February 1962,<sup>11</sup> as, interestingly, trade unionists believed that ‘narrow class issues would not be sufficient for countrywide politics’.<sup>12</sup> Aybar convinced Behice Boran, ex-lecturer in sociology and long involved in politics, to join the party, which she did in 1962.<sup>13</sup> Behice Boran had joined the underground TKP in 1942, but she was not charged with party membership during the trials of TKP members in 1951. Boran, the well-known professor of economics Sadun Aren<sup>14</sup> and Mehmet Ali Aybar,<sup>15</sup> formerly, and secretly TKP members or in the case of Aybar sympathetic to the party, were the main leaders and ideologues of the TİP. However, the TİP was founded independently of the TKP and its main goal was to remain separate from the TKP and especially known party members.<sup>16</sup> The party managed to attract important intellectuals, such as the journalist Çetin Altan, novelist Yaşar Kemal, writers Aziz Nesin and Fethi Naci and many others along with future trade unionists.

The party adopted a Marxist identity, with the party programme formulated at the congress in February 1964,<sup>17</sup> but the party consistently refused Leninism.<sup>18</sup>

The TİP advocated a gradual and democratic transition to socialism. Its main programme consisted of radical reforms in agriculture to end exploitation in rural areas, and broadening of the state sector including banks, insurance companies and foreign trade.<sup>19</sup> The party defined this system as a non-capitalist development model which was to bring rapid industrialization. The model was the same as the programme of *Yön*, but the TİP programme emphasized that the economy was to be run and controlled by the labouring classes.<sup>20</sup> The party, then, actually advocated the same linear reformist democratic programme which it shared with other leftist movements defending NDR,<sup>21</sup> though with a significant difference, as the party programme placed economic and political power directly in the hands of the working class and determined the working class as the agency of change.<sup>22</sup> This was based on the assumption that Turkey had more or less completed its democratic revolution during the Independence War under the leadership of the bourgeoisie and middle strata and the Kemalist reforms which followed.<sup>23</sup> Though there were still vestiges of feudalism, and the country suffered from underdevelopment, feudalism was not an important aspect, as NDR advocates claimed, and Turkey was essentially a capitalist state with a significant mass of working class. Hence, the time was ripe to transform into a socialist regime under the leadership of the working class, with the democratic socialist principles of the TİP.

The TİP also acknowledged the anti-imperialist struggle for independence in economic and political means as its primary goal, particularly in the period between 1962 and 1965, and also called for those aspiring to independence from the US, mainly Atatürkist forces and socialists, to act together. This idea came on to the agenda especially at the height of the Cyprus crisis with the US, discussed in Chapter 3. Aybar announced a new platform for Turkey in one of the General Executive Meetings in Ankara on 6 September 1964 during his speech on the Cyprus conflict. He made a call to all anti-imperialist forces – the socialists and Atatürkists:

[All socialists and Atatürkists] Let's unite our power for an independent foreign policy. Everything depends on our being independent; planned development, establishment of a democratic regime, carrying out radical reforms – all these goals can be attained only when we become fully independent in our foreign affairs.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, it was decided in the general congress of Malatya (1966) that Turkey's primary agenda was to reach full independence and this could be achieved only by turning back to the foreign policy of Atatürk's Turkey during the Independence War period.<sup>25</sup> Even though the TİP advocated unity with

anti-imperialists namely Atatürkists, the TİP insisted on leadership by *the socialists* but not *Atatürkists* in this struggle, as the party believed that both economic and political independence could be maintained only under a socialist system.<sup>26</sup> In this sense, the party firmly believed that anti-imperialist and socialist struggles were one combined battle: the struggle for national liberation was a socialist struggle as well, with a single stage,<sup>27</sup> like the 'two sides of a coin'.<sup>28</sup> For that reason, even though the TİP shared an anti-imperialist discourse and a broad-front policy as a strategy with advocates of NDR, the TİP regarded its goal basically as SR.

### 3 TİP against 'short-cuts' to socialism

The essential difference of the position of the TİP that led to fierce debate and the consequent split of the left centred on the TİP's determination that the socialists, and tacitly the labouring classes, were to be the vanguard in a combined socialist–anti-imperialist movement. The TİP leadership argued that economic and political goals such as attaining rapid development and broadening of democracy all depended on the organized action of the proletariat, and in order to get the assent of the proletariat it was necessary to frame politics with a class perspective.

The vanguard class issue was problematic, as *Yön* defended the vanguard of the military-civilian intelligentsia and the NDR movement led by Belli (discussed in the following chapter) saw as well a window of opportunity far greater than any other groups or classes in the current state of affairs. The TİP leaders, however, from very early on were opposed to transition to a socialist regime through an authoritarian solution and any top-down attempt by the civil or military elite.

Boran, for example, explained her and the party's position against a military-led movement with the dictum that there could be 'no short-cut to socialism'. This was at the time when Colonel Talat Aydemir failed in his second coup attempt and there were signs of support from the *Yön* movement.<sup>29</sup> *Yön* had implicitly supported the interventions by the military and justified them time and again as the shortest route to transition to socialism, as the group expected an authoritarian regime to carry out radical reforms initially and attain rapid development. Boran opposed such perspectives, especially since they did not depend on the active participation of the people. She understood a leftist or a socialist regime as representing the direct and active participation of the people, and differentiated the two separate roads, writing that:

According to the advocates of a 'short-cut', popular support can be maintained by doing things that benefit people and that would eventually become a people's rule. Those who support such views misunderstand the

rule of the people, as they take it as the passive support of the people. ... A regime that really depends on the people, however, is a form of regime where the people actively participate in all decision-making processes, in governing, the preparation of reforms and in their execution.<sup>30</sup>

Boran also warned that a military junta would not invite an intellectual group to carry out radical socio-economic reforms after seizing power, and even if they did, there would be differences of opinion between these two different groups of civilians and officers. She asked, pragmatically, which side would then have power over the other in such a case? Boran opposed quick remedies without undertaking a long-term struggle to organize and generate consciousness in the working class. She argued that otherwise when carrying out reforms these powers would have to deal with the masses that would cling to their old political beliefs and traditions and who were not conscious yet, and as the masses would have to make economic sacrifices during the time spent on realizing reforms, how would they then support this new regime? She was, in any case, also sceptical about the willingness of the intellectuals to improve the living conditions of the masses.

In these terms, Boran criticized leftist strategies that favoured short-cuts and claimed, in contrast to the impatient intellectuals, that she believed transition would not take such a long time in Turkey, as it had managed to emulate the long democratic developments of Europe in a relatively short time.<sup>31</sup> What was necessary at the moment was to organize the masses, generate class consciousness and liberate them from their old political parties. The immediate political goal was to establish a state that guaranteed social rights and provided social justice.

The TİP also criticized the leftists who allocated a special revolutionary potential to the military for other reasons, including the class content and ideological leanings of the officers. According to the TİP, the military officers together with other intellectuals and civil servants were in terms of their class content petty bourgeoisie who tended to be individualistic and inclined to bourgeois ideologies. Thus they were prone in the final analysis to support capitalism.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Aybar believed that even if they did not always directly stand against the people, they had a tendency to look down on them.

Boran also considered the consequences of military interventions. She pointed out the fact that military regimes were generally temporary, as it was impossible to rule by force alone and impossible through force to solve the problems of countries.<sup>33</sup> As a result, a series of junta regimes follow one after the other, leading to chaos. Boran warned that as a regime of officers inevitably had to depend on a basic class, and as the bourgeois class had more economic

power and political experience, eventually they would be forced to co-operate with the bourgeoisie. Unlike the *Yön* movement, or more specifically Doğan Avcıoğlu, Boran regarded Nasser's regime in Egypt as a failure rather than a success.<sup>34</sup>

Boran also emphasized that in cases where the military or middle classes seemed to act as socialists, this was actually a form of *bourgeois socialism* which was a type of bourgeois ideology. She did not trust the ideology of the officers because, like Aybar, she believed that the middle classes, including officers, were in terms of their class origins, cultural upbringing and also the status that they acquired in society, bourgeois in mentality. They would only adopt socialist ideals if their living conditions worsened, with resulting feelings of insecurity. That sounds contradictory, as presumably Boran and other party leaders were themselves of middle-class origin, and perhaps for this reason Boran added that some middle-class people could turn to socialism, becoming scientifically conscious of the conditions of social and economic developments. Yet, she emphasized, probably again for short-cut defenders, that the middle classes would only support the labouring classes if a socialist culture had flourished and the masses were politically conscious.<sup>35</sup>

As the party was ready to act with Atatürkists against imperialism and internal collaborators of imperialism, but only under its own leadership, Boran stressed that the middle classes should not be alienated but included in the socialist movement by an 'extra enlightening process'. She explained that intellectuals would play an important role in influencing the public, but to assume an active role as a managing cadre they had to depend either on the bourgeoisie or on the working class and the labouring classes. Their own power would not be enough.<sup>36</sup> She believed, then, that intellectuals, middle classes or the military officers were not a politically and socially determining group in a modern society, unlike the position held in *Yön* and NDR circles.

In this respect, concerns over what might be described as revolution from above and leadership of classes other than the working classes were expressed constantly by the TİP leadership, especially with regard to those defending the NDR line and leftist Kemalists gathered around the journal *Yön*.<sup>37</sup> The TİP defended its position from two central points: first, the durability of success of the anti-imperialist movement and second, the support of the public for the movement. With regard to the first, the TİP leadership regularly called attention to the fact that if the national liberation struggle were to be led by the middle strata or the national bourgeoisie (and they believed that the latter did not exist in Turkey) they would eventually form relations with the imperialists in the future. The TİP explained that the First Independence War was fought under the leadership of a bureaucracy, the civil and military civil servants, and

the petty bourgeoisie was successful temporarily in obtaining independence for the country, but this independence was lost again in two decades.<sup>38</sup> The failure of the Atatürkist movement and the 27 May coup, apparently seen as aspects of the anti-imperialist struggle, were regarded similarly.<sup>39</sup> The 1960 coup had no lasting result, as foreign and local exploiters eventually controlled the state through their parties. The TİP stressed that only by establishing a socialist regime through elections could the power of these be broken at last. Hence, the TİP persistently emphasized the inseparability of the struggle for independence and socialism under the leadership of socialists.<sup>40</sup>

With regard to the second aspect, the TİP believed that the Turkish people had a peculiar attitude towards impositions from above as a result of their past experiences. In this sense, the party declared that the people of Turkey would not accept any change from above as historically they had always reacted to processes that were forced on them in this way.<sup>41</sup> The TİP had actually emphasized in its party programme that the failure of the republican regime to eliminate feudalism and comprador bourgeoisie, and consequently the dominance of imperialism, was due to the lack of co-operation between the ruling cadre and the people.<sup>42</sup>

Despite this it must be noted that the party put forward these ideas on the political role of the military specifically to counter the leftist movements' eagerness to extend the framework of the 27 May coup with yet another one. The TİP's approach to the guardianship role of the army was otherwise not very different from that of other circles. The party regarded the Turkish armed forces as a progressive, modernizing force and the guarantor [terminat] of democracy with the youth since 1960. The army had overthrown the rule of reactionaries, exploiters and their representatives. The 27 May intervention was perceived as one of the most important days of the Independence War and a return to the 'Kuvay-i Milliye ruhu' which marked the rebirth of Atatürkism. The intervention gave the working classes the chance to consciously rise to the historical stage. Aybar had spoken consistently of Atatürkism and demanded conformity to the constitution of 1961, strongly condemning views which were reactions to the 27 May military coup, which he thought came from the AP.<sup>43</sup> The TİP called to the Atatürkists for support and praised the 27 May coup time and again<sup>44</sup> to the point of declaring the party an heir to intervention<sup>45</sup> and celebrating the ex-officers' entrance to the party.<sup>46</sup>

The TİP seemed inconsistent in its approach to the political role of the army, which sometimes invited criticism from other leftist movements.<sup>47</sup> The TİP, like all other leftist movements at the time defended the 27 May coup and the changes initiated by the coup. The TİP leaders were actually quite pleased with the intervention and saw it more or less as a reformation of the Kemalist

revolution. The difference between the TİP and other leftist movements, including the ones that will be examined in the following chapters, lay in the attitude towards another coup to complement 27 May by radical reforms to pave the road to a socialist regime, with only the TİP standing against such a strategy. The TİP did not react to the military intervention from a civil rights or protection of democracy position as a social democratic party would. However, apparently neither did the TİP believe in imposing socialism – in essence the rule of the people – from above. It was this point that the party developed as a theme, especially after 1965.

To sum up, even though the party shared similar perspectives on the political role of the army, and in relation to that Kemalism in Turkey, with other leftist groups, the TİP was from the beginning consistent in its strong reaction against any short-cut transition to socialism from above, especially in the form of a military intervention.<sup>48</sup> From the very first day until its end in 1971, the party, despite opposition groups within, continued its devotion to a parliamentary regime and warned against interference from the military in politics in any form.<sup>49</sup> Unlike any of the other leftist groups, the party retained this position and reacted as such to the intervention in 1971, in other words, it was quite consistent in its attitude towards military coups, especially as an instrument for carrying out radical reforms leading towards a socialist regime.

#### **4 Rifts in the party: NDR or SR?**

##### ***4.1 Elections: supremacy of the popular vote***

The relative success of the party in the 1965 general election justified the belief held by the TİP that the Turkish people could quickly adopt socialist thinking. Even though the TİP was not organized in all cities (it was only able to enter the election in fifty-four cities) it had received 276,000 votes (3 per cent) and as a result won fifteen seats in parliament. The party rejoiced in having a chance to be represented in parliament.<sup>50</sup> The TİP was able to disseminate its views more easily and widely, through its presence in parliament and via regular access to the mass media. Party leaders optimistically argued that socialism was in the veins of people, and if a party could have close relations with the masses and generate consciousness, socialism would become a popular trend.<sup>51</sup>

The TİP leaders reiterated that when they came to power the class content of the ruling government would also dramatically change, and democratic socialist revolution could thus be realized by legal parliamentary methods. Yet this view did not seem to reflect where their votes had come from; the votes for the TİP were not actually from the urban working class employed in big business but mainly from middle-class people in Istanbul, and in rural areas from Alevite and Kurdish people, here especially thanks to the energetic

campaign for land distribution.<sup>52</sup> Remarkably, even the trade unionists in the TİP had failed to get their working-class members to vote.<sup>53</sup> It was not too far-fetched then, for the *Yön* circle, having praised the success of the TİP in the elections for obtaining the support of middle-class people who were yearning for a radical change in Turkish society,<sup>54</sup> at the same time to criticize the TİP for not being realist. The TİP was unrealistic for believing that a party like the TİP – a European-type socialist party – could ever be successful in Turkey.<sup>55</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 3, the objections raised against the TİP were mainly that the party advocated that a socialist revolution could also realize the goals of NDR. The TİP could only intimidate the middle strata that would otherwise join an anti-imperialist anti-feudal struggle. By doing that the party intimidated the Atatürkist groups (with its anti-capitalist class-orientated discourse) that were presumably ready for the anti-imperialist struggle but not yet ready for a socialist one, and put like this they might not join, which would seriously damage the anti-imperialist movement.

Similar objections were raised against the TİP during the discussions on socialism<sup>56</sup> started by *Yön* in co-operation with the old-guard Mihri Belli and the supporters of NDR within the TİP immediately after the election to evaluate the current conditions.<sup>57</sup> These discussions had focused mainly on the historical and revolutionary stages of Turkey and the relevant strategies to be adopted as an outcome. All this discussion actually implicitly centred on the role of the military in the movement.

This was also the first time that the TİP was criticized in terms of Marxist theory,<sup>58</sup> and was the start of the major ‘war of theory’ that was to continue until the end of the 1960s among the Turkish left.<sup>59</sup> The TİP leadership, however, did not actually join in the discussions in *Yön*, preferring to carry out the debate in their own arena, except for those members of the party advocating the NDR line. The leaders responded with speeches to the party or in public and tackled the issues in their writing.<sup>60</sup> This reluctance to join the open debate, however, damaged their prestige, as party members were aware of the discussions and the party had not fully responded to the accusations raised by *Yön* and NDR supporters.<sup>61</sup> This also led to a NDR paradigm being adopted by many party members as the theoretical discourse seemed stronger.

Starting in August 1966 the TİP leadership had led a campaign against the NDR movement as well as against the CHP centred on the political-revolutionary role of the elite, including military officers.<sup>62</sup> After the election the TİP started to voice its differences from the CHP<sup>63</sup> and from the *Yön* movement, with which it had had lukewarm co-operation before the election. In his speeches at party meetings and statements in the leftist press, it was as if party leader Aybar was having a polemical discussion with Avcıoğlu and

had started to strongly criticize the *Yön* movement for advocating building socialism from above. Aybar renewed this point, claiming that socialism as an economic system and worldview of the people [halk] could only be built by the labouring masses [emekçi halk kitleleri]. Aybar explained that:

As socialism is an economic system and the worldview of the people, socialism will be built by the labouring people. There has never been a socialist country in the world not built by the people. Socialism is built from bottom to top.<sup>64</sup>

Aybar emphasized, however, that among all other labouring classes the working class was the real agent for building socialism. He explained that in the light of scientific research, socialism acknowledged the working class among all other labouring classes as the agency for building socialism as it was an ideology of this class, and as it was the most effective, most talented, strongest and most capable class of all.<sup>65</sup>

Boran likewise considered that the TİP's programme was not actually a socialist programme, as it advocated a mixed economy and land reform. Yet she emphasized that only a socialist party could carry out these reforms and ensure independence and rapid development which would establish the basis for transformation into socialism.<sup>66</sup> She also discussed other alternatives and emphasized that strategies for the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle under the national bourgeoisie or middle strata (as the *Yön* circle and those supporting NDR were advocating) were put forward in the socialist literature for young Asian, African and South American states which had not fairly developed in terms of their political regimes, unlike Turkey. Turkey had spent about forty years developing its political system, and in Turkey there had been a means of organizing and generating consciousness in the working class.<sup>67</sup> Hence, Boran did not raise objections against the theory known as the non-capitalist road, the transitional stage towards socialism via a military intervention, but she did draw attention to the inappropriateness of it for a politically mature country like Turkey.

#### *4.2 The Malatya Congress: victory of SR*

These discussions were in a way a preparation for the Second General Congress of the TİP, where the two positions would struggle for the leadership of the party. NDR advocates had shown their strength in the Istanbul Executive Board, when they aimed to first gain control over the board then to extend it to the Central Executive Board.<sup>68</sup> Following that, during the Istanbul City Congress (October 1966), Sadun Aren won the Chairmanship of Congress

against the opposing group<sup>69</sup> by a margin of a few votes only.<sup>70</sup> It was obvious that NDR advocates were no longer marginal, hence the TİP administration decided to organize a major congress of the party in Malatya, instead of in Istanbul or Ankara, where the opponents were stronger.<sup>71</sup>

The Malatya Congress (20–23 November) turned into a battlefield where the decisive struggle between the party leadership (SR supporters) and the opponents (NDR supporters) was staged. The opponents put forward a separate agenda. The *Yön* circle supported the opponent group, and an essay, to be read in congress by the leader of the opponents, Vahap Erdoğan, was published in *Yön* just days before the congress.<sup>72</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu himself had joined the congress, giving his full support to the opponents. The three-day congress ended with victory for the TİP leadership, and as a result of the following investigations, the opponents gathered around Mihri Belli were almost all evicted from the party.<sup>73</sup> The party leadership had been intimidated by Belli and the groups around him<sup>74</sup> and was apparently trying to prevent the group from taking over the party. For this reason the party leadership was quite hostile to the opponents and eliminated the vocal group of NDR supporters from the party. However, this was not the end of NDR support in the party, and the NDR advocates actually gained strength especially in Istanbul in the following years.

The motions passed in the congress outlined the theoretical and strategic differences between the NDR and SR groups very clearly, as the TİP had announced its strategy of *democratic struggle under the leadership of the labouring people* versus a possible military-led action in alliance with socialist intellectuals.<sup>75</sup> NDR versus SR was also the first split of the Marxist left in the 1960s. After the congress the split in the left was even more vocal and explicit. Even though the debate between these two groups within and without the TİP was about which historical and revolutionary stage the country was at, neither side was actually advocating a revolution, especially a socialist revolution. The TİP defended a parliamentary transition, believing that a party with the tacit support of the working and popular classes would bring about change, and NDR supporters actually, and implicitly, advocated a bourgeois democratic revolution initiated by a coup and with civil support.<sup>76</sup>

The controversy about the revolutionary stage, strategy and tactics focused on the role of the military and civil intellectuals, with a conflict over the leadership of a socialist movement as well. There was also a clash between the parties representing different factions in the TKP under the leadership of Zeki Baştımar (acting as the general secretary of the TKP external bureau) on the one hand, and Mihri Belli on the other. Mihri Belli and Baştımar had had problems since the 1951 arrest of TKP members. Those associated with the

TKP were divided into two groups: 'Zekiciler' and 'Mihriciler', as explained in earlier chapters. People such as Reşat Fuat Baraner, Şevki Akşit, Sevinç Özgüner and Vecdi Özgüner were close to Belli, while Aybar, Aren, Boran and Sargın were close to Zeki Baştımar.<sup>77</sup> The TİP leadership, then, had prior resentment and mistrust of Belli and, therefore, suspected those supporting the NDR line both within and outside the party.

Apart from this dispute caused by the TKP's past, the theoretical discussion opened up an ongoing controversy about the history and structure of society, social change and what revolutionary stage Turkey was at. A small group within the TİP came forward with an original work based on Marx's study of the Eastern states, termed the Asiatic mode of production, as an evaluation of Turkish history to guide the current socialist movement. The popular discussion on the left as to whether the Ottoman state was a feudal state or an Asiatic state with different historical stages from the West was actually centred on the role of the army in the current revolutionary movement.

## **5 A feudal or an Asiatic state? New discussions on the role of the army**

### ***5.1 Asiatic mode of production: the military as the ruling class?***

During the discussions about what revolutionary stage Turkey was at in terms of social structures, Aybar and a few intellectuals of the TİP had started to publicize new ideas on the state, Turkish society and its history. Though probably initially directed as a polemic against the CHP and the NDR opposition, it turned into an investigation of the potentiality of the bureaucracy, intellectuals and, most importantly, military officers in leading a probable revolutionary action. The political role of the army was discussed not only with respect to the position of the middle strata in Marxist theory, but also with respect to the role of the bureaucracy and implicitly the state, based on Marxist analyses of the historical development of Turkey.

Around the mid-1960s, the chair of the TİP, Aybar, had abandoned some of his earlier views and instead of orthodox Marxism began to pay greater attention to Althusser's interpretation of Marxism. He was especially influenced by Althusser's concept of overdetermination.<sup>78</sup> Aybar argued that class conflict in Turkey had a secondary level of importance compared to the problem of freedom in terms of the position of the state relative to the people. He held that the Ottoman state was an authoritarian state [ceberrut] and the Turkish Republic still continued the same form of state. Aybar explained this from a materialist viewpoint, through the lack of private ownership of land under the Ottoman state. The Ottoman state, which Aybar regarded as an 'above-and-beyond the people, centralized, monopolist, despotic entity', was

overpowerful, as it allowed no private land-holding system.<sup>79</sup> The state used its power and a form of exploitation, that of obtaining land rent, through intermediators belonging to its 'kapıkulu' or civil and military servants, that is, the bureaucracy. These civil and military state officials had used immense state power for centuries, both in economic and political terms, and hence had become a *sui generis* class identified with the state. Aybar concluded that there were basically two pseudo-classes, the bureaucrats and the people in the Ottoman state, with the bureaucracy acting as a dominant class.

Aybar was influenced by the writings of TİP members Selahattin Hilav and, especially, Sencer Divitçioğlu<sup>80</sup> and İdris Küçükömer, who basically argued that the Ottoman empire was not a *feudal* state but an *Asiatic* one, which had primarily an Asiatic mode of production (AMP).<sup>81</sup> This view was based on Marx's not fully developed theory of a different kind of historical development for Asian countries.<sup>82</sup> Selahattin Hilav was the first to initiate discussions on AMP for Turkey.<sup>83</sup> After *Yön* had published a series of Hilav's articles, discussions about AMP had been taken up by Sencer Divitçioğlu, who had joined the TİP during the crucial Istanbul City Congress, and İdris Küçükömer, and a similar concept was made public by party leader Aybar, although he never directly attributed AMP to the Ottoman state.<sup>84</sup>

At almost the same time that this was brought to the socialist agenda by Althusser,<sup>85</sup> the AMP concept also resulted in one of the most memorable and intellectual debates of the time in Turkey – whether the Ottoman state had passed through the feudalism stage as in Western countries or whether it had been an Asiatic despotic state. The popularity and acuteness of the discussion was due to its direct reference to the importance of the state of feudalism in Turkey, which then would determine the historical stage and consequently the revolutionary stage and the actors. If the Ottoman empire had been a feudal state, the vestiges of feudalism would be important and the current revolution would be a bourgeois revolution. The military could play a central role in eliminating the feudal powers in such a case. However, if the Ottoman empire had been a despotic state run by its bureaucracy, there would be no need for a bourgeois revolution as in European states. The military officers would have been among the ruling class then, and therefore they could not have any revolutionary role. The feudalism versus AMP discussion was brought to the agenda exactly at the time when the left was polarized into two main groups in terms of revolutionary strategies.

The relevance of AMP to the contemporary leftist movement was also due to the argument put forward by Aybar and Küçükömer, particularly, that the form of the Ottoman state had continued with some changes until the present, so determining the contemporary ruling class as well. According to

AMP advocates, the military was the oldest hegemonic class, a *sui generis* class almost identified with the state, continuing its hegemony in Turkey from the beginning of the Ottoman empire to the present. Aybar, for example, argued that people were alienated for centuries by the bureaucracy, which he defined as an authoritarian, centralized, elitist old power-holder class. Aybar explained that the weakening of the Ottoman state relative to Western countries forced the Ottomans to carry out some reforms. However, the economy was still run or at least directed by the state: either the state directly carried out industrialization projects, or by granting privileges to certain people actually included them among its *kapıkulu* class. A capitalist class was created as a result, carrying out its business allegedly in the name of the state but actually for its own sake.<sup>86</sup> Interestingly, in the republican period, the same (*kapıkulu*) class was able to maintain its power through the *étatiste* policy in the economy. It was actually through the statist mode of production that the *kapıkulu* class was able to increase its political, economic and social dominance. Aybar remarked that in this sense the bureaucratic class could actually protect its dominant role against the rising comprador capitalist class, and argued that both under the rule of İT and, especially, under the CHP, the Ottoman statist mode of production continued and even developed. Consequently, just as was the case in the Ottoman state, there had been a sharp differentiation in Turkey between the exploited and the ruling classes. In this sense, society was divided into the exploiting and exploited classes [*sömürenler ve sömürülenler sınıfı*] just as in the Ottoman model.

Aybar pointed out that when the DP came to power during the 1950s with an ağa–comprador alliance, it was not because the alliance aimed to remove the bureaucracy from power, but rather to take direct power in state issues and force the bureaucracy under their command. As a result of the accumulated reaction against Ottoman-style state rule the people sided with the ağa–comprador coalition in 1950. Expressing a radical opinion for the left, Aybar, Divitçioğlu and Küçükömer praised the result of the 1950 election, as they thought that through free elections people had deposed the oldest ruling class, that of the military and civilian bureaucracy.<sup>87</sup>

Aybar remarked that at the present, as beneficiaries of the Americans, the bureaucracy as a class was in alliance with the ağa–comprador classes.<sup>88</sup> However, at the same time, Aybar also divided the nineteenth-century bureaucratic class into two main streams according to their worldview, with one section supporting liberal views and a capitalist economy and the other as he defined it favouring centralized, monopolist, authoritarian statist views.<sup>89</sup> He termed these two streams in the republican period ‘the pro-American’ and ‘Atatürkist’ factions respectively. The American faction, or, as Aybar defined

it, the 'American bureaucrat bourgeoisie,' formed an alliance with the big landowners and comprador bourgeoisie. Pro-American bureaucrats, or the bureaucrat bourgeoisie, and the ağa-comprador alliance all benefited from relations with US imperialism. Thus, the conflicts among these classes were eliminated and they had coalesced into one hegemonic class. Aybar concluded that the main conflict in Turkey was between this alliance and the rest of the people, that is, all labouring classes.

While demeaning bureaucracy and authoritarianism in so many ways, Aybar at the same time defended the actions of the Atatürkist wing, citing as examples the declaration of the Constitutional regime,<sup>90</sup> the Independence War and the 27 May 1960 coup. Aybar still had expectations of the Atatürkist wing, probably because it was perceived as standing against the ruling coalition of pro-American bureaucrats, big landowners and comprador bourgeois. Aybar believed that Atatürkist bureaucrats would 'do their duty in the struggle for a second Independence War and socialism.'<sup>91</sup> Yet he warned that it was impossible to continue an Ottoman-style state under the label of socialism.<sup>92</sup>

The classification of bureaucracy based on ideological and political differences was not very clear in Aybar's work. Aybar essentially considered classes in terms of their economic roles and relations, and therefore defined bureaucracy in the Ottoman state both in terms of economic relations and as an appropriator of surplus value. Yet in the republican period, from the nineteenth century onwards, bureaucracy was qualified according to the worldview of the participants, without explaining the roots of this differentiation. The perspective on Atatürkism and early republican history was problematic, as authoritarianism was criticized while at the same time Atatürkist actions were praised.

Aybar derived his overall conclusions on the popular behaviour of the Turkish people on the basis of the problematic relation between the state and the people. He claimed that '[Turkish] people would react against anything that comes from above' as they have associated this with state repression for hundreds of years. Hence he reiterated that a transition into socialism imposed from above could not succeed in Turkey. This was a warning from Aybar to those believing that socialism could be built through an initiative of the military by a coup. Aybar explained that the masses strongly resented top-down regimes, and they had shown this clearly by eliminating the CHP from power in the first free election. The result of the election was the statement of the people against an Ottoman-style authoritarian state and the representative of such a rule, the CHP.<sup>93</sup> Also after 27 May, as people were worried about a revival of the old mentality and state rule if the bureaucrat bourgeoisie gained power, 40 per cent had voted against the constitution. Aybar reaffirmed that

the socialization of Turkey would be in the form of a democratic socialism where every labouring class would unite and ascend to power.

Küçükömer, who was opposed to the Kemalist differentiation of secularists versus reactionaries, argued in his book, other writings and speeches from a similar standpoint of the perception of oppression by a bureaucratic elite, explaining that the military and civilian state officials had been the real oppressors and historically the enemy of the people.<sup>94</sup> He added that to eliminate exploitation, the powers of this historical elite must first be broken. Otherwise, not only would it not be possible to build a system which benefited the working classes of Turkey but also any attempt to do so with the aid of these historical power-holders would have to face the reaction of the people.

Küçükömer argued in this sense that some socialists misunderstood the role of the army and were mistaken in assuming that another 27 May was possible. He strongly criticized 'national front socialists'<sup>95</sup> and drew attention to the foundation and development of OYAK:

The sources of OYAK have rapidly increased and the foundation has joint ventures with foreign capital and established massive industrial companies (such as automobile and truck companies) based on profit. Those who define themselves as progressive-secular Atatürkists ... should first analyse OYAK; the socialists thinking to build a broad front with the bureaucrats for the independence struggle must first analyse OYAK. Those who define themselves as socialists cannot run away from this truth.<sup>96</sup>

Küçükömer drew attention to OYAK in the Third General Congress of the TİP as well.<sup>97</sup> He argued that even though bureaucrats could not be a class, as they did not own the means of production, in Turkey a bureaucratic group was moving towards becoming a class. He claimed that unfortunately these were the military officers. Even though there were objections to Küçükömer in the congress, he further claimed that through OYAK the military officers were in business with foreign capital and he thus implied that they were becoming comprador bourgeois. He emphasized in this sense that co-operation with the bureaucrats was impossible under these conditions, and argued that it was for this reason that Nasser's regime had lost power. Actually, very radically, Küçükömer instead proposed that the leftists could co-operate with what he termed the 'Islamist people's front' [İslamcı halk cephesi] against imperialism. Küçükömer argued that a new commission must discuss the different views with respect to the new role of the army and if necessary prepare a new programme for the TİP, with new tactics and strategy.

Aybar reiterated that bureaucracy was a kind of a class, as it had a regulatory and controlling role in the economy. He again based this on the analysis of the social structure of Turkey, arguing that Turkey had special historical characteristics, and that party strategy and tactics must be regulated to find a solution to the superstructural problems that also overdetermine contradictions in the economic base.

To summarize and end the discussion, AMP offered an original reading of history, and its adherents were the first on the left to draw attention to state repression through the rule of the elite. Therefore it was an important attempt to liberate leftist ideology in Turkey from both the straitjacket of Kemalism and the Stalinism that Turkish leftists were generally associated with. Unfortunately, it lacked consistency of judgement and was in need of further exploration. Aybar's theses were very not very well developed. Moreover, Küçükömer's work was highly incomprehensible, even though it was very important in attacking the modernist framework and in its attempt to understand the cultural factor and the role of religion in Turkey from a different and not hostile perspective.<sup>98</sup> Despite some shortcomings, overall these AMP theses were highly innovative and revealing.

The AMP theorization also served a variety of pragmatic political causes which opened up further debates. First, it provided a theoretical ground for opposing the view of a revolution from above through military intervention. In many ways it also directly attacked the CHP, the rival of the TİP after its turn to left-of-centre, as the inheritor of the old despotic Ottoman-style state rule. Furthermore, the emphasis on freedom and the state versus people contradiction instead of class contradiction also formed a functional populist rhetoric to attract Alevite and Kurdish people, to whom the TİP had begun to turn its attention.<sup>99</sup> Last, but definitely not least, the historical discussion provided an opportunity for Aybar to implicitly put forward his ideas about the Soviet Union. By denouncing the centralized, despotic, bureaucratic state – the Ottoman empire – Aybar was at the same time pointing at a bureaucratic giant, the USSR, acting under a socialist label.<sup>100</sup> The two states had essential resemblances as far as Aybar was concerned, whereby the state controlled and exploited the masses through its ownership and control over the means of production with the help of its bureaucratic class.<sup>101</sup> Hence, Aybar not only attacked those socialists advocating a change through a military coup, but also a kind of socialism in which bureaucratic dictatorships ruled.<sup>102</sup>

However, it became obvious after some time that Aybar's newer and more unorthodox ideas were not actually welcome in the party. This came to the fore after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Aybar had criticized the Soviet Union for acting like a 'big brother' and undermining the smaller

states.<sup>103</sup> He condemned the invasion and asked for the recognition of the sovereignty principle for all countries.<sup>104</sup> Actually, he was not alone in the party in condemning the intervention of the USSR. Boran, who had generally been regarded as a Soviet sympathizer, also condemned the invasion in her essay 'Çekoslovakya Olayları,' which was published in the popular daily *Milliyet*.<sup>105</sup>

After a while Aybar started to speak publicly about 'humanitarian socialism' [gülyüzlü/insancil sosyalizm] and this led to a reaction from many party members.<sup>106</sup> Party members and especially young sympathizers believed that using such a concept would mean that the TİP had earlier defended non-humanitarian socialism.<sup>107</sup> Aybar did not agree. His earlier emphasis on the problem of humiliation<sup>108</sup> and public statements in favour of a Turkish type of socialism<sup>109</sup> meant that he was accused of deviating from the party line and using terms that did not belong to scientific socialism, in other words of theoretical deviation.<sup>110</sup> Five top members linked by their affinity with the TKP and personally very close to Aybar finally submitted a proposal stating that Aybar's views were his personal views and did not bind the party.<sup>111</sup> Aybar considered the reaction as a Moscow coup to remove him from office and publicly accused the opposition of having been dictated to by the USSR.<sup>112</sup> As this was a most sensitive issue for TİP members the public accusation brought relations between Aybar and the opposition into deadlock.

Aybar resigned from the party after a few days of long meetings with the administrative board, but was persuaded to return by his supporters. The Third Congress once again supported Aybar against two opposition groups,<sup>113</sup> but Aybar finally resigned on 16 November 1969 after the failure of the party in the 1969 national election.<sup>114</sup> Boran succeeded Aybar as the new chair, becoming the first woman ever to lead a political party in Turkey.<sup>115</sup>

### *5.2 Boran's socialism and the political pole of the army*

Boran, one of Aybar's closest friends and main supporters in the party, had become one of the leaders of the opposition against Aybar and finally she became the new party chair. She was also the only person within the party to have written a book on her own and the party's views on socialism which started with an evaluation of Turkish history and the present historical stage. The book shows clearly the differences between Boran's views and those of Aybar, especially in terms of the socialist model to follow.

Boran's analysis was more rigidly orientated towards classical Marxism, though she kept close to the TİP platform.<sup>116</sup> Boran had a materialistic approach to history and did not view the Ottoman empire as a case of AMP, defining it instead as an *anachronistic, centralized feudal empire* and a *variant*

of *European feudal states*. She distinguished feudalism in terms of mode of production and relations of production in Marxist analytical terms, rather than through specific cultural and ideological formations. Though her definition was different, the characteristics she attributed to the empire were the same as those used by people within the TİP who understood the structure of the empire through the concept of AMP.<sup>117</sup> According to Boran, the Ottoman empire was a centralized, authoritarian state ruled from above, which was represented in concrete by its bureaucratic class.<sup>118</sup> The civil-military executive class brought change to the traditional state/society in the nineteenth century.<sup>119</sup> The same class initiated a bourgeois revolution characteristic of backward countries by the foundation of the republic. Boran stressed that this was the peak, namely the most revolutionary point that the bourgeois could ever hope to reach in Turkey.<sup>120</sup> Boran explained that: 'The Turkish people has gained consciousness of its existence as a nation during the Liberation War. As the National Liberation War was anti-imperialist it was also of an anti-capitalist character.'<sup>121</sup>

Boran explained that a national liberation war was a bourgeois revolution of the type experienced by underdeveloped countries.<sup>122</sup> It was a movement dependent on and supported by the people. However, she emphasized that the class character of a revolution was determined by the class leading the movement and its ideology. As the bourgeoisie was weak in Turkey the military and civil administrative cadre, which were of petty-bourgeois origin, led the movement and the revolution. However, after the war the Turkish bourgeoisie enriched itself through war profiteering (during World War I) and the ağas surrounded the ruling cadre.<sup>123</sup> Mainly because of this dependence on the bourgeoisie, and the petty-bourgeois lineage of the bureaucratic cadre with their tendency to acquire a bourgeois mentality,<sup>124</sup> the ruling cadre had chosen a capitalist way of development.<sup>125</sup>

Boran explained that the ruling cadre had very high status thanks to its administrative, elite role under the Ottoman empire. They had realized that in a society where the bourgeois powers were not yet developed they could ensure their control over the economy if an *étatiste* route were followed, which would also bring direct economic advantages for themselves.<sup>126</sup> By allocating such a level of class consciousness to bureaucracy, Boran took a noticeably radical approach to the state-governed economy and claimed that a bureaucratic bourgeoisie had developed under these conditions, but she claimed that this did not cover the period when Atatürk was still alive.<sup>127</sup> Boran argued in a very schematic, superficial and contradictory way (one which did not match the reality) that the ruling cadre had struggled *against imperialism* and *thus capitalism* and the *Ottoman type of rule and traditional society* until Atatürk's death.<sup>128</sup> Atatürk's principles,

especially those of nationalism, *étatisme*, populism and secularism were the peak of revolutionary thought. Boran, in a way strikingly similar to Avcıoğlu, argued that if these principles were systematized into an ideological framework they would be very close to socialism.<sup>129</sup> Kemalism was somehow closer to leftist ideology and the regime close enough to socialism. Statements such as these raise questions about Boran's understanding of socialism. The principles she mentioned were classic bourgeois nation-state tenets, and could be the attribute of any kind of a capitalist state (fascist, for example, or a temporary stage in a capitalist state) rather than basic socialist characteristics.<sup>130</sup>

Yet the main problem in Boran's work was that she had attributed an anti-capitalist character to the Kemalist regime as it allegedly stood against imperialism. She explained the reaction of the military and civil bureaucracy to the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois character of the administrative cadre in terms of its hegemonic role under the Ottoman empire. However, as she adhered to the Soviet position (dating from the Comintern) she schematically argued that Kemalist cadre was against imperialism and deduced from that the conclusion that in this sense it was also against capitalism.<sup>131</sup> Actually, her theses were internally contradictory, and at the same time she regarded Kemalist revolution as a bourgeois revolution and regarded the petty-bourgeois executive cadre (the bureaucrats and intellectuals) as bourgeois in mentality.<sup>132</sup> The anti-capitalist drive was only due to the 'anti-imperialist' position of the Kemalist leadership, then, which was only based on the struggle against the invading Greeks supported by the British during the liberation war.<sup>133</sup>

With respect to the worldview of the ruling cadre, following the same line as Aybar, Boran acknowledged that an ideological battle had been going on within the ruling cadre since the nineteenth century. The battle was between those advocating authoritarianism, centralization and *étatisme* versus liberalism. The CHP came to represent the first line of thinking and the DP the second during the 1950s–60s.<sup>134</sup> The struggle between the DP and the CHP represented a power struggle among the coalition of a newly rising urban bourgeoisie and bourgeois landowners against the traditional elite bureaucracy, both civilian and military, who had control over both the state and the economy. Boran pointed out that the bureaucratic elite had the highest status in society, and they had despised the bourgeoisie and landowners.<sup>135</sup> In this respect, the 27 May 1960 military coup, which Boran defined as a movement, was the triumph of the reunited bureaucracy and intellectuals, who by an action of the armed forces had overthrown the comprador bourgeoisie and landowners, literally their representative party, the DP.<sup>136</sup>

Boran explained that when the bourgeoisie fails to fulfil its duty of industrializing the country and building modern technology, either the lower classes,

if they are strong enough to take power, or the military intervene. She further explained that in Turkey the bourgeoisie could not realize development yet and the 1960 intervention meant more than that. It also aimed to strengthen the state in respect of the power of the bourgeoisie and landowners in order to return power to the civil-military cadre. Strikingly, the liberal constitution of 1960, which the intelligentsia and especially the leftists were very fond of as it enabled socialist parties to be formed legally, was interpreted by Boran as *a way of attracting and pulling the masses to the side of the coalition of bureaucracy and intellectuals in their battle against the bourgeoisie and landowners*.<sup>137</sup> This would actually mean that the traditional elite was using people or at least approaching them as a means to perpetuate its own hegemony. Yet Boran did not develop this idea to the point of describing a new class alliance and new class relations.

Boran also pointed out that the Turkish army had a *progressive tradition*; whenever it intervened in politics it was always in a progressive way and never backwards. This idea actually contradicted the argument described above, which evaluated the intervention in 1960 as a reaction of the old elite to the newly rising bourgeoisie. However, even though Boran emphasized that the Turkish army was not constituted from aristocratic or bourgeois elements, she warned that nobody should expect the army to carry out reforms. Military regimes could not generally govern for a long period and undertake social change. She reacted strongly to the interference of the military in politics even under current civil rule, with the National Defence Committee governed by constitutional law. She warned that in the long run military intervention in politics by such bodies and special laws would endanger democracy.<sup>138</sup>

Boran also remarked upon the dependence of the Turkish armed forces on the US. She drew particular attention to US conspiracies in many countries to suppress democratic movements by military intervention, which had so far succeeded in Latin American countries. She raised suspicions about the privileged strata within the military which did not correspond to Turkish military traditions.<sup>139</sup> This actually contradicted her argument outlined above about the dominant status of the military both under the Ottoman empire and in the republican era within a bureaucratic administrative role. Leaving this point aside, though she reaffirmed her belief in the progressive, revolutionary quality of the army and modernized Turkish politics, she nevertheless warned that AP rule could use US support through agents provocateurs, some of the military cadre and underground organizations to build a fascist military dictatorship in Turkey. This would turn Turkey into a second Vietnam, or a second Greece.<sup>140</sup>

Apparently, Boran was quite clear on the political role of the military even under the current civil regime, and the dangers it posed to democracy in the

long run if it continued to interfere under constitutional guarantees. She was also far-sighted about the two interventions awaiting Turkey. Yet she did not have a comprehensive understanding of the social and political role of the military, especially in terms of its relation to other classes and hegemonic powers. That was perhaps the main weakness, and also the reason behind the apparent contradictions in her analyses noted above. Boran had actually asserted that a new kind of class struggle was taking place in Turkey between the old and the new elite, with the military forming an essential part, yet she did not draw conclusions about the class struggle, for a revised political discourse, strategy or tactics based on this argument.

### **6 Disappointment in elections and disappearance of trust**

The TİP lost its prestige and popularity amongst the leftist youth, one of the important pillars of its organization, as a result of its parliamentarist and reformist line and especially its bureaucratic tendencies.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, the party could not satisfy its defenders in terms of theory and socialist education. Its inability to solve the conflicts and rifts within the party and offer satisfactory solutions to the complex problems of the day did not help much, and the NDR position, which paid more attention to theory and action, became much more influential, particularly among the university youth.<sup>142</sup> Even though the discourse of the TİP looked more radical, conformist and parliamentary tendencies within the party had disillusioned young, hot-blooded socialists.<sup>143</sup> Non-parliamentary strategies, and especially the strategy that allocated the military a special role within NDR, had become more influential in leftist movements.<sup>144</sup>

The TİP also lost representation in parliament after the 1969 general election, when it was only able to return two members.<sup>145</sup> This was partly due to the change in electoral law that favoured large parties over the small ones such as the TİP.<sup>146</sup> The decrease in the number of votes, even though the TİP had formed a party organization in all sixty-seven cities for this election, which should have been more advantageous compared to the election in 1965, was mainly due to the disagreements within the party and the increasing factional struggle. The Aren–Boran faction had even set up a separate election bureau for the group gathered around the journal *Emek* and they competed openly with the Aybar faction for electoral districts.<sup>147</sup> It was almost inevitable that the election would not bring any positive result when the party could not even agree on the conduct of its election campaign.

The pre-election situation was further complicated by the trade unionists' resentment towards Aybar. The trade unionists were especially dissatisfied with their positions in the nomination lists and even more furious with the

allocation of the first position on the list in Adıyaman to a big landowner, Sabri Tanrıverdi. He was an Alevite, allegedly with 13,500 votes ready to be cast for the TİP.<sup>148</sup> Aybar's decision reflected his new tactical move to gamble on the peasant vote, which made up three-quarters of the population of Turkey, and especially to win Alevite support.<sup>149</sup> Aybar argued that Turkey's liberation would be through the peasantry and that the peasantry formed the main revolutionary force, as the workers, small shop owners and low-ranking civil servants were not oppressed as much as the peasantry.<sup>150</sup> That was actually a grave misconception, as the peasantry was very inactive except in a few cases where they seized state-owned land, whereas around that time the working class was becoming more and more energetic and forceful. This shift of attention did not suit the early discourse of the party, especially its defence of SR, but it was in line with Aybar's newer conceptualization of the situation.

The shift of attention from the working class to the peasantry was not welcomed by the factions representing the working class in the party, especially the administrators of DİSK. Even though there was no organic relation between DİSK and the TİP, DİSK was founded by very much the same trade unionists who had founded the party.<sup>151</sup> Though the membership of the federation and the party did not coincide, the TİP had always supported DİSK and vice versa, which led to a severe reaction from Türk-İş. However, the trade unionists withdrew their support for Aybar when he gave priority to the peasantry.<sup>152</sup> The trade union faction was determined to protect their interests in the party and hence established their own electoral section in Ankara.

The delegates of the eastern cities became Aybar's main allies instead of the trade unionists. On the eve of the 1969 elections four factions existed in the party, each conducting its own election campaign. They were, in order of their strength in the party: (1) the group led by Aybar and Ekinci,<sup>153</sup> (2) Aren-Boran; (3) the trade unionists and (4) the Proletarian Revolutionaries, known as Proleter Devrimciler or Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık [PDA].<sup>154</sup> The trade unionists and representatives of the eastern regions fully shared Aybar's views but there was a power conflict between them as a result of social, economic and even ethnic (as eastern representatives were mainly Kurdish) differences. The factional struggle also represented the clash of interests between different classes and social strata, between the intelligentsia and the workers, and between the workers and the peasants. The intelligentsia itself was also split into two factions, those supporting Aybar on the one hand and more conventional leftists supporting Aren-Boran on the other.<sup>155</sup>

Meanwhile, Aren-Boran had formed a new bloc with several trade unionists and power shifted in their favour. Aybar resigned from the chairmanship and his membership of the Leadership Committee. Proletarian Revolutionaries

and the Aren–Boran faction became the main opponents in the party. The year 1970 marked an intensification of the conflict between the Aren–Boran faction and the PDA. The plan of the PDA supporters was to oust the Aren–Boran faction from leadership during the Fourth Congress.

The gathering took place in Ankara on 29–30 October 1970 and the central issue was once again party strategy and tactics, with an open discussion of the views of NDR supporters. Several days before the Congress Aren–Boran had declared that NDR contradicted proletarian socialism and therefore was not compatible with party membership.<sup>156</sup> The TİP was split from the first day of the congress as only 206 of the 341 delegates attended and the rest decided to attend the separate 'Revolutionary Congress' which had gathered at the same time.<sup>157</sup> The PDA group led by Doğu Perinçek and Şahin Alpay, though, did participate in the Fourth Congress. The Aren–Boran group gained the leadership and Boran became the new party chair.

Despite the rejection of NDR by a majority of the delegates many were against a purge of NDR supporters from the party. They argued that NDR supporters could be recognized and contained within the party and were willing to allow democratic discussions to take place.<sup>158</sup> However, Boran stated that there could be no compromise between the official party line and the indivisibility of socialist and NDR goals and a peaceful approach to power. She defined the strategy of SR and the NDR as two completely different paths impossible to reconcile.<sup>159</sup> The former Aybar supporters from the eastern regions, PDA supporters and the remaining trade unionist faction voted against the resolution of the Aren–Boran faction for purging the NDR defenders.<sup>160</sup> However, the Aren–Boran faction gained a majority in the vote and immediately started purges and evicting NDR supporters and some of their other opponents.<sup>161</sup>

The Fourth Congress of the TİP reiterated that after 1950 capitalist development had gained speed and the rising bourgeoisie had integrated with imperialism and formed the basic internal social alliance of imperialism.<sup>162</sup> For this reason, the main contradiction of capital–labour coincided with the contradiction between the imperialist forces and anti-imperialist forces, so that the struggle for political independence against imperialism and for socialism was the same revolutionary movement. The TİP maintained firmly that defending NDR was to reject the struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie or postpone it to the future, and instead take feudalism and feudal landlords as the main target. *Such an approach would empty the anti-capitalist essence of the class conflict.* As Turkish capitalism had integrated with the global capitalist system, which was in an imperialist phase, and as the internal social base of imperialism was the bourgeoisie, the struggle against the vestiges of the feudal system as defended by

NDR would in fact seriously damage the struggle against imperialism. Turkey had been in the phase of democratic revolution for at least the past sixty years, and the main goals had mostly been attained. The capitalist relation of production was dominant and there were only vestiges of a feudal relation of production in some regions, but even these were day by day becoming integrated with capitalism.<sup>163</sup> The party clearly delineated its different approach to the social and economic structure from that of the NDR line.

The party also declared that NDR movements were actually targeting the TİP, which was the independent political organization of the working class of Turkey and moving towards power.<sup>164</sup> Therefore, advocating NDR was not compatible with party membership.

One of the central issues that also affected the fate of the party after the military intervention was the Kurdish problem. The Kurdish people formed a considerable proportion of the party membership and sixty-eight delegates from the eastern regions were Kurdish socialists. Despite their warnings Boran decided to continue with the discussions on the Kurdish problem.<sup>165</sup> She stated that the TİP would continue to support the struggle of the Kurdish people for democratic rights and liberties, though within the limits of the constitution and protecting the integrity of the state.<sup>166</sup> In her speech in congress Boran also pointed to the increasing violence and oppression policy of the dominant bourgeois classes, especially in the east.<sup>167</sup> The resolution of the Fourth Congress gave a very clear and full expression of the TİP's position on the Kurdish problem which seriously challenged the national or official state ideology. First, the party had recognized the existence of the Kurdish people and second, there was a Kurdish problem. The problem was repression, forced assimilation and deprivation of the elementary national and socio-economic rights of the Kurdish people by the chauvinistic-nationalist ideology and attitudes of dominant class rule.<sup>168</sup> However, the answer to the Kurdish problem did not lie in the separatist national liberation movement of the Kurds but in the socialist transformation of Turkey, for which Turkish and Kurdish socialists had to work together in the TİP. Put like this the TİP did not support the autonomy of the Kurdish people and, especially, did not recognize the right of the Kurdish nation to self-determination to the point of establishing an independent state. However, the party was sued for advocating an independent state for the Kurdish nation by the Constitutional Court after the 12 March military intervention.<sup>169</sup> The TİP through its approach to the Kurdish problem had separated from the mainstream parties and the official state ideology. It had become the custom for social democratic parties to deal with the Kurdish problem by drawing special attention to state repression, inequality in socio-economic conditions and inhibitions of democratic rights.

### 7 Towards the 12 March military intervention and after

The TİP had formed quickly around diverse elements that supported socialism and was the centre of all radical leftist movements, including the Kurdish democratic-socialist movement, but it had lost its influence with the same rapidity, especially among the socialist intellectuals who shaped the ideology and discourse of the party. The impact of the TİP on the working-class movement at the peak of its dynamism was actually very small, as was particularly noticeable during the mass demonstrations on 15–16 June 1970. Access to the working class had actually reached a further stage in 1967 with the establishment of DİSK by some labour unionists, almost all of whom were TİP members.<sup>170</sup> Party administrators were quite optimistic about this new organization, and not without reason as the membership of DİSK had increased to represent 15 per cent of Turkey's organized workers in 1969–70, compared with Türk-İş's majority, which was still 85 per cent. Several DİSK leaders, such as Rıza Kuas, held prominent positions in the TİP. Unlike Türk-İş, DİSK held that trade unions should enter party politics and DİSK should support the TİP.<sup>171</sup> However, most of the trade unionists had left the party and boycotted the elections for the administration of the party held during the Fourth Congress (in October 1970).<sup>172</sup> The close relations between the TİP and the top administrators of DİSK, among them the trade unionist founders of the TİP, had ceased by the end of 1970, and after 12 March, DİSK had closer relations with the CHP.

As 12 March approached the TİP was largely inactive in parliament despite a covert 'No to fascism' [Faşizme Hayır] campaign, even though the party had raised its voice against interventions by high-ranking military officers in politics time and again.<sup>173</sup> After the 1971 military intervention the TİP was at first rather cautious, and initially blamed those parties that did not follow the constitution. But after the statement by President Sunay on 15 March the TİP declared that the constitution had been violated, and a fascist rule had been established by the support of imperialist powers against the democratic rights of the whole nation. The TİP called for a struggle against fascism.<sup>174</sup> The reaction of the TİP against the intervention was striking, as leftist organizations such as TÖS (Teachers' Union of Turkey) or Dev-Genç, had supported the intervention.<sup>175</sup> Boran as chair interpreted the intervention as a reaction to the workers' movement, and expressed the view that the high bourgeoisie, bourgeois politicians and high-ranking commanders were so terrified by the workers that they had disregarded the constitution and sought to change it in order to limit the struggle of the working class.<sup>176</sup> The TİP therefore remained consistent in its attitude towards military interventions in politics throughout the decade, clearly displayed by its early reaction after the March 1971 memorandum.

The Constitutional Court started a lawsuit against the TİP on 26 July 1971, in particular with respect to the party's position on the Kurdish issue. The party was accused of attempting to bring about a separation of the national unity and regarding Kurds as a separate ethnic identity. The party was closed down by the Constitutional Court in 1972. The administrators of the party, including Boran and Aren, were sentenced to twelve to fifteen years in prison and the delegates to eight years, but all were released under the terms of a general amnesty in 1974.<sup>177</sup> The TİP was restarted in 1975, but it could not match the popularity of the first TİP, which had managed to reach every town and village in the country with its striking slogans, charismatic leaders, orators and writers, and, perhaps most importantly, its fifteen vocal deputies elected to parliament in the election of 1965. Its share of the popular vote, varying from 2.7–4 per cent, has never been matched by any single socialist party since then. The TİP had become the first, and the last, mass openly socialist party in Turkey, trying to act under severe difficulties in intolerable times.

### 8 A brief conclusion

The TİP's agenda of remaining a legal socialist party restricted its activities and as a result alienated the young leftists looking for more radical action. Actually, the decision to restrict its actions to those within the limits of the law contradicted the party rhetoric that it was a vanguard party of the working class., No vanguard party of the working class should need authorization from the bourgeois law and constitution. The party perceived the constitution as a neutral body to protect the interests of all classes. In these terms the TİP resembled the Western type of social democratic party rather than the vanguard party of the working class.

However, the socialist revolutionary discourse of the party was the most extremist among the other leftist currents of the day, though it was hardly matched by the programme, strength and composition of the party. The SR discourse was more about the leadership problem of the leftist movements – the leadership of the TİP versus others – and it was more about whether the revolutionary strategy should be in favour of an intervention by the army or not. The TİP was distinguished among other leftist movements of the time by its reaction to furthering the framework of the 27 May intervention by yet another coup. However, the party did not completely repudiate the intervention of the military in politics. The party members did not challenge Kemalism and the positive attributes of the Turkish army drawn from its Kemalist ideology. The conflict was more over the rule of the elite or a forced transition from above rather than confronting the Kemalist past and Kemalist tradition of the army. The party put forward the SR discourse mainly to challenge the *Yön* movement and the NDR movement led by Belli.

The party was also highly heterogeneous. The party members had quite distinct views, especially towards the end of the decade, but the differences were mostly about the extent to which members favoured top-down change or initiatives by leftist-inclined officers. The party also was divided between those who attempted to make a fresh start for an independent socialist movement in Turkey (people such as Aybar, Küçükömer, Belge) against those (people such as Boran, Aren, Sargın) who chose to adhere strictly to TKP tradition and a pro-Soviet position.

However, as the party restricted itself to legal actions and had already broken up around 1969, the TİP had only a relatively small impact on the revolutionary movement, especially towards the end of the decade. The party was more influential in generating a certain level of consciousness of the political conduct of the bourgeois parties. It was successful in drawing attention to inequalities, undemocratic attitudes and class and ethnic (or religious) oppression of the masses by the ruling classes. It was for this reason that the TİP met with a violent reaction from the bourgeois parties and the dominant classes, and its success at the time lay mainly in the challenge that it offered in these areas.

# THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONARIES AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ARMY

## 1 Introduction

This chapter examines the perspective of the National Democratic Revolutionaries towards the political role of the army. The NDR movement (known as 'Milli Demokratik Devrimciler' in Turkey) was initially organized as an opposition group in the TİP under the ideological and moral leadership of the 'old-guard' Mihri Belli acting outside the party.<sup>1</sup> Socialist university students in particular started to support NDR and gathered around Mihri Belli. NDR supporters perceived Turkey as a semi-feudal, semi-dependent country and hence advocated national democratic revolution as the initial revolutionary stage towards socialist revolution. The principle contradiction in Marxist terms was, then, viewed not as that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but between the oppressed nation and the imperialist powers and their internal collaborators, namely the comprador bourgeoisie and remnants of the feudal order. NDR therefore stood for the struggle against this alliance and the imperialist countries (specifically the US) in order to form a democratic and independent country.

The NDR strategy in its Turkish interpretation was based particularly on Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*.<sup>2</sup> The idea of a struggle with a united broad front and NDR as a compulsory stage towards transition into socialism was derived mainly from this work. The Turkish NDR movement in the 1960s originated from the early TKP, more specifically Aydınlik or the Şefik Hüsnü wing in Istanbul, which believed in the single-front policy and supported the Kemalists as

a national bourgeoisie in the early republican period.<sup>3</sup> The union to be formed with the Kemalists in the current struggle for NDR in the 1960s actually implied expectations of another intervention by young Kemalist or left-inclined military officers.

The NDR movement was also strongly influenced by the Marxism in the Third World, and especially the national liberation struggles in Asian states – in China and later Vietnam and Cambodia – from which a resemblance with Turkey was drawn. The Chinese Revolution, and the revolutionary work of its leader, Mao Tse-Tung, especially his political thinking as stated in his *New Democracy*, was considered relevant to the Turkish experience.<sup>4</sup> However, NDR hardly represented the class independence perspective of Lenin and Mao (at least in theory) and there was no vanguard party to carry out the NDR programme in Turkey.<sup>5</sup>

Belli and those like him tried to establish an organization to conduct NDR with a united force of socialists and Kemalists. They tried to influence the TİP, and when this failed they tried to build up a separate organization. However, as a result of the lack of an organization strong enough to bring about NDR expectations were mainly focused on military officers and rebellious university students.<sup>6</sup> The militant socialist students, having adopted the NDR strategy, quickly separated from their ideological ‘father’, however, and instead formed their own independent guerrilla organizations to engage in armed propaganda and armed struggle for NDR. This was another stage of petty-bourgeois radicalism which was not rooted in the popular struggle. The revolt against ‘the fatherland’ was complemented by a considerable break from the official nation-state ideology of Kemalism. These developments had an effect on the perception of the political role of the army, as will be discussed in detail below.

The NDR views of Belli and those close to him, and the conflict between SR and NDR supporters in the TİP, especially on the political role of the army, are discussed first in this chapter. It continues with a discussion of how the left divided into increasingly smaller units while still influencing a larger audience throughout the decade. The NDR–SR controversy, as noted in the previous chapter, was the determinate cause of the first fragmentation of the radical leftists, but the NDR movement became further factionalized into separate new groups in 1968–71. The disagreement centred especially on the role of the army in a revolutionary stage. After 1971 these fragmented organizations became the heritage of the diverse lines that represented the socialist movement in Turkey. How much of a break or continuity these new lines represented is discussed at the end of the chapter, with particular reference to the main question, the perspective on the army.

## 2 No short-cut to socialism: socialism through NDR

Mihri Belli, who can be regarded as the leader and one of the main ideologues of the movement, was a convicted member of the Turkish Communist Party. Belli had quite an interesting life as a Turkish communist. He had participated in communist activities in the US when he was a university student and according to his statements later fought on the side of the Greek communists in the civil war that broke out after World War II.<sup>7</sup> Belli was influenced by Stalinism and the national liberation struggles carried in on China and other Asian countries.

Belli was not able to join any political party because of his previous conviction for being a member of the TKP. Instead, Belli co-operated with the *Yön* movement, with which he shared many common points, and published an article that introduced NDR in *Yön* for the first time. The article defined the primary contradiction and related current revolutionary classes as well as the counter-revolutionary classes in a Marxist manner.<sup>8</sup> Belli, using the pen name E. Tüfekçi,<sup>9</sup> a reference to the old guard, argued that as the bourgeois democratic revolution stage in Turkey was not over in terms of what he called objective and subjective conditions, the first step was to ensure complete democracy by eliminating feudal remnants. The immediate goal of the revolutionary movement as the nature of democratic revolution was to end all dependency relationships with imperialist countries. Belli advocated nationalizing the means of production and eliminating feudalism, and undertaking a broad socio-economic programme for a completely independent and truly democratic Turkey. He emphasized that NDR differed from the classic bourgeois revolutions (the best example being the French Revolution), as they were the liberating revolutions of colonial countries and therefore had an anti-imperialist nature. NDR was also not a revolution under the leadership of the bourgeois class, but instead was to be initiated by the national forces, by which he meant the united force of the urban and rural labouring classes, the petty bourgeoisie and the military-civilian intelligentsia. Belli termed the front formed by these national forces the 'Revolutionary United Force' [Devrimci Güçbirliği].

It was emphasized regularly in *Türk Solu*, the political journal of Belli and his followers, that the current revolutionary phase was NDR with all nationalist forces. It was stated that *real nationalists* were those who would fight against the foreign presence and dependence on the imperialist centres in Turkey. In these terms, *Türk Solu* took the view that every party (including the extreme right parties such as the MSP) could and should join the struggle if it were really nationalist or patriotic.

Even though *Türk Solu* emphasized that in the contemporary world no country could remain independent by following a capitalist road and,

therefore, that real independence could only be attained by conversion to a socialist regime, it still pointed out that the current struggle was not a struggle of socialism–capitalism but instead a struggle of the patriotic forces against the collaborators with imperialism.<sup>10</sup> The TİP was criticized regularly for advocating an untimely socialist revolution under the leadership of the organization of the working class. Even though NDR defenders argued that the hegemony of the working class in the NDR was essential to guarantee its eventual success and continuity, they also believed that this could only be realized within a process,<sup>11</sup> and that therefore the hegemony of the working class was or might be out of the question for a certain period. Moreover, in contrast to the position of the TİP, NDR supporters particularly emphasized that the Kemalists must not be alienated from an anti-imperialist movement. It was stated that in societies in which the socialist parties could not have a mass organization the political parties that defend the interests of the national bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie could try to assume leadership. As in the Turkish War of Independence the struggle against the imperialists could be successful under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie. The proletariat could assume leadership after a period but to wait for that would be to lose the war to the imperialists.<sup>12</sup>

Mihri Belli in particular emphasized that the eventual success of the NDR struggle depended on the proletariat assuming leadership of the movement. He argued that the protection of independence depended on establishing a socialist order.<sup>13</sup> Socialism could only be attained under the hegemony of the proletariat and with the participation of all labouring people, therefore, the eventual success of NDR depended on the forces that were on the left of the national bourgeoisie, that is, the proletariat, urban and rural labourers.<sup>14</sup> These were the forces which were endowed with the revolutionary potential to lead NDR to the frontiers of the SR. However, Belli strongly criticized those, meaning the TİP, who ignored the concept of the 'stages' and argued that democratic revolution and the socialist revolution could be realized simultaneously as a single phase.<sup>15</sup>

However, Belli also claimed that the urban and rural proletariat in Turkey was still *politically unconscious* and, therefore, voted for the parties of the exploiting forces. He wrote that the proletariat had only recently been in the process of becoming a class for itself.<sup>16</sup> This was mainly due to the fact that Turkey had not passed through a real capitalist development phase, and that the capitalist economy was dependent, underdeveloped and was integrated in the feudal system. The majority of the industrial workers retained their relations with their villages and the workers still maintained their rural character. The difference in the rate of development between the rural and urban areas

was enormous. Under these circumstances the proletariat could not rapidly become class conscious.

Interestingly, Belli also argued, like Avcıoğlu, that the reforms and anti-feudal movements under the leadership of the intellectuals originating from the petty bourgeoisie were not beneficial to the labourers. Actually, Belli here referred to reforms under the leadership of military officers and civil officials, as in the following sentences he remarked that the urban and rural labourers were sceptical about what the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy defined as the revolution.<sup>17</sup>

Belli paid special consideration to the political role of the army within the category of military-civilian intelligentsia. He actually categorized the position of the Turkish army in NDR as petty bourgeois as the recruits generally originated from this class.<sup>18</sup> He argued that in Turkey the consciousness of being exploited as a nation was quite strong and when national liberation movements were on the increase the petty bourgeoisie, which included the military-civilian intelligentsia, had a higher revolutionary potential compared to Western states.<sup>19</sup> In these terms, Belli argued that the petty bourgeoisie must be considered as forming part of the group that would force revolution.

Belli placed what he called the bureaucratic intelligentsia group in the category of the petty bourgeoisie. Even though he had classified the group as 'intelligentsia', he had actually taken this as including the bureaucracy and gave special consideration to the social position of the army within that bureaucracy. In this respect, Belli argued that the bureaucracy in Turkey was different from other state bureaucracies which were unconditionally under the command of the hegemonic class.<sup>20</sup> In this sense he explained that:

For example, Lenin uses the concept of 'bureaucrats' to correspond to the Tsarist rule. However, in Turkey and in some Third World states military-civilian intelligentsia has propagated historical development as an independent democratic force against the hegemonic classes. We should consider the 1908 Liberation movement, Atatürk's revolution and 27 May in this light.<sup>21</sup>

Belli emphasized that in the final analysis what determined the position of each class and group in its role in a revolution was its place in the social economy.<sup>22</sup> However, his analysis of the role and the position of the army was not based solely on social class but rather on traditions, ideology and quantitative strength. Belli placed military officers in the 'military-civilian intelligentsia' category and argued that this rather large group, amounting to half a million people, had been a *hegemonic power* throughout history. Like the *Yön* circle,

he explained that key points in the 'army' and in the 'state' were under the governance of the military-civilian intelligentsia.<sup>23</sup> The group had almost had a monopoly of power and had played a very important role, particularly since the nineteenth century, even having the last word until the end of World War II. However, Belli argued that at this period the balance of power had shifted in favour of a tripartite alliance of the comprador merchant bourgeoisie, local gentry and feudal ağas. They had gained not only economic strength, but also political power through bourgeois parliamentarism.<sup>24</sup> Following the same line as the *Yön* circle Belli argued that the political system brought this alliance into power as the reforms in the social structure had not yet been carried out.<sup>25</sup>

He pointed out that there could be no compromise between the alliance of collaborative capital–feudal landlords and the military-civilian intelligentsia.<sup>26</sup> There was no economic basis for that as the economic resources of Turkey were limited. In other words, he implied that the military-civilian intelligentsia could not benefit from such co-operation. Moreover, he argued that these dominant classes were protecting the status quo because of their interests; hence they would not carry out the substructural reforms required to increase productivity. Under these conditions, the military-civilian intelligentsia could have no benefits from the rule of the collaborative alliance of feudal landlords and capitalists.

However, Belli particularly emphasized the 'moral aspect' of the question. He pointed out that the military-civilian bureaucrats [*asker-sivil bürokrat zümre*] were representative of a past and a tradition, which included for example, the Gallipoli campaign or the liberation war.<sup>27</sup> Interestingly, Belli claimed that by the victory at Gallipoli the Turkish soldiers [*Mehmetçik*] and their commanders, the military officers, had prepared the factors leading to the success of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917.<sup>28</sup> This, then, was part of the tradition of the military-civilian bureaucracy, but American imperialism and its collaborators were trying to change this and turn Turkish military officers into an enemy of their own people, to keep people oppressed for the sake of American interests and local exploiters, just like the South American armies.<sup>29</sup> In a later edition of this work, Belli pointed particularly at efforts by American imperialism and its collaborators to establish an economic base that would create imbalances between the national Turkish army (or at least its officer cadre) and the Turkish people. He added:

The aim of the USA is to turn the Turkish army into a servant of imperialism, enemy to its own people like the Greek military officers such as Grivas, Papadopoulos or Vietnam's Kao Ki. Americans are aware of the fact that they can maintain their existence in Turkey only if this plan

succeeds. But they try in vain. ... The Turkish army can never be turned into a Greek army. The Turkish army is representative of a victorious past and tradition. In this past, there is for example, the victory at Gallipoli, and the First National Independence War.<sup>30</sup>

Belli believed that the national tradition, the Mustafa Kemal tradition, would overcome the efforts of American imperialists and their local collaborators with schemes to use the army against the Turkish people. Belli emphasized that an independent Turkey was indispensable for the military and civilian intelligentsia to feel self-respect and honour.

Belli and the *Türk Solu* circle in general attributed a positive meaning to the Independence War, the Kemalist revolution and the regime following this, as in their view it was a progressive, democratic and nationalist (in the sense that it stood against foreign imperialist domination as much as it could) regime. The Independence War was regarded as a national liberation war of an Eastern nation which started the age of national liberation struggles.<sup>31</sup> The socio-political dominance of the military-civilian bureaucracy was appreciated as being endowed with this tradition of progress and anti-imperialism.<sup>32</sup> This reading of Turkish history was quite common in the era and almost became a peculiarly leftist canon, a way of appreciating the nineteenth-century reforms that had been imposed from above in a positive way, regarding the Independence War as a national liberation war and also attributing an anti-imperialist essence to the Kemalist regime in contrast to the rule of the DP, which was regarded as a counter-revolutionary period largely on account of its relations with the US and the dominance of large landowners in the party.

Belli also dealt with the problem of the political role of the army more specifically. He based the current revolutionary role of the Turkish army on its being progressive in its traditions and structure. He argued that as a tradition arising from the Mustafa Kemal movement, the Turkish armed forces marched in front of society, not at the back. He thus emphasized how the Turkish armed forces had never been the leader of a reactionary movement.<sup>33</sup> As in the Kemalist tradition, this was mainly based on a dichotomy between progressive secular powers and religious reactionaries. According to Belli, historically, the military-civilian bureaucracy was against the retrogressive powers or the religious bigots [yobazlar]. These bigots allegedly arose as a group of internal collaborators of imperialism and were thus against the military-civilian intelligentsia and the working class. The military was revolutionary, as it had unfinished business with the conservative religious powers in Turkey.<sup>34</sup> Belli then acknowledged a struggle among the progressive powers, especially the armed forces against the

representatives of what he saw as traditional medieval institutions. The bigots stood against the labouring classes and the military-civilian intelligentsia, as this was apparently where their class interest as feudal powers lay. There was, however, no social basis for drawing such conclusions. The possibility of such being the case and any sensible, logical deductions from the current situation were also undermined by the fact that Belli was not very consistent in characterizing the bigots as the remnants of a feudal regime. He also remarked, for example, that the bigots had managed to disintegrate the great empire.<sup>35</sup> A Marxist would surely not react in this way to the disintegration of an empire and the abolishment of a feudal *ancien régime* in favour of a bourgeois republic, which must be a stage forward towards a socialist state. One can only conclude that in his understanding of the past, the social classes and the political struggle, Belli was typical of many Turkish socialists with an eclectic view of Marxism and nationalism, which did not essentially depart from Kemalist ideology except from a deterministic and shallow class point of view.

Belli then regarded the current revolutionary movement as the second Turkish NDR, as a struggle to complete the Kemalist revolution. The first NDR was an example of a successful struggle against imperialism and the feudal powers under the leadership of the military-civilian intelligentsia or what was sometimes described as the military-civilian bureaucracy or petty-bourgeois bureaucracy. The contemporary movement had no specific distinction from the first one, except that it was to be supported (in theory) by the working class, which was to have an ideological hegemony, and it stood in opposition to American imperialism rather than invading European powers. The movement was (in theory) to move towards socialism in the next phase. Belli or *Türk Solu* did not, therefore, stand for a class struggle by the proletariat. The internal struggle was against the collaborators of imperialism and the feudal remnants or bigots who stood against the unity of the Turkish nation, progress, liberation and the labouring classes. The imperialist powers collaborated with these feudal powers as feudalism stood against nationalism, or to be more precise, the nation.

*Türk Solu* had exaggerated the nationalism of the current movement to such an extent that this theme had almost become the main justification of the revolutionary movement. The idea was, like *Yön*, to argue that socialism or the liberation movement was actually the *real* nationalism. The emphasis was to defend the movement as real nationalism, as the Turkish socialists were generally being accused of being the lackeys of Moscow. The theme of nationalism could also attract a larger audience. Belli argued that nationalism was the highest reality of the current age and defined the current stage as one in which the oppressed people of the world would become nations by throwing off the imperialist yoke and ending feudalism.<sup>36</sup> According to Belli, only through

*becoming a nation* and completing the democratic revolution could one transform into a socialist system: there was no 'short-cut to socialism'.<sup>37</sup>

### 3 NDR opposition in the TİP

NDR supporters tried to influence the TİP and change the party programme and strategy around the year 1965/6. The TİP leadership, however, was eager to prevent the party 'being engulfed' by followers of Belli, whom they regarded as an untrustworthy TKP convict.<sup>38</sup> The Malatya Congress of the party held between 20 and 24 November 1966 was one of the high points of the dispute between the two groups and had an impact on the whole of the Turkish leftist movement of the time. At the congress, NDR adherents in the party (known as 'MDD'ciler') who had a close affinity with Belli advocated adopting the NDR programme and the related national front strategy.<sup>39</sup>

It was obvious that the leftists had started to split into two distinct groups, as the spokesman for the NDR opposition, Vahap Erdoğan, had published the speech he intended to present at the congress in *Yön* beforehand.<sup>40</sup> He had many criticisms of the TİP leadership, especially of their attitude in parliament. He claimed that most party members were disappointed with the reconciliatory attitudes of the parliamentary members. One of his main criticisms was that the TİP had adopted a sectarian attitude, as the party regarded the national struggle for liberation as a monopoly of the socialists by claiming that the victory of the Second National Liberation War would also be the victory of democratic socialism.<sup>41</sup> Erdoğan argued that monopolizing the socialist struggle was against historical reality and the 'science of socialism' and would help neither the socialist nor the national liberation struggle. The national liberation struggle was the struggle of the entire Turkish nation.<sup>42</sup> According to Erdoğan, the socialists should form the leadership of the movement; however, in the current stage there were very important forces which supported an independent Turkey but were yet not socialist, and the socialists in Turkey must join these nationalist forces. Erdoğan also claimed that American imperialism was especially intimidated by the Kemalist section within the CHP. In the same vein Erdoğan argued that the TİP must not stand against the intelligentsia, vigorous forces or the CHP in order to build a revolutionary united force against imperialism.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the advocates of SR finally gained the majority vote and the NDR adherents were expelled from the party. The TİP leadership was not democratic in the way they treated opponents, who were generally expelled from the party. The ideological struggle in the TİP continued, however, until 1968–9. NDR adherents won the majority in one of the biggest centres, the city of Istanbul, even though most of the NDR supporters had been expelled from the party before this.

The NDR–SR controversy took on the form of a battle of slogans in meetings in the following years: ‘Independent Turkey’ [bağımsız Türkiye], the main slogan in demonstrations, for example, by NDR adherents, versus ‘Socialist Turkey’ [Sosyalist Türkiye], the main slogan of the TİP supporters. The NDR circle regarded the ‘socialist Turkey’ discourse as theoretically wrong as the current movement was an anti-imperialist movement.<sup>43</sup> The NDR circle again emphasized that its choice of terminology was also a tactical move so as not to alienate the Kemalist military-civilian intelligentsia whom they considered crucial for the success of the NDR movement. Strikingly, Belli explained that even though the final goal of the NDR movement was socialism, and the struggle for a completely independent, truly democratic Turkey [tam bağımsız gerçekten demokratik Türkiye] was a transitional stage towards socialism, the term socialism was *deliberately not used* in order not to discourage and frighten some classes or groups who were ready to join the liberation movement but were not yet ready for a socialist one. These classes included small landowners and small factory owners, but more importantly the Kemalist military-civilian intelligentsia. It was possible that the latter group might unite with the socialist camp;<sup>44</sup> however, some of them could opt for the other side or become a neutral force if socialist notions or slogans were used.<sup>45</sup> It is very interesting that such remarks were expressed not only in small meetings behind closed doors, but also in open meetings that everybody could attend, or in journals that were widely available. If military officers were to be alienated by the choice of terminology they would surely also abandon the anti-imperialist movement if such a hidden agenda was expressed openly. It seems that under these conditions the motivation was more to reassure and relieve the more militant revolutionaries than to encourage indecisive military officers.

#### 4 The revolutionary vanguard problem: the role of the Kemalists, bureaucracy and the army in NDR

The leadership of the NDR was again the main issue in the discussions on NDR. Belli, in line with the Leninist-Stalinist understanding of NDR, emphasized that the ultimate success of the movement as well as transition to a socialist order depended on the hegemony and leadership of the proletariat. However, he acknowledged that in Turkey the proletariat was not in an ideological or social state to lead the struggle. He had, therefore, resorted to realpolitik during the decade and because of the circumstances actually supported the possibility of other groups forming the leadership, the leadership by the Kemalists in particular, through another military coup.

Around the year 1968 Belli argued that there must not be any bargaining over the vanguard class issue, as he believed that the struggle itself would

determine the leader.<sup>46</sup> He argued that whoever fought better would be the vanguard. That was, however, escapism or only a polemical statement, as Belli had previously argued that the proletariat did not have its own autonomous organization and was weak in terms of subjective and objective conditions, so that the proletariat could not be the vanguard. Actually the leadership problem was not discussed on the basis of the class or its organization – the revolutionary vanguard party – but on the basis of the ideological leadership of the struggle. In this sense Belli argued that the majority of Kemalist groups would agree to socialism and the struggle would thus be under the leadership of socialists. Socialism was almost an ideological, political choice, the choice of an elitist group (mainly military-civilian intelligentsia); therefore a socialist revolution was devoid of an agency or a vanguard party, unlike in Leninist ideology. Kemalism and socialism were complementary ideologies as both stood against imperialism.

Apparently, the revolutionary vanguard dispute had centred on the position of the bureaucracy and more specifically the military within the bureaucracy. That was especially triggered by Aybar's classification of the bureaucracy into two ideological factions, as Atatürkists and pro-Americans. His grouping of a pro-American bureaucracy within the ruling class alliance (with bourgeoisie-feudal landowners) had provoked NDR supporters. Throughout the decade there had been much debate about the role of the Kemalists, the bureaucracy and, related to this or even underlying all, the position of the army in the revolutionary movement.<sup>47</sup> In this respect, Erdost, who had engaged in most of the theoretical discussions with SR supporters, had likened the bureaucracy and especially the military-civilian intelligentsia to the petty-bourgeois class. He considered that as the petty bourgeoisie was politically divided into three different ideologies – those of the left, right and centre according to their wealth and future prospects – this group was also divided into the three same strands,<sup>48</sup> and so divided the bureaucracy and military-civilian intelligentsia into the three main ideological groups of the right, middle and left. He argued that all these wings would join in the current liberation war, but only the left wing would do so if socialist notions were adopted. The military-civilian intelligentsia would then join in an NDR front, but it would disperse, however, and even fight with the opposite front if socialist revolution terminology were adopted, as was the case with the TİP.<sup>49</sup> However, like Belli, he did not pose the crucial question of what would be the fate of the armed forces when the stage of NDR had been completed.<sup>50</sup>

Even though Erdost's writings were mostly elaborate and detailed, the criteria on which the ideological division of the military-civil intelligentsia or the bureaucracy was based were not clear. Erdost emphasized that it was

not because bureaucracy was a class, as Aybar had claimed, but because of the progressive and revolutionary quality of petty-bourgeois bureaucracy that it was dominant in Turkish history. Yet as Turkey was leaning towards capitalism the dominant class would soon be the bourgeoisie. However, the military-civilian intelligentsia could affect the historical development by its progressive and revolutionary ideology, as a feudal culture still dominated Turkey. Feudal remnants also endangered national unity.<sup>51</sup> Erdost, though, warned that power based on physical force, as in the case of the military, belonged to the past or the feudalism stage. Even though the military could maintain its power when the bourgeoisie was weak, as exemplified by the progressive coups, eventually the bourgeoisie would become dominant as capitalism progressed.<sup>52</sup>

Erdost reacted not only to the terminology used in the programme of the TİP, which claimed to install socialism while the programme remained within the boundaries of democratic revolution, but especially to Aybar's understanding of the notion of bureaucracy. The central point in Erdost's argument was that in contrast to what was claimed by Aybar the bureaucracy was not a class in the Ottoman empire, the centralized feudal state.<sup>53</sup> Erdost was one of the main advocates of the feudalism debate against the AMP defenders, and he reacted strongly to the division of the bureaucracy in Aybar's work into pro-American and Atatürkist wings, and the consequent power alliance of pro-American bureaucrats, ağas and comprador classes. Erdost correctly questioned the fate of the Atatürkist bureaucracy, which was not mentioned by Aybar, and according to him was struggling against the anti-Kemalist contra-revolutionary and reactionary Ottomanist bureaucrats inside the state machinery. He pointed out that the majority of the bureaucracy belonged to this group. This group defined as the Atatürkist wing or petty-bourgeois bureaucracy would join the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution front whether they were socialists or not. Erdost emphasized strongly the importance and even the vitality of the strata for the success of NDR. The only way to incorporate all to the movement was to use the right discourse for the next movement, which was NDR.<sup>54</sup>

NDR advocates, then, criticized the TİP leadership first for using false terminology – socialist revolution instead of national democratic revolution – which they asserted would damage the anti-imperialist struggle. They were critical of the party's views on the political position of the feudal powers, national bourgeoisie and bureaucracy all in relation to the current strategy. They further emphasized the determining role of the Kemalists, including military officers, and for this reason it was essential not to alienate this group. NDR rhetoric on the other hand was in tune with the nation-state ideology of Turkey; this meant NDR remaining within the limits of this ideology and

the present regime, with certain improvements and modernization towards capitalization. Moreover, the importance of the bourgeoisie in national and class oppression was neglected by exaggerating the role of the feudal powers and collaborator bourgeoisie. NDR was not a socialist movement based on the class struggle of the proletariat, or, as understood by Lenin and Mao, the union of different classes and ideological groups with their own autonomous organizations to carry out NDR. Even though this was not stated openly, it was implied more than once: it seems that the NDR circle expected the army to be the most likely force to bring down the present regime and initiate social revolution and attain independence.

However, NDR leadership actually adhered to the 'communist view' of the time which suggested that Third World communists support nationalists in their countries, including military officers. In these terms, they did not act differently from Third World communists such as those in Iraq or Indonesia who were actually destroyed by military rule. They were not original in this sense. They did not have an autonomous organization so their 'co-operation' could only mean 'defending' a military coup, even if it threatened them. The success of the Kemalist revolution made it easier for Turkish communists to justify ways to support a military intervention. In particular, the anti-religious drive of the Kemalist revolution, by virtue of its secularism and its materialist conception of communism, was a very important factor that brought two political streams together, as we shall see in more detail below.

### 5 Establishing a national front

As explained above, NDR strategy centred on the formation of a single front of all nationalist powers. The first initiative to establish this was taken on 1 April 1964 during 'War against the Retrogressives' [gericilikle savaş], a meeting attended by thirty-three organizations regarding themselves as progressive powers. Of these, twenty-four Atatürkist organizations had signed a common declaration.<sup>55</sup> Although the TİP had not joined the meeting, Aybar, as chair, made a similar statement in which he noted the importance of the unity of all honorable, courageous and real patriotic forces in co-operating in a national front for the complete independence of Turkey, both economically and politically.

Some of the leftist organizations had united and established the Anti-Imperialist National Front of Turkey [Türkiye Anti-Emperyalist Milli Cephesi] following this initial meeting. Its protocol was published in the journal *Dönüşüm*, which was run by young TİP members.<sup>56</sup> Aybar said to *Dönüşüm* that he supported the idea of establishing a national front, but he acknowledged as well the inseparability of national liberation and socialist

movements, and announced for the first time his ideas on Turkish socialism, which led to a reaction from other leaders of the party.<sup>57</sup>

Even though the function of the national front was uncertain, *Türk Solu*, the representative organ of the NDR movement, finally called on all national forces to unite against 'fascism'.<sup>58</sup> The call had quite a nationalist tone, as it emphasized that every real Turkish patriot, anyone who could say 'I'm a Turk' with sincerity, must take his place under the National Democratic 'piston' (in the NDR movement) against fascism.<sup>59</sup> This national front was established as the Union of Revolutionary Forces of Turkey [Türkiye Devrimci Güç Birliği: Dev-Güç] on 27 March 1968. The importance of military officers to Dev-Güç was obvious from the fact that the administrative committee was headed by former National Unity Committee member and currently senator for life Kadri Kaplan.<sup>60</sup> The union was actually initiated by the 27 May NDR Association [27 Mayıs Milli Demokratik Devrim Derneği], which called on democratic mass organizations to unite against religious retrogressiveness [dinci gerilik].

The 27 May NDR Association, FKF and DİSK formed part of the organization committee of Dev-Güç, but DİSK had not sent any representatives.<sup>61</sup> The presence of FKF in Dev-Güç was the harshest blow to the TİP in its strategic battle with the NDR stream, as the idea clubs were initially founded by the party. The TİP regarded the association as a *preparation for a junta*,<sup>62</sup> but on the other hand the TİP was condemned by Dev-Güç for not contributing. The party was even accused of treason and by Hikmet Kıvılcımlı of being an agent of finance capital.<sup>63</sup>

The declaration of Dev-Güç was politically closer to Kemalism than socialism.<sup>64</sup> It emphasized in particular the values of positivism and enlightenment, and demanded national unity.<sup>65</sup> *Türk Solu* considered Dev-Güç realistically as a grouping of mostly nationalist organizations [millici örgütler] represented primarily by revolutionary intellectuals and students. Dev-Güç united the two Turkish revolutionary streams, that of Mustafa Kemal and that of the socialists.<sup>66</sup> These two progressive movements were to determine the future of Turkey. *Türk Solu* considered the Mustafa Kemal movement as the reformism of the real nationalist military-civilian intelligentsia and as the radicalism of petty-bourgeois bureaucracy. The socialist movement represented the urban and rural proletariat of Turkey. However, it was emphasized that most of these labouring classes could not yet enter Dev-Güç because Turkey was not a truly democratic state in which professional and political organizations could exert power. The union actually represented the Kemalists more than the socialists. It was indeed argued by *Türk Solu* that if such a union between socialists and Kemalists could be established on 27 May 1960 during the military intervention, Turkey could be freed of American imperialism and

become an independent, democratic country moving on its own specific path towards socialism.<sup>67</sup>

Thus it can be fairly said that the NDR movement believed in the same scenario as the *Yön* circle<sup>68</sup> who had joined Dev-Güç – also in essence advocating the NDR strategy – that is, in the possibility of a union between socialist and Kemalist intellectuals and the military, not only to attain independence and democracy, but somehow socialism as well in the long run. Socialism and Kemalism were then perceived not as identical ideologies but also not as mutually exclusive ideologies and systems. Instead, they were regarded as complementary ideologies on account of their anti-imperialist and democratic lines. Kemalism represented the NDR phase towards a socialist revolution, and accordingly Mustafa Kemal was regarded as the leader of the Anatolian struggle for liberation in the new struggle.<sup>69</sup> The NDR movement considered itself as the continuation of the liberation war of 1919–23. Kemalism and Kemalist history was reinvented yet again. After its first action on 29 April Dev-Güç marked the symbolic dates of Kemalism by organizing actions on these dates, but apart from this Dev-Güç had no important activity.

Summarizing, the NDR line was to regard the role of the armed forces pragmatically like the *Yön* movement. This was seen explicitly in, for example, Belli's statement on the power conflict between the AP and the military-civilian intelligentsia, where the latter was the immediate alternative to the former rather than the communists.<sup>70</sup> This remark on the high probability of military intervention thus implied that the foundation was an attempt to establish a union with military officers who could intervene in politics and realize the goals of NDR. For that reason, unlike the communist parties in Iraq, Egypt, Sudan and Indonesia, for example, which supported military interventions for conversion into socialism, the NDR movement had called for unity without an organic organization of the working class. In other words, the NDR movement advocated unity but without any basis.<sup>71</sup>

According to Ertuğrul Kürkçü, the young revolutionary who was among the small circle around Belli, Belli had argued that the current stage was basically NDR because of the ban on the communist party.<sup>72</sup> In the absence of an autonomous organic party formed by the proletariat the first duty was to attain NDR, whether this was under the leadership of the Kemalists, the Kemalist army or others. Under these circumstances, one might conclude that revolutionary expectations were built rather on the intervention of the army than on a popular struggle led by a party formed by the proletariat–peasantry alliance as described in international NDR literature. However, the views of

NDR supporters were in tune with the Soviet thesis on the leadership of the military in some Third World countries, as discussed earlier.

## 6 NDR and student militancy: the 1968 generation

If there was a single moment ... after 1945 which corresponds to the world simultaneous upheaval of which revolutionaries had dreamed after 1917, it was surely 1968, when students rebelled from the USA and Mexico in the West to socialist Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, largely stimulated by the outbreak of May 1968 in Paris, the epicentre of a continent-wide student uprising. It was global, not only because the ideology of the revolutionary tradition, from 1789 to 1917, was universal and internationalist ... but because for the first time, the world, or at least the world in which student ideologists lived, was genuinely global. The same books appeared, almost simultaneously, in the student bookshops in Buenos Aires, Rome and Hamburg (in 1968 almost certainly including Herbert Marcuse). The same tourists of revolution crossed oceans and continents from Paris to Havana to São Paulo to Bolivia. The first generation of humanity to take rapid and cheap global air travel and telecommunications for granted, the students of the late 1960s had no difficulty in recognising what happened at the Sorbonne, in Berkeley, in Prague, as part of the same event in the same global village.<sup>73</sup>

The year 1968 marked a period in which the crystallization of social classes and political activism joined with the energy of university students. Mihri Belli and more generally the NDR movement had managed to extend their political influence over socialist university students, and this was the main success of the NDR line. The TİP had managed to win a large following in the universities, however, and with the activism of 1968 the influence of the NDR strategy gained enormous momentum. The politicization of the students and especially the increase in involvement with left-wing movements reached a peak in 1968 simultaneously with similar youth movements around the world. However, international influence and imitation were not the only factors in the active participation of university students in politics. The youth were included along with the intelligentsia and the military in the vigorous forces of the republic. A youth culture had pervaded the formation of the Republic. As Landau pointed out, Atatürk had called on the youth to watch over the Republic and its independence in a speech that every Turkish child learnt in school.<sup>74</sup>

Students had played an important role in the 1960 coup, with riots and demonstrations against the government. Civilian students had clashed with the police and one of the final demonstrations against the government was by military students. The success of the 1960 coup that was carried out by young officers with significant support from military students and young cadets enhanced the idea that youth was a very powerful political actor in Turkey. The increase in self-confidence complemented the quantitative increase of the number of students enrolled in higher education, leading to a greater influence of youth in politics.<sup>75</sup>

Leftist university students, especially those regarding themselves as socialists and not as social democrats, generally supported the TİP and were active in the FKF. The student clubs were one of the mediums for creating a civil society in a country under strong bureaucratic pressure. The number of Fikir Kulüpleri [Idea Clubs] increased rapidly in the mid-sixties, and in 1966 and 1967 members of the clubs won all the elections in student institutions. This made them the official representatives of Turkey's university students. The students discussed not only the problems of education, the organization of universities and their future problems but also the social and economic problems of their country. One of the main issues was why and how Turkey was left underdeveloped by the imperialist countries. Anti-American and anti-NATO sentiments were increasingly voiced, especially after the Cyprus crisis, the US intervention in the Middle East War in 1967 and the Vietnam War.

Socialism as represented by the TİP was the most radical leftist line until 1967–8. However, university students became disenchanted with the legalism of the party and doubted that a revolution could be carried out by legalist methods, as advocated by the TİP.<sup>76</sup> Student activism gained momentum in 1967, initially with academic requests but later becoming increasingly politicized, especially with the increasing political and economic instability. The students suspected that the two major parties were postponing all reforms and were allying with the US against the interests of the Turkish nation. In April 1968, most of the student organizations joined together in a progressive movement to build a common front against imperialism under the idea of national democratic revolution. A 'No to NATO' week was organized shortly after the news from Paris of the occupation of the universities. The highlight was in the month of June, however, with a series of occupations of universities in Ankara and in Istanbul.<sup>77</sup> While the workers occupied their factories, demanding higher wages and social improvements, the university students occupied universities, demanding reforms in the universities and better material conditions. These academic demands were soon upgraded to demands for overall reforms and even revolution in the country, however. Harun Karadeniz, a student leader from ITU (Istanbul Technical University), for

example, declared on the fifth day of the boycotts that the basic demand of the movement was not a mere reform in education but an education revolution. He also pointed to the global struggle against imperialism by students around the world as well as a global revolution:

Although we live in very different geographical areas, our goals, our struggles, desires, our friends and enemies are the same. We are the youth which will strengthen the struggle against imperialism in different parts of this earth. One day we will meet in a better and more beautiful world.<sup>78</sup>

The occupations and boycotts continued from 10 June to early July, and during this period the students gained great self-confidence. Belli and his circle supported student activity as a road towards NDR and to broaden the anti-imperialist front.<sup>79</sup> The TİP chair at the time, Aybar, however watched these developments with unease and interpreted them as anarchistic movements preparing the ground for fascism.<sup>80</sup>

One of the most significant events that caused students to despair of the TİP and resulted in a separation was the student protest against the arrival of the US navy sixth fleet in Istanbul harbour for a visit on 15 July. The students harassed the US sailors wherever they went. When the tension increased the police brutally attacked the student halls of residence of the İTÜ, leaving dozens of students wounded. Vedat Demircioğlu, who was either thrown out of the windows by the police or jumped out during the attack, went into a coma and died after a few days, causing a major shock to student activists throughout Turkey.

On the afternoon of 17 July thousands of students began marching to protest about the attack and the visit of the US navy. Student leader Harun Karadeniz, obeying the TİP's position, wanted the students not to march to Dolmabahçe and remain in front of the İTÜ campus in Gümüşsuyu, but Deniz Gezmiş, a law student at Istanbul University, gave a speech exhorting students to continue the march as far as Dolmabahçe where the fleet was anchored. The students did not listen to Karadeniz, who said that such an act would be a provocation. Instead they marched to Dolmabahçe, attacked American servicemen and threw a number of them in the sea. The sixth fleet had to depart from the Bosphorus and later also from Izmir because of the very strong reaction to its presence, particularly on the part of university students. The action against the sixth fleet became the symbol of the anti-imperialist spirit and of 1968 in Turkey. Deniz Gezmiş, who was a handsome, energetic and charismatic student, emerged as a leader of the revolutionary students after this incident.

Gezmiş and about fifteen other students who were very active in occupations of the universities in June and in the anti-imperialist demonstrations in Dolmabahçe in the summer of 1968 established the Devrimci Öğrenci Birliği [Revolutionary Student Association: DÖB] as a reaction to the FKF, which they regarded as inactive. Their political views were very close to the NDR line and they had personal contact with Belli. The DÖB regarded Mustafa Kemal as the leader of their anti-imperialist struggle and named the national liberation movement the Second War of Liberation.<sup>81</sup> However, the emphasis of the struggle was not on the retrogressive powers but on imperialism and especially US influence and domination. In one of his rare writings Gezmiş called on youth to join the anti-imperialist struggle with all the underdeveloped countries in the world.<sup>82</sup> The Turkish liberation war was then regarded as part of an international struggle against imperialism, but the leader of the movement was Mustafa Kemal, regarded as the leader of the first struggle against imperialism in Turkey.

Gezmiş accused the TİP of opportunism in his article and argued that youth must be independent of political parties in their struggle against imperialism. This statement clearly showed the resentment and scepticism that militant youth felt against the political parties. Gezmiş emphasized that all political parties could become anti-revolutionary, but the responsibility of youth was only to the *revolution* and *not to the political parties*.<sup>83</sup> This was also one of the early signs of the uncertainty of youth towards political parties, including the idea of a revolutionary vanguard party.

The student actions continued with the visit of Robert Komer, who was a CIA specialist and a director of the pacification programme in Vietnam. Komer was appointed as US ambassador to Turkey in 1969. Kemal Kurdas, the rector of ODTU (Middle East Technical University), invited Komer to the university. ODTU was actually an American-style university founded with help from the US. However, the plan to create a university which would be sympathetic to the US and the Western capitalist system had not been successful, as the ODTU had played a central role in the 1968 movement and was one of the centres of anti-American sentiment. When Komer came to the ODTU on 6 January 1969 his car was vandalized and burned.

### *6.1 Emergence of student leaders and relations with the army*

One of the main consequences of student militancy was that it led to the emergence of new student leaders such as Deniz Gezmiş, Mahir Çayan, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Yusuf Küpeli, Ruhi Koç, İbrahim Kaypakkaya and later independent left-wing groups who subsequently engaged in armed propaganda. The other development was due to the brutal reaction of the police to the students, in

contrast to which the protective attitude of the armed forces lent support to the idea that youth and the armed forces were actually in the same boat. The demonstrations, boycotts, sit-ins and occupations resulted in violent clashes with the police. The police were not actually allowed to enter the campuses but were called in when the functioning of the universities was jeopardized. The 'social police', as this was known, a special unit for the protection of social order, however, reacted brutally to the youth movements. The police searches of the dormitories and the student halls turned into raids, with beatings and even killings, and frequent sexual harassment of female students. In contrast, the military personnel were gentle with the students when they were called in to maintain order.<sup>84</sup> Interestingly, the students could only be rescued from the violence of the police and attacks by anti-communists with the aid of military forces. This supported the belief that the army as a vigorous force was indeed siding with the revolutionaries, as NDR adherents claimed. The police was an instrument of state oppression under the service of collaborators in imperialism and anti-communists, while the army was an independent vigorous force in the service of the Turkish nation.

Accordingly, the slogan 'Army-Youth Together' [ordu-geçlik el ele] became popular again (as in the days before the 27 May intervention). The posters and banners carried at some meetings reflected hope for the unity of anti-imperialist forces – youth, army and justice.<sup>85</sup>

The students' approach and the attitude of the civilian and military bureaucracy towards them can be seen in another important demonstration, the 'Mustafa Kemal march for a completely Independent Turkey'. The march was to start symbolically from Samsun and end in Ankara on 10 November, with a big anti-imperialist demonstration at Anıtkabir, Atatürk's mausoleum. The march was intended to demonstrate that the anti-imperialist struggle and the Second Liberation War were following the road of Kemalism and were therefore indigenous movements and not against the Turkish state and its national interests. Several student associations took part in the march and the DÖB led it. The marchers were arrested and brought to court on 31 October. However, the judge released the students, as one of the demonstrators claimed that it was actually 'Mustafa Kemal' who was being brought to trial. The judge decided that none of the courts in Turkey had the authority to try a case against Atatürk. In their account of the march the DÖB reported that the Turkish judge had shown once again the 'Atatürkist and nationalist tradition of the justice officials' and that the verdict was a statement of his support for the spirit of anti-imperialism on behalf of the progressive element in the bureaucracy.<sup>86</sup> This was again seen as an example of the solidarity of some state officials within the justice system with anti-imperialist youth.

The march ended in Anıtkebir, and the military officers protecting Anıtkebir did not disappoint the young marchers. Strikingly, even though this was a demonstration rather than a legal or official ceremony, the officers assisted the young marchers, even carrying their wreath and waiting while they stood to show respect to Atatürk as if it were an official ceremony.<sup>87</sup> Events such as this accentuated the impact that examples of the unity of civilian and military bureaucracy and youth in an anti-imperialist movement could have.

### ***6.2 Revolutionary youth: Dev-Genç established***

Meanwhile, at the organizational level one of the most important developments was the rise of the NDR opposition within the FKF. Dev-Güç had organized a meeting on 29 April 1968 and the FKF under the leadership of Doğu Perinçek had joined the meeting. As a result, Belli supporters (first thirteen and then seventy-five members) and Perinçek and his group were expelled from the TİP.<sup>88</sup> The Belli and Perinçek group began publication of a theoretical socialist journal, *Aydınlık*, on 1 November 1968. The name of the journal was decided by Belli, and was that of the earlier TKP journal *Aydınlık*, published by the Şefik Hüsnü wing. This showed clearly that Belli was able to transfer the TKP tradition to the younger generation and maintain the link between the past and future of the leftist movement.

The FKF had assumed the name Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Federasyonu [Turkey's Federation of Revolutionary Youth] in October 1969 but was known generally as Dev-Genç (literally meaning 'gigantic youth'). Atilla Sarp, a student at Ankara University's faculty of agriculture, was its first chairman. According to him, Dev-Genç was a political youth organization with a Marxist ideology.<sup>89</sup> The organizational ties were, however, loose and the federation acted largely as an umbrella organization for several revolutionary youth groups. Even though it was composed of university students the federation sought to make links with peasants and working-class youth. The students joined peasant meetings, workers' strikes and demonstrations, and Dev-Genç became a sign of hope, especially among the peasantry, as the peasants were fond of the name of the federation with its implication of an enormous and dynamic power. The leaders and members of Dev-Genç tried to reach every village in Turkey to support their demands for land or, more accurately, agricultural reform. The students were not able to create a significant relationship with the working class, particularly as DİSK was an obstacle to this.<sup>90</sup>

On the whole, Dev-Genç adopted the NDR strategy, under the leadership of Mihri Belli. Most student leaders tried to meet and keep up relations with Dr Hikmet Kıvılcımlı as well, although he was too ill to play any real part.<sup>91</sup> Dev-Genç declared war on the TİP to the point of physically attacking the party

and its members and persistently accused it of opportunism.<sup>92</sup> The physical attack on the TİP was regarded as 'revolutionary violence' and such attacks on the rival leftist groups increased in the following decade. Dev-Genç stormed into TİP meetings and party offices, beating up the TİP leaders, including Boran, and destroying party materials more than once. Unfortunately, the revolutionaries had adopted an attitude of intolerance to any opposing ideas. They were apparently supported by members of the older generation such as Belli.

The NDR and Dev-Genç, however, split into several groups that competed with each other. One of the problems with Dev-Genç was that its political goals far exceeded its function and organization. Dev-Genç was a loose federation of student groups, formerly clubs, but its goals extended from reform in the universities and the struggle against extremist right-wing students to outlawing the American presence and making sweeping reforms or revolutions (the term generally used) in the social and economic structure. Obviously, a student body could not achieve all of these goals. One of the options was to support a revolutionary vanguard party. However, there was doubt about this on the part of the Belli group, more or less the only body able to establish a revolutionary vanguard party. Mehmet Emin Yıldırım, who was among the *Aydınlık* group and had contact with the Belli circle, also said that Belli was tired of illegal work and therefore declined to establish an underground party to lead the NDR.<sup>93</sup> Belli did not have any real authority over the energetic youth though, even if he had had a real desire or competence to establish this. Under these conditions, what Belli's adherents and some of the student groups seemed to prefer – perhaps because there was such high anticipation of it happening – was to support or even provoke a military intervention by Kemalist, anti-imperialist or left-inclined officers.

Belli and his close associates, then, tried to broaden the NDR support for a popular revolt or a left-wing military intervention. Some student groups had already had contact with anti-imperialist, left-inclined military officers on the possibility of a coup. Ertuğrul Kürkçü claimed that when he was chair of Dev-Genç he was pressurized to provoke the students into carrying out terrorist attacks to prepare the ground for a military intervention.<sup>94</sup> He claimed, however, that he had refused such proposals and did not join in. There were apparently groups which had contact with the *Devrim* circle who were planning to assist such a coup or even provoke one.<sup>95</sup> There were many left-inclined military students, and one of the central discussions in student meetings was whether to prepare such a coup or support one if it took place. It seems that to most of those advocating NDR, a military coup was one of the most suitable strategies for realizing the goals of NDR, especially after 1970.

Belli was a source of inspiration and a real leader to many young socialists. They learned from him and his followers a great interest in theory. However, Belli could

not have contained these students. According to his statement, the students did not listen to his warnings and went on to establish small guerrilla units.<sup>96</sup>

## 7 NDR factions and their discourse on the army

### 7.1 *The split in the Aydınlık group: the leadership problem revisited*

The NDR current was divided into various splinter groups, in part for ideological and even sociological reasons but also as a result of personal rivalries, minor disagreements, distrust and leadership battles which in time were legitimized by differences in tactics and strategy. The discourse on the army was either the main cause of disagreement or was used to justify separations that were actually due to other concerns.

As mentioned above under the leadership of Belli the NDR movement published a theoretical monthly *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi* in Ankara, starting in 1968. The contributors were Belli, Muzaffer Erdost, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and a younger generation of Dev-Genç followers such as Doğu Perinçek, Şahin Alpay, Erdoğan Güçbilmez, Gün Zileli, Cengiz Çandar, Atıl Ant, Vahap and Seyhan Erdoğan and Mahir Çayan. However, a dispute soon broke out between the Perinçek and the Çayan groups.<sup>97</sup> The Perinçek group asked for the elimination of leftist anarchistic trends among the leftist students. Çayan responded by criticizing the Perinçek group's ideas about the political role of the army. Çayan accused the Doğu Perinçek line of right deviation and opportunism for declaring Mustafa Kemal as the leader of their party, which in fact did not exist, and considered popular war the same as a military junta.<sup>98</sup> Perinçek had written in *İşçi-Köylü* that their 'party' was the National Liberation Front and the commander of the party was Mustafa Kemal.<sup>99</sup> He declared that the members of the party were the entire nation, which did not collaborate with the American exploiters. In return, Çayan responded that:

Our party is not a party of the national front and the commanders of our party are not petty-bourgeois radicals. Our party is the party of the socialists, and it is a Marxist party. Our guide is not Kemalism but scientific socialism!<sup>100</sup>

Even though Mihri Belli did not have a different approach to this point from the Perinçek group, he supported Mahir Çayan and his friends in this controversy, probably because they seemed to have more influence on militant students. In any case Belli was present with the group when it declared itself as the party of the Mustafa Kemal Front, its commander being Mustafa Kemal himself, in *İşçi-Köylü*, the popular NDR journal addressing the workers and the peasantry.<sup>101</sup>

The PDA [Proleter Devrimci Aydınlik] group led by Doğu Perinçek used new terminology to discuss the leadership problem, and termed the NDR, which the proletariat did not lead in Turkey at that time, National Democratic *Movements* [Milli Demokratik Hareket: NDM] rather than *Revolution*.<sup>102</sup> The term 'revolution' was resorted to only for the struggle of the working class. NDM would transform into NDR, which was a preparation for a socialist revolution, only after the proletariat became the vanguard. The PDA group argued that the proletariat did not fully have the objective and subjective conditions to lead NDR.<sup>103</sup> The present duty of proletarian revolutionaries (as the PDA circle called itself) was to prepare the preconditions and in the meantime support NDM under the vanguard of petty-bourgeois radicalism, which in other words meant the army. This was not only an extreme case of positivist stagism but also looked like what is generally termed in Marxist literature tailism. However, the perspective was not actually very different from that of the Belli circle. According to Mehmet Emin Yıldırım, who was a young follower of the PDA, the PDA group was only trying to theorize Belli's position or improve the theory within it.<sup>104</sup>

The PDA circle regarded the opposing views that advocated that the proletariat could also lead as a leftist deviation.<sup>105</sup> In terms of objective conditions, the PDA took a very narrow view of the working class and pointed out that there was not yet a significant mass of proletariat employed in major industrial sectors. Furthermore, the workers had maintained their networks with their rural backgrounds, which could be an advantage in establishing an alliance of workers and peasants, if only the subjective conditions were ripe. When considering the subjective conditions the PDA remarked that the proletariat was not yet class conscious and ready to accept the duty to establish socialism.<sup>106</sup> Under these conditions the PDA concluded that the military-civilian intelligentsia would play a very important role in the Turkish revolutionary movement,<sup>107</sup> and the *real struggle* was actually between the collaborators in imperialism and these strata, thus following the same line as Belli and the *Yön-Devrim* circles.<sup>108</sup>

According to the viewpoint of the PDA in NDM the proletariat could support the movement even when the vanguard was the petty-bourgeois radicals, arguing that petty-bourgeois radicalism was a revolutionary movement in countries under the domination of imperialism and the conflict between the proletariat and petty-bourgeois radicals over the issue of the vanguard was a non-antagonist conflict.<sup>109</sup> The proletariat must try to become the vanguard but in the meantime support the petty-bourgeois radicals. This would not mean that the proletariat was tailist.<sup>110</sup>

As usual with discussions on the revolutionary potential of petty-bourgeois radicals, the arguments had centred on defining the characteristics of

Kemalism. The PDA claimed that Kemalism was not a consistent ideology of national liberation [milli kurtuluşçuluk] and, like all the political currents of the petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie, it was on the one hand a revolutionary movement but on the other hand a collaborator with imperialism.<sup>111</sup> The strategy of the proletarian revolutionaries was, then, to establish an alliance with Kemalist revolutionaries, but in a sceptical, critical manner.<sup>112</sup> The ideologues of Kemalist politics, with their claim to represent the attitude of the petty bourgeoisie, were divided into two wings in terms of their attitude towards parliamentary democracy – a left revolutionary and a right reactionary-parliamentarist fraction. While left Kemalists were aware of the fact that reactionary-parliamentarism was the means of oppression used by the imperialists and their collaborators, right Kemalists like Bülent Ecevit were protecting bourgeois parliamentarism.<sup>113</sup> The PDA circle then reacted to this parliamentarism in the same way as the *Yön-Devrim* circle – as a means to comply with imperialism. Avcıoğlu was criticized in the meantime, though, as he considered the military-civilian intelligentsia as a whole and as having a consistent progressive and revolutionary ideology. So the PDA led discussions mostly on the nature of Kemalist ideology and the different attitudes of the Kemalists.

One of the most important disagreements between the PDA and the *Aydınlık* group was on the vanguard problem, and in relation to that the attitude towards Kemalism.<sup>114</sup> The PDA also claimed that the strata from Young Turks to Mustafa Kemal had throughout been petty-bourgeois intellectuals against imperialism, and thus their interests lay in the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle. AMP advocates of the TİP were severely criticized for comprehending the bureaucrats as an enemy of the people. Alpay, for example, criticized the TİP particularly for advocating that the military-civilian intelligentsia was a comprador bureaucracy with its roots in the Ottoman empire. The TİP was defined as a populist opportunist party in the service of the imperialist powers, as the party antagonized one of the most stable and powerful forces against imperialism, the army.<sup>115</sup> Küçükömer and Divitçioğlu, in particular, whose views were examined in the previous chapter, were accused of dividing the national front and legitimizing imperialist powers in Turkey by disregarding American imperialism and instead advocating the military-civilian intelligentsia as the main enemy.<sup>116</sup>

Even though the PDA regularly drew attention to the growing ferment of the anti-imperialist movement among petty-bourgeois radicals or the military-civilian intelligentsia it still emphasized, like most leftists, that the petty bourgeoisie as a class was unable to follow a consistent line, as it was an intermediate class, and would not be able to do so in the future.<sup>117</sup> Therefore the

success of the revolution depended on the proletariat party as a single party taking over the leadership. However, the PDA had already drawn attention to the fact that the proletariat did not have an autonomous party and implied, like Avcioğlu, that there was only one way to eliminate imperialism in Turkey, which was under the leadership of the petty-bourgeois radicals, the anti-imperialist left-inclined military officers and left Kemalist civilians such as Doğan Avcioğlu. However, in this sense the PDA advocated an alliance with petty-bourgeois revolutionaries and proletarian revolutionaries to achieve success in the current struggle for national democracy and liberation.<sup>118</sup>

As mentioned above, the PDA group was accused, especially by Çayan, of supporting a petty-bourgeois leadership in a revolutionary movement. Actually, even within Dev-Genç, Perinçek and his close associates were suspected of supporting a leftist junta.<sup>119</sup> The Perinçek group was also mistrusted for having too close a relationship with Doğan Avcioğlu and the *Devrim* circle.<sup>120</sup>

As far as the accusations of backing juntas [cuntacılık] were concerned, the PDA group claimed that they had to separate from *Aydınlık* as they wanted to eliminate anarchistic elements from the revolutionary movement, but Mihri Belli and the Çayan group rejected this. This might have been a well-founded argument, as soon afterwards Çayan set up a group of guerrillas to start armed warfare. However, the PDA also later formed a rural guerrilla group to start NDR from the countryside, as in the Chinese revolution.<sup>121</sup>

The conflict within *Aydınlık* resulted in the elimination of the Perinçek group from the journal. *Aydınlık* separated into two factions, one under the leadership of Mihri Belli (with people like Muzaffer Erdost and Vahap Erdoğan) and Mahir Çayan (with Ertuğrul Kürkçü and Yusuf Küpeli) and the other under Doğu Perinçek with Gün Zileli, Şahin Alpay, Atıl Ant, Cengiz Çandar, İbrahim Kaypakkaya and Halil Berktaş. Perinçek and his faction were not allowed to publish in the fifteenth issue of *Aydınlık* (January 1970). The Perinçek group started publishing *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık* in January 1970.<sup>122</sup> As a result two journals appeared in January 1970 bearing the name *Aydınlık*, the new one with the addition of 'Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık' to its title. *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık* [PDA] adopted a Mao Tse-Tung line and the cover of the journal was in the same colours as the *Peking Review*.<sup>123</sup> As a result the journals came to be known according to the colour of their cover as the White and Red *Aydınlık*.

The two *Aydınlık*s started to compete and accused each other bitterly immediately after the split. The ideas of the Perinçek group were interpreted by Belli as the will to accept the absolute hegemony of the military-civilian intelligentsia to make some revolutionary *movements*.<sup>124</sup> Belli, for example, argued that by pointing to the incomplete conditions of the proletariat both in objective and subjective terms without examining the conditions of the petty

bourgeoisie – which actually was no better off – the PDA exaggerated the role of the petty bourgeoisie. Belli had exaggerated the role of the same strata in NDR as well, but according to him the group was trying to avoid such accusations by distinguishing between ‘revolution’ and ‘movement’, which was not a part of Marxist-Leninist terminology.<sup>125</sup> Ironically, Belli here also emphasized that the concept of *complete* (as used by the PDA to define the conditions of the proletariat) contradicted Marxist philosophy, while it was Belli himself in the first place who had argued against the TİP that Turkey was not a complete [tam] democratic country. Terms such as ‘tam demokratik’ or ‘tam bağımsız Türkiye’ were used as the main slogans of the NDR line.

Belli then accused the PDA (or, as he called them, the Alpay–Perinçek faction) of opportunism, defining the group as bourgeois-originated student youth with shallow ideological foundations.<sup>126</sup> He blamed the PDA for misusing the great leader of the Chinese revolution, Mao Tse-Tung, and for confusing campus Maoism with a popular war. He defined PDA supporters as depressed, *déclassé* intelligentsia.<sup>127</sup>

The PDA changed positions very rapidly and was very inconsistent in its approach on various points. First, the circle had criticized NDR for its theoretical position of allocating the leadership of the movement (the ideological leadership) to the proletariat. Yet the PDA circle then criticized Belli for supporting military intervention soon afterwards. The Çayanists, who were closely related to Belli at the time, were also condemned for defending a coup and adventurism.<sup>128</sup>

The political role of the army, which was generally discussed under the category of petty-bourgeois radicals, appeared to be one of the main theoretical discussion points. The ideology of Kemalism and whether it was possible to co-operate with the Kemalists was one of the important points of discussion for strategy. Mahir Çayan criticized the PDA’s idea that Kemalist ideology could be divided into two currents, one revolutionary and one reactionary. He argued that this was a metaphysical separation,<sup>129</sup> as only Kemalists as people could be factionalized, not the Kemalist ideology itself.<sup>130</sup> He emphasized that at the present time, in accordance with the indecisiveness of the petty bourgeoisie, the military-civilian intelligentsia, the ideologues of the Kemalist revolutionary line, had been separated into two currents, but Kemalism as an ideology was intact, and was in essence revolutionary. Kemalism was a leftist ideology, as it represented a reaction to the imperialism of the revolutionary-nationalist strata.<sup>131</sup> The essence, or, as he used the term, the soul, of Kemalism was in these terms its anti-imperialism. Çayan argued that Kemalism was the flag of rebellion of the petty-bourgeois revolutionarism against imperialism in a country under occupation. Kemalism had been the most radical ideology

of a section of the petty bourgeoisie, that is, the military-civilian intelligentsia.<sup>132</sup> With regard to the state, Çayan reiterated the Leninist idea that the state with its bureaucracy and militarism was the means of oppression of the ruling classes as a whole, yet the Turkish army had waged war against imperialism when there was neither a revolutionary nationalist-radical class movement against imperialism nor a socialist bloc to support the Turkish liberation war. Turkey was the first country in this sense, then, to have waged a victorious war against imperialism. Radical-nationalism, according to Çayan, was original to Turkey because of its past and the progressive lower bureaucracy of the Ottomans. Kemalists were also regarded as the Jacobins of the military-civilian intelligentsia. Çayan anticipated that this group – the most conscious group of the petty bourgeoisie – would join the anti-imperialist war sooner or later, but warned that the most revolutionary line of this group – the ideology of Kemalism – must not be confused with the group itself.<sup>133</sup> Çayan later declared that THKP-C in its stage of armed propaganda could co-operate with Kemalists, and actually only with Kemalists, in its struggle against anti-imperialism.<sup>134</sup>

There were not actually any major differences in the approach of the different groups to Kemalism or the political role of the army and the vanguard problem. None of the groups actually represented a workers' movement and all were petty-bourgeois revolutionaries in this sense. Çayanists politically had a greater impact on the student movement, while before the split Perinçek was actually more dominant over the student movement as he was the chair of the FKE. Meanwhile, the struggle between these groups had increased to such an extent that both groups engaged in physical attacks and also tried to prevent the sale of the other's journals.<sup>135</sup> The offices of PDA and their other more populist journal, *İşçi-Köylü*, were both stormed and some materials were stolen.<sup>136</sup>

### ***7.2 Workers' revolt and revision or affirmation of NDR***

The 15–16 June workers' revolt was an event that deeply affected the left. Nobody was expecting such an outburst from the working class and the most important aspect of the mass revolt was that it was a spontaneous movement. The revolt actually started as resentment of the AP government, which was determined to pass a law to destroy the political unionism led by DİSK. The proposed amendment would prohibit unions if they did not represent at least one-third of the workers in a workplace. Government spokesmen had explicitly announced that the amendment was going to wipe out DİSK.<sup>137</sup> The workers responded to this proposed change in the law by staging an enormous and spontaneous demonstration, with a march of over 150,000 workers in the Marmara region. DİSK had called for a protest against the legislation

on 15 June and they were expecting only about 10,000–15,000 workers to attend, but workers from all areas of Istanbul and Izmit spontaneously joined the demonstration. Right from the start DİSK had warned the workers not to take any further action, but instead the workers paralysed the entire Istanbul–Marmara region. When the police proved ineffective the army was called in and the bridges over the Golden Horn were raised to stop the march to the Governor's Palace. Women in the van of the demonstration breached the defences. During the clashes a policeman and two workers were killed and more than two hundred were injured. Many people were arrested and beaten severely while in police custody. The workers broke into police stations to free their comrades. Martial law and a curfew were declared, and this was to last for two months to suppress further demonstrations.

The government described the demonstration as the dress rehearsal for revolution. The workers had been active throughout the 1960s, with demonstrations, strikes and occupation of factories. However, a demonstration of such dimensions had never before been carried out spontaneously, nor one affecting a whole region. The events of 15–16 June not only shocked the government but also the revolutionary youth. Some groups within Dev-Genç located close to Istanbul tried to join in and even take control of the demonstrations and some were brought before a military court for this, but it is apparent from the recordings of the talks by Dev-Genç transcribed in the book by Yıldırım that they were completely taken by surprise.<sup>138</sup> Dev-Genç members were unable to direct the movement although they were eager to do so. The talks show that there were disputes between Dev-Genç militants and trade unionists, and Dev-Genç blamed the unionists for narrowing down the class struggle to a question of the economic interests and formation of unions.<sup>139</sup> Apparently some of the workers' leaders shared a similar opinion.<sup>140</sup> Dev-Genç regarded the revolt as one of the first signs of the working class gaining class consciousness, but the unionists were trying to misdirect and curb the class struggle.<sup>141</sup> The working class, then, despite this spontaneous and massive action, was devoid of class consciousness and Dev-Genç members appeared to feel it was their duty to generate this in the working class and liberate them from the narrow-minded and collaborator unionists. Though Dev-Genç still doubted the potential of the working class to lead a struggle, the reaction of Dev-Genç to trade unionists also showed the non-conformism of the young and what could perhaps be described as their *revolutionary reflex*.

The worker's revolt of 15–16 June and the declaration of martial law paved the way for a revised discussion of the political role of the army. Groups in Dev-Genç in particular felt obliged to renew their ideas, as the military had been used to stop the workers from marching as soon as martial law had been

declared. The first observations of some of the Dev-Genç members who joined the march were that military officers treated the demonstrators and those in custody properly, unlike the police. However, the use of the armed forces to restore order by shooting at the workers if necessary clearly showed that the armed forces were to be used to maintain law and order at any cost. This led to a revival of the discussion on the role of the army, especially because it was fairly apparent that a new military intervention was very close.

Yet, ironically, almost all the groups had managed to extend their influence, albeit mostly to low-ranking military officers or students. The expectation of a new coup, which could be a radical coup and a leftist one, was very high. It is apparent that despite the literature opposing the role of the army, leftist groups retained their trust in the army and were trying to direct a probable coup towards an anti-American leftist position and be recognized as representing the socialists and the working class by the junta. Some of the leftist groups had also established links with military officers. Çayanists, for example, had links with the air force, mostly through Captain Orhan Savaşçı, and Sarp Kuray and Ruhi Koç had links with the navy.<sup>142</sup> Organizations were formed consisting of both civilians and military officers.

Meanwhile, each Dev-Genç group competed with the other, thus turning the movement almost into a nonsensical competition about radicalism. Each group was determined to become authoritative by adopting revolutionary foreign models or leaders, as the Turkish communist tradition failed to provide any inspiration. The discourse of the leftists discussed above and in previous chapters regarding the political role of the army which was generally based on the distinctive past role of the Turkish army was revised, specifically with reference to Marxist-Leninist canons.

As a result of these developments, in particular the competition over radicalism, even the PDA changed its position very radically, especially in terms of its perspective on the political role of the army. PDA adopted the classic Marxist-Leninist view that the state was not an over-the-classes independent organ but an organization to protect the class rule of the bourgeois. Based on this view of the state, the military was then regarded as the organization of the ruling classes in its mechanism, structure and hierarchical chain of command *everywhere* in the world, and that was its *essential* [esas] quality.<sup>143</sup> The PDA strongly criticized reformists and revisionists with their belief that it was possible to carry out a revolution without fighting against the state organs of the ruling classes, which was an illusion. The TİP was attacked in the same way for believing that the army could be impartial in the class conflict between the working class and the bourgeoisie.<sup>144</sup> The PDA declared that the role of the army was the main issue that separated them from the bourgeois reformists and the revisionists.<sup>145</sup>

The PDA circle criticized the Soviet thesis of the non-capitalist road to socialism as being revisionist. This was actually more because they wanted to support China in its struggle against the USSR rather than a consistent stand against a military-led revolutionary struggle.<sup>146</sup> The circle still argued that the revolutionary struggle for national liberation was increasing in the army among Kemalist officers with petty-bourgeois backgrounds. Yet at the same time the PDA pointed out that such notions as that the Turkish army was the army of the people and that it had a tradition of national liberation and was Kemalist were subjective ideas. Such views could not explain why martial laws protected the bourgeoisie against the working class, or the Turkish army being a member of NATO, loyal in this respect to American imperialism.<sup>147</sup> The PDA criticized the *Devrim* circle, which previously the group had by and large supported, for ignoring the workers' revolt and not publishing any news about martial law. Strikingly, the PDA drew attention to the oppression of the Kurdish people in the east, especially by commandos and gendarmes, and warned *Devrim* not to disregard these facts. In other words, the PDA acknowledged the existence of anti-imperialist military officers who could join NDR but warned against blanket descriptions of the army, while only some two months earlier claiming that the Turkish army had a revolutionary heritage, as was shown by the Independence War and 27 May, and therefore the ruling classes could not use the army against the people's struggle. The PDA doubted that the attempts of the hegemonic classes to use the army against the struggle of the nation would succeed.<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, only a few months later, and without reference to their previous views, the group criticized those who believed that in Turkey a fascist dictatorship could not be built as the army was revolutionary.<sup>149</sup> This time the PDA remembered that the military-civilian intelligentsia had rejected the power and the essentiality of the working class ever since the foundation of the republic.<sup>150</sup>

With regard to the 12 March military intervention, the PDA directed its criticisms at the perspective of Dr Kuvılcımlı on the army. Immediately after the intervention the PDA claimed that Kuvılcımlı rejected popular war and the arming of the people as he believed that the army alone should possess arms.<sup>151</sup> Even though the perspective of the PDA might have been theoretically correct this attitude was an example of their inconsistency. Hikmet Kuvılcımlı continued to contribute to the PDA until the final issues of the journal and his ideas had not changed for decades. Therefore, the PDA circle must have been aware of his views much earlier but still co-operated with him, or worse maybe had even used him as he was one of the oldest communists in Turkey. He was then attacked bitterly in the last issues of *PDA* and the group gave no explanation of the reasons for this change of opinion of Kuvılcımlı's on the army.<sup>152</sup> The PDA was not actually trusted by the young revolutionaries of the

period because of its changes of ideas, and it was accused of being inconsistent in open debates and meetings.<sup>153</sup>

Meanwhile, a very important development within the NDR line was the separation of the Çayan group from the Belli group. Çayan was one of the young revolutionaries most respected by Belli. He was already disappointed and very much surprised when Çayan did not attend the general assembly of the leftists. NDR supporters organized a Proletarian Revolutionary Assembly on 29–30 October 1970 to establish an alternative leftist party to the TİP, but the meeting dispersed before any conclusive decision was made.<sup>154</sup> To establish a legal party was something of a senseless and futile idea anyway, as the country was already in a chaotic situation and the lifetime of any legal party would only have been very short. This was apparently the view of Mahir Çayan, one of the most important student leaders at the time. He did not attend the assembly as he had to have an operation, but this was not an urgent one. He had his appendix removed to prevent any possible inconvenience while in the mountains taking part in a future guerrilla war. This shows that he had already decided to engage in an armed struggle for revolution.

The Çayan group split from the group under Belli by sending an open letter to *Aydınlık*.<sup>155</sup> Though formally operating within the framework of the legal federation Dev-Genç, Çayan and his close friends established a clandestine organization with the title Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi Cephesi, known as THKP-C [People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey].

The Çayanists claimed that they did not trust Belli on account of his strategy, which was built on the initiative to be taken by the army and a co-operative approach to the Kemalists, including the CHP.<sup>156</sup> However, the open letter was not very clear on exactly why the group did separate from Belli or more generally from the *Aydınlık* movement. Ertuğrul Kürkçü claims that they had separated from the Belli group because he was only passively expecting a military intervention. One of the final blows was the call of *Kurtuluş* to the military courts to remain impartial during the trials of working class detainees after 15–16 June.<sup>157</sup> Kürkçü says that they were highly disturbed by such a nonsensical headline, as it was impossible for the armed forces to remain impartial in the class struggle. The boxes of *Kurtuluş* collected in ODTU (to be distributed to the shanty towns) were destroyed, and for the first time ever the journal was not distributed, on account of this headline.<sup>158</sup>

Summarizing, the NDR line factionalized around the end of 1969 or early 1970 into five major groups and lines with the following goals and motivations which were mainly determined by their approach to the political role of the army. (1) Mihri Belli and the *Aydınlık* circle. The circle expected an intervention by the progressive wing of the army and finally decided to establish a new party.

The decision, however, was very untimely and not sound, as the forces that could support such a party had already dispersed. (2) Dr Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and the *Sosyalist* circle took the probability of an army intervention seriously, but advocated formation of a united proletarian party to lead the movement. (3) Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, Ertuğrul Kürkçü and Münir Aktolga had considered a progressive junta unlikely, and instead planned to prepare for a reactionary coup and armed struggle in an illegal party. However, they were also to support an intervention and try to steer it towards an anti-American stand after the intervention by attacks on American bases or embassies. The group established the party front THKP-C. After the 12 March military intervention, Yusuf Küpeli and Münir Aktolga did not support armed propaganda tactics and left the group. Çayan tried to renew NDR and formulate a new programme on the popular war inspired by South American experiences. (4) The PDA circle under the leadership of Doğu Perinçek had often-changing views and finally supported the Chinese Communist Party in its rivalry with the Soviet Communist Party and adopted an openly Maoist line. The PDA group had formed an illegal party called the Revolutionary Workers-Peasants Party of Turkey [Türkiye İhtilalci İşçi Köylü Partisi: TİİKP] in January 1970. İbrahim Kaypakkaya, a student leader from Çapa Teachers' School, separated from the PDA around the end of 1971 and with other opponents established the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Turkey [Türkiye Marksist-Leninist Komünist Partisi: TKP-ML] on 24 April 1972. (5) Deniz Gezmiş, Sinan Cemgil, Hüseyin İnan and Yusuf Aslan started to organize a guerrilla unit that was to become the People's Liberation Army of Turkey [THKO].<sup>159</sup> Deniz Gezmiş was inspired by Che Guevara, and, in contrast to Lenin's famous dictum, belittled revolutionary theory. THKO therefore left almost no written declaration of its views. This group did not really trust the army mainly because some members were Kurdish and Gezmiş himself was friends with Kurdish students at ODTU. They told him about the mistreatment of Kurdish people by gendarmes. Mustafa Yalçiner told me in interview they were not ideologically and physically close to the military officers and had no links with them.<sup>160</sup>

### *7.3 With or against the army: disappointment on 9 March, rebellion against 12 March*

Around the year 1970, Dev-Genç, or more precisely, clandestine organizations acting under the legal platform of the students' federation, started to engage in an armed struggle under the influence of guerrilla warfare in South American countries as advocated by Carlos Marighela and Douglas Bravo.<sup>161</sup> Arming by the leftists had initially started as self-defence against the fascists under the leadership of ex-Colonel Alparslan Türkeş, one of the most famous colonels

of the 27 May junta.<sup>162</sup> He had become the leader of a small conservative party called the Republican Peasants and Nation Party [Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi: CKMP], and in 1969 changed its name to the Nationalist Action Party [Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi: MHP] to match its actions. This party came to represent the ultra-nationalistic, authoritarian extreme right in Turkey. Those attacking the leftist students in the universities were fascists trained in contra-guerrilla camps organized by Türkeş since the summer of 1969. Türkeş organized his party on military lines and indoctrinated activists. The paramilitary arm of the party, the 'Grey Wolves', notorious for their violence, initiated physical attacks on political opponents, especially those on the left. The police did nothing to prevent the attacks on leftist students. The first commando training camp was opened in July 1968, and by August 1970 they had reached a total of twenty-eight. They increased attacks on leftists, including the murders of fourteen revolutionaries, one of whom was a military officer. Schoolteachers in towns sympathetic to the TİP became the main targets. After the killing of Taylan Özgür by the police, fascist gangs shot Mehmet Cantekin in the engineering faculty in Istanbul University.<sup>163</sup> Dev-Genç followers had started to form armed groups initially in response to these increasing fascist attacks.

The Islamist movement on the other hand called for a jihad against the socialist movement.<sup>164</sup> During the largest anti-imperialist demonstration on 16 February 1969 Islamists and extreme right-wing groups controlled by the Turkish contra-guerrilla organization had attacked about 50,000 marchers, mostly workers and students who were protesting about the arrival of the US fleet in Taksim, with knives and sticks. Two workers, Ali Turgut and Doğan Erdoğan, were murdered and more than a hundred were wounded. The day later became known as 'Bloody Sunday'. So the left was surrounded by the hostile ideologies of the right, right-centre (DP), Islamic and ultra-nationalist right generally protected by the state or the government. The resort to arms was mainly the result of these physical attacks on leftists and especially the discriminating attitude of the government towards them.

As a result the students felt that they were left unprotected by the state. Trust in the parliamentary system had actually faded following the violent attack on Çetin Altan, a deputy of the TİP, on 20 February 1968 by more than a hundred members of the AP in parliament. The fascist attacks, the partisan attitude of the ruling party and the police and the natural dynamism of the young prompted first the idea of armed defence and then that of an armed struggle.

South American guerrilla warfare, especially the struggle of Che, who had resigned from a comfortable political position in Cuba and died under fire while fighting for the Bolivian revolution, had inspired students in Turkey in 1968 as well.<sup>165</sup> Even though they were not ready, student leaders such

as Hüseyin İnan, Deniz Gezmiş, Sarp Kuray or Mahir Çayan were thinking about starting a popular or guerrilla war in Turkey to achieve NDR. Most students who were active at this time consider that there were actually provocations to the leftist students, that they were compelled to take up arms and to start guerrilla warfare.<sup>166</sup>

Around 1969–70, a guerrilla unit called THKO was established by Hüseyin İnan, and later became known for its charismatic leader, Deniz Gezmiş. They believed an armed struggle was unavoidable if revolution was to take place in Turkey. Like the Cuban revolution, the party was going to be born from the army, hence they preferred to engage in an armed struggle. Gezmiş, for example, went to Palestine in the winter of 1969 for military training in Al-Fatah camps.<sup>167</sup>

Both THKO and THKP-C, as discussed above, acknowledged the ideological leadership of the working class, even though they considered the peasantry as the main force of the struggle. The central strategy was that as the urban areas were tied to imperialist centres and were under control the popular war was going to start from rural areas and then spread to urban places through guerrilla warfare.<sup>168</sup> The peasantry, led by a proletarian party or army front, was to strike at the local feudal elements. As revolutionary rule was going to be established in these areas, reactionary elements in the Turkish armed forces would attack jointly with foreign troops in support of imperialism. This would lead to a Vietnam situation and a popular war would start. The enemy in rural parts would be repulsed into the sea, while urban guerrilla units would cleanse the urban parts, and revolution would establish socialism in Turkey.<sup>169</sup>

Underlying this strategy was the idea that the Turkish peasantry and the working class were very uneducated and far from being politically conscious. Çayan, who produced new theories of NDR, believed that for this reason NDR without armed struggle would be totally ineffective and that the Turkish revolution could only be realized through armed struggle.<sup>170</sup> He believed that consciousness must be generated from outside, and emphasized, however, that Bolshevik concepts of work, organization and consciousness were classical views which were not really relevant to the contemporary anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic revolutionary movement.<sup>171</sup> However, he was still theoretically loyal to Marxist-Leninism and regarded THKP-C as a Leninist party.<sup>172</sup>

First THKO and then THKP-C in competition with THKO engaged in armed bank robberies, kidnappings and bombing of public buildings.<sup>173</sup> THKP-C had the largest 'organization' among Dev-Genç,<sup>174</sup> and its members were recruited from university students or recent graduates, peasants, workers, intellectuals and low-ranking military officers. The organization was run on the basis of personal relations and interactions.<sup>175</sup>

When the planned 9 March intervention failed the army intervened with a memorandum on 12 March 1971. As explained above, most Dev-Genç members were aware of the fact that different factions in the armed forces were preparing an intervention. According to Ruhi Koç, all groups had links with a group in the military and were thinking of assisting a coup or were even involved in the junta's organization.<sup>176</sup> Some groups within Dev-Genç were intended as instruments to provoke the military or to assist if a left-wing junta had managed to carry out its plan. The group consisting of Sarp Kuray, Atilla Sarp and Mehmet Beşlioğlu in particular were planning to create the necessary conditions (by terror) for the army to intervene and put an end to American hegemony.<sup>177</sup> At the end of the summer in 1970 all the student leaders gathered for a meeting at the political science faculty in Ankara and discussed just such a possibility, and tried to decide on different options: to be a part of the intervention, or at least support it from outside, or to steer it towards a more leftist position. Only Münir Ramazan Aktolga and Mahir Çayan were convinced that they did not want to be a tool of the junta and therefore rejected any of the plans.<sup>178</sup> Those close to Gezmiş (later adopting the name THKO) had already taken their own direction and were getting ready for an armed struggle for liberation.

Apart from assisting or provoking the military coup, the THKP-C and Sarp Kuray–Ruhi Koç groups had an organic unity with some of the military officers, and the Kuray group had followers in the navy.<sup>179</sup> According to Ruhi Koç almost all young navy cadets were socialists ready to launch a revolt. Moreover, almost half of the THKP-C was composed of military officers, mostly in the air force.<sup>180</sup> These had been recruited particularly through Mahir Çayan's brother-in-law, air force Captain Orhan Savaşçı.<sup>181</sup> THKP-C actually expected a right-wing intervention (even though it did not rule out the alternative) and refused to assist a junta which it was not part of, preferring to retain its independence and maintain contact with military officers only in ideological terms. THKO, however, was devoid of any personal links with military officers.

At the time THKP-C anticipated a fascist junta, perhaps because of their close relationship with the army. The party front decided to start rapidly organizing among the peasantry and working class both legally and illegally. If a fascist junta seized power they were thinking of fighting back, using the arms smuggled by the military officers related to THKP-C, who were planning to desert if such an event did take place. Despite this there were still hopes, and actually plans, for a radical leftist junta, and both the military and civilian members of THKP-C had decided to assist the leftist junta with their own units and organizations. Major İbrahim Keskin had contacted THKP-C to ask for their collaboration and through Çayan it was reported that THKP-C would unite forces but not co-operate with the army.<sup>182</sup> This

shows very clearly the decision of THKP-C not to be a part of a junta but only to support an intervention from outside within its independent organization. The attitude was in these terms different from that of the *Yön-Devrim* movement, for example. Leftist officers and THKP-C member officers were delegated the duty of taking over Ankara police headquarters. On the night of 9 March Çayan, Ziya Yılmaz, Kamil Dede, Ulaş Bardakçı, Hüseyin Cevahir and some officer friends listened to the radio, waiting for news of the intervention. THKP-C was to attack and take over the American consulate and police headquarters if the military intervened. The point of taking the American consulate was to break relations with the US and give an impression that the coup was directed against the US, and hence change, or broaden, the direction of the coup. However, at around 3 a.m., Orhan Savaşçı informed the group that a leftist intervention would not take place.<sup>183</sup>

Dev-Genç did not react to the 12 March intervention as it was only a memorandum, and it was initially ambiguous who it was directed at. There was a meeting in Ankara which some members of Dev-Genç including its chair, Ertuğrul Kürkçü of THKP-C, attended. Leftist organizations such as TÖS and DİSK were also present. Finally, a declaration defending the memorandum was published. Kürkçü said later that Dev-Genç had only half-heartedly accepted the declaration.<sup>184</sup> Dev-Genç published another declaration, which was against the coup, the next day. Kürkçü regretted having joined in the common statement with other leftists supporting the coup.<sup>185</sup>

Belli meanwhile defended the 12 March memorandum, as he saw it as a reaction to the Demirel regime, which was dominated by comprador capital and feudal landlords who were planning to bring fascism to Turkey. The Turkish army was again regarded as nationalist and progressive and protecting the Mustafa Kemal tradition, and the intervention represented the will of the Turkish working class and poor peasantry.<sup>186</sup> He called on all labouring classes to actively participate in democratic reforms and safeguard reform in an organized, conscious manner.

Martial law was extended in May 1971 after the Israeli consul general, Ephraim Elrom, was abducted by the THKP-C in Istanbul. Many youth groups of the extreme right and left were disbanded, followed by mass arrests of socialist youth and even renowned intellectuals.

The THKO leadership was arrested and charged with a series of crimes. Gezmiş confessed to the kidnapping of US servicemen (whom they had released unharmed) and two bank robberies. A military court sentenced Gezmiş and seventeen others to death on 9 October 1971. Hüseyin İnan, Yusuf Aslan and Deniz Gezmiş were executed on 6 May 1972; all were still in their early twenties.

Mahir Çayan and twenty-five comrades meanwhile were tried in another military court for establishing a secret organization to carry out a proletarian revolution, for bank robbery and the kidnapping and murder of Consul General Elrom.<sup>187</sup> About half of the THKP-C members tried in court were military officers. On the anniversary of 12 March Ertuğrul Kürkçü reported that these junior officers believed that the army could not have a revolutionary role as they had observed the ideological distance between them and their superiors, and they had no trust in the army as the bonds between high- and low-ranking officers had already been broken and the two groups led very different lives.<sup>188</sup> The high-ranking officers were *embourgeoisé* as a result of OYAK, and the young officers mistrusted the higher ranks and therefore did not believe that the army could be used to start a revolution. During the trials of about a hundred air force students and young cadets Kürkçü had observed that they were Marxists and believed in a people's revolution and that compared to civilians they were more satisfied that the army could not undergo a transformation.<sup>189</sup> He believed that the purpose of the 12 March intervention was largely to eliminate these radical officers and especially to prevent 9 March.<sup>190</sup> Ruhi Koç, however, who had links with the navy, does not believe that all the officers were Marxists, but that they were anti-imperialist and reformist. He also thinks that the high commanders and the ruling class (and contra-guerrillas) used them to suppress revolutionary movements, especially one from the working class. In other words, the existence of revolutionary officers and their underground acts towards a revolution were used as an excuse for the intervention. Koç is very sure of this, as in the Erim government which repressed the left Orhan Kabibay was their leader or go-between with the junta.<sup>191</sup>

Çayan and several others escaped from military prison on 29 November 1971, probably with the help of servicemen sympathetic to the THKP-C or its members. THKP-C leaders, including Çayan and some members of THKO, were killed by security forces (by contra-guerrilla forces, as revealed later by General Kenan Evren, the leader of the 1980 military coup) in February and March 1972, while attempting to kidnap British technicians in order to prevent other THKO members from being executed.<sup>192</sup> All THKP-C leaders and three of the technicians who were kidnapped were killed in Kızıldere village on 30 March 1972, except Ertuğrul Kürkçü, who survived injured. Kızıldere was an aberration in Turkish leftist history, as one group of leftists had sacrificed themselves to save leaders of another leftist group and co-operated and died together. Previously, opposing groups, from the very early days of the TKP, had threatened each other no less than the fascists. This was probably another reason why Kızıldere has had such an impact on generations of leftists.

Most members of THKO, such as Sinan Cemgil, were brutally murdered by the security forces in the Nurhak Mountains, close to Adıyaman. İbrahim Kaypakkaya, who had separated from PDA to start guerrilla war in the east, was brutally murdered after undergoing torture for trying to provoke Kurdish peasants to start NDR.<sup>193</sup> He became one of the most respected revolutionary martyrs, as he had steadfastly refused to submit to the police even while under severe torture.

The leading cadres of the three main guerrilla groups were thus annihilated around the year 1972. Those who had survived, such as Mustafa Yalçiner, received long sentences. These guerrilla movements shared the common ground of stemming from NDR and they acknowledged themselves as part of the proletarian movement even though the proletariat did not exist as a major factor or as a potential one. These groups had departed from the NDR line they stemmed from, as well as from Turkish revolutionary history, by adopting a strategy of armed propaganda and guerrilla warfare. However, they did not formulate a revolutionary theory, which was more in tune with the realities of Turkey. THKO belittled revolutionary theory and THKP-C generally produced its main theoretical positions while on the run, so had insufficient time to develop them. The internal capitalist development of Turkey and the rapid accumulation of capital in the 1960s meant that the class conflict was ignored again and consequently the importance or even the vitality of the working class was disregarded both in theory and practice, as in the NDR line.

One of the main theoreticians in this period was Çayan. He held that in the era of monopoly capitalism each country's level of economic development, and consequently the force of the proletariat in each country, was no longer important as countries and national economies had become part of an integrated world economy. He based this view on Lenin and Stalin and claimed that they both advocated that in the age of imperialism the world as a whole was developed enough to transform into socialism, thus the proletariat could lead ideologically. He then maintained that as a result of international conjunctural developments, the conditions for the proletariat to lead the revolution existed, but there was no developed working class in Turkey to actually attain the leadership. This was in fact not different from the views of the NDR line about the leadership of the movement. However, Dev-Genç followers were more active both in participating in peasant movements, such as land invasions, and also in directly influencing young military officers, and were more militant for their NDR cause, rather than simply and passively anticipating a leftist coup.

It was apparent that the young militants perceived themselves as proletarian revolutionaries rather than Kemalists, even though their ideas did not favour a proletarian revolution and their actions could be described as petty-bourgeois radicalism. The 12 March military intervention and annihilation of the leading

cadres of THKO, THKP-C and TKP-ML was a big shock to the leftists, especially the young. The sense of an alliance with the army, or that co-operation could be established through leftist military officers for NDR, was shattered by the repression of the leftists, measures directly aimed at curbing trade union activism and restrictions on civil rights. One of Deniz Gezmiş's close friends and his comrade Bozkurt Nuhoglu, himself an active student leader at the time, told me that they understood the 'real nature of the army' only after the 12 March intervention when they were beaten in custody by the military forces.<sup>194</sup>

Views were changed abruptly first after the workers' revolt and then as a result of the military intervention rather than as a development within leftist movements, even though radicalism had also been an important factor, particularly in the year prior to the intervention. Yet the leftists had seemed to believe strongly in the revolutionary tradition of the army, and therefore were terribly traumatized by the 12 March intervention.<sup>195</sup> The break, though not consistent and permanent, with the official ideology of Kemalism and the expectation of revolutionary actions from the army because of its Kemalism could be observed even during the trials. Necati Sağır of THKP-C, for example, had declared in the military court that 'Atatürkism cannot be reconciled with our goals. We are socialists.'<sup>196</sup> This was in a sense a turning point, as for the first time Kemalism formally ceased to be of relevance to organized political groups outside formal politics.<sup>197</sup>

The legacy of the guerrillas, though very short-lived and hardly effective, did have a lasting impact. Gezmiş and Çayan in particular, as charismatic student leaders, became revolutionary icons, the martyrs of the revolution, the 'Ches' of Turkey. Many babies were given the names 'Mahir' and 'Deniz' (also Ulaş, Cem and İbrahim, all names of what were regarded as revolutionary martyrs) for generations to come. This was actually rather ironic, as both THKO and THKP-C had decided to engage in armed propaganda to show the weakness of the state to the Turkish people. However, they were caught and annihilated almost immediately, which effectively proved the contrary. It was not the *weakness* but the *strength* of the state and its merciless, brutal reaction to such amateurish young rebels that created the real propaganda. Many groups were formed spontaneously, modelled on one of these units out of sympathy for the courageous young rebels. Ertuğrul Kürkçü reported that they had never expected this; armed propaganda was actually aimed at the contrary.<sup>198</sup> When they were first caught and imprisoned, Çayan had regretted their decision to embark on such a road and believed that they had failed.

Despite this failure, the tragic end of these young people and the brutality of the reaction increased the number of people who had embarked on a revolutionary road.

# THE VOICE OF THE TKP FROM ABROAD

## 1 Introduction

The Communist Party of Turkey [Türkiye Komünist Partisi: TKP], founded in Baku on 10 September 1920, was one of the oldest political parties in Turkey. Though establishing a communist party was banned by law throughout the period of the new republic the party maintained a continuous underground existence. The Kemalist leadership monitored the activity of the communists closely in the 1920s. A paragraph in the 1924 constitution that forbade any change in the government of the state was directed as much against communism as against bringing back the sultanate. Despite the attempts of the early Kemalist regime to suppress the Communist Party it continued to work in a few, but determined, cells with the support of the Soviet Union and Comintern.

The role communism played in Turkey for half of the century was never very impressive by the standards of an organized party struggling for power, but the party did have more significance in terms of its ideological and propaganda value.<sup>1</sup> Because of the criminal laws then in use, communist parties could not be established after 1960, either. The heirs to the TKP disagreed enormously about the existence of the TKP in the 1960s. The party was destroyed in 1951 by a series of notorious mass arrests under the government of the DP.<sup>2</sup> Almost all the party cadre was arrested, meaning that the party had no organizational existence thereafter.

After 1960, the TKP took the form of a foreign bureau in Europe tied to Moscow, with members being appointed directly from the central communist party of the Soviet Union. Mihri Belli claims that the offer or, perhaps more accurately, the order to establish a foreign bureau was delegated to him. In this sense he was the leader of the communists in Turkey. However, he rejected the idea firmly, as he thought Turkish communists would not agree to accept orders from the USSR.<sup>3</sup> He also rejected Zeki Baştuğmar's appointment as general secretary of the bureau, as he believed that he had betrayed his

comrades and revealed party secrets to the police during his interrogation and sentencing in 1951.

In this sense, the communists in Turkey did not recognize the TKP external bureau as representing the TKP. However, in the 1970s, the TKP as recognized by most people was related to this TKP foreign bureau from the 1960s. The TKP had always been tied to Moscow in the past so it would not have been very sensible to ignore the TKP foreign bureau on account of the fact that it was tied directly to the USSR. The rivalry among the leftist circles in the 1960s also reflected the rivalry between what was then regarded as the TKP and those who were its inheritors. Zeki Baştımar had close relations with some of the TİP leaders, while he was very hostile towards NDR leaders.

As it did not have an organization in Turkey during the period under study the influence of the TKP foreign bureau was negligible. However, the TKP had had a long tradition in Turkey and the views adopted by most movements in this period were directly influenced by the ideology of the party in its first period, which is to say more or less until 1951. The TKP was established in Turkey again after 1971 and was especially influential in trade unions, being the only Marxist platform to maintain a direct link with the working class and the youth movement.<sup>4</sup> Thus it is necessary to consider the discourse of the TKP on the military during the decade if only to form a link between the past and future of the radical leftist movements and their attitude towards the armed forces.

The leftists who regarded the armed forces as a progressive, anti-imperialist power and an agent of transformation into a non-capitalist regime had their roots in the early TKP's discourse on Kemalism and its approach towards the early Kemalist regime until the end of World War II. Thus it is necessary to consider the ideology of the early TKP briefly, especially in terms of its relation to the Kemalist regime, and then to evaluate the 1960s to grasp the continuity of the ideology and to see whether there was a significant change caused by separating the TKP foreign bureau from its early roots in Turkey.<sup>5</sup> This review will also help us to show the origins of the ideology of the rival group, the Belli circle, which claimed to inherit the 'real TKP'.

## **2 A concise review of the ideology of the TKP up to the 1960s**

### ***2.1 The attitude of the TKP towards the military and the Kemalist regime (1920–45)***

The TKP in Turkey was formed when various organizations that were initially set up in Europe and in Bolshevik Russia moved to Istanbul and Anatolia and later united. One of these groups was originally formed in Berlin by Turkish intellectuals led by Ethem Nejat and had then moved to Istanbul in 1919–20. This group had united with a Marxist circle gathered under the leadership of

Dr Şefik Hüsnü in Istanbul. They established a legal party, the Türkiye İşçi Çiftçi Sosyalist Fırkası [Socialist Workers-Peasants Party of Turkey: TİÇSF] on 22 September 1919. Meanwhile, another important socialist movement was formed in Anatolia by intellectuals, in particular prisoners of war returning from Russia. They had no communication with the Istanbul TİÇSF and formed the Anatolian TKP in June 1920. Mustafa Suphi, an Ottoman intellectual who was one of the Russian prisoners, was influenced by Bolshevik thinking and had organized imprisoned Turks while acting as a member of the Soviet Union Communist Party. He managed to unite the Anatolian and Istanbul groups, which until then had not heard of each other. Many delegates from Anatolia and Istanbul gathered at the First Congress of the TKP in Baku on 10 September 1920, when the TKP was founded.

This first congress decided to support the national revolutionary movement in Anatolia as it was against imperialism and in these terms was part of the international proletarian movement. The TKP believed that the new regime could prepare the path towards future proletarian revolution,<sup>6</sup> but in the meantime the TKP was to protect its organizational independence and represent the labouring classes. The united TKP had elected Mustafa Suphi as chair of the party, and it was decided to move the headquarters to Anatolia. Suphi and fourteen members of the central organization committee had boarded a small ship in Trabzon destined for Batum. However, Mustafa Suphi, his wife and fourteen other leading communists were killed by people from another boat that had intercepted them on the night of 28 January 1921.<sup>7</sup> The details are obscure, but the elimination plan must have been organized by the Mustafa Kemal leadership.<sup>8</sup> This putsch eliminated the brains of the fledgling TKP.

The murder of the leading communists in 1921 is exemplary of the problematic relationship between Turkish communists and the Soviet Union favourable policy towards Turkish–Soviet relations. The Soviet government disregarded the incident (or put it aside in a business-like fashion) and continued its official policy of co-operation with Ankara.<sup>9</sup> This was the first time that the interests of the local communists were regarded as being of less importance than Soviet foreign policy, which looked to the success of the Kemalist leadership to protect the Bolshevik revolution against the Western powers, especially the British.

As Istanbul was under occupation by the British at that time the Istanbul section could not communicate with Anatolia, resulting in the Istanbul wing taking over the leadership. The Istanbul wing continued to support the Independence War and played an important role in capturing arms and munitions in Istanbul and delivering them to Anatolian fronts.<sup>10</sup> The Istanbul wing tried to establish an alliance between Kemalists and socialists to establish a

national front, while at the same time attempting to influence the Kemalists ideologically so that the new regime would follow a non-capitalist line. Şefik Hüsnü had sent a congratulatory telegram regarding the opening of the National Parliament and demanded that the sultanate be abolished and a struggle against religious reactionary movements be carried out. He also expressed his hopes for a social revolution based on collective production and collective property.<sup>11</sup> Demands were made on the new government in the journal *Aydınlık* for all rights to be granted to the labouring classes and peasants.<sup>12</sup>

After the proclamation of the republic the Kemalist regime was supported in *Aydınlık*, the main journal of the party, against the feudal elements in the country as well as against Western imperialism, and moreover this was presented as the only correct position for the Turkish left to take. However, the group was targeted by the new regime.<sup>13</sup> Despite this Şefik Hüsnü continued to regard the new regime as one of democratic and anti-imperialist forces.

This line taken by the Turkish communists was severely criticized during the Fifth Congress of the Comintern which met in Moscow from 17 June to 8 July 1924.<sup>14</sup> This was more in tune with the response of the Comintern to the defeat of the German Revolution in 1923, in which Zinoviev first characterized social democracy as a wing of fascism, which he termed social fascism. One of the moves of the Comintern as a result of this was to 'Bolshevize' the communist parties outside the Soviet Union. As a result of this shift in policy Manuilski made a speech on national and colonial questions and criticized the TKP strongly for giving full support to the Turkish bourgeois government. Şefik Hüsnü responded with a detailed analysis of the situation in Turkey and argued that the stance of *Aydınlık* and the TKP was in line with the Marxist position drawn up by Lenin in the early 1920s towards the anti-imperialist and anti-colonial national bourgeois. The TKP emphasized as well that due to the petty-bourgeois class character of the Kemalist regime it would not be able to achieve revolution against feudalism. The Kemalist regime would only be able to act indecisively against reactionary powers, as was typical of the petty-bourgeois classes. That remark actually shows the continuity of leftist ideology in regarding the class character of the Kemalist regime as petty bourgeois even though it was regarded as a bourgeois revolution. The TKP derived its dogmatic conceptualization from the indecisive attitude of the petty-bourgeois class, and the same perspective was shared by the leftist movements in the 1960s.

A disagreement arose within the party after 1924. The 'rightist wing' argued that there was no social basis for adopting socialism and hence delegated the duty of development of the country to the Kemalists. These ideas

were defended by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, a contributor to *Yön* in the 1960s, and Vedat Nedim Tör. A group under the leadership of Şevket Süreyya, who thought that Kemalism could end class conflicts, had left the TKP around the years 1925–6. This group had later supported Kemalism both directly and on an ideological level and proposed that the TKP should join with the CHP.<sup>15</sup> They published the magazine *Kadro* and tried to structure the ideology of Kemalism with a more leftist position, which, however, did not include a class conflict paradigm.

Meanwhile, the first Kurdish uprising since the proclamation of the Turkish Republic gave the leaders an opportunity to silence domestic opposition. The TKP considered the 1925 Kurdish rebellion as one led by feudal chiefs and isolated from progressive forces in other countries and denounced Sheikh Said as the puppet of British imperialism,<sup>16</sup> which was actually the official Comintern line about the 1925 rebellion. Even though the TKP criticized the inhuman methods used by the Kemalist regime to crush the revolt and their chauvinist policies, the party still advocated the suppression of the rebellion and punishment of its leaders. The TKP had, like the Kemalist regime, regarded the revolt as a feudal, religious movement manipulated by British imperialism.

Even though the TKP had supported government policy against the Kurdish rebellion all the party journals *Aydınlık* (Enlightenment), *Yoldaş* (Comrade) and *Oraç Çekiç* (Sickle and Hammer) were shut down after 1925 and the party was faced with mass imprisonment,<sup>17</sup> with Şefik Hüsnü and 480 other members of the group being arrested in 1927 and imprisoned. Hüsnü went into exile in Europe after his release.

Şefik Hüsnü organized a meeting in Vienna in 1926 and a new party programme was prepared which remained in force until 1951. This programme introduced a new attitude and perspective on Kemalism, with the TKP criticizing the Kemalist regime for assuming the role of the old high bourgeoisie and minority bourgeoisie who were dependent on imperialism under Ottoman rule in order to build a new prosperous Turkish business bourgeoisie and maintain hegemony. The Kemalists were said to have reconciled with imperialism and repressed the class struggle of the working class and the peasants to protect the interests of a bourgeois dictatorship. The regime was condemned for being unable to prevent class conflict and labelled as reactionary in terms of its attitude to the class struggle. Moreover, it was obvious to the TKP that the new regime was bourgeois in character and, thus, could not have a collective economy. Even though the party was to struggle against Kemalism, its efforts in abolishing feudal super- and sub-structure institutions were still to be supported, and Kemalism was then still regarded as preparing the road for

proletarian revolution to cleanse society from the remnants of feudalism, the sultanate and imperialism.<sup>18</sup>

This was in fact the fundamental strategic requirement of the Soviet Union, to support national movements against Western imperialism whatever their domestic character. There was, for example, a dispute by the Turkish delegate and the Persian delegate over the official work of the Comintern in the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928.<sup>19</sup> Both Turkish and Persian delegates stated that nationalist leaders had gone over to the camp of the counter-revolution. However, the Comintern disregarded these complaints as the struggle against Western imperialism was a strategic requirement for the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, Atatürk equated communism with treason for the first time in a speech on 5 August 1929. The TKP responded by starting to describe the Kemalist regime as a 'bourgeois-feudal regime which had retained all its earlier anti-imperialist claims'.<sup>20</sup> A detailed account of the Kemalist oppression from the 1925 Kurdish rebellion onwards was provided in *Inkilap Yolu* (Revolutionary Path), another TKP magazine.<sup>21</sup> As well as this, the Kemalist leadership was no longer described as *revolutionary Kemalist petty bourgeoisie* but as *Kemalist bourgeoisie* and the regime as a *Kemalist dictatorship*.

However, the attitude of the party was toned down around the 1930s. Şefik Hüsnü claimed that Kemalists were divided into different wings, and while one of the groups was eager to submit to imperialism the other had a more nationalist attitude. The party decided to revise its approach and not consider Kemalists as a single political bloc, but to see the different perspectives, attitudes and related internal conflicts. Following the Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935, the TKP assumed a more conciliatory tone in order to court the progressive wing of the regime, hoping to extend its influence in key institutions of the state as well as establishing contacts within the army with this shift.<sup>22</sup> A communist cell was discovered in the naval academy in 1938 and Nazım Hikmet was sentenced to twenty-eight years' hard labour for organizing communist cells. Another important figure of the TKP, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, was also sentenced in the same so-called navy trial for 'inciting the army to rebellion against the regime'.

The TKP's overall approach was determined mainly by the attitude of the Kemalists towards imperialism, towards religious movements and towards the USSR. The relations between the USSR and Turkey had an impact on the Comintern's perspective on Kemalism, and as it was tied to both the Comintern and the USSR the TKP was under direct influence, and even pressure, from this unbalanced relationship. As relations between Turkey and the USSR developed after 1933 so the TKP voiced less reaction against Kemalism. Atilla İlhan, a famous poet, writer and commentator on politics,

even claimed that the Comintern had delegated foreign duties to Şefik Hüsnü as it had not wanted a strong and serious opposition towards Kemalism.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps for this reason, the TKP was an increasingly weak political force after 1925. During the years 1930–46, the TKP engaged generally in socio-cultural issues, publishing art journals rather than political ones.

Summarizing, the TKP criticized Kemalists for banning workers' organizations and their relations at certain times with Western imperialism, but it also observed political reality very closely and so was critical of attitudes towards the feudal powers, particularly where the party observed reconciliation. It remained an opposition party, though, with no initiative for organizing any alternative rule. Kemalism was regarded as a bourgeois regime and hence named as a bourgeois dictatorship in terms of its class rule, but it was never considered a fascist dictatorship. Like other leftist movements described in previous chapters, the TKP generally supported the Kemalist regime, as it was seen as carrying out a bourgeois revolution, a prerequisite stage towards socialist revolution.

The TKP had inherent difficulties in assessing the new regime, its major weakness being that it could not organize as a party during a strict repressive period, or it failed to organize, as many communist parties did manage to do so under harsher conditions. The changing position of the communist parties in the Communist International, which had prioritized the interests of the USSR, was the determinant factor in this unbalanced relationship. The defence of the socialist system in the Soviet Union undermined all other revolutionary activities, especially after Stalin's policy of 'socialism in one country' was accepted by the Comintern. TKP remained one of the parties most loyal to Moscow, which seriously damaged its functioning in Turkey.

The party did not claim its independence and, therefore, did not attempt to formulate its own strategy and tactics even when its observations opposed Moscow's decisions. The party actually had little contact with the people and its followers were mostly intellectuals with university-level education. As Gökay put it 'the party's mind was the mind of Western-educated Turkish middle class intellectuals.'<sup>24</sup> The TKP was loyal to Stalin after his ascension to power and remained loyal to his principles and stagist strategies, as advocated for Third World countries in 1928. The effect of the USSR protecting its own foreign interests had perhaps the most significant impact on the TKP, as this was a party in a country right on a very strategic border with the Soviet Union.

## ***2.2 World War II, the national front and legalization***

The TKP carried out propaganda activities against the war and fascism during World War II through a number of journals such as *Ses* (Voice, 1939), *Yeni Edebiyat* (New Literature, 1940), *Yurt ve Dünya* (Homeland and World,

1941) and *Adımlar* (Steps, 1943).<sup>25</sup> During World War II the Comintern had adopted a 'Popular Front against the War and Fascism' policy, which also had a direct impact on the TKP. A new political line was determined in 1943 after discussion of the new Comintern policy. The party announced what was later called 'The 1943 Platform: Progressive Democratic Struggle Front against Fascism and Profiteering'. The party aimed to struggle against the pro-German policy of the CHP and its Saraçoğlu government, arguing that the CHP had become the principal representative of the most parasitic and reactionary forces in the country and declared that the overthrow of the government was the revolutionary task of the party and all progressive forces in the country.<sup>26</sup> Şefik Hüsnü had written the programme himself and asked for a new cabinet to be formed by citizens loyal to Atatürk reforms.<sup>27</sup>

After the war, as Turkey moved to a multi-party regime, the ban on establishing parties based on class principles was lifted and several leftist parties were established in this period. The most formidable of these were the Türkiye Sosyalist Partisi [Socialist Party of Turkey],<sup>28</sup> established by retired prosecutor Esat Adil, and the legal party of the TKP, formed under the leadership of Şefik Hüsnü, Türkiye Sosyalist Emekçi Köylü Partisi [Socialist Workers-Peasants Party of Turkey]. Both parties only survived for six months, during which time, however, they founded a number of trade unions and organized thousands of workers.

When the parties were closed down the TKP again worked illegally until the major operation carried out by the DP government in 1951. Almost all the members, and the leading cadres in particular, were arrested during the witch-hunt – only about 167 people, as the TKP had hardly any mass base.<sup>29</sup> The arrests in 1951 marked the organizational end of the TKP within the borders of Turkey.

### 3 The TKP in the 1960s as an 'external bureau'

#### 3.1 *The TKP in support of NDR*

The hopes of the TKP of acquiring legal status after the 27 May 1960 coup were dashed when communists were again barred from acting openly, while other groups could organize and register freely without the need for special permission from the authorities. Consequently the TKP had to remain underground and acted so secretly (and unnoticeably) that an Italian socialist magazine wondered in 1965 whether the party existed at all.<sup>30</sup> There was some truth in this, as the TKP entered the 1960s with no organization at all and in this decade acted only as a foreign bureau, with almost all of its activity outside Turkey. It was certainly directed from abroad – most of the members of the central committee (consisting of thirteen members), including Zeki Baştınar,

the general secretary, who used the code name Yakup Demir, lived in Moscow. Some members were employed in Leipzig to broadcast in Turkish from Bizim Radyo (Our Radio). The radio was actually one of the main mediums available to propagate the views of the TKP to the Turkish people. Some party members were accommodated in Sofia and Baku to maintain relations with the central committee and the underground rank and file in Turkey.<sup>31</sup> There were efforts to organize Turkish workers in Germany and other European countries. The Communist Party did retain a certain amount of propaganda value, especially in intellectual circles, despite these problems.<sup>32</sup>

In April 1962, the central organization of the Communist Party and other party members gathered in Leipzig to start organized party work in the foreign bureau.<sup>33</sup> Just like all the other leftist circles in Turkey, the party discussed mainly whether the current revolutionary stage was a socialist revolution or a democratic revolution.<sup>34</sup> In the end the party decided on democratic revolution and advocated a non-capitalist development road and the formation of a single national front as its main strategy during this period.<sup>35</sup> The current revolutionary movement was declared a democratic national liberation revolution under the vanguard of the working class. The main forces were the united working class and peasantry, together with all progressive powers against the power base of imperialism, big landowners and comprador bourgeoisie.<sup>36</sup> The main struggle was stated as being for national independence and the establishment of a democratic regime. The imperialist enemy was identified as the Americans and the high bourgeoisie of Turkey who were supporting the Americans.

In other words, the TKP also advocated NDR but under the vanguard of the working class, in line with the Leninist position on NDR. The party argued that capitalism had developed rapidly in Turkey. However, there were some remnants of feudalism, especially in rural areas, and the country was in need of land reform. The party held that there was a part of the bourgeoisie which was not tied to imperialist powers and actually had conflicting interests with the imperialists. However, the determining factor in the revolutionary stage was Turkey's semi-colonial status, that is, its lack of economic and social independence. In such a country, *to build socialism was an anachronism*, no different from building castles in Spain. In this sense, the party continued its adherence to the Stalinist 'stages of revolution' position in determining NDR as the initial stage for a socialist revolution and in the meantime was loyal to the current Soviet view proposed for Third World countries.

The TKP called on all anti-imperialist forces, including the national bourgeoisie, to join the struggle. Among the political issues discussed concerning the political struggle in Turkey were the role of the national bourgeoisie, the

current parties of CHP and DP, the conditions of the working class and the peasantry, the political role of the army and national minorities, mainly the Kurdish problem, and the attitude of the party towards these subjects. Though dogmatic in its understanding of current conflicts, the party showed in these discussions an accumulation of Marxist knowledge and tradition compared to most other leftist movements. Of course, the TKP had an advantage as it could tackle issues more freely and openly (probably as long as the party retained a communist and pro-Soviet position), since it was not operating within Turkey, whereas the law and socio-cultural constraints inhibited the writings of those actually in the country. The TKP could, for example, discuss the Kurdish problem and advocate the autonomy of the Kurds and their national sovereignty rights to establish their own state in accordance with Leninist principles of national sovereignty.<sup>37</sup>

### *3.2 Can the army carry out the revolution?*

One of the most important discussions of the first congress in the 1960s was on the political role of the army, which the TKP stressed was especially noticeable after the military coup in 1960.<sup>38</sup> The party considered that there was political tension between the army and civilian rulers for good or bad reasons and the civilian authority had rapidly weakened. The army could swing either to the right or the left, and there was a possibility of military dictatorship.<sup>39</sup> The party also observed that Bizim Radyo had sympathizers in the army and the TKP must work to have a political impact on the army, but pointed out that military rule could not undertake radical reforms. The situation was perceived in almost exactly the same manner as the early TKP attitude to Kemalism. Relations with the Soviet Union were again very important, and the intervention was criticized, as the military junta had declared its loyalty to NATO and CENTO. As a consequence of the war policy the junta eliminated patriotic officers and scholars in order to win favour with the reactionary powers instead of carrying out its promise to bring freedom, democracy and social justice to the people. Offers of friendship and co-operation by the Soviet Union were continually rejected and instead the new government bowed more deeply to the US, NATO and CENTO. It increased the war budget, taxes and cost of living, which all further worsened conditions for the population.<sup>40</sup> The TKP then emphasized that the army had an economic interest in intervening in politics, which in turn increased its political power, but stated that the interests of the army conflicted with those of the people. Despite this, when a party member asked whether a military intervention could support the struggle, Zeki Baştımar, party first secretary, responded that it depended on the situation. He remarked in his final report:

It should not be forgotten that there are patriotic officers in the army who understood the reasons behind the situation of the country today. It is not beyond the bounds of probability that they could depend on the support of the national bourgeois and petty-bourgeois masses who feel the imperialist yoke and hence make a relatively progressive leap forward. We can support the movement to a certain degree. Without doubt we cannot attain our real goal through a military coup. However, it can bring us closer to our destination.<sup>41</sup>

The TKP supported military intervention in 1960 and the abortive coup attempts made by Colonel Aydemir, as they were made against the most reactionary power. In this the TKP attitude was parallel with the Soviet position, which advocated seeking alliances for an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal movement. The most reactionary power was currently represented by the DP, which had been established by the most reactionary forces, the big bourgeoisie and feudal landowners, who had reconciled with imperialism and were trying to build a fascist dictatorship. The intervention had deposed and eliminated these from power,<sup>42</sup> and for this reason the TKP, like most of the leftist movements, supported military action as it was set against this most reactionary power. The 27 May intervention was the result of a deep political and socio-economic crisis of capitalism, but it could not solve the crisis itself. However, the coup prepared the ground for discussion in the country on whether to follow a capitalist or a socialist path.<sup>43</sup>

The TKP broadcast a criticism of its attitude towards 27 May through Bizim Radyo.<sup>44</sup> The TKP criticized the reaction of Bizim Radyo to the military intervention in 1960 immediately after the event and remarked that even though the intervention was the result of an internal conflict within the dominant bourgeois classes, the TKP must support 'the wing' with a more progressive and anti-imperialist attitude in the current concrete situation.<sup>45</sup> The radio had condemned the new constitution as a 'fascist and chained constitution' and in this way sided with the DP. The TKP argued that this was wrong, the radio having presented matters schematically, abstractly and dogmatically. The party emphasized that if the radio had analysed matters concretely then it would have stood by it with other progressive powers.<sup>46</sup>

This was, however, just as dogmatic and schematic as the leftist movements' understanding of the military intervention discussed in previous chapters. Again the TKP argued (as in the early 1962 conference) that Turkey was not ready to pass directly to a socialist regime as it had not yet achieved its bourgeois revolution, and Turkey had attained neither economic and political independence nor industrial development. Though there was a significant

mass of increasingly active and conscious working class in Turkey it was still an underdeveloped country, with a highly uneducated and poor peasantry living in conditions of semi-serfdom and forming about 75 per cent of the population.

Under these conditions the TKP considered that it was a major delusion to believe that Turkey could transform directly into a socialist regime. The strategy of the TİP was criticized in this respect, and although the party was not directly attacked it was implicitly accused of left deviation and – in the term used by Lenin – of infantile sickness. The TKP argued that the primary problem in Turkey was the need for land reform, to be followed by agrarian reform so as to end feudalism and to allocate land to the peasants. Transition to a capitalist (or semi-capitalist through a non-capitalist development road) system and finally into socialism could then be attained.

The TKP emphasized that if feudalism were eliminated the transition into socialism would not take long, as there was already a conscious working class and people from various classes with a socialist ideology. Furthermore, the practice of *étatisme*, state ownership and control of the economy would make a smoother passage into socialism as long as this was run and controlled by the labouring classes and for public interest instead of the current practice of state capitalism intended to develop capitalism. In any case, a country with a strong state sector, a developed working class and a somewhat developed industry could rapidly transform into a socialist stage.<sup>47</sup>

The TKP advocated a non-capitalist development road, in the same manner as Doğan Avcioğlu, since the party believed capitalism could not sustain development in Turkey, as stated in the new perspective of the Soviet Union for underdeveloped Third World countries. According to the TKP, the present capitalist system made Turkey increasingly the guardian of US interests and policies, especially its imperialist policies in the Middle East, and so, not surprisingly, the party systematically criticized Turkey's relations with the US and NATO, pointing out that Turkey was spending more than half of its budget on military expenditure to meet the interests of the US and for that reason was increasingly indebted to Western powers.<sup>48</sup> Turkey was even required to import agricultural goods from the US, not to mention military equipment and industrial goods. This relationship made Turkey increasingly underdeveloped and poor – a new colony of the colonizers.<sup>49</sup> The TKP advocated instead severing relations with the US and following Atatürk's 'peace at home, peace abroad' policy. The party suggested that Turkey should build friendly relations with the Eastern bloc countries.

The TKP believed that severing links with the imperialists and establishing independence and a national democratic state by eliminating the vestiges of

feudalism were in the interests of almost the whole of the nation. A united national front to struggle for the common cause was an appropriate political strategy. Unlike the TİP, the TKP believed that the national bourgeoisie existed and could join the front with other classes and groups, such as the petty bourgeoisie, students, teachers, intellectuals, patriotic officers, poor and landless peasants, labouring classes and small shop owners. In other words, the TKP argued that all classes except the big feudal landowners and big (comprador) bourgeois would establish this united national front.

It did not consider the Turkish army as a single class or stratum (or institution), but acknowledged the existence of patriotic officers and the progressive, anti-imperialist character of the army and hence expected it also to join the national front.

The TKP advocated, then, the formation of a national democratic front in the same way as the other NDR movements and a non-capitalist road to socialism which was a Cold War Soviet theory. The party, however, reiterated that the working class should have the leadership during the struggle for national democracy and regarded this as the main duty of Turkish communists. This remained only on paper, of course, as the TKP had hardly any relations with the working class of Turkey in the 1960s. However, the party also warned that the leadership of the working class did not mean its class dictatorship, instead it was ideological leadership. The power in NDR would be shared by all national classes who had stood against imperialism, feudalism and reactionary powers for a non-capitalist road.<sup>50</sup>

Significantly, the party questioned whether it was possible to establish a democratic state and follow a non-capitalist road without the leadership of the working class, actually implying the role the army could play in such a transition. The party agreed that given the recent political developments, and with the existence of the patriotic intellectuals in and outside the army, it was possible to establish a national democracy without the *leadership of the working class and follow a non-capitalist development road*.<sup>51</sup> This was exactly what the *Yön-Devrim* circle also advocated, and as argued in the chapters on those movements this was actually the communist line advocated for Third World countries, even though *Yön-Devrim* was not a communist movement related to Moscow or the international communist movement. The TKP stressed that if the working class led the movement the transition to socialism would be easier.

In the same manner as the TİP the party also warned that the working class must be very cautious about the movements which it did not lead, drawing attention to the end of the first experience under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.<sup>52</sup> Like the TKP in the early republican period, the party acknowledged

1919–23 as an anti-imperialist war and the new republic founded by the leadership of Mustafa Kemal as a bourgeois revolution. As it was a progressive state compared to feudal rule it was regarded positively. However, the CHP was criticized strongly for not carrying out a bourgeois revolution and maintaining independence, and the TKP argued that since the CHP represented the national bourgeoisie it could not carry out substructural reforms to eliminate feudalism. This was due to the weakness of the national bourgeoisie which could not exert its own class power. As a result, it was unable to attain development and sustain political and economic independence. The different sections within the CHP, more specifically the right wing of the CHP representing big landowners and the high bourgeoisie, had made concessions to imperialist powers abroad and feudal powers internally. In these terms the TKP also perceived a national bourgeoisie in the CHP (the leading party of the bourgeois revolution) which stood in opposition to Western imperialism. This was, however, a dogmatic conceptualization resulting from the decisions taken by the Comintern in the early 1920s and hardly appropriate for the realities of Turkey.

The TKP was, however, more sceptical about the changes after the 1960 coup, and emphasized that anti-communism was still a state policy in Turkey and hence the changes after 1960 must be regarded cautiously. It was not entirely sure if changes in 1960 and openness towards socialism were simply a political tactic of the day or a radical change in the regime and in mentality.<sup>53</sup> The 27 May intervention was regarded as the declaration of the people through the voice of the working class, media, youth and patriotic soldiers that they were ready to fight for independence and the economic, social and political rights that they had won with the Independence War but which had been eliminated by the reactionary regime led by Menderes. It had opened the gates of hope to the people, but the AP was finding it easy to close the door.<sup>54</sup>

According to the TKP the Turkish people wanted anti-democratic laws to be abolished, radical land reform, the elimination of feudalism and retrogressive powers [gericilik], liberation from imperialism and a return to the peace policy of Atatürk. The party noted that the AP had started to threaten patriotic soldiers for backing progressive, democratic powers. The aim of the reactionaries was to install an open dictatorship of the high bourgeoisie and big landowners through the alliance of pro-Menderes groups, radical Islamists [şeriatçılar], racists and fascists. They were planning to destroy progressive associations, working-class organizations and outlaw the constitution, and especially to discharge Atatürkist, patriotic pro-27 May officers and those who stood against NATO and CENTO. The TKP claimed that the AP, most reactionary forces and the high bourgeoisie were linked to monopolist

imperialism, and feudal landlords were trying to separate the army from the nation. However, the TKP trusted Kemalist officers and commanders who stood against these powers,<sup>55</sup> and claimed that such open threats provoked anger among the lower ranks of the officer cadre and that the head of the general staff had to intervene to prevent rebellion from below. Parties had secretly read his letter and held a secret meeting. Apparently, the TKP was keeping a very close eye on politics within the army.

Even though the TKP favoured the actions and political attitude of the progressive anti-imperialist section of the army it did not expect revolutionary movements from it, actually pointing out the dangers of such an attitude. However, considering the history of the party and its general attitude towards the political role of the army, it is doubtful if the party would have taken the same position if it had any real political strength (and was thus able to seek alliances) in the country.

Leaving this aside and just taking it at its face value, the TKP warned the progressive powers, however, not to start dreaming, since depending on the action of the military would leave the democratic forces unorganized and passive, and hence, in the final analysis, this would only assist the reactionary forces. TKP emphasized in this respect that ultra-conservatives [*aşırı gericiler*] were strong in the country as they had united and were also backed by the imperialist power and devoting a great deal of energy to preventing the unity of progressive forces. Under these conditions the TKP concluded that even if the army acted on the side of the progressive powers, if all the progressive, democratic forces were still not united it would be difficult and even impossible to stop the reactionaries from coming to power and preventing their dominance.<sup>56</sup>

The TKP, then, divided Turkish politics into two basic camps, reactionaries and progressives, and regarded the conflict between these two groups as the primary contradiction. Reactionaries were those who did not accept the tenets of a bourgeois revolution and instead wanted to retain feudal relations and dependence on Western powers. According to the TKP they were strong as they had united and were backed by the imperialist powers. The DP represented these powers in parliament. Though there were those with similar ideology in the CHP, the CHP still represented the national bourgeois and in this respect was a progressive party.<sup>57</sup> The TKP advocated that all progressive forces should unite, since without establishing a united national front it was impossible to struggle against feudalism and imperialism, nor was it possible to guarantee democratic changes and improve living conditions. The TKP praised the attitude of the TİP and the tactics of the chair of the TİP, Aybar, and remarked that the party must also support all progressive forces and especially benefit from the tension within the two bourgeois groups (the

Bayar–Menderes groups and the İnönü groups) or in other words the internal conflicts among the exploiting classes.<sup>58</sup>

Apparently, the TKP actually defended the capitalist system with this formulation as long as it was ruled by the national and progressive bourgeoisie. In this respect, the party considered that the movements which continued the 27 May intervention could cement a single front and become the organizer instead of the working class. The TKP believed that the army, with other democratic forces, could become the striking force [vurucu güç] if it carried out the maximum programme of the single front. This maximum programme consisted of land reform and abolishing feudal relations.<sup>59</sup> Instead of a feudal mode of production, market production and a capitalist mentality to increase productivity and hence end dependent relations (in agricultural terms) on the US were defended. Again, in this respect, the TKP actually advocated a capitalist programme and capitalist development.<sup>60</sup> The TKP believed that the army could undertake such changes or at least act as the striking force, but frequently emphasized the importance of the united force of all social forces to determine the outcome. The party stressed in these terms that the hopes delegated to the military would otherwise be nothing but a fantasy.<sup>61</sup> Here the TKP was more realistic in assessing the socio-political potential of the armed forces.

#### 4 The TKP in the mid-1960s: the revolutionary leadership problem

As argued in previous chapters, the ideological battle in the mid-1960s had centred on the current revolutionary stage and in relation to that the leader of the revolution in Turkey. The opponents were the TİP on the one side versus NDR movements, supported by Kivilımlı and Avcioğlu, on the other. The NDR supporters advocated NDR as the proper phase, especially so as not to alienate officers who were ready for an anti-imperialist struggle but not yet for a socialist one. Though the TKP also advocated the NDR strategy it supported the TİP's discourse and accused those following the NDR line taken by Belli of chauvinism, opportunism and Maoism.<sup>62</sup> The TKP argued that NDR currents were diverting the course of the socialist movement and made angry personal assaults on Belli and Kivilımlı, accusing them of being agents, always the accusation made by leftists against their opponents. The party stated that Kivilımlı and Belli had been expelled from the TKP for their deviation from the party line and that they were responsible for many of the police arrests.<sup>63</sup> The party accused Belli especially (without actually citing his name but Belli was obviously intended<sup>64</sup>) of a series of provocations, especially during the 1951 mass arrests.

The TKP reiterated, however, that the current revolutionary struggle was for national liberation to be fought on a single front with all nationalist forces,

including the national bourgeoisie. Interestingly, the party believed that there were still some national bourgeoisie who were against the stronger comprador bourgeoisie in Turkey. Even though the current struggle was for national liberation, where all nationalist forces including the bourgeoisie were welcome, the TKP held that independence could not be sustained without a simultaneous struggle for social revolution. In the same manner as the TİP, then, the party held that the two movements were inseparable and indivisible, and that only through a social revolution could independence be protected in the future. As did the TİP, the TKP believed that the compromise with the imperialists after winning the Independence War was the result of not complementing the victory with a broad social revolution.<sup>65</sup> The TKP pointed to the 'October revolution,' where the struggle for national liberation and social revolution had taken place simultaneously and hence results were lasting as a counter-example to the failed Turkish revolution. As in the October revolution the TKP argued that such a movement could only be led by the peasant-working-class alliance. The vanguard of any other party would not sustain independence in the long run as the liberation would only bring a bourgeois revolution, the vanguard of the bourgeoisie would not carry the socialist revolution and the bourgeoisie would eventually compromise with the imperialist powers.<sup>66</sup>

In this sense the TKP accused the NDR line of only advocating a bourgeois revolution under the pretext of a social revolution. Importantly, the NDR movement (under the leadership of Belli) was especially criticized, both openly and covertly, for defending the vanguard of the Turkish armed forces. The TKP pointed to the book written by Belli, *Milli Demokratik Devrim*, in which he showed the Turkish army as a force preparing the October revolution and devoted special pages to the role of the army in order to praise the Turkish army, while he downgraded the role the proletariat would play in a revolutionary struggle.<sup>67</sup> The TKP defined NDR leadership in Turkey as bourgeois nationalism and accused the NDR line in this respect of chauvinism,<sup>68</sup> arguing that Belli was a chauvinist petty bourgeois by drawing examples from his speeches. The TKP accused the NDR movements of deviating from Marxism-Leninism and especially of deceiving the uneducated youth by disseminating these perverted ideologies as true Marxism. According to the TKP, NDR ideology had its roots in perverted Maoist ideology, but the Belli group concealed this fact to deceive the public. In this sense the NDR movement did not represent socialist ideology but bourgeois ideology, as the vanguard of the working class was not defended.

In other words, the TKP strongly criticized and actually downgraded the NDR line in Turkey, especially as the party argued that NDR was trying to pervert the true revolutionary struggle. One of the main points of opposition to the NDR line was due to its approach to the political role of the army and

the notion of nationalism used by the movement. The party emphasized that the NDR line undermined the working-class movement in Turkey, which should lead to the struggle for NDR, and instead allocated the leadership of the movement to the military-civilian intelligentsia.<sup>69</sup> According to the party, the NDR line was trying to influence even the extreme Atatürkist nationalists in the army, but the TKP argued that *Atatürkism was actually as an ideology not as strongly nationalist and chauvinist* as the NDR line stated.<sup>70</sup>

The TKP also criticized the notion of nationalism used by the NDR line. It was argued that the *national liberation movement* against imperialism was a progressive and national movement but it was not a *movement of nationalism*.<sup>71</sup> The TKP strongly criticized *Aydınlık's* use of notions such as proletarian nationalism and argued instead that there could only be proletarian internationalism, as nationalism was a bourgeois ideology.<sup>72</sup> The TKP accused the NDR movements of following China's nationalist chauvinist turn. The Soviet point of view was obvious in the remarks attacking China, as Maoism was accused of being a chauvinist ideology, an ideology of the petty bourgeois serving the interests of imperialism. The TKP condemned the nationalism discourse of the NDR line (what they termed the nationalists of *Milli Demokratik Devrim*), as they had even called the Turanists to ally with them in order to realize their pan-Turkish aim of uniting the Anatolian Turks with the Turks under the Soviet Union.<sup>73</sup> The TKP argued that while the NDR movement propagandized an extreme nationalism, at the same time they demanded only cultural autonomy for the Kurdish people in Turkey.

Even though the TKP had accused the TİP of left deviation before the rise of the NDR line under the leadership of Belli the TKP supported the TİP and argued that this was the duty of every patriot and everybody who defined himself as socialist and progressive.<sup>74</sup> The party emphasized that the TİP had to operate under certain limitations, as it was not legal to establish a communist party, but the TİP defended the rights of the labouring classes and supported broadening of democratic rights and social reforms and stood against imperialism, NATO, US military bases and the US presence in Turkey, foreign monopolies and their local collaborators.<sup>75</sup> TKP argued that the road of the TİP was the correct road and fitted the international communist and working-class movement.<sup>76</sup> Even though one could criticize the party for some of its policies, still in Turkey the approach of the TİP determined who was loyal to the socialist ideal. The party accused the NDR leadership, which called itself the old guard, of trying to manipulate the TİP because they regarded themselves as the heir to the earlier TKP.<sup>77</sup>

Following the same line as the TİP, the TKP argued that even though Turkey was a backward capitalist country it was nevertheless one of the most

developed capitalist countries in the Near East and the Middle East.<sup>78</sup> The number of workers had exceeded a million, and they had become influential in social and political life. The TKP claimed that only the working class could lead the national liberation revolution, as it was the only class which would not reconcile with imperialism and the reactionary forces. In the same way as the TİP, the TKP also pointed to the result of the first national liberation struggle, which the working class did not lead.

Importantly, the TKP ridiculed the NDR lines for carrying out NDR with the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy, which according to the TKP was the army. The TKP defined petty-bourgeois bureaucracy as the oppressive force of the ruling high bourgeois and the grand ağas.<sup>79</sup> Referring to the army, the TKP argued that the nationalist bourgeois could play a positive role in the national liberation struggle. However, the anti-imperialist struggle in Turkey had already been taken the direction of anti-capitalism and the non-capitalist road, implying in this sense that the national bourgeois (the army) was intimidated by a completely democratic order and for that reason could unite with the reactionary powers in the future. As a result of this the TKP claimed that even though the petty bourgeoisie (the army) had a big potential for revolution it could not by itself become the leading force of the NDR.<sup>80</sup>

TKP advocated again the leadership of the working class and the peasant–working-class alliance in the NDR front. The party drew attention to the existence of patriotic officers [yurtsever subaylar] in the army, the result chiefly of its Atatürkist ideology, which the TKP also saw as the tradition of the army. However, it believed that the imperialists, especially the US, were trying to convert the tradition of the army and turn it into the enemy of people, as they had done in Greece and other countries.

The TKP acknowledged in this sense Turkey's NATO membership as the vital threat to its national sovereignty and mainly to its national army. TKP stressed that NATO armies could not be independent and could therefore not be national any longer. It was, in this sense, one of the first goals of the party in the revolutionary movement to cut ties with NATO and to build a national army. The TKP referred to a CIA report revealed by Haydar Tunçkanat (mentioned in earlier chapters) that the Americans were putting all their efforts into changing the national army to make it the tool of their interests in the Middle East region. According to the TKP, the foundation of OYAK was one of the most significant steps in actualizing this goal. The party, however, drew attention to the reaction of some officers (patriotic officers) and expected a conflict within the army.

Like other leftist movements of the time, the TKP also pointed to the Turkish army as being recruited from the popular classes, and therefore the

party believed that the army could not be separated from the people. However, the TKP also drew attention to the closing of the middle military schools as an attempt to bourgeoisify the army corps. This was another important attempt of the imperialist powers to remove the national people's army from power and to install an imperialist tool.

Apparently the TKP was paying attention to developments and changes in the institution of the armed forces and reflecting on the political position of the army. Like some TİP members (such as Küçükömer) and unlike most leftist groups, the TKP took into account institutional and organizational developments concerning the army and therefore reflected upon relations with NATO and the foundation of OYAK as well as changes in the military schooling system.

### 5 Workers' revolt and the ambivalent position of the army

The position of the TKP towards the political role of the army was more ambivalent in the period 1968–71. On the one hand the party drew attention to the swing in the army towards an anti-communist position, emphasizing in this respect that the government was a collaborator with imperialism. As the army was a state organ bound to the government it would inevitably represent the interests of this collaborator government. The party also pointed out that even though there were many patriotic officers in the army corps, they were also obliged to follow the orders of their superiors, who were directly under the command of the imperialist government, as the army was a hierarchical organization. The TKP considered the political role of the army, then, mainly from its institutional and functional role in the state.

Despite that, strikingly the TKP called the army *impartial* in a class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class, and *partial* in protecting national sovereignty; in this sense it would side with the anti-imperialism front.<sup>81</sup> The party still acknowledged the relative autonomy of the army with respect to the government, but also frequently pointed out the consequences of NATO membership, which impeded the independence of the Turkish army, and also frequently emphasized the existence of patriotic officers and was encouraged by their reaction to current political affairs and especially the current government.

After the 15–16 June workers' revolt the TKP reported that the workers' march was only on the surface a reaction against the new restrictions on trade unions. It believed that the march represented the will to end exploitation and dependence on foreign interests and to establish a non-capitalist system, and was seen as an important step in the class struggle of the working class. According to the TKP, it was also obvious that the working class had

the ability to mobilize the intermediary layers, which included the patriotic officers and commanders, as well as the intelligentsia and the indigenous bourgeoisie, in their struggle against imperialism and the high bourgeoisie or, in general terms, capitalism.<sup>82</sup>

Ahmet Saydan, the regular TKP commentator on Turkish politics in the party journal *Barış ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, wrote that the high commanders were reacting to the government's use of the armed forces as a social police force. According to Saydan, the commanders were actually reacting to the plan of the imperialists and the comprador bourgeoisie to use the armed forces as a striking force against the working class and revolutionary anti-imperialist currents. However, he also reiterated that armies were hierarchical institutions under the control of government. As the current government led by Demirel represented the comprador bourgeoisie, the army was used to suppress the working class in favour of the comprador bourgeois class. During the protests soldiers had opened fire on the workers, killing four and wounding hundreds. This showed that the army was used as a social police force to protect the class interests of the comprador bourgeoisie, regardless of what was stated in the constitution.

Significantly, Saydan claimed that the use of the army to suppress the working class showed very clearly that the fake socialists – those defending NDR – were all wrong in advocating the army as one of the basic revolutionary forces. He wrote that the political goal of NDR defenders was only to carry out a bourgeois revolution and not a socialist one. Therefore, they neither believed in the potential of the working class nor tried to enrich this potential, but instead their tactics and strategies were based on the vanguard of the military-civilian intelligentsia.<sup>83</sup> Importantly, Saydan claimed that NDR movements were assisting the bourgeoisie to carry out a bourgeois revolution.

Saydan also argued that the fact that the military was an instrument tied to the government did not mean that the armed forces were always anti-revolutionary. He pointed out, like most of the leftists active in the period, that military officers generally came from urban and rural working-class families, and therefore had a working-class mentality, believing in the same social and political worldview. The Turkish armed forces did not form a closed caste. Even though the bourgeoisie was trying to enforce its class view on the military this had not yet been achieved, as was shown powerfully by the 27 May coup, and so the TKP believed that 27 May was an anti-capitalist action. However, the intervention also showed that the military was not a class of its own – it had to depend either on the bourgeoisie or on the proletariat – and that was why the officers could not hold power and carry out reforms on 27 May, but had to hand power back to the comprador monopolist bourgeoisie. Therefore, the

army had to join the anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist and socialist movements for democracy, social justice and national liberation in order to effect decisive political changes.

The TKP also warned the revolutionary powers that the imperialists were planning to install an open dictatorship, or more precisely a fascist military dictatorship, in Turkey. Therefore, the government (which was tied to imperialists) discarded or displaced some of the military commanders. The party reiterated that all patriotic, democratic, revolutionary powers must unite to prevent the imperialists carrying out such plans. In the following months, the TKP continually warned of this danger and called on all revolutionary, democratic, patriotic forces to struggle against anti-imperialism and to establish an anti-oligarchic front.

Furthermore, during the court martial trials of the workers and trade unionists who had joined the revolt on 15–16 June, the party commented robustly on the changing political role of the army, saying:

The officers and the generals who charged revolutionary workers and trade unionists on behalf of the government during martial law in Istanbul and who condemn the revolutionaries to imprisonment again on behalf of the government and the imperialists were actually trying themselves, that is 'the armed forces'. They tried and condemned the independence principle, army ethics, Atatürkism, 27 May, the constitution on behalf of the enemies of the people and the country. It seems that the plan of the AP government to depend on some commanders who have strayed from their real objects – to defend the independence and sovereignty of the country and to protect the motherland from the enemy – is increasing. The commanders are instead used against the working class, national liberation movement and social liberation. The army recruited from the modest families must stay impartial in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. In the struggle against imperialism, in the national liberation war, however, the army must join the front of the people.<sup>84</sup>

The TKP, then, observed the change in the army itself and linked this to the effort of the imperialists and the collaborator government. Following the same line as the TİP, the party believed that the army could stay *impartial* in the class struggle of the proletariat, as the military officers originated from modest families. However, the army was expected to join in the current struggle for national liberation on the basis of two main factors: first because it was Atatürkist – ideologically inclined to support independence – and second because the army was

professionally endowed with the duty to protect the independence and national sovereignty of the country. However, such statements seem likely to be intended as propaganda to influence the military officers.

The TKP continually rejected the vanguard of any classes other than the working class–peasantry alliance. However, the TKP also regarded the Kemal leadership as having fought against imperialism and did not perceive the link between the capitalist development of Turkey and the role of the army in maintaining capitalism. More importantly, how the army would join an anti-imperialist struggle under the leadership of the working class–peasantry alliance was a major question. Even though the position of the TKP was very similar to the position of the NDR line, NDR movements were condemned as petty bourgeois and perverted Maoist movements mostly because of the leadership cadre. The TKP advocated uniting all the powers and establishing an organized army instead of separate guerrillas for the youth movements.

### **6 The military intervention and reaction of the TKP**

The TKP reacted strongly to the memorandum of the army on 12 March. It was obvious from the statements made by party members that they closely observed the internal functioning of the armed forces. There were major discussions and a dispute at the meeting of the generals prior to 12 March. The TKP wrote that understandably there were several different wings in the military, and argued that Tağmaç and his supporters led other officers to believe that the memorandum was aimed against those reactionary powers on the right that endangered the Atatürkist reforms, but actually the intervention was directed against the left. The working class, the revolutionary youth and leftist democratic powers were to be suppressed by the military intervention.

The TKP, then, believed that the memorandum text referring to reforms and Atatürkism was a disguise to silence the democratic, patriotic officers, and stated immediately after 12 March that the memorandum was paving the way for fascist commandos, religious reactionaries and the CIA and it was most of all the head of the general staff, General Tağmaç, who was responsible for such an outcome.<sup>85</sup> General Tağmaç silenced other generals and officers who resisted such a plan, and instead argued that the danger was from the reactionaries and not the leftist forces. These officers had resisted Tağmaç's plan and his supporters even after the memorandum, and even though Tağmaç tried to manipulate these officers with lies about a communist attack and so forth, these patriotic officers resisted and actually insisted that the danger was from the right, not from the left. The TKP drew attention in this sense to the power struggle within the army itself which, however, eventually led to the defeat of the patriotic officers.

In the following months the general secretary of the TKP declared that the memorandum was published to better protect the class interests of the monopoly comprador, high bourgeoisie and their imperialist patrons under an open fascist-military regime.<sup>86</sup> The civilian government under Demirel had failed to cope with the increasing unrest of the working class, socialist and anti-imperialist movements. Therefore, the imperialists wanted to restore order and safeguard their interests through an open fascist-military dictatorship, using the generals, who were tied to the imperialist powers through NATO. Civilians such as Nihat Erim had represented the interests of the landed gentry and high bourgeoisie from 1940 onwards. Erim had reacted to the left-of-centre turn of the CHP and Ecevit's leadership. The TKP supported Ecevit's reaction to the military intervention in contrast to İnönü's tacit support and Erim's appointment as head of state. The TKP pointed to the fact that the fascist-military dictatorship would use the fascist commandos and the religious reactionaries, as the imperialist countries planned to combat the working class and the rising socialist movement, and was again sure that the intervention targeted the left, not the right, despite the rhetoric in the memorandum.

The TKP argued that a military clique within the armed forces had seized power over the patriotic forces in order to install an open fascist dictatorship, drawing a comparison between the situation in Turkey and that of pre-Nazi rule in Germany in the early 1930s. The civilian government representing the interests of the comprador high bourgeoisie could not establish its hegemony over the working class and, therefore, had to resort to open fascist dictatorship. The TKP reacted against the unconstitutional police arrests, military courts, extended periods of surveillance and torture, including the arrest and finally murder of guerrilla leaders, even though the TKP did not support the youth guerrilla movements.

The TKP also argued that the military corps resented the arrest and persecution of the leftist military officers, who were also mistreated and even subjected to torture, and that, furthermore, there were cases of fraud during the trials. The fascist-military clique was trying to eliminate the patriotic elements from the army, but as the reaction was strong they had had to retreat from full application of their plans.

In short, the TKP saw the 12 March intervention as a resort to fascism by the comprador bourgeois and the imperialist US to suppress the working-class movement. The US was able to use the Turkish armed forces for this plan as it was a NATO army. Military intervention, then, was seen not only as the result of an internal class conflict but part of an international capitalist-imperialist scheme. The TKP explained opposition in the military corps to this plan by pointing to the existence of patriotic officers in contrast to those who had

become tools of the imperialists and their collaborators. In this sense, internal socio-economic developments in Turkey, capital accumulation and sharpened class conflicts as a result were not very meaningful in the perspective of the TKP. It was the plan of the imperialists more than the local power-holding class to establish a fascist dictatorship through the use of the military.

### 7 Conclusion

In the period from the 1960s to 1971 the TKP foreign bureau advocated NDR as a stage in the transformation from a non-capitalist path to socialism under the vanguard of a working class–peasantry alliance, as in the October revolution. The party members were more opportunistic in their attitude towards the military coups in the early 1960s, as they believed that the coup could be functional by bringing Turkey closer to the goal of NDR. However, the party also emphasized that the possibility of the long-term success of such a military-based transition was very low and it depended on the strength of the real revolutionary classes, that is, the working class and the peasantry.

In the mid-1960s, when the strategic battle among the left movements in Turkey increased, the TKP adopted a more orthodox Leninist position (even though it was Stalinist in essence, believing in a stagist revolution) and assigned the vanguard role to the working class–peasantry alliance. The party was close to the ideology advocated by the TİP and hostile to its rival NDR. The party was realistic (compared to most leftist circles in the period) in suspecting the revolutionary potential of the army on account of its direct link with the US, which was regarded as the imperialist power, through NATO and to capitalism through OYAK. However, the party also internalized Kemalist ideology and the early Comintern position, which was the perspective of the early TKP as well and regarded the army as Kemalist, therefore anti-imperialist and revolutionary in essence. At least that was how the party propagandized its views.

The TKP followed political developments towards the end of the 1960s very closely and generally showed foresight with regard to political developments. However, the way the TKP used some political concepts, such as comprador bourgeoisie, oligarchy and fascism, and the way almost all political developments were linked immediately to the US (the imperialists) rather too easily, also showed that the party was not strong in its political thinking. This was especially visible in its ideas on the army, as the TKP could not produce well-founded arguments on the political role of the army in Turkey; neither did it produce an alternative revolutionary theory and practice for Turkey.

The TKP did not have any direct influence on the socialist movement in Turkey in the 1960s, so even if it had developed a breakthrough ideology as it reflected on its position with regard to the army this would not have had any

impact on the Turkish revolutionary movement of the period. However, the position of the TKP was of great importance, as it also gave a clue to Moscow's position. Therefore, the close similarities of the TİP and the TKP lines in a way reveal that despite the fact that Soviet theoreticians advocated military coups for Third World countries in order for them to transform to a non-capitalist road, the CPSU would not be too eager to support a military-assigned revolutionary transition in Turkey. This might support Ömer Laçiner's argument about the agreement between the US and the USSR on the position of Turkey and, therefore, the decision of the USSR not to break *détente*.<sup>87</sup> This would mean that a possible leftist coup would not have been called for or even supported by the USSR, and would have had almost no chance of success.

# THE KIVILCIMLI MOVEMENT IN SEARCH OF THE TURKISH PAST FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WARRIOR CULTURE

## 1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the political views of the Kivilcimlı circle, based mainly on the political works of its leader, Dr Hikmet Kivilcimlı, who was a prominent figure trying to formulate an authentic socialist form of thought in Turkey. Kivilcimlı was one of the earliest TKP members but he was cast out by the party leadership in the mid-1930s and then went his own way.<sup>1</sup> He was one of the most acclaimed theoreticians and a persistent fighter for socialism/communism in Turkey. He was arrested many times and served many years of imprisonment during the years 1925–50. His relationship with the party and the masses was also damaged as a result of his long imprisonment. He was released from prison in 1950, at the time when the leader of the TKP, Şefik Hüsnü, was trying to organize an illegal party, but had not invited Kivilcimlı to join. It was probably for this reason that he was one of the rare individuals to have relations with the TKP who escaped being convicted with the TKP in 1951. Instead, Kivilcimlı founded his own legal party, the Vatan Party, in 1954. The party programme called the 'Second Kuvayı Milliye'<sup>2</sup> (which was to become the name of the socialist movement in the 1960s as used by Kivilcimlı) was designed to solve the socio-economic problems of Turkey, such as unemployment and poverty.<sup>3</sup> The party was closed down in 1957 and the entire administrative cadre including Kivilcimlı himself was imprisoned.

At the time of the 1960 intervention Kivilcimlı had already spent twenty-one of his forty years of political involvement in prison. Therefore, though he had been a TKP member, he had spent his political career outside the party and his relations were frozen after the 1950s. He had his own recruits from

among university students, members of the working class, socialist intellectuals and military officers from the 1930s until his death in exile, immediately after the 1971 intervention on 11 October 1971, in Belgrade.<sup>4</sup> Even though he died in 1971 there have been movements up to this day adopting his ideology, generally referred to as 'doktorcular' [doctor supporters] as Kivilcimlı was called 'doktor' [doctor] because he had studied in a medical faculty. This group is different from all the other leftist groups previously examined as it is formed around the ideas of Dr Kivilcimlı, especially his works on Turkish society and history. These energetic and devoted followers of Kivilcimlı, who has generally been seen as a rather 'eccentric' figure by outsiders, continue their activities, based on more or less the same socio-political views, even today.

Kivilcimlı's major contribution to socialism, or Marxist-Leninism, in Turkey is his writing and translation in a wide range of fields. Kivilcimlı was a passionate writer and especially during his long years of imprisonment he wrote insatiably on every aspect of Marxism: dialectic philosophy, economics, ideology, scientific socialism, on the Turkish classes, gender problems and revolutionary strategies. He was well informed about Islam, its traditions and history, as well as Anatolian cultures, unlike most leftists in Turkey. Unfortunately, most of his works have not been read and analysed carefully. He is mostly acclaimed for his *Yol* [The Road] series<sup>5</sup> and his magnum opus *Tarih Tezi* [Historical Work].<sup>6</sup>

Though his movement had always been small, Kivilcimlı had considerable prestige among socialists in the 1960s as he was a survivor and one of the oldest members of the socialist/communist movement in Turkey. The works on Marxism which he produced during his long years in prison added to his prestige and esteem. Although he was highly respected he did not manage to become the leader of the mass socialist movement in the 1960s.

Kivilcimlı is especially significant in view of his attitude towards the army, as he always had a small gathering of military devotees. He was sentenced to prison for fifteen years for his involvement with the naval officers, particularly for inciting the officers to riot.<sup>7</sup> After 12 March he again became wanted for conspiracy with the army and fled the country largely for that reason. There has been much discussion on Kivilcimlı's perspective on the political role of the army, particularly as he had greeted the 12 March memorandum with enthusiasm,<sup>8</sup> and this has been one of the most essential and problematic topics in discussions of Kivilcimlı's position. For this reason, Kivilcimlı is remembered as a coup supporter even though he was perhaps the least interested in such a road.

This chapter first describes the position of the Kivilcimlı circle within the leftist movement in the 1960s. It continues with Kivilcimlı's studies on the

role of the army in Turkey. Kıvılcımlı explained the involvement of the army in politics and their revolutionary role from a different perspective from that of the other leftist movements. He had an original thesis on the political role of the army in Turkey and in this sense was perhaps one of the most interesting and important actors in the 1960s, even though his impact was small. In this chapter, accounts of his general ideology and especially his involvement or relation with other leftist movements are followed by a conclusion on his approach to the political role of the army in the 1960s, as well as his reactions to the military interventions in 1960 and 1971.

## 2 The Kıvılcımlı movement in the 1960s

Kıvılcımlı observed all the leftist movements of the 1960s and contributed to and frequently co-operated in one way or another with all of the leftist journals such as *Yön* and *Türk Solu*, and finally with both *Sosyalist Aydınlık* and *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık*. He took careful notice of the TİP right from the start, as he believed in the necessity of a working-class party and though the TİP was hardly his ideal Leninist vanguard party he did try to become a member. His application was refused even though he had supporters in the party. He did not criticize the party, but instead observed it seriously and tried to convince those in contact with him to join the party. He later explained that he wanted to be observant and prudent about those movements that had sprung up independently from the old socialist movement. He preferred rather to follow their evolutionary course. He then started to criticize the party programme of the TİP in early 1966. Even though he believed the party could be reformed he had severe criticisms of the parliamentarism, legalism and conformism of the TİP, especially directed towards its leading cadre, which he called degradingly 'ABA opportunism.'<sup>9</sup> These were the initials of Aybar (Mehmet Ali), Boran (Behice) and Altan (Çetin). He even claimed that it was finance capital which had selected Aybar and Boran for the leadership of the TİP. He defined them as 'crypto-socialists'. He regarded Aybar (in a denigratory way) as an heir to the Ottoman dynasty and called Boran a metaphysical sociologist.

Meanwhile, he tried to convince the small circle gathered around him to work in trade unions. He even persuaded some, such as Suat Şükrü Kundakçı, to take up blue-collar occupations even though they were well educated and could easily get professional jobs. Kıvılcımlı was in these terms a very exceptional socialist in the 1960s, actually working with members of the working class and trying to organize them. One of his successes in these terms was work in Yapı İşçileri Sendikası [Union of Construction Workers] in 1966. The union held a strike on the Batman–İskenderun oil line at the end of 1966. However, his influence within the union diminished soon after that. At the

same time, workers' leaders within his circle, such as Suat Şükrü Kundakçı, were very influential in the establishment of DİSK. Kıvılcımlı was also one of the founders of İşsizlik ve Pahalılıkla Savaş Derneği [Society for Struggle against Unemployment and Cost of Living: IPSD]. The IPSD was founded on 19 May 1968 and had offices in Ankara, İzmir and Istanbul. It focused on the two major social problems in its title. The society organized marches, meetings and conferences. It was active until the 12 March intervention.

Kıvılcımlı also founded his own publishing house and published many of his own booklets on history, revolutionary theories and current politics. Even though he contributed to all the leftist journals at the time, he also published his own journal, *Sosyalist*, but only seven issues appeared (the last in July 1967); publication again in 1970, continuing to around the end of the military intervention in 1971. He was a socialist who paid great attention to organizing the workers and actually working with them as well as producing theoretical work. His theoretical and political writings were always aimed at the poorly educated working class, not the intellectuals. In this sense too he was different from the other movements and their leaders.

Kıvılcımlı collaborated with the other socialist movements of the time and his main political aim was to bring together all the movements of *Yön*, TİP and the old socialists, by which he meant those previously affiliated with the TKP. Noting the crisis in the TİP and the disintegration of the leftist movement, he argued time and again that the left must reunite in an anti-imperialist front.<sup>10</sup> To this end, Kıvılcımlı called on all socialist movements to hold a conference to establish a single people's front in the current Second Liberation Movement as he saw it.<sup>11</sup> He divided the movements into two main streams, the first those acclaiming themselves as 'scientific socialists' while the second had no such claim. He listed the TİP, *Yön* socialists and the old socialists in the first group, while the other group included 27 May socialists, student clubs, social-democrats and the left-of-centre party (implying the CHP). Kıvılcımlı held that if the first group managed to unite it would be easier to integrate the second major group and so form a common single anti-imperialist movement. He reiterated that victory in the first war had come about through an organized army and hence argued that the socialists must form an army of national unity.<sup>12</sup> His calls, however, were totally ignored.

Kıvılcımlı was especially close to NDR movements in the mid-60s even though he himself was not a NDR advocate. He contributed to *Türk Solu* and *Aydınlık* as he was also close to the Şefik Hüsnü tradition of the TKP that was generally known as the 'Aydınlık' group, with supporters such as Mihri Belli. The Şefik Hüsnü tradition of the TKP which brought together Kıvılcımlı, Belli and other ex-TKP members or sympathizers also found its echo in the political views of

Kıvılcımlı towards the Turkish army. Kıvılcımlı shared with the others in the *Türk Solu* and NDR movements the view that the Turkish army was different from other state armies, it was a commoner army and it was revolutionary and progressive. Kıvılcımlı argued that the army could become a *striking force* in a revolutionary situation, very similar to the views of the TKP (see the previous chapter).

Kıvılcımlı therefore had a similar concept of the army as being under the influence of Kemalist ideology. He followed developments in the Middle East closely and was acquainted with the current Soviet view on the revolutionary role and potential of the armies in underdeveloped countries. More in line with Marxist-Leninism, he argued that a revolutionary workers' party was essential for a socialist transition. The lack of a party of the working class was actually his main critique of the other leftist movements, especially the NDR. However, ironically, he was not able to establish a party himself, and his esoteric use of language made it very difficult for him to increase his influence. He was almost incomprehensible, and the ability to be exact and sharp needed in a developing revolutionary movement was lacking. He could not convey his political views in the best possible way and build the basis for a political mass or class movement because his language was full of uncommon metaphors and peculiar terms and was almost a crypto-language.<sup>13</sup>

He could not join in with any of the movements wholeheartedly as a result of differences of opinion. His contribution was a source of prestige for any of the movements, as he was one of the oldest and the most intellectual of the communists still active in Turkey. However, when he realized that he could not open theoretical discussions he generally refrained from contributing, thinking he was being used. Even though he collaborated with almost all movements and contributed to their journals, he was very critical of each, especially in the last years of the decade. He especially despaired when his final calls to establish a working-class party and an alternative assembly failed on 29–30 October 1970, as explained in Chapter 6.

Kıvılcımlı shared some ideological ground with all of the movements that have been described above. Even though he objected to becoming a Stalinist in the 1930s he later came to adopt the Stalinist 'revolution in stages' theory. He also defended the idea of an initial anti-imperialist nationalist movement in a single front, which he called 'Second Kuvayı Milliye', as with the NDR movements. Like *Yön-Devrim* and the NDR movements he attributed great significance to the armed forces and perceived them as leading the country and being a determining force; however, like the TİP, he acknowledged the necessity for leading the movement with a working-class party. In this sense he was different from those movements which aimed at supporting a coup, not necessarily with a working-class organization.

However, he also had criticisms of all of these movements and his main power was in his criticism, rather than in his creative political thought. He had become critical of the *Yön* movement as he considered it similar to the Kadro movement, which perceived the state as being above the classes. Therefore, *Yön* treated the state as a fetish and expected a revolutionary movement from the representatives of the state, the civilian and military bureaucracy.<sup>14</sup>

In a moment of disillusionment with the socialist movement Kivilcimlı poured contempt on *Yön*, the TİP and finally the NDR movements in 1970–1 with a bombardment of pamphlets, booklets and articles.<sup>15</sup> He particularly ridiculed the NDR movement, using biting language full of irony and mockery. He criticized the NDR for becoming a ‘petty-bourgeois declassed intelligentsia movement’ devoid of a working-class base and without a crucial integration with the working class.<sup>16</sup> He made fun of all the sectarian lines springing from the NDR and especially the Maoist lines. He neither appreciated Mao Tse-Tung’s thinking about politics (and he had always been pro-Soviet) nor did he believe that his version of NDR was in tune with the realities of modern Turkey.<sup>17</sup> He argued that there was nothing original in Mao Tse-Tung’s ideology. He explained that China had waged a liberation war just like any other country and Mao Tse-Tung was the product of his times.

Importantly Kivilcimlı emphasized that the Maoist version of NDR was not an appropriate movement for Turkey as it had ignored the capitalist development in Turkey. Maoists could not realize that Turkey was not China of the 1950s – a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country. Instead, finance capital ruled Turkey and the impact of imperialism was qualitatively different from that in the colonial countries. To compare Turkey with China was to confuse contemporary Turkey with the Ottoman empire of fifty years ago.<sup>18</sup>

He proposed reorganization of the proletarian party and a Marxist-Leninist road for the transition into socialism through working-class socialism rather than youth guerrillas.<sup>19</sup> Though he was sympathetic to the militants of Dev-Genç he criticized their road, describing it as another sickness of the petty bourgeoisie. He considered that even the initiator of the strategy, Régis Debray, had accepted that the rural guerrilla was invalid. He also believed that the urban guerrilla was a wrong path as it had no contact with the working class, and repeated that a guerrilla organization and armed struggle alone could not maintain integrity with the working class without a Leninist party. He actually claimed that ‘salon socialists’ were exploiting the enthusiasm of the young and that there was a CIA set-up. He later claimed in his memoirs, written on his sick-bed while in exile, that he was the first person to be assassinated by the CIA as he was trying to prevent the youth from starting an armed struggle.<sup>20</sup>

In a nutshell, Kılıçcımlı criticized all the leftist currents for not being appropriate to Marxist revolutionary ideology and related strategy. He was correct in most of his criticisms. However, he himself was not consistent in his political thinking and actions, especially in his attitude towards the role of the army. Moreover, he was a rather eccentric figure who could not organize socialists or the working class himself. He generally tried to influence all movements, and especially the TİP, to pull it towards a working-class party. Then he tried to unite the movements, announcing the criteria for unity.<sup>21</sup> When he despaired he turned back to criticism, publishing his own journal, *Sosyalist*, for the second time towards the end of the decade. He criticized the sectarian attitude of the leftists particularly for not being united under one party, likening them to a 'headless camel'.<sup>22</sup> He observed that the current movements were heading towards a non-Marxist and non-Leninist path, and he warned against the involvement of the CIA in this chaotic situation.

He had to flee the country after the 12 March military intervention as he was suspected of conspiring within the armed forces and of involvement with naval officers after the intervention.

The following sections will deal with the ideas of Kılıçcımlı on the political role of the army and the sources of his ideas, which have been the guiding lights of Kılıçcımlı followers for many decades. Even though Kılıçcımlı was also influenced by Kemalism, his views on the army were based on a historical study of the tribal Turkic cultures and the transformation into an Ottoman state. He also regarded Kemalism as a derivative of this tradition of the Turkish army dating back to the barbarian age of the Turks.

### 3 Kılıçcımlı's political thinking about the army

#### 3.1 Historical Work: *the communal Geist and the revolutionary army tradition*

Kılıçcımlı devoted much of his work to the study of history, and his main work was *Tarih Tezi* [Historical Work]. Kılıçcımlı argued that every country had an original way of making social revolutions.<sup>23</sup> The object of almost all of Kılıçcımlı's work was to uncover what was unique to Turkish society's way of making revolutions. His motivation for studying Turkish history was to discover the laws of development and, surprisingly, to see why Turkey could not transform from the Ottoman empire.<sup>24</sup> He was inspired by the anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan and by Friedrich Engels, especially by their category of 'barbarism versus civilization'.<sup>25</sup>

Kılıçcımlı used original terminology for describing revolutions, differentiating between what he termed historical and social revolutions.<sup>26</sup> According to him historical revolutions were more observable in antiquity (in pre-capitalist

societies), where a civilization was completely destroyed because its internal antagonisms could not otherwise be resolved.<sup>27</sup> Social revolutions, however, changed the class hegemony, keeping the civilization intact. Kivilcimlı held that in Turkey both revolutions were combined. The Ottoman empire was destroyed, which was a historical revolution, and a bourgeois revolution was carried out simultaneously. He defined this double revolution as a hybrid revolution. According to Kivilcimlı a combination of ancient and modern revolutions led to a misunderstanding of the nature of the revolution.<sup>28</sup>

Kivilcimlı concluded that the originality of the Turkish social revolution was the role played, and to be played in the future, by youth, and especially the army.<sup>29</sup> Kivilcimlı pointed out that in other countries armies did not have such a central revolutionary role, but in Turkey making revolutions was the tradition of the army. Kivilcimlı based this tradition on the historical development of Turkey, in the way the *state* was founded – in the Ottoman case – and the *nation-state* was founded in the case of the Turkish Republic. This tradition, however, dated from the remote past of Turkish society, which Kivilcimlı described as the ‘Horasan Erlik and Dirlik Order’. He considered the Turkic tribes to be barbarians and regarded them as having a superior culture to that of the civilized cultures, as they were early communists, a community of egalitarian people devoid of class differences.<sup>30</sup>

According to Kivilcimlı, ‘İlb’s and ‘Horasan Erleri’ were the ghazis fighting for the common good.<sup>31</sup> All people in the Turkic tribes carried arms. Kivilcimlı praised this feature of these societies, which he considered a form of egalitarianism.<sup>32</sup> Ghazis fought for the conquest of the Byzantine lands or the ‘Red Apple’. It was these ghazis who built the first Ottoman state as ‘men in arms’. In other words, the *Turkish tribal armies founded the Ottoman state*. Kivilcimlı emphasized that the army formed Ottoman society, and as all people carried weapons and participated in warfare, the Ottomans were an *army nation*.<sup>33</sup> For that reason, Kivilcimlı claimed that the state actually meant the armed men in the Ottoman state.<sup>34</sup> The Ottoman state was founded by its *army*, which was the defining feature of the Ottoman reality.<sup>35</sup> The military democracy of the primitive commune formed the base on which both the army and the state were built and this was the most original characteristic of the Ottoman empire. Kivilcimlı defined this as ‘our Ottoman tradition’, and as a result of this tradition, the army in Turkey was an autonomous entity, almost a state within a state.<sup>36</sup>

Kivilcimlı reminded his readers that the state expressed as a concrete and abstract entity was an organization with armed men and prisons.<sup>37</sup> The Ottoman state still protected the tradition of these tribal armies, even though the system had become corrupted over time. The primitive communal lifestyle

was transferred to Turkish and Ottoman practice as the state ownership of land. According to Kuvılcımlı, the '*Geist*' of the material basis of the Ottoman history was communal land ownership.<sup>38</sup> The Ottomans had almost carried out a land reform and distributed the land owned by the rich in the antique period to the common people in a socialist manner.<sup>39</sup> The communal lifestyle could also be observed in the collective labour [*imece*] tradition of Turkish folk and the Bektashi sect. Interestingly, Kuvılcımlı praised the Koran and early Muslim scholars for acknowledging communal ownership, as God was the only possessor of things.<sup>40</sup>

Kuvılcımlı believed that the army and youth still protected these traditions, as well as the idealism of the first Turkish folk, which was to sacrifice oneself for the sake of others. He referred to these traditions as *nationalism*, which had been created as the nation evolved over hundreds of years. In other words, the nation was permanent while the state was transitional. Therefore, Kuvılcımlı constructed his views on the political role of the army on the notion of *nationalism* instead of *statism*, which he claimed had been used by *Yön*.<sup>41</sup> He defined nationalism as a historical tradition dating from the remote Asian tribal past of Turkey. However, this differentiation of the nation from the state was not very logical, as the state, according to Kuvılcımlı's analysis, had taken over the national character.

As the army had founded the Ottoman state, it was the army again which had carried out the bourgeois revolution. The indigenous-nationalist bourgeoisie or the Anatolian bourgeoisie as Kuvılcımlı called it, which was supposed to carry out the bourgeois revolution, was weak, but also cowardly and dishonoured. They were ready to break up the country.<sup>42</sup> It was the armed forces who had instructed the bourgeoisie to protect the country and the nation, but with the victory in the Independence War the army naturally took control over this bourgeoisie. He explained that in Turkey the young and the army, though they were not classes, played special revolutionary roles, as there was no productive power, i.e. the bourgeoisie, to carry out a bourgeois revolution. In the absence of a revolutionary bourgeoisie the two revolutions – historical and social – had to be carried out at the same time by the youth, that is, the Young Turks, and the army.<sup>43</sup> Kuvılcımlı referred to the Turkish army as the striking force of the country. He explained that: 'As a result of this original law of the development and history of revolutions the Turkish army represented essential revolutionary tradition and customs.'<sup>44</sup>

According to Kuvılcımlı, the fact that the army had been the striking power in social revolutions (even though it was not a social class) was one of the most important and original realities transferred from Ottoman customs to Turkey. Strikingly, Kuvılcımlı pointed out that the originality was so influential

that the army still always formed the striking power of social revolutions in Near Eastern countries which had previously been part of the domain of the Ottomans: Iraq, Egypt, Syria, the Sudan and Libya. The armed forces of other countries, on the other hand, did not have such an attribute as they had become a blind tool of the bourgeoisie and thus became reactionary.<sup>45</sup>

Kıvılcımlı compared and contrasted Western historical development with that of the Ottoman-Turkish empire and he cited France as a perfect example of the bourgeois revolution and mastery over the armed forces. The Western European bourgeoisie had used the antagonisms among the feudal lords to eliminate each other. The bourgeoisie had come to power by using the force of the working class and the peasantry to eliminate ancient powers and build a bourgeois state.<sup>46</sup> In this respect, drawing on de Gaulle's statement that in France 'the army did not start revolutions', Kıvılcımlı reversed the statement and claimed that in Turkish history 'almost all revolutions were carried out by the army!'.<sup>47</sup>

Kıvılcımlı regarded the Turkish army as revolutionary and idealist; however, he argued that the idealism of the army was not based on the first Kuvayı Milliye tradition but rather in the very remote past of Turkic tribes. He claimed that there were two social characteristics and attitudes that were unique to the Turkish people. The first of these was the Young Turk tradition, which was a reformist movement in the Ottoman empire in the nineteenth century consisting mainly of military officers and intellectuals.<sup>48</sup> He explained that this tradition had become a trademark for revolutionary nationalists anywhere. The second characteristic was fighting liberation wars. Kıvılcımlı stated that the first major anti-imperialist victory was achieved by the army and intellectual Turkish youth who had fought in a Young Turk tradition, and he considered that the Young Turk mentality and attitude inherited from the remote history of primitive communal traditions played an essential role in this. That was exactly the reason why the Turkish Liberation war was acclaimed internationally.<sup>49</sup>

Kıvılcımlı, then, expected the armed forces to play a revolutionary role on account of their idealist nationalist characteristics, dating back to the early tribal armies. The idea that such a quality had remained unchanged through the centuries, even though the material basis of the Ottoman empire and Turkey had changed significantly, was an idealist (not materialist) and metaphysical point of view. While Kıvılcımlı criticized the *Yön* circle for having glorified the state, Kıvılcımlı then did exactly the same for the nation and the army and considered these somehow autonomous from and unrelated to socio-economic relations and historical changes. In this sense, he was inconsistent as it was actually Kıvılcımlı himself who criticized such a point of view. He had

criticized those who considered the military-civil intelligentsia of Turkey still to be under the hegemony of the state ideology, or as he called it 'devletlu philosophy', which was based on the foundation period of the Ottoman empire and its socio-economic structures six hundred years earlier. Under the Ottoman land system the state had established itself in the person of the sultan as an above-the-classes entity. The same system had continued during the republican era, but the pashas could not perceive the change in the state. Even though the first Ottoman state was based on the tribal patterns of the early ghazis, the system had collapsed in the last three to four hundred years. The usurer-trader classes, then comprador (Levantine) finance capital and finally local finance capital had in turn become the ruling classes.<sup>50</sup> The people of Turkey, therefore, had been currently subject to bloody class conflicts, which was not realized by the pashas.

Unlike the NDR movements Kuvâcımılı actually perceived Turkey as a basically capitalist country even though it was dominated by the imperialist powers and pre-capitalist classes were still retained. That was probably one of the major differences in his approach and the main contribution by Kuvâcımılı to understanding the economic development of Turkey. Kuvâcımılı argued that the Ottoman empire had started to change around the sixteenth century and that a merchant capitalist class had started to gain dominance as a result of this transformation. Turkey was a capitalist country from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, and this capitalism was monopolist, or in other words finance capital. His view of finance capital followed the Leninist position on the integration of industrial capital and finance capital which had taken place in developed countries.<sup>51</sup> However, Kuvâcımılı observed monopoly capital in Turkey as early as the nineteenth century, making use of the law of uneven and combined development. It was mainly in these terms that Kuvâcımılı actually criticized the NDR movements, as he viewed Turkey as a capitalist country open to a working-class struggle. He actually argued that monopoly capital exploited the whole nation in Turkey, and that the capitalists were not comprador but national bourgeois.

However, at the same time Kuvâcımılı also advocated a 'Second Kuvâyı Milliye', a single front against imperialism as the current revolutionary stage. This did not make any sense at all, but Kuvâcımılı considered NDR or the struggle for national liberation as the correct revolutionary stage for Turkey as an underdeveloped country. Even though he was a Leninist in understanding socio-economic relations (such as the uneven and combined development law) when it came to political strategy he was actually loyal to the Stalinist doctrine because of its adoption by Soviet-orientated communists. He was loyal to the Stalinist conception of the correct revolutionary stage and strategies

for different countries based on their development level. Kivilcimlı was, then, being schematist and loyal to the Soviet position, even though he had observed different relations of production in Turkey. This, however, unfortunately made his analysis of the concrete conditions of Turkey and his political statements, supposed to be the outcome of the analyses, inconsistent.

Another contradictory element in his analyses was his ideas on the ruling class in Turkey. Kivilcimlı perceived the hegemony of finance capital, especially after the liberation war, but the relation between the capitalist classes and the bureaucracy, including the military, was not clear in his analyses. As mentioned above, on the one hand he complained about the pashas not considering the socio-economic changes but on the other hand he explained that the bourgeois revolution was carried out under the leadership of the army as the bourgeois was weak. The conflict stemmed from his distinguishing the 'productive' bourgeoisie from 'finance capital'. Actually, he had perceived a sort of class conflict with these capitalist classes.<sup>52</sup> I presume that he meant that the productive bourgeoisie was the industrialists and the second Kuvayı Milliye movement was basically against the finance capital.

To sum up the discussion, Kivilcimlı recognized a relationship between the socio-economic and ideological structures, but did not necessarily see a simultaneous determinist change in each. However, he did not develop these points and he was inconsistent in relating both change and continuity in the Ottoman state to the Turkish Republic without clarifying such ideas. Apparently, he perceived the military-civil intelligentsia as being beyond the class conflicts and expected them to play a leadership role in the anti-imperialist struggle by being conscious of the class struggle in the past centuries. Thus, Kivilcimlı expected the military-civil intelligentsia to play a revolutionary role on account of a *nationalist* tradition evolved from the idealist egalitarian early Turkic tribes, or what he termed the military democracy of the ghazis, the *Geist* of primitive communism.

### *3.2 The problematic relation between the army and the bourgeoisie in republican Turkey*

The relation between the army and the ruling class of finance capital was not made clear in Kivilcimlı's writings. He pointed out, for example, that the comprador bourgeoisie came to power with the onset of the republic, but the internal striking power that brought this class to power, helped by foreign agents of international finance capital, was the army. The weakness of the bourgeoisie allowed the army to dominate it, yet at the same time Kivilcimlı argued that the 'Turks of Turkey' were realists, hence they believed that whoever possessed the guns ruled.<sup>53</sup> However, the armed forces tried to restore normal

relations and therefore delegated power to the civilians to attain a Western level of civilization. Kuvülcümlü was not fond of such ideas and he argued that Turkey did not need to follow the Western attitude as Turkey was unique.<sup>54</sup>

Kuvülcümlü regarded the transition into a bourgeois regime as untimely, believing that capitalism was in the death-throes of its imperialist stage. There was no way for the bourgeoisie which had outlived its historical role and especially its comprador stratum to seize power in a semi-colonial country.<sup>55</sup> In Turkey, the state had been governed first by comprador, then by indigenous finance capital under an alliance of usurer-trader *hacı-ağas* [tefecî-bezirgan hacı ağalar].

Despite the aforementioned change in the class hegemony over the state, Kuvülcümlü claimed that the army had continued to rule the state as the possessor of arms. The armed forces did not believe in a Western-type parliamentary democracy, as in the West the bourgeoisie was indigenous and, therefore, had protected their nation and the land and came to power deservedly. Kuvülcümlü claimed that it was for this reason that the bourgeois army recognized its master.

Interestingly, Kuvülcümlü delegated to the army the duty of filling the social gap created by the absence of the bourgeoisie.<sup>56</sup> According to Kuvülcümlü, Mustafa Kemal knew that only through capital could Turkey attain the level of civilized countries. However, Mustafa Kemal had also seen that without the army comprador capital would turn the country into a colony, hence he took control.<sup>57</sup> Imperialism and capitalism were condemned in the first parliament; however, the order building capital mechanism was founded through the army. When it had become necessary to establish a parliament to force people towards capital all army officers had then changed their military clothes for civilian ones and become members of parliament, and carried on acting as they wanted while in disguise. Kuvülcümlü held that the parliamentary road was used by members of the army to realize the goals of capital, and it was as if the parliament were formed only by former military officers. He made this point very clearly, stating that the army sat in parliament. Despite this, parliament appeared to be civilian in order not to annoy the 'lords of capital'. Kuvülcümlü explained that in time the 'pashas' could integrate with the capitalist class. He cited the example of İsmet Paşa, who bought land and had then made a fortune of millions of liras. He concluded that in Turkey *the bureaucrat bourgeoisie* replaced or fulfilled the function of the entrepreneur industrial bourgeoisie of the West. He considered the pashas who had become 'bourgeoisified' metaphorically as commoners spoiling their own nests. Unfortunately, he did not tackle this issue, which showed different class formations and class-state relations in Turkey, in detail. The weakness of the bourgeoisie, and therefore only limited class conflicts, made such a system run. However, finance capital

enriched under CHP rule had rebelled against the single-party democracy and tried to push the army out of parliament.

Kıvılcımlı though claimed that it was impossible for parliamentary rule to survive in Turkey, saying that parliamentary democracy was the 'apple candy finance capital allowed commoners to suck'.<sup>58</sup> In an imperialist metropolis finance capital exported its capital through an imperialist system and used a small portion of the extra profits it obtained to share with and silence (or deceive) the working class and petty bourgeoisie. These classes could have a high standard of living thanks to the extra profits of imperialism and hence be deceived into playing the parliamentary game, but there was no such possibility in Turkey, which depended on American subsidies to protect the parliamentary rule. As the subsidies were not enough to maintain the system the army rebelled and lifted the ban on socialism. According to Kıvılcımlı, because of the lack of extra profits, the system could only continue to work by making excessive and ill-gotten profits and playing the card of the extreme ideologies – those of ultra-Islamism and nationalism (fascism). Kıvılcımlı, then, viewed the parliamentary regime in the same way as Avcıoğlu, as both claimed that under a dependent country the system could function only by resorting to extreme right-wing ideologies to oppress the people.

Kıvılcımlı drew attention to the world hegemony of finance capital, and to American imperialism collaborating with the internal finance capital to colonize Turkey. He remarked that none of the countries of the world were ruled by their own nation.<sup>59</sup> Capitalist rule was in the hands of the English in the nineteenth century and in those of the Americans in the twentieth century. The US had become the landlord of international finance capital by its tripartite rule of money, agents and the army.<sup>60</sup> He argued that there were only two options for dealing with this power: either to accept being a colony or to fight a liberation war.

Kıvılcımlı emphasized in this respect that it was only the army youth who did not believe in the lie of parliamentarism.<sup>61</sup> He advocated uniting the youth, the army and the working class to bring down the regime and achieve national liberation. He regarded the working class as the endless source of consciousness and power. The hunt for votes by the finance capital, usurer-traders and big landowners could be eradicated by an alliance of these forces. National liberation and the desired level of civilization could then also be achieved by this united force. According to Kıvılcımlı, then, the first problem of the current day was to convince the army of this reality. He repeated that the most dependable support for the army with a tradition of revolution was the working class and the labouring masses.

In this respect, Kıvılcımlı ridiculed the debate in the mid-60s about the revolutionary stages, SR versus NDR, in his writings.<sup>62</sup> He warned the TİP

that in the history of Turkey the ruling classes were always the usurer-traders and pashas, beys, effendis or what he termed the state classes. He considered that the offspring of these two classes, the Young Turks, had carried out several modernization movements for a transition from a constitutional monarchy to the foundation of the republic.

Kıvılcımlı actually aligned the general Marxist notions of the armed alongside his views on the Turkish army, which conflicted with each other. Kıvılcımlı, for example, believed in the Leninist notion of the army as an instrument to protect the bourgeois state. In this respect, he pointed out that the state could only survive by the guardianship of swords and arms. As a class (comprador) finance capital ruled Turkey together with a few local gentry and vestiges of feudal ağas and Turkey was a bourgeois democracy exploiting millions of Turkish people.<sup>63</sup> He emphasized that class societies could survive only by the protection of the armed forces. This was the case for democratic as well as dictator-run and totalitarian states, and it was actually only the image, or the form of rule, that was different between these regimes. In a bourgeois democracy the arms were concealed ('put in the shade') whereas they would be exposed in open fascism.

Following this line of thought, Kıvılcımlı also argued that until the foundation of the republic, finance capital had ruled the Turkish economy and politics together with foreign companies and banks and with the *support of the armed forces*. After the republic had been formed finance capital ruled together with local or national firms and companies but again *relying on the armed forces*. Kıvılcımlı acknowledged this fact as a historical rule: 'Turkey would follow the orbit of those who possessed the guns.' Turkey was a sultanate when the sultan had control of the armed forces, but when the sultan became a captive and the armed forces were in the hands of the pashas in Anatolia and the first Grand National Assembly of Turkey government was formed then the state became a republic. The army looked down on the finance capital that depended on foreign infidels, so the army intervened. Even though he thought otherwise his explanation did not make the reality as clear as he had assumed. The relation between the finance capital and the armed forces could not be understood clearly and fully from the explanations given by Kıvılcımlı.

Kıvılcımlı had also emphasized in his seminars to the Dev-Genç followers that the military-civilian bureaucratic group was not a social class but one of the strata within the petty bourgeoisie.<sup>64</sup> In modern societies there were only two classes – finance capital, which was the hegemonic class, and the proletariat – and he argued that in a modern society the state could stand only by depending on one of these main social classes. Therefore, even though the

military-civilian bureaucracy had taken power they had had to delegate power to one of these. As Kivilcimlı put it, the military-civilian bureaucracy had had to choose which social class to hand power to.<sup>65</sup> According to him, the finance capital class had cleverly found a way to seize power from those who had brought about 27 May. In Kivilcimlı's view the military-civilian bureaucracy actually felt deceived by the profiteers and regretted their action, but they had done so as they had no notion of depending on a social class.

Kivilcimlı emphasized that under these conditions to expect the civilian-military intelligentsia bureaucracy to bring about socialism would be to indulge in fantasy. Transition to socialism could only be under the leadership of the proletariat where the proletariat would also be the main force.<sup>66</sup>

However, Kivilcimlı believed in the potential of military-civilian idealists and the sacrifice of the Turkish youth, by which he also meant the Young Turks. They would save Turkey from colonialism just as in the first liberation war. Kivilcimlı advocated that the Turkish nation form a people's front [halk cephesi] from the youth, army and justice personnel, leaving all the rest of the people only a single option of resorting to a reactionary junta. Kivilcimlı believed that in such a case the ruling classes could transfer from the protection of the Turkish armed forces, which they detested, to the protection of the American armed forces.<sup>67</sup>

According to Kivilcimlı, the US was threatening Turkey with staging a reactionary coup like the one that had taken place in Greece. He reminded his readers that when Menderes had dared to visit Moscow a coup was staged in Turkey. In this respect he differed from the main leftist discourse in pointing to the US involvement in the 1960 coup as being due to the relations of Menderes with the Soviet Union.<sup>68</sup>

Kivilcimlı remarked that the so-called 'Bloody Sunday' on 16 February 1969 (the crackdown against the anti-imperialist forces) was staged by the imperialist US. He added that Türkeş, and the commandos of Turkey, were produced by the *régisseurs* in the Pentagon, the CIA and Wall Street.

Kivilcimlı, then, interpreted socio-political developments in Turkey not through an internal class struggle or at least conflicts with a social class base, but as a struggle between the imperialist powers, together with their internal collaborators, and the popular nationalist powers for liberation. According to Kivilcimlı, after the war of liberation the hegemony passed from the comprador bourgeoisie to the local finance capital,<sup>69</sup> which monopolized power and in these terms stood against other groups within the bourgeoisie. He believed that finance capital was the main hegemonic (and brutal) class and even the rest of the bourgeois classes aspired for democracy.

#### 4 Kivılcımlı's approach to the military interventions of 1960 and 1971

There was a certain consistency in Kivılcımlı's reactions to the military interventions on 27 May 1960 and a decade later on 12 March 1971, in line with his views on the political role of the army in Turkey. To begin with, just one day after the coup on 27 May 1960, Kivılcımlı sent a congratulatory telegram [selamlama telgrafi] to the Committee of National Unity (CNU). He ended this telegram with what is probably one of the most amazing statements ever to have been expressed by a Marxist, saying: 'Congratulations on the Second Kuvayı Milliye. Let God not detain you from the real democracy.'<sup>70</sup>

A week later Kivılcımlı supported his earlier congratulatory note with a support letter sent to the NUC on behalf of the Vatan Party. Then he wrote two letters of recommendation to the NUC on 7 July and 24 August. He proposed that the NUC should not abdicate from power, but instead should establish a party and carry out a version of the reform programme that he had presented in the Vatan Party.

It was actually very naive, of course, even to imagine that NUC officers would listen to a convicted communist. Kivılcımlı was, at most, just being optimistic about the sudden changes and the reform discourse expressed in the memorandum put out by the young officers. A new constitution was to be prepared. He could have imagined, or felt the duty to convey his opinion, that young Turkish officers might follow the road of neighbouring armies. The Iraqi and Egyptian officers, who had taken power a few years earlier, had nationalized their industries, built closer relations with the Soviet Union and threatened Western imperialism. In his second letter, he especially emphasized the advantageous trade conditions if close relations with the Soviet Union were to be developed. He suggested to officers in the NUC that they should actually stay in power, although through a party, and take the same direction as those Middle Eastern countries.

Commenting on the 27 May intervention, Kivılcımlı argued that the theft by a handful of finance capitalists had provoked so much reaction that it could only be contained by the 'dam' of the armed forces. However, there was a small crack, a handful of junior officers, which led to the flood of the masses. The power of 27 May rested in this power of the people.<sup>71</sup>

Kivılcımlı had hailed the intervention on 12 March with the same excitement, as shown in his memorable headline in the *Sosyalist* newspaper declaring that 'the army shot up its sword!'<sup>72</sup> He added that the army was going to seize power eventually, and decided to watch the turn of events. He did not, however, think that this was a reformist or a leftist intervention, claiming that the army could choose a reactionary or a revolutionary road, but he was optimistic.

Even though it seemed nonsensical that the army could make a choice in a capitalist country, Kivilcimlı perceived a conflict between the high-ranking officers (army fossils) and the young officers (Young Turk army) revolting against the present system. Therefore, he might have assumed that there would be a political struggle between these two groups resulting in a final settlement. Kivilcimlı also had personal links with military students and officers of the naval base who were following the leadership of Kivilcimlı and Sarp Kuray. Suat Şükrü Kundakçı says that as he was not very close to Kivilcimlı towards the end of the 1960s (as he lived in Ankara) he did not know about these relations with the military officers.<sup>73</sup>

Kivilcimlı reiterated that he was against the democratic principle that the armed forces must stay out of politics. He argued that both the army and the state servants must be involved with politics, otherwise they would be inhuman, the outcasts of society. He asked why millions of soldiers and state servants would carry out the orders of finance capital and usurer-traders as if they were a machine? He perceived a hidden agenda, and claimed that the aim was to make the intellectual class alien to the people and society, and as a result exploit the people for the sake of the rulers. He regarded this as the game of the class war, even claiming that finance capital had a conscious policy of selecting educated commoners for the army or the state bureaucracy personnel so that they would be left out of politics. Kivilcimlı further claimed that while the foreign hegemony of finance capital had been eliminated by Kuvayı Milliye the local finance capital had taken over. He argued that this stratum wanted the army not to deal with politics, but in the meantime handed the army over to NATO and the US commander-in-chief. Kivilcimlı reiterated, however, that the army did not bow down to the US, as unlike the Western armies consisting of officers originating from the aristocracy or bourgeoisie the Turkish army consisted of commoners. In these terms, Kivilcimlı criticized leftists, or as he called them clever Marxists, who advocated that the army must not be involved with politics, which according to him was a reactionary idea.

Kivilcimlı examined the text of the memorandum and drew particular attention to the 'Mustafa Kemal formula' in the message. Apparently, like most leftist movements or organizations, Kivilcimlı also believed the reformist and Atatürkist rhetoric of the memorandum and as a result was optimistic. He reiterated, however, that there were currently only two possible roads: one was the road of decaying imperialist capitalism and the other that of civilized socialism.

Kivilcimlı followed the developments after the intervention carefully, and he was also much more alert to politics within the army itself. When it became obvious that the right wing had ascended to power, he remarked that the

memorandum had been drafted in order to prevent the revolutionary wing of the army from taking action.<sup>74</sup> He implicitly accused General Batur of having acted as an agent within the 9 March junta known as the Madanoğlu junta. According to Kuvülcümlü, Batur had acted as the leader of the revolutionary wing, but instead had made recordings of the secret meetings of the junta and spied on it. Kuvülcümlü believed that this was a set-up, just as in the Talat Aydemir case. The aim was to install agitators to push the revolutionary army youth into actions that they were not yet ready for, and then to establish the identity of revolutionary officers and eliminate them. Interestingly, Kuvülcümlü described such actions first by using the concept of sinful, with its religious overtones,<sup>75</sup> and second as dangerous. The armed forces had a duty to protect the constitution as enjoined by their internal regulations. Provocations would, however, diminish the credibility of the constitutional role of the army.<sup>76</sup> Clearly Kuvülcümlü adhered to the idea of the armed forces as the guardian of the constitution, but pointed out the two separate ideological groups within the army, reactionary and revolutionary. He did not clarify his thinking on this point, however. The units in the army influenced by Kuvülcümlü were imprisoned and were discharged from the forces following the 12 March intervention.

## 5 Conclusion

Kuvülcümlü did not oppose the intervention of the military into politics; on the contrary, according to him this was natural and preferable to the rule of finance capital. He ended his political life in Turkey expecting the Young Turks, the civilian and military youth, to carry out the national liberation struggle against American imperialism and its internal collaborators. He assigned a revolutionary role to the army based largely on the national tradition of Turkey, in which the armed forces were egalitarian, idealist, revolutionary fighters against the infidel, which was currently the US presence.

Kuvülcümlü differed from all other leftist movements by attributing the essential revolutionary character of the Turkish army to early Turkic tribal armies rather than to a modernization in the nineteenth century. However, the army was divided into revolutionary and reactionary wings on account of changes in the socio-economic and political structure and the influence of imperialism, which as a consequence caused the high-ranking officers to become bourgeois. This stratum was alienated from its social origins, as the officers were commoners which was not the case in Western countries. However, the low-ranking officers were still imbued with the nationalist-revolutionary Young Turk tradition. Kuvülcümlü interpreted the 12 March intervention as a plot carried out by the high-ranking officers to cleanse the revolutionary officers and thus prevent any revolutionary uprising.

Kıvılcımlı perceived a tension between the general theoretical positions of Marxism and the specific, concrete conditions of Turkey as far as the army was concerned. He based the qualities of the modern Turkish army on its far-distant past, which had created a humanitarian Turkish army. Moreover, the military corps of the Turkish armed forces consisted of commoners rather than the aristocratic or bourgeois classes. Kıvılcımlı also thought that each country had its own specific characteristics and it was essential to examine these in order to see what the precise revolutionary line of that country was. Kıvılcımlı's main importance lay in this *dedication* to, not necessarily his success in, producing an original work for the Turkish revolution which could also contribute to Marxist literature in general. Kıvılcımlı was the only leftist actor who had attempted to make such a contribution.

Kıvılcımlı attributed a revolutionary essence to the armed forces because of the *Geist* of military democracy, the main idea of his historical work. However, he also described the army (within the bureaucracy) as a determining force and almost a ruling class in the Ottoman empire. How the army would keep its egalitarian communal *Geist* when in the meantime it acted as a 'devletlü' among the ruling class cannot really be deduced from his explanation. Kıvılcımlı tried to understand the specificity of Turkey through its different stages of development in contrast to both Asian states (such as China) and Western ones (such as France). However, he discovered a national character in the role in the army had played and would play in the future. In this sense, he was among the leftist groups which designated a special place to the role of the army, or at least a section within the army. He was in the meantime one of the strongest advocates of a working-class party to lead the national liberation struggle.

As mentioned in the previous chapters the oppression of the Kurdish people, especially their mistreatment at the hands of the gendarmes or the commandos, was one of the main causes for the leftist movements (especially Dev-Genç followers) to doubt the role of the army within the democratic liberation struggle. Kıvılcımlı was actually a pioneer within the radical left when he pointed at the oppression of the Kurdish people and judged the attitude of the Kemalist regime to the Kurdish people in the 1930s, and in this was against the position of the TKP at the time.<sup>77</sup> He also considered the Kurdish people not as a feudal society but as a tribal one which had an essentially revolutionary character, as they were still protecting their egalitarian communal relations. However, in the 1960s he disregarded the Kurdish problem and chose not to speak about it.<sup>78</sup> He also criticized the leftists, especially Dev-Genç followers, for speaking about the 'peoples of Turkey' as he thought it would lead to provocation,<sup>79</sup> and as far as we can infer from his personal writings retained this point of view after 12 March as well.

Even though he was sympathetic to their pain, Kivılcımlı ridiculed the young revolutionaries who engaged in armed propaganda, and thought they were imitating the cowboys they had watched on American movies.<sup>80</sup> He also pointed to his warning not to raise the Kurdish problem, as this would agitate the army.<sup>81</sup> He believed that the young militants were being used as a tool by finance capital to oppress the working-class movement, thus provoking the army and unleashing it on the young revolutionaries, so that this meant that the army was also being used by finance capital.<sup>82</sup> In a departure from his earlier views, Kivılcımlı completed his political life by implicitly choosing the side of the army in its struggle against the Kurdish people, when earlier he had demanded silence in order not to provoke the army.<sup>83</sup> This was a tactical move, then, and perhaps a realistic one also, but it did mean that Kivılcımlı believed more in the potential of the army – at least at the end of the 1960s – than in other forces.

# CONCLUSION

## 1 Introduction

In the previous chapters I have shown why and how the radical leftist movements in Turkey included the military in their political projections, particularly in the period 1960–71, in some cases to the extent of establishing outright co-operation through conspiracies. The influence of policies that depended on the intervention of the military was exceptionally powerful, especially as a consequence of the military intervention of 27 May 1960. The anti-imperialist and progressive regimes under the leadership of military officers in neighbouring countries in the Middle East supported the arguments put forward that it would be possible to have an anti-capitalist transition carried out by the army and backed by civilian support. The new Soviet policy of backing the national liberation movements in the Third World and suggesting that it was possible to bypass the capitalist stage and move towards socialism under the leadership of a national bourgeoisie or the army was regarded as the theoretical basis of these new ways of changing the system. Adherence to the Stalinist thesis of a two-stage revolution and its pragmatism and the internalization of the ideology of Kemalism through the TKP tradition beginning in the early stages of the republic contributed to the adoption of a theory towards conversion into a socialist regime through a non-capitalist development model initiated by a military intervention. This influence manifested itself theoretically through the debates on the agency of revolution and revolutionary strategy while in practice it turned into the formation of conspiracies and ways of seeking co-operation with the juntas that were being prepared in the military.

The most important question to be answered in this present work is whether the perspective on the political role of the army enables us to understand the nature of the Turkish left, its development, and its eventual weakening. I believe that it does. The work shows that one of the main questions throughout the vital decade of the 1960s was the political role of the army, especially its

situation in a revolutionary movement. The study of this question, however, shows the weakness of the Turkish radical left both in its political thinking and organizational prowess. Even though the leftist movements saw a window of opportunity in the direct intervention of the army in politics and politicization of the military corps they could neither understand what this signified nor take the initiative to establish a strong and independent revolutionary movement. They were also unable to establish suitable organizations to react to the new developments in politics and socio-economics, the opening of the system to socialist ideas and the sharpening of the class conflict. Especially important was the distance of these lines from the working-class movement or more concretely from the workers themselves, who were supposed to be the agents of socialist revolution.

The 1970s inherited these failures of the socialist movement, the inability of the left to organize independently and to produce a coherent theory of revolution. Socialism gained mass momentum and popularity and it was stronger in terms of its relation with the masses, but it was vulnerable as the quality of the political-ideological debate was very low.<sup>1</sup> Though political and ideological discussions were much stronger in the 1960s, as the previous chapters have shown, almost no party was able to put forward satisfactory and unconventional ways of thinking to change the current status quo. The debates and discussions failed to produce revolutionary ideals and organizations appropriate to the conditions of Turkey. As a result, the 1960s have been remembered mostly in terms of the mass actions, the protests, strikes, demonstrations, boycotts and invasions, as well as the feelings of solidarity, rebellion, rage and hope, rather than for their ideas and a strong revolutionary movement that was transferred to the 1970s.

The weakness of the left despite the mass movements was mostly a result of its endemic splintering. The main reasons for the first division within the left during the 1960s, into the TİP on the one hand and the Belli movement and *Yön* circle on the other, were disagreements about the political role of the army. The role of the army was also one of the main points of divergence later on in Dev-Genç. It was one of the most important causes of the splintering of the left (along with mistrust among the leftists) and its inability to organize the revolutionary or working class and the leading socialist intellectuals.

A brief summary and discussion of the leftist movements' approach to the political role of the military is given in this concluding chapter in order to provide a more general and comprehensive understanding of the question and to help in evaluating the development of leftist thinking and political attitudes in the period 1960–71.

## 2 The armed forces as the guardian of the republic

The most striking aspect of the problem of the political role of the army is perhaps that all of the movements examined in this work consented to the guiding and guarding role being allotted to the armed forces. The military intervention on 27 May 1960 was not perceived as usurping power, but rather as the armed forces using the guardian role ascribed to them by the internal situation. The legitimacy of the armed forces participating in and controlling politics by using the threat of force was assented to by the radical leftist movements including the TİP. The leftists assented to the ethos of the military officers as public servants who were dedicated to protecting national interests, the secular and modern state and even socio-political liberties. The intervention was seen as justified because the civil rulers were perceived as the usurpers of power and unfit to rule, and in particular they were perceived as being against modernization, the Kemalist revolution and national interests. Almost every leader of the movements examined welcomed the 27 May military intervention, and intellectuals within the *Yön-Devrim* circle participated in the preparation for a new economic and political order under the command of a military cabinet. Kuvılcımlı sent a congratulatory message and offered advice to the new leaders of the military junta, and Aybar and Boran also wrote similar letters of advice.

The 27 May military intervention received the approval of all the groups as it was viewed as having ended the dictatorial and reactionary rule of the DP, which was regarded as collaborating with the imperialist powers and ending the social, political and economic independence of Turkey. Despite the bourgeois character of the new constitution the newer libertarian attitude towards trade unions and political movements was interpreted in terms of the closeness of the military elite to the people and in terms of supporting general national interests rather than the self-interest of the ruling alliance.

Almost all the movements examined assented to the guardian role of the army and supported the intervention because of particular social, ideological/political and historical views of the Turkish armed forces: *socially*, as the officer corps was recruited from the lower and middle classes and so was regarded as representing the common people rather than the ruling classes; *ideologically/politically*, as the military officers were Kemalist, nationalist (hence anti-imperialist), secularist and modernist; *historically*, as the army was regarded as being progressive. The armed forces were endowed with the role of guardian of the republic as they had founded the republic and carried out modernization reforms from the nineteenth century onwards, particularly in the early republican period. The leftist movements considered the Turkish armed forces to have been a major force in politics throughout the Ottoman empire and the early republican period, with

a comeback in 1960, as shown by the intervention. In other words, it was not a question of military versus non-military involvement in politics, but the form of the involvement that was under discussion.

### 3 Revolution through a coup or by means of a united national front

The leftist movements, however, differed in their attitude towards another coup and the possibility of transforming Turkey through military initiatives. The *Yön* and *Devrim* circles in particular supported the extension of the 27 May 'revolution' by another left-inclined intervention. The *Yön* circle regarded the education of what they defined as the intermediary layers, the military-civilian intelligentsia or vigorous forces, as its main objective, presenting them with an economic and political programme so as to reach the goal of the development of civilization in a social justice system. The *Yön* leadership saw capitalism and parliamentary democracy as systems linking Turkey directly to imperialist states and, therefore, hampering the development of Turkey. In a similar vein, *Devrim* advocated, and tried to prepare, another military intervention for a Third World Marxist agenda, to attain industrialization, development and independence. According to the *Yön-Devrim* circle, this was in essence the same as the goals of Kemalism, but in the current age *real Kemalism* could only be the adoption of a non-capitalist road. *Yön*, and even more so *Devrim*, advocated that the Kemalist, modernist, secularist and social welfare statist framework of the revolution must be extended by a more authoritarian regime ruled by a body of civilian and military leaders who were competent to carry out radical reforms in the socio-economic substructure. Such a regime would be populist as it was to work *for people*, and presumably *with people*, to attain an internationally set development-industrialization-social justice model.

The *Yön-Devrim* circle believed that socialism was in the distant future, as the working class and the peasantry were immature and politically unconscious. In order to generate consciousness, the alliance of the reactionary powers that had established its economic and ideological hegemony over the masses must first be broken by the military-civilian intelligentsia, who were conscious of the situation. For this reason, Avcıoğlu and his followers tried to incorporate those officers who were inclined to the left to sweep away the power of the comprador bourgeois and pre-capitalist classes, and above all the dependence of the country on the US. Military intervention would provide the *shortest route* to socialism in contrast to the long path of organizing the working class and generating consciousness. They explained in these terms that the *shortest route to socialism in Turkey was through Kemalism*.

The *Yön-Devrim* circle was influenced by the model of the neighbouring countries in the Middle East, such as the 'Free Officers' in Egypt and the Ba'ath

regimes in Syria and Iraq. Nasser's Egypt was especially influential in the policies for conversion to socialism. Land and agricultural reform, statist centralization, nationalization of resources and industries, in fact the minimum programme of national democratic revolution, were on their agenda.

Socialism was a distant objective for defenders of NDR, and could be considered after NDR had been achieved. Belli explained that there was no short route to socialism as Turkey had to first pass through both capitalist and nationalist stages. In other words, Turkey should first become an independent nation with a national bourgeoisie, instead of a collaborator bourgeoisie, by eliminating feudal remnants. This should be complemented by building capitalism to prepare the conditions for socialist revolution. In this line of reasoning, the revolutionary forces were the forces which would stand for the elimination of feudalism and establishment of an independent democratic state. Apart from the feudal forces and collaborator, or comprador, bourgeois, all other forces were to join together for this struggle.

The alliance with the Kemalists was almost the most important guarantee of the success of the national liberation movement, as is clear from discussions with the TİP and through the writings of NDR leaders. The NDR line differed from *Yön* as *Yön* was a *Marxist* interpretation of Kemalism, or a *Kemalist* interpretation of Marxism. The agent of the revolution differed slightly, as *Yön* expected a military coup d'état whereas the NDR line advocated a national front struggle, even though the success of the 'national front' was to be determined mainly by the military officers and a military intervention could give a start to a national liberation struggle.

In the case of the NDR circle, relations with the Kemalists, and in this sense the army, were not a matter of organic unity but took the form of an *alliance* within a single national front. As the NDR leadership was formed by the communists who were previously involved with the TKP, they considered themselves, as proletarian revolutionaries, to be in alliance with the Kemalists. However, they had neither a social base nor an independent organization. Their ideas did not differ significantly from those of the Kemalists at the time, at least where they remained within the limits of the constitution. They actually regarded this as a tactical move, as they did not want to scare military officers away from the national liberation movement.

However, neither the goals to be achieved nor the reconstruction of Kemalist history, the social classes and their positions differed significantly from the views of the *Yön-Devrim* circle. NDR followers based their strategy on the underdevelopment of capitalism in Turkey and related to that the immaturity of the proletariat. They also aimed to end ties with imperialism in order to remove obstacles for the full development of productive forces. The idea

that the imperialist powers were preventing Turkey from becoming a nation, a developed capitalist state with democracy, was also present in NDR ideology. The concern was again for the nation, national liberation and salvation, rather than ending class exploitation. Actually, NDR adherents had first developed their ideas in the pages of *Yön* so this is not surprising. The working class had neither an autonomous organization, that is, a revolutionary party, to lead the revolutionary movement nor was it consciously developed. Actually, the NDR movement represented bourgeois reformism rather than a revolutionary line, especially when taking into account the conditions then prevailing in Turkey.

The NDR line represented by the Belli group did not support a military intervention directly; however, the group lacked initiative and did not carry out the actions necessary to bring a revolutionary force, or, as they defined themselves, proletarian revolutionaries, to power. Actually, they emphasized that in the current political conflict power would not be shifted to the proletariat but (as they implied) to the military-civil intelligentsia. Even though the NDR movement did not defend the coup directly as did *Devrim*, the logical outcome of their political thinking and actions did not point to a different solution, a solution which would welcome a military intervention.

The groups who separated from Belli actually did do so as they wanted to take the initiative, unlike the older generation. However, the political thinking which motivated their actions also resulted from much the same problems as they were basically dominated by the same NDR ideology. The NDR strategy in general was based on undervaluation of the social, economic and cultural development of Turkey and overvaluation of its dependence on the West. All the NDR movements since as early as 1960 undervalued the level of capitalist development in Turkey and the growing dynamic working-class activity and were not in tune with the realities of Turkey. Even if there were some vestiges of feudalism and some foreign influence, Turkey hardly required a national liberation war of the type undergone by the colonial countries of Asia, the Middle East and South America. Just as Turkey was not in the same condition as the China or Cuba of 1949–50, neither was it like the Egypt of the early 1950s, where the despotic regime of King Faruq held power.

It was also questionable whether Turkey was an oppressed nation like other Third World countries. Turkey had never been a colony; instead it was built on the remnants of a huge empire. Even though Turkey had some sort of master–client relationship with the US during the 1960s, the relation – though hierarchical – was built on mutual benefits, largely on account of the geopolitical importance of Turkey. The poverty of Turkey, as compared to Western countries, could be explained mainly by internal dynamics or at least by a more in-depth understanding of capitalist development and the impact of

imperialism than that held by the leftists at the time. Imperialism was understood, however, in quite superficial terms, and to regard Turkey as an oppressed nation in need of a national liberation war was not very realistic.

The popular war or guerrilla war strategy was a consequence of turning the anti-imperialism discourse into a national liberation goal. As Turkey was under national oppression the young militants believed that it would not be very difficult to lead people to rebel against the imperialist or foreign oppressor. The majority of people were perceived to be suffering feudal repression, which was directly linked to imperialist oppression, so they were seen as liable to be provoked by armed propaganda tactics, and the army would not stand against a national liberation movement. The NDR ideology led to two wrong assumptions that resulted in a rapid failure of the guerrilla struggle – that the people would quickly join an NDR movement, and that the army, or at least a majority of the army, would not stand against it. While adherence to the NDR strategy for the older generation resulted in not taking an initiative and postponing political work among the working class, for the younger generation it resulted in taking untimely action when neither the material and logistical conditions for guerrilla warfare nor mass support were ready. Most peasants had suffered from poverty but not oppression by feudal powers; this was more the case in the Kurdish-populated eastern regions. Nor did people come across foreign powers, ‘foreign oppressors’, in their daily lives to give rise to nationalist feelings as in the first liberation war.

#### **4 The anti-imperialist alliance: a problematic relationship**

A revolutionary programme to be carried out mainly through the initiative of the army, or the co-operation of Kemalists and socialists in which Kemalist officers were decisive, was generally regarded as the NDR strategy. A bourgeois democratic revolution as a revolutionary stage had always been advocated by the left in Turkey, except for the TİP, and in the 1960s it was generally termed ‘NDR’. This strategy did not actually fit the realities of Turkey, and the strategy itself was also problematic. It was advocated by the Comintern for Eastern nations, but in the first place, the Comintern had little knowledge of/ or interest in non-Western states, and in the second, the main goal was to serve the interests of the USSR.

The Communist International (Comintern) was established in Moscow in 1919 and co-ordinated the activities of communist parties worldwide. However, located in the only socialist country at that time, it was under the domination of the Russian Communist Party. The Comintern was a Eurocentric organization with many recruits coming from Western countries and expected a proletarian revolution to occur all over Europe. The Comintern stated in its First

Congress that the liberation of colonies depended on proletarian revolution in the main European countries.<sup>2</sup> However, this idea was criticized by the Eastern delegates, and at the Second Congress in 1920 the liberation movement of the colonial people was delegated to an independent movement which did not necessarily depend on the Western proletarian revolution,<sup>3</sup> but the Comintern still failed to pay much attention to the problems of the liberation struggle. In this and the following congresses communists were to form alliances with the national liberation movements, although the proletarian movement was to keep its independence.<sup>4</sup> Comintern advocated a united front between communists and Eastern nationalists against Western imperialism. Despite the warnings of Eastern delegates, such as the Indian communist M.N. Roy at the Fifth Congress, the alliance with the national bourgeoisie became the priority of the Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership, particularly so as to safeguard the Soviet Union in the East during the Chinese liberation movement.<sup>5</sup> The alliance strategy turned out to be fatal for Chinese communists, who were defeated by the Chinese bourgeoisie. The Chinese communists had actually carried out orders given by the Comintern.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, communist Arab parties followed the instructions of the Comintern and in order to align with the bourgeoisie the communist movement supported the military coup of 1936 in Iraq.<sup>7</sup>

In the early 1920s the Soviet government moved to rapprochement as they pursued common interests against the Western powers in the region. However, there were dilemmas in this relationship as a bourgeois national movement against imperialists could turn against local communists. The aid given to Mustafa Kemal was seen as problematic in this sense, as the Kemalist leadership had assassinated Mustafa Suphi and other leading communists.<sup>8</sup> The Soviet Union, however, completely ignored this as a result of its prioritization of foreign policy. The Soviet aid, and the Comintern's declaration that Turkey's Independence War was an anti-imperialist war, were the factors that dominated the TKP's attitude towards the Kemalist regime.

After the assassination of Mustafa Suphi, the Şefik Hüsnü leadership mostly remained loyal to Moscow, and the interests of the communist movement in Turkey were subordinated to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. The TKP had become Stalinized when Şefik Hüsnü rose to become the leader of the party. Şefik Hüsnü supported the bourgeois Kemalist regime as an anti-imperialist and progressive movement that would achieve a bourgeois democratic revolution. The Comintern classified the strategies and the stages for each country according to its current historical stage in 1928 and this was adopted by the TKP under Şefik Hüsnü. In this classification, Turkey was defined as semi-feudal and semi-dependent, and a bourgeois democratic revolution was,

therefore, advocated and this policy did not change, even in the 1960s. The TKP under Şefik Hüsnü preferred to remain as an opposition group and only criticized the Kemalist regime from time to time; however, it completely lost the perspective of a socialist revolution.

In the 1960s these groups, especially that of Belli, shared the same perspective on the past, and it was thought that it was largely thanks to the false perception of the Comintern that the period between 1920 and 1923 was recognized as an anti-imperialist war.<sup>9</sup> The leftist circles loyal to the Şefik Hüsnü tradition, Belli's NDR, the TKP foreign bureau and the PDA advocated the same linear, reformist programme of NDR, as Turkey was still semi-feudal and semi-dependent. At least a section of the army, even if not all of it, which was loyal to the Kemalist tradition would be regarded as one of the most important constituents of the current NDR.

The Belli circle, for example, reconstructed late Ottoman history and especially republican history and defined revolutionary and contra-revolutionary periods on the basis of this reconstruction. According to this, Kemalism was an anti-imperialist movement and the early Kemalist regime up to the 1950s was a national democratic revolutionary period. This was a revolution characterized by ending the hegemony of the comprador bourgeoisie and the feudal state.<sup>10</sup> The Kemalist leadership represented the petty bourgeoisie not the bourgeoisie, therefore the revolution was not a bourgeois revolution. Erdost argued, for example, that the Kemalist revolution depended on the petty bourgeoisie, the working class and the peasantry.<sup>11</sup> In terms of ideology it was represented by petty-bourgeois radicals, and both THKO and THKP-C also considered the Kemalist revolution to represent petty-bourgeois radicalism. The bourgeois character of the state and the army was neglected on account of this reading of the Kemalist, period which was regarded as a successful national liberation struggle and a semi-successful national democratic revolution. National democratic revolution, however, was not achieved mainly because of the decisions (or indecisiveness) of the petty-bourgeois radicals, the Kemalists, who had carried out the NDR.<sup>12</sup>

### **5 The revised Soviet theory and its impact on the Turkish left**

Around the year 1956 Soviet analysts called for a fundamental reappraisal of communist theoretical positions regarding the national liberation question and especially the Middle Eastern movements. The Moscow Communist Parties' Conference in 1960 called for the developing countries to strive for national democracy. This meant fighting against imperialism but also rejecting dictatorial and despotic methods of government; the people must enjoy broad democratic rights and liberties, such as establishing political parties and social

organizations and participation in governance. Non-capitalist development was recommended as the best way to abolish age-long backwardness and improve living standards, and agrarian reform and other democratic social changes were advocated. In a speech at the congress Khrushchev stressed the close relationship between the national liberation movement and socialism.<sup>13</sup> National democracy was regarded as a transitional stage to socialism. The theoretical pronouncements of the conference (attended by eighty-one communist parties, those from North African and Middle East countries in particular) reiterated the doctrine of peaceful coexistence between socialist and capitalist states. Importantly, neutralism and peaceful roads to national liberation and socialism were recognized as legitimate options for Third World nations. The progressive role of a broad national front in the struggle for national liberation was emphasized. Moreover, it was declared that independent states in the Third World which were antagonistic to Western imperialism could progress to socialism along the non-capitalist road without passing through a capitalist stage. The programme adopted by the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1961) reiterated the progressive nature of the national liberation movement in general and declared that Marxist-Leninists differentiated between the nationalism of the oppressed nations, which was historically justifiable, and that of the oppressing nations.

It is apparent that most leftist lines of the 1960s were influenced by the new Soviet doctrine for a different path of transition to a socialist regime in the Third World nations. The new Soviet position and the developments in the Middle East coincided with the 27 May military coup which deposed the pro-American government, and, therefore, the new theories seemed incompatible with the developments in Turkish politics. As explained in the previous chapters, the point of view put forward in *Devrim* on national democracy – development through a non-capitalist road – was derived from the new Soviet theorization, even though Avcioğlu and the other major actors did not have an organic relation with Moscow. However, it must have been obvious to the group that Soviet support was essential, even to remain impartial after the seizure of power by the national revolutionaries. Kemalism, as understood by the circle, was entirely in tune with the new Soviet position for the Third World countries. Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 4, the revolutionary discourse of *Devrim* was perfectly in tune with the pronouncements made in the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU. *Devrim* used similar terminology, such as ‘nationalist revolutionaries’ or ‘national democracy’, and moreover introduced the ‘Soviet view’ as a series of articles in the newspaper. I speculate that the adherents of *Devrim* knew that without some sort of support from the Soviet Union there was no chance for a revolutionary junta to remain in

power and carry out the industrial development project. The attempts of the *Yön* circle to influence the politics of the TİP and the harsh criticisms made of the TİP can also be seen as part of the same thinking. Avcıoğlu was probably trying to convince not only the TİP but also the USSR (through the communists in the party) to back up a military junta to pave the way for a new transitory regime.

The case of the TKP external bureau, on the other hand, is also interesting. The TKP had initially condemned the military intervention of 27 May, but this was retracted in the conference in 1962, immediately after the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU.

The previous chapters have explained at length how the TİP leadership was alone among the internal leftist movements in adhering to parliamentary democracy. The TİP had consented to the guardian role of the army and regarded the 27 May intervention as legitimate as a result of this conceptualization. The party did not differ from other leftist movements in its perception of the army as revolutionary, modernist, progressive and truly democratic. The TİP was also indebted to the 27 May intervention, as it resulted in the ban on socialist parties being lifted and protected civil rights. However, the involvement of the military in politics ended – or should have ended – as far as the TİP was concerned with the guardianship role. The party believed that as it was legal to organize the working class and as the democratic system was open to socialism – not proletarian dictatorship but mild socialism – it was the duty of civilians to work under parliamentary democracy to carry out the extension of the 27 May revolution through legal parties and civil organizations such as the TİP.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the TİP had acted from the premise that Turkey had for the most part completed its bourgeois revolution and ensured the working of democracy through the intervention of the young officers in 1960. As long as the new constitution and the parliamentary system were protected, the newly rising working class and impoverished masses could push for radical reforms, as promised in the party programme. The TİP regarded democracy as also defending the interests of the labouring classes. Common people could participate directly in governance, and therefore democracy was not just a play staged to deceive the masses and protect the status quo, as other leftist currents believed.

Interestingly, however, the TİP and other leftists groups advocated a socio-economic reform programme which was similar to that proposed for Third World countries by the CPSU. Importantly, the party had also advocated a non-capitalist road to development in its party programme. The TİP was naturally not a party tied to Moscow; however, the party programme was prepared after

appointing Aybar, who had been close to the TKP in the 1950s as chair of the party, and the other main administrators of the party, Behice Boran, Sadun Aren and Nihat Sargın, were also formerly TKP members. As the TKP had always direct links to the CPSU it is not difficult to assume that these leaders were aware of the change of position and discourse of the CPSU towards Third World countries. The party programme, especially the non-capitalist development road, shows at the very least some sort of influence. Moreover, the affirmation of peaceful roads to socialism and the emphasis on broadening democratic rights and liberties were the new propositions for Third World countries made by the CPSU in 1962. The Soviet Union, though, changed its position towards new states that were governed by an authoritarian military clique, criticizing Egypt, for example, for mistreatment of communists and the working class, and so-called despotic regimes were also condemned by the Soviet leadership. In this respect the TİP was more in tune with the new changes in the Soviet Union.

This supports the view of Ömer Laçiner, who suggested that the TİP's SR strategy and adherence to parliamentary democracy was not due to a principled objection to the coups but actually due to the Soviet Union's decision.<sup>14</sup> According to Laçiner, TİP leadership, except Aybar, acknowledged that the Soviet Union had a pact with the USA after World War II which determined that Turkey would fall within the hegemony of the USA. They either knew or were warned by the Soviet Union not to challenge the *détente* and, therefore, they did not support a military intervention.

As Laçiner has also argued and as mentioned above, the TİP really did not take up a position against the military interventions as a matter of political principle. However, it was against the *raison d'être* of the party itself, as it was a legal party, to support another coup over which it would also have no control. Even though administrators who were TKP members could have been warned by the Soviet Union, I do not believe that this was the only reason behind the party's rejection of short-cuts. Aybar had stood for libertarian socialism from 1945 onwards and, therefore, he could not but oppose strategies favouring military intervention towards a socialist transformation. That was probably why Laçiner excluded Aybar from this group. Boran had actually drawn attention to more practical problems regarding military rule and in that sense it was more reasonable to assume that she had reservations about the practicality of the strategy. Moreover, she considered that the project did not fit the conditions in Turkey, which was a politically and economically mature nation, at least when compared to the new Middle Eastern or African nations.

Actually all other movements initially had ideas of establishing a political party or influencing and even dominating the TİP, but only when such plans failed did they resort to revolutionary strategies and the policies of intrigue politics,

which basically meant preparing a junta or provoking one. Belli and Kıvılcımlı as TKP convicts were banned by law from establishing or joining a political party. However, as mentioned before both had initially tried to influence the party and even join it. The *Yön* circle had also planned to establish a party but finally gave up. The same people attended the Second Congress of the TİP in order to have an impact on it. The main difference among the leftist movements was not between reformist and revolutionary lines but in being open to different tactics, especially under restraint or when opportunities were presented. The *Yön-Devrim*, Kıvılcımlı and NDR lines actually saw less opportunity in legal activities and comparably more in a new military intervention, especially after the victory of the AP in the 1965 general election, to realize basically the same linear, evolutionary set of socio-economic changes as aimed for by the TİP. The lack of a class struggle discourse in these movements led to the adoption of strategies directly or indirectly favouring the intervention of the army.

The different paths taken by the leftist movements in the 1960s, including the NDR movement led by Belli, were in tune with the new Soviet propositions regarding the socialist struggle in the Third World. These international developments coincided with the internal political developments, with 27 May and the new constitution. They had prepared the ground for the legal struggle on the one hand, and on the other hand for the extreme expectations that were built around a military intervention. Apparently all the movements, though without a direct relation to the CPSU, were influenced by the Soviet theory. This was a deviation from Marxism-Leninism in both acknowledging peaceful methods to transition and the vanguard of the non-communist forces. However, it was well suited to the leftist Stalinist tradition of Turkey, which also aimed to co-operate with the Kemalists, and for the left Kemalists such as İlhan Selçuk and Doğan Avcıoğlu it was an opportunity to unite with the socialists for radical change. On the other hand it was an opportunity for the TİP to make a fresh start to redeem the TKP past, which had on numerous occasions failed to organize and sustain a continuous impact on Turkish politics.

## **6 Divergence in the Turkish left: SR strategy and the revolutionary leadership problem**

The TİP's programme, which was intended to be carried out using democratic methods and under the present democratic system without the involvement of the army, was represented by the SR strategy. This was an aberration in Turkish leftist history, as the revolutionary phase for Turkey had always been determined as a democratic revolution under Stalinist influence as a result of its TKP heritage. However, the SR strategy was actually directed against those advocating change through a military coup. The TİP rejected this and claimed

that socialism had to be built from below by the active participation of all labouring classes. Therefore, the revolutionary stage discussion, NDR versus SR, was actually a discussion on revolutionary agency and the role of the military in politics. In other words, the difference was in the methods of achieving power, or the *strategy*, and in the actual conduct of socialist policy rather than in the *substance* of the socialist movement.

There have been debates on why the TİP had actually advocated the SR strategy. Yalçın Küçük, for example, argued that the NDR strategy in Turkey was a response to the TİP's sudden shift to the SR strategy.<sup>15</sup> I agree with Metin Çulhaoğlu on this issue, who has claimed the contrary: the SR was only a response to NDR to emphasize the leadership of the working class and other labouring classes in a transition to socialism.<sup>16</sup> This claim appears to be supported by the fact that Mihri Belli (using the pen name Mehmet Doğu) and Doğan Avcıoğlu had made their arguments explicit in *Yön* as early as 1962, and the TİP's early programme was actually no different from the minimum programme of NDR. However, the TİP had reacted to short-cut defenders as early as 1962, and it was only after the rise of NDR rhetoric that the party started to voice its strategy as SR. The difference was actually in the agent and the tactics, and the TİP also did not claim to bring about a socialist revolution right away and build a socialist system at once. The party only advocated sweeping away the vestiges of the feudal system and ending ties with imperialist countries, in particular by withdrawing from NATO.

Another argument used to explain the TİP's SR strategy is that the TİP only advocated SR out of rivalry with Belli, who had been locked in a leadership battle with Zeki Baştımar for the control of the TKP. Baştımar was close to some of the TİP leaders, especially Aybar, Boran and Sargın. Some writers interpret the dispute mainly as power rivalry within the TKP in its broader sense. I believe that there is a grain of truth in this emphasis on the dispute, as apparently TİP leaders (such as Aybar, Boran or Nihat Sargın) were trying to avoid the party being engulfed by Belli adherents.<sup>17</sup> Aybar had also mentioned the danger of the old guard destroying the party from within. However, the strategy was not exclusively advocated in order to combat the NDR movement of Belli. Boran had stood against the short-cut road to socialism before Belli was around. Moreover, the TKP at that time, the mid-sixties, advocated NDR not SR. Therefore, one can assume that the TİP's insistence on SR as the agency of the people to build socialism was not simply to defeat the rivalry stemming from the history of the TKP.

The TİP demanded a larger share of power for the working class, the labourers and the peasantry. It seems that the party was eager to make a fresh start for the leftist movement in Turkey by relinquishing the TKP past,

even though prominent actors had previously been involved with the TKP. According to Nihat Sargin, in this sense the TİP had an unofficial pact with the external bureau of the TKP to remain independent and its main goals were different from those of other movements.<sup>18</sup> The TİP intended to broaden democratic rights and freedoms by increasing the direct participation of people in governance. The TİP's strategy was also parallel to the Soviet Union's shift to a doctrine of peaceful coexistence, and it was a reformist line rather than a revolutionary one.

However, as outlined in Chapter 5, the party was torn internally along different lines – the more libertarian socialist, even Western social democrat, line (of Aybar and associates) and the more conventional Stalinist line (of Aren–Boran and associates). The party was not indifferent to relations with the Soviets, as the problem had turned into an open crisis after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. It is apparent from Aybar's reaction that he had recognized the reaction in the party caused by his condemnation of the invasion. According to Nihat Sargin, Aybar had actually interpreted the reaction in the party by those close to TKP as a 'Moscow coup' as he had misunderstood them.<sup>19</sup>

The SR strategy actually conflicted with the party focusing its attention on the peasantry and with Aybar's plan to broaden the party by extending it to each and every village. Aren–Boran on the other hand believed in intensification of the party by educating the working class and narrowing down the membership to a more orthodox socialist group. It is apparent that the party actually had problems with the SR strategy but not the legal democratic methods for transformation. However, the party was far from able to convince socialists outside the party on the road to be followed, especially the younger generation. This was perhaps logical as the party could only attract about 3 per cent of the votes, and its strength was no match for that of the anti-revolutionary alliance. The party also was not very democratic, especially with regard to critical views or opposition in the party, and could not empathize with the needs and requirements of university students and so alienated them. The party did not look very convincing, especially to the young people of Turkey. Yet the existence of a legal workers' party brought about an increase in awareness, as people had become conscious of their problems when the party publicized them in the media. The trade union work which emphasized the interests of the workers and the workers' movements, strikes and even attempts at self-organization in a remote town in Anatolia in the late 1960s show the impact of the TİP. It is almost certain that in time social democracy could have achieved a certain momentum in Turkey if a military intervention which was instigated largely on the basis of radical activities in the army had not interrupted these developments.

### 7 Final remarks: the army, the state and capitalist relations

The problem of the political role of the army stemmed especially from the atypical bourgeois revolution that Turkey had experienced according to the Marxist understanding of the term 'bourgeois revolution'.<sup>20</sup> A form of democratic revolution, termed a 'national democratic revolution', was observed during the transition to a republican regime. However, the absence of a strong or national bourgeoisie and the absence of land reform, which thus protected the feudal form of relations in the land system, led to the idea that the revolution was not a complete or typical bourgeois revolution as characterized in Marxist literature. This led to confusion over the character of the state and, related to that, the role of the army, particularly as the left viewed the military officers as forming the main leadership of the national liberation movement.

Actually, all groups had recognized the establishment of state capitalism when the republic was formed. This was one of the most important characteristics of Turkey and its atypical bourgeois revolution and led to confusion, which could easily be overcome by not remaining superficially loyal to the texts or to the opinions from Moscow but instead closely examining the socio-economic conditions and development of Turkey. However, the existence of capitalism and the relation between the state bureaucratic bourgeoisie as some leftists saw it and the bourgeoisie could not be resolved. In the end most leftists had included involvement of the army in their political views with the assumption that it did not represent the bourgeoisie. This was mainly because the radical leftist currents at the time only vaguely considered the army as an instrument, function or organization of the state, and when they did define it as such the state and the army were generally regarded as being above and beyond class relations. This was peculiar to Turkey, as it was assumed that it did not have a powerful bourgeoisie to rule over the state.

The military officers, on the other hand, were considered petty bourgeois as they were mostly recruited from the common people. This meant that they could then have any ideology – ultra right or left – as the petty bourgeois tended to swing in their ideological inclinations. It was the consciousness or the circumstances which determined the ideology and political attitude of the military officers. Yet as they represented the nation they were assumed to protect the interests of the nation, not just in military terms but also in economics and politics, and in this sense were also anti-imperialist. Moreover, the army was endowed with the national-state ideology, which was Kemalism. Kemalism with its principles of nationalism, reformism, secularism, *étatisme* and populism was reconcilable with the goals and motivations of national democratic revolution.

There was a logical flaw in this argument as the state was equated with the nation. Kemalism was in this sense not recognized as the bourgeois ideology

of the Turkish nation-state but was instead a radical petty-bourgeois ideology and therefore a revolutionary and quasi-leftist ideology. This major misapprehension was at the root of the leftist expectations of the army, which was assumed not to support the interests of the bourgeoisie.

The confusion can be demonstrated particularly by studying the discourse on the bureaucrat bourgeoisie in terms of class definitions and relations, which mainly referred to the armed forces. Belli, Kılıncımlı and the TKP had defined the ruling military cadre as bureaucrat bourgeoisie, as the power aligned with the bourgeoisie on account of the application of state capitalism. However, they did not consider the consequences of this for class alignments and relations. Whether as a bureaucrat bourgeoisie or not, the armed forces are an essential part of the 'relations of productions' (in Marxist terms) under any system. The armed forces do not exist entirely independently of the socio-economic structure of any regime, let alone a bourgeois regime. The military depends on state revenues and generally consumes about 20 per cent of central state budgets. The armed forces in Turkey, as noted by Divitçioğlu and Küçükömer for example, had founded OYAK, the financial-industrial complex belonging to the armed forces in 1962. Under these circumstances it was obvious that the army was part of the bourgeoisie and unavoidably so in a capitalist regime. However, the relation of the armed forces to capitalism was not explained, and most strikingly the leftists, apart from a small clique within the TİP, did not reflect on the foundation of OYAK, nor about the fact that its foundation also resulted in the growth of a group with economic interest in the army and caused stratification among the low- and high-ranking officers and non-commissioned officers.

The major failure in the assessment of the armed forces, then, was in the recognition of class relations – the relations to the mode of production. It was not possible to see whether the Turkish armed forces were anti-bourgeois or anti-capitalist. Being anti-imperialist, nationalist or progressive does not necessarily mean being anti-capitalist, and, moreover, being anti-capitalist does not turn directly into being socialist. One can be fascist and still be anti-capitalist, for example. In contrast to the dominant idea of the radical leftists, the armed forces hardly had an anti-capitalist tradition, let alone a socialist one, and as a result the idea of a military intervention followed by an evolutionary transformation trajectory into a socialist regime was very problematic.

In fact most of the circles had different and contradictory perceptions of the attitudes of the military officers and tried to understand this by making categorizations within bureaucracy. These categorizations were, however, schematic and were again based on the idea that Kemalism represented anti-imperialist revolutionary ideology. Anti-imperialism was only meaningful

in Marxist thinking because of its relation with capitalism; however, *the programme of democratic revolution drawn up by the majority of the leftist movements was essentially a capitalist programme*. It was argued that eliminating the relationship with the US would impose a socialist system directly. Such an idea contradicted the idea that socialism was essentially a political organization established by conscious actions rather than being imposed from external conditions.

The work of the radical leftists which aligned the armed forces into their revolutionary strategies posed serious questions on their views of the state and class relations. The conceptualization was also internally contradictory. The Leninist view that perceived the state as an instrument of the dominant class stood alongside views that regarded the state and its security force, the military, as an autonomous arbiter of power. The radical leftists did not try to develop new formulations to understand this reality and the relation of the army to power and the state, instead retaining the Leninist theory. However, they claimed that its specific history and class content meant that the Turkish army was different. The autonomy, hegemony and impartiality of the military were based on its historical tradition and ideological power mainly because of its nation-building agency, which the military shared with the civil intelligentsia. In these terms, radical leftists had actually internalized Kemalist ideology and their ideas on the Turkish army were a derivative of this.

However, the classification of the military with the civil intelligentsia was very problematic. First, it did not explain how the military actually derived its autonomy, and second, such an approach disregarded the fact that military officers are major or predominant political actors by virtue of their actual or threatened use of force, something they do not share with civilians. This leads to problematic assumptions when referring to governance by both of the actors together. Civilians can be replaced, but officers cannot without resorting to extreme measures of violence, and military coups by their nature generally result in oppression and violence towards civilians.

Overall, the leftists lost the opportunity to become a strong ideological force in Turkey as the left could not produce an alternative to the state/national/bourgeois ideology of Turkey. It only challenged the parliamentary system or the bourgeois governments in power, and in the meantime internalized the modernist/positivist Kemalist ideology and retreated from socialist revolution. A revolutionary ideology in the basic sense had necessitated creating an alternative social culture and political codes. The problem with the leftist movement was that its Marxist education was mainly derived from Stalinism, which had, like Kemalism, a strong positivist, pragmatic, nationalistic and authoritarian character in its political thinking.

The 'putschism' of the *Devrim* circle was one of the classic tactics of political opponents to remedy political problems that had existed in Turkey for centuries. The resort to revolutionary violence to silence opponents and the militarized strategy adopted by the younger generation were also similar to the lack of tolerance and resort to violence in the face of opposition shown by the ruling classes, as well as being a symptom of the highly militaristic Turkish culture. In this respect the revolutionaries were unable to differ in their mentality, social behaviour and political thought from the national ideology of Turkey and the national culture. This made it easier for the general public to identify with the revolutionaries to some extent, but at the same time the movement was overall devoid of revolutionary substance and remained either a bourgeois reformism or a form of rebellion. There were no socialist movements based on the working class or with an alternative form or idea of how society should be structured. It might be too much to expect a movement in its infancy to transcend the socio-political culture that its members were born into. Moreover, the success of the Kemalist revolution, which has managed to extend its ideological influence and to a large section of society, seems to have blocked the rise of the socialist-communist movement as a separate pathway representing ideas of how to change society to end exploitation and liberate people.

The 1960s ended with the radical leftist movements in trauma. The discourse of the radical left on the military has generally been associated with its dependency on Kemalism. In this respect the 1970s have been regarded as marking a break from this. The impact of the workers' revolt on 15–16 June 1970 and the suppression of this revolt by the military forces, the rising Kurdish socialist movement and consequently the questioning of the position of the state and the political role of the armed forces were the initial reasons leading to suspicion of the role of the army. However, the major blow came with 12 March, of course, when almost all the leaders of the young revolutionaries were annihilated and working-class organizations suppressed. Although leftists resorted to different methods, tactics and strategy in the 1970s, all social democratic, socialist, leftist and revolutionary movements were destroyed in the military intervention of 1980. Despite 12 March 1971 and 12 September 1980, some leftist circles in Turkey still claim the military in Turkey have a political role, especially in safeguarding the republic against Islamic movements. The role of the military in politics in today's Turkey is still a matter of very vital debate, especially in light of such recent developments as the 'Ergenekon' trials, where military officers and others have been brought to trial for establishing juntas to force the government out of power. Most socialist organizations have not backed military intervention under any circumstance, but despite past events there are still some groups which are ambivalent.

# NOTES

## Chapter 1

- 1 Hobbes, *English Works*, ed. William Molesworth, London, 1839–45, vol. VI, p. 122.
- 2 Dankwart A. Rustow, 'The Military in Middle Eastern Society and Politics', in Sydney N. Fisher (ed.), *The Military in the Middle East: Problems in Society and Government*, Ohio State University Press, 1963, pp. 4–5.
- 3 Ulus, interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul. See also Sevim Belli, *Boşuna mı Çığnedik*, Belge Yayınları, 1994, pp. 450–1.
- 4 Ulus, interview with Nihat Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul. See also Nail Satlıgan, 'TKP, Mihri Belli, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı', *Devrimci Marksizm: Teori-Politik Dergi*, 2, 2006, p. 41.
- 5 Ulus, interview with Belli.
- 6 The PDA Revolutionary Workers-Peasants Party of Turkey [Türkiye İhtilalci İşçi-Köylü Partisi: TİİKP] and Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Turkey [Türkiye Marksist-Leninist Komünist Partisi TKP-ML] faction, however, have been mentioned only but not examined separately. Their main ideas were formed after the 12 March intervention.
- 7 The relation with the TİP or some TİP leaders and the TKP foreign office has not been proved but strongly suggested. See Haluk Yurtsever, *Süreklilik ve Kopuş içinde Marksizm ve Türkiye Solu*, 2nd ed., El Kitapları, 2002, pp. 172–3.
- 8 Some of the other journals covered but referred to less frequently are *Ant*, *Emek* and *Kurtuluş*.

## Chapter 2

- 1 William Hale, *1789'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, Hil yn, 1996, p. 24.
- 2 Dankwart A. Rustow, 'The Military in Middle Eastern Society and Politics', in Sydney N. Fisher (ed.), *The Military in the Middle East: Problems in Society and Government*, Ohio State University Press, 1963, p. 18.
- 3 A survey of ten assemblies between 1920 and 1957 showed that during single-party rule the percentage of representatives with a military background varied between 18 and 23 per cent. Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, MIT Press, 1965, pp. 210–11.

- 4 These are known as the 'six arrows': republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, statism and reformism.
- 5 Hale, *1789'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 80.
- 6 Roger Paul Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', PhD dissertation, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, Department of Political Science, 1974, p. 75.
- 7 Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, pp. 210–11.
- 8 Sydney Nettleton Fisher, 'The Role of the Military in Society and Government in Turkey', in Fisher (ed.), *The Military in the Middle East*, p. 29.
- 9 Erik-Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, I.B.Tauris, 1998, p. 351.
- 10 Ergun Özbudun, *The Role of the Military in Recent Turkish Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1966, p. 13.
- 11 The reluctance of the military to get involved in police functions is understood from a professional point of view. Janowitz argues that:  
 'The military either as a result of the influence of Western forms or because of self-generated heroic ideals, seeks, wherever possible to withdraw from the continuous task of day-to-day policing and repression of political opposition ... It seems to operate on the assumption that minor day-to-day resort to force weakens its organizational capacity to intervene successfully with shock tactics and with overpowering impact.' Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New States: An Essay in Comparative Analysis*, University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. 37.
- 12 Özbudun, *The Role of the Military in Recent Turkish Politics*, p. 14.
- 13 Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, Doruk, Ankara, 2002, p. 19.
- 14 See Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İletişim yn., 3. Baskı, 1993, pp. 197–9; Sungur Savran, *Türkiye'de Sınıf Mücadeleleri*, Kardelen, 1992, pp. 95–7; Murat Belge, 'Ahmet Hamdi Başar'ın Kitabı Dolayısıyla 27 Mayıs Üzerine Düşünceler', *Birikim*, 11 January 1976.
- 15 Çağlar Keyder, 'The Political Economy of Turkish Democracy', *New Left Review*, 115, 1979, pp. 24–7.
- 16 According to Savran, these 'left Kemalist' interpretations were wrong, as the attitude of the bourgeoisie on 27 May was misunderstood. Savran, *Türkiye'de Sınıf Mücadeleleri*, p. 96.
- 17 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', pp. 80, 85.
- 18 Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 353.
- 19 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', p. 274.
- 20 One of the most important reforms accomplished by the MBK was the establishment of the State Planning Organization. Many civilian politicians, however, resented what they considered to be an encroachment upon their authority by a group of technocrats. All top planning officials had to resign after 1961 and were replaced by more conservative bureaucrats as a result of civilian pressure. Another measure taken by the MBK was the inclusion of agricultural income as a taxable category. This, however, was to apply only to large and middle-sized farm operators. Significantly, the agricultural sector, which provided about three-quarters of the Turkish national income, had been exempt from an agricultural income tax for many decades. However, tax rates were lowered as a result of resistance from the landed interests through their influence on political parties. The MBK decided to remove fifty-five Kurdish ağas (owners of large lands and often many

- villages) to compulsory residence in western Turkey and confiscate their lands for future distribution with the hope of breaking the semi-feudal system predominant in many parts of eastern Turkey. One of the first actions of the CHP–AP coalition government following MBK rule was to return the ağas to their positions and to restore their land and property that had not yet been distributed.
- 21 Özbudun, *The Role of the Military in Recent Turkish Politics*, p. 38.
  - 22 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 12.
  - 23 Fisher, 'The Role of the Military in Society and Government in Turkey', p. 35.
  - 24 Doğan Akyaz, *Askeri Müdahalelerin Orduya Etkisi: Hiyerarşi Dışı Örgütlenmeden Emir Komuta Zincirine*, İletişim yn., 2002, p. 145.
  - 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 148–9.
  - 26 Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, p. 22.
  - 27 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', p. 89.
  - 28 Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 358.
  - 29 Taha Parla, 'Türkiye'de Merkantilist Militarizm 1960–1998', *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu*, ed. Ahmet İnel, Ali Bayramoğlu, İletişim, 2004, p. 202.
  - 30 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', pp. 117–18.
  - 31 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', p. 148.
  - 32 Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, pp. 188–9. See the following chapters for details.
  - 33 Hale, *1789'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 161.
  - 34 See for example, Hale, *1789'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 162; Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', p. 156. See the following chapters for details.
  - 35 For the full text of the 12 March memorandum, see Zafer Üskül, *Siyaset ve Asker*, İmge, 1997, p. 219.
  - 36 Hale, *1789'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 153.
  - 37 These provinces were Adana, Ankara, Eskişehir, İstanbul, İzmir, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Zonguldak, Diyarbakır, Hatay and Siirt.
  - 38 Nye, 'The Military in Turkish Politics 1960–1973', p. 156.
  - 39 Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, pp. 192–3.
  - 40 Fisher, 'The Role of the Military in Society and Government in Turkey', p. 22.
  - 41 Ahmet İnel, 'Bir Toplumsal Sınıf Olarak Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri', in *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu*, p. 42.
  - 42 For an account of such examples, see Tanel Demirel, 'Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin Toplumsal Meşruiyeti Üzerine', *Türkiye'de Ordu*, pp. 345–81.

### Chapter 3

- 1 As a variety of writers contributed to *Yön*, I will consider the views of its founders (see below for the core circle), and inevitably the views of the editor and ideologue of *Yön-Devrim*, Doğan Avcıoğlu, as they relate to the movement. However, differences of opinion among the core circle, such as Mümtaz Soysal, will also be stressed.
- 2 Such ideology and action are generally referred to as the 'radicalization of the petty bourgeois' in Marxist literature. See, for example, Ergun Aydınoglu, *Türk Solu: Eleştirel Bir Tarih Denemesi 1960–1971*, Belge Yayınları, 1992, pp. 38–40.
- 3 Jacob Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, E.J. Brill, 1974, pp. 50–1.

- 4 A total of 187 writers contributed to *Yön*, indicating how the journal had activated leftists working in political, cultural and social fields. Niyazi Berkes, Şevket Süreyya and even Sadun Aren were influential figures among these contributors, in addition to the core cadre. Cahit Tanyol, İdris Küçükömer, Fethi Nazi, Rauf Mutluay, Adil Aşçıoğlu, Atilla İlhan, Mehmet Kemal, Erol Uluben, Çetin Altan and İbrahim Çamlı contributed frequently. After 1964 Mihri Belli and Erdoğan Berktaş were also influential writers. Hikmet Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı: Yön hareketi*, Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986, pp. 61, 328.
- 5 Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu provided most of the capital for the journal. Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı*, pp. 53–4. Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu, Mümtaz Soysal and Doğan Avcıoğlu were cited as being among the founders of *Yön*. İlhan Selçuk and İlhami Soysal were not mentioned as they were working for other newspapers, nor was Hamdi Avcıoğlu, who also provided a portion of the capital, as he was not involved in any of the political aspects, only managing the technical and financial affairs of the journal.
- 6 Gökhan Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar: Yön-Devrim Hareketi*, TÜSTAV, 2002, pp. 31, 41. They had acted together in the movement before the 1960 intervention, supporting the CHP against the DP.
- 7 Mümtaz Soysal had suggested the name of the journal. He explained later that they aimed to show 'direction' to Turkey as it was devoid of one. Interview with Atılğan, Ankara, 6 September 2000. Quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 256.
- 8 According to the journalist (and famous 'groom' of İsmet İnönü) Metin Tokar, this declaration indicated the start of the era of socialism. Tokar, *Solda ve Sağda Vuruşanlar*, Akis, 1971, p. 12. Even the TİP, for example, did not use the term (despite the proposals of Rasih İleri and Yücel Kıvılcım) and used the word 'toplumculuk' instead until the 1966 Malatya Congress.
- 9 *Yön*, 1, no. 1, 1961, pp. 12–13. This declaration in the first issue was signed by 164 intellectuals and as it was open to signatories during the following weeks was signed by hundreds more, finally reaching a total of 1,042. Signatories were markedly an elitist group of teachers, writers, officers (including a general), politicians, trade unionists, entrepreneurs and administrators. They declared their willingness to unite around a rapid development programme to attain civilization through social justice which was defined as the objective of Atatürk's revolutions. It was discussed outside Turkey and translated into English by Frank Tachau, and into French by René Giraud. See *Middle Eastern Affairs*, 14, 3, March 1963, pp. 72–8, for the translation and Frank Tachau's comments. For an occupational breakdown of the signatories of the *Yön* statement, see Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 53.
- 10 'Yapıcı Milliyetçilik', *Yön*, 1, no. 4, 1962, p. 3.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Labourism was based on the British Labour Party model. Landau remarks that labourism was actually rather remote from the original concepts of Kemalism. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 56.
- 13 Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizm Anlayışımız', *Yön*, 1, no. 36, 1962, p. 3. *Yön* supported this view through the declarations of people who were very close to Atatürk, such as Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Tefik Rüşti Aras. Karaosmanoğlu claimed in one of the forums that 'Atatürk's principles could be defined as national socialism'

- and Atatürk's ideal was to 'reach a classless society', which was an 'ideal of socialism' as well. Aras, likewise, had claimed that during the foundation of the CHP, some of the members like him tried to put socialist principles into the party programme but were prevented by the liberals. 'Açıkoturum: Atatürk'ün Özlediği Türkiye'yi Kurabildik mi?', *Yön*, 1, no. 47, 1962, pp. 12–14.
- 14 See for example, 'İşçiler ve Devletçilik', *Yön*, 1, no. 29, 1961, p. 4; Doğan Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizme Giden Yollar: Sosyalizmden önce Atatürkçülük', *Yön*, 2, no. 69, 1963, pp. 8–9. The term neo-*étatisme* was also cited in the manifesto of *Yön*. For a discussion of *Yön's étatisme*, see Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 85–100.
- 15 Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizme Giden Yollar'.
- 16 See, for example, Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizme Giden Yollar'.
- 17 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 57–8.
- 18 Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 93.
- 19 Actually the National Front policy was what the underground Turkish Communist Party and its front organizations advocated time and again after World War II. Obviously, there was some kind of influence, and Jacob Landau asserts that Avcıoğlu had been close to the TKP for a time, and could have been somewhat influenced by it. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 61, n. 52.
- 20 'Marxism and the Third World', *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, ed. Tom Bottomore, Blackwell, 1983, p. 315.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 314–15.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Allegedly, the military had regained its leadership position by 1960, which it had lost in 1950.
- 24 Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizme Giden Yollar'. Avcıoğlu later blamed the military for losing their leadership, which they had won back in 1960, for the lack of a systematic worldview and for keeping the parliamentary system intact.
- 25 Mümtaz Soysal, 'Teşhiste Yanılma', *Yön*, 1, no. 10, 1962, p. 15.
- 26 Avcıoğlu, '27 Mayıs', *Yön*, 5, no. 165, 1966, p. 3.
- 27 Doğan Avcıoğlu, 'Sosyalizm Tartışmaları: Bir Sosyalist Stratejinin Esasları', *Yön*, 5, no. 185, 1966, p. 3.
- 28 Avcıoğlu, '27 Mayıs'.
- 29 Avcıoğlu warned that in Western countries as well, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, development under capitalism led to pauperization of the working class, and brought about fierce social and political conflicts. Similar conditions would occur in Turkey. 'Sosyalizm Anlayışımız', *Yön*, 1, no. 36, 1962, p. 3.
- 30 Avcıoğlu noted, for example, that after World War II, the economic independence policy of the young republic (nationalization of foreign firms and *étatiste* policies) was abandoned in favour of foreign capital through foreign subsidies and economic treaties similar to those of the 'capitulations' of the Ottoman empire. The military and economic subsidies of the big capitalist countries were a means to export their economic system so as to integrate Turkey into the world capitalist system and keep it away from the socialist one. He warned importantly that these 'foreign circles' had tried to use religion against socialism some time ago. See 'Sosyalist Gerçekçilik', *Yön*, 39, 1962, p. 20.
- 31 For a discussion of the 'dependency theory' and its influence in Turkey, see Haldun Güllalp, *Gelişme Stratejileri ve Gelişme İdeolojileri*, Yurt, 1987;

- Asım Karaömerlioğlu, 'Bağımlılık Kuramı, Dünya Sistemi ve Osmanlı/Türk Çalışmaları', *Toplum ve Bilim*, 91, 2002, pp. 81–99.
- 32 For example, in 'Azgelişmiş Ülkeler için Tek Çıkar Yol Sosyalizmdir', *Yön*, 1, no. 45, 1962, pp. 10–11. Discussing the part the army would play in a National Democratic Movement in 'Sosyalist Gerçekçilik', Avcioğlu gave as an example the experiment of Egypt under the leadership of Nasser and other young officers who had deposed King Faruk. He stated that the first thing military rule did was to hang workers, but then the officers 'burning with the progressive zeal to modernize their country' adopted socialism even though there was no demand for this from the people. They had eliminated the economic and political power of the feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie, and instead depended on the workers and peasants. The programme announced by Nasser in the summer was noted as an advance socialist programme. Avcioğlu asserted that Egypt's example could not be explained by those who gave the terms 'army' and 'fascism' the same meaning.
- 33 *Yön*, no. 39, 1962, p.1.
- 34 See, for example, Avcioğlu, 'Sosyalist Gerçekçilik'.
- 35 See, for example, Çetin Altan on the 'illegal gains' of the bourgeois in 'Yaşasın Liberalizm', *Yön*, 1, no. 1, 1961; and İlhan Selçuk, *Yön*, 1962, 1, no. 3.
- 36 Avcioğlu, 'Tepe Üstü Duran Ağaç', *Yön*, 2, no. 68, 1963, p. 3.
- 37 See, for example, Avcioğlu, 'İnönü'den Beklediğimiz', *Yön*, 1, no. 9, 1962, p. 3. Actually, after the 1960 intervention, *Yön* writers contributed to the Constitutional Assembly [Kurucu Meclis] representing the CHP in the Assembly of Representatives [Temsilciler Meclisi]. The efforts of the later *Yön* circle, especially in convincing the leader of the CHP, İsmet İnönü, to push radical economic reforms for a rapid development, were not welcomed by the majority. Thus, these intellectuals were totally disappointed and Doğan Avcioğlu did not even approve the constitution prepared. Atılgan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 45.
- 38 See for example, İlhami Soysal, 'Çıkmazlar İçinde Bir Işık: Ordu', *Yön*, 1, 10 October 1962, p. 7.
- 39 Avcioğlu, 'Rejim Buhranı', *Yön*, 1, no. 10, 1962, p. 3. Also İlhami Soysal, 'Çıkmazlar İçinde Bir Işık: Ordu', *Yön*, 1, 10 October 1962, p. 7.
- 40 For turmoil in the military and subsequent interventions in politics, see Walter Weiker, 'The Aydemir Case and Turkey's Political Dilemma', *Middle Eastern Affairs*, 14, 9, 1963, pp. 258–71; Kemal Karpat, 'The Military and Politics in Turkey, 1960–1964: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of a Revolution', *American Historical Review*, 75, 6, 1970, pp. 1654–83; William Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset: 1789'dan Günümüze*, Hil yn., 1996, pp. 135–54.
- 41 Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, pp. 138–9.
- 42 Colonel Aydemir, who was the leader of the radical group during the 27 May intervention, had revealed that if he came to power he would inevitably build a military dictatorship 'as blood was to be shed'. However, after carrying out radical reforms the regime was again to be democratic. Talat Aydemir, *Talat Aydemir'in Hatıraları*, Ak Kitapçılık, 1968, p. 142.
- 43 Atılgan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 168.
- 44 Avcioğlu, 'Rejim Buhranı', *Yön*, 1, no. 10, 1962, p. 3.
- 45 Avcioğlu, 'İnanç Buhranı', *Yön*, 1, no. 11, 1962, p.3.

- 46 See, for a similar interpretation, Atılın, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 171–2. Atılın comments that *Yön* was trying to use the military as a body of influence and persuasion, and the attempts at intervention by some officers were not expected by *Yön*.
- 47 Atılın, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 171.
- 48 Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye: 1945–1980*, 2nd ed., Hil yn, 1996, p. 214.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Avcıođlu, ‘Eski ve Yeni Türkiye’, *Yön*, 1, no. 42, 1962, p. 3.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Avcıođlu, ‘Türkiye İşçi Partisi’ne Dair’, *Yön*, 1, no. 50, 1962, p. 20. Avcıođlu criticized the TİP for not being ‘realist’ but ‘romantic’, and not being ‘concrete’ but ‘academic’.
- 53 The Fabian Society was a British reformist organization founded by a group of bourgeois intellectuals in 1884. It took its name from the Roman general Fabius Maximus Cunctator (the Delayer), famed for his procrastinating tactics and his avoidance of a decisive battle against Hannibal. The Fabian Society joined the Labour Party in 1900.
- 54 See the whole list in Atılın, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 360. Lipovsky (without referring to a source) claimed that the membership of SKD reached 5,000 in 1965, a very high number considering that the SKD did not have an objective to increase the numbers of its members and the TİP had about 10,000 members in 1965. This shows very clearly the political strength of the SKD. Igor P. Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movement in Turkey 1960–1980*, E.J. Brill, 1992, p. 87.
- 55 ‘Sosyalist Kültür Derneđi Tüzük’, *Yön*, 2, no. 53, 1962, p. 9.
- 56 ‘Sosyalist Kültür Derneđi Tüzük’. The regulations of the SKD also declared ‘labour’ as ‘the basic value of society’.
- 57 The dailies *Milliyet*, *Akis* and *Vatan* greeted the SKD positively. *Milliyet* chief writer Abdi İpekçi, in his editorial ‘Durum’, praised the SKD mainly for two reasons: (1) the founders were ‘scientific’ and serious, reformist people, and (2) the views of the SKD were similar to those of Western social democratic parties and workers’ parties, which did not advocate abolishing the private sector. Hence, the SKD could not be accused of communism by exploiters of such views. However, Aydın Yalçın, one of the owners of *Forum* and writing in *Yarın*, blamed the SKD proclamation for having ‘striking parallels to the Communist Manifesto of Marx-Engels’, especially in the claim that ‘Turkish socialists perceive human beings and labour as the highest form of value’. That, according to Yalçın, was a clear example of Marxist theory on labour-value. (Quoted in Atılın, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 296–7.) *Yön*, reverting to this accusation, asked: ‘What is the highest form of value, if it is not labour, is it capital?’ (in ‘İş Bankasının Beslemesi’, *Yön*, 2, no. 73, 1963, p. 6).
- 58 The founding of the SKD was greeted with enthusiasm by some socialist institutions in Europe. The General Secretary of the Socialist International, Albert Carthy, for example, sent a letter praising the establishment as a historical step and assured assistance and support. The German Social Democrats also wrote a letter of support. Atılın, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 297.

- 59 'Sosyalist Dernek Meselesi', *Yön*, 1, no. 37, 1962, p. 4.
- 60 For example, Abdi İpekçi, 'Fabianizm veya İslahatçı Sosyalizm', *Yön*, 1, no. 7, 1962, p. 8; 'İngiltere'de Sosyalizm', *Yön*, 1, no. 7, 1962, p. 17. For more on the interpretation of Fabianism by *Yön* see Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 58–60. For more detail on the SKD, see Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 290–303.
- 61 See Chapter 2 for more details. In reaction to the accusations directed from the leadership of the TİP, *Yön* reminded readers that Fabians were just 'seven intellectuals', but they could not be counted as intelligentsia as they had played a great role in founding the Labour Party. They were socialists, and their ideology and views favoured the interests of the working class ('Sosyalist Dernek Meselesi').
- 62 Behice Boran, 'Sosyalist Kültür Derneği Tartışması', *Vatan*, 22 August 1962.
- 63 Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 299–300.
- 64 'SKD İstanbul Şubesi Açıldı', *Yön*, 2, no. 75, 1963, pp. 7–11. The Istanbul office was opened on 20 May 1963, deliberately chosen because it was the day after 19 May, the start of the 'Independence War' in official republican history. The statement of the panel discussion 'Atatürk and Turkish Socialism' focused on this historical date as well. In this discussion vigorous forces, military officers, bureaucrats, university students and intellectuals (about 2,000 people) were present. Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 300.
- 65 İlhan Tekeli-Selim İlkin, *Bir Cumhuriyet Öyküsü, Kadrocuları ve Kadro'yu Anlamak*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003, p. 469.
- 66 M.A. Birand, C. Dündar and B. Çaplı, *12 Mart*, İmge Kitapevi Yayınları, 1994, p. 77. *Yön* was influential in the 'Academy of War' [Harp Okulu] at the time. Even though it was prohibited, young cadets read and discussed *Yön* generally with feelings of sympathy.
- 67 'Doktrin Kemalizmdir', *Yön*, 1, no. 43, 1962, p. 8.
- 68 Birand *et al.*, *12 Mart*, p. 77.
- 69 For example in Mümtaz Soysal, 'Karşı İhtilal', *Yön*, 1, no. 41, 1962, p. 20; Avcıoğlu, 'Tepe Üstü Duran Ağaç', *Yön*, 2, 68, 1963, p. 3.
- 70 Feroz Ahmad and Bedia Turgay Ahmad, *Türkiye'de Çok Partili Politikanın Açıklamalı Kronolojisi 1945–1971*, Bilgi, 1976, p. 276.
- 71 Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 94–5.
- 72 Avcıoğlu, 'Milliyetçilere Sesleniş', *Yön*, 3, no. 78, 1964, p. 3.
- 73 See Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 106–13 for the understanding of 'nationalism' in *Yön*.
- 74 The ideological difference between these two movements still lay in their views on the leading class. The TİP claimed that the reason the 'First anti-imperialist war' had failed eventually was the leadership of classes other than the working class. *Yön*, however, advocated that the 'First War' was lost because of the 'ideological vacuum' of its leading cadre, and Avcıoğlu added accordingly that socialists must be the 'soul and brain of this struggle', not specifying a class, but an ideology to govern. 'Asıl Muhalefet Şimdi Başlıyor', *Yön*, 4, no. 99, 1965, p. 3. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the Independence War through the problems of the leading class.
- 75 The slogan was 'The left-of-centre is the way of Moscow', which rhymes in Turkish. [Ortanın Solu Moskova Yolu].
- 76 Ahmad and Ahmad, *Türkiye'de Çok Partili Politikanın Açıklamalı Kronolojisi 1945–1971*, pp. 191, 195–7.

- 77 'TIP lideri Aybar ile Bir Konuşma', *Yön*, 3, no. 87, 1964, p. 7.
- 78 Ahmad and Ahmad, *Türkiyede Çok Partili Politikanın Açıklamalı Kronolojisi 1945-1971*, pp. 191-2.
- 79 'Ortanın Solu mu Sorumlu?', *Yön*, 4, no. 133, 1965, p. 3.
- 80 'Seçim Sonuçları Washington'u Sevindirdi ... Sosyalizmin Romantik Dönemi Mutlaka Kapanmalıdır', *Yön*, 4, no. 133, 1965, pp. 4-5.
- 81 This also led to the weakening and disappearance of the SKD. Mümtaz Soysal explained in an interview that 'when *Yön* changed its direction' the SKD lost support and became inactive as it had also lost its function. (Interview with Mümtaz Soysal, Ankara, 6 September 2000, quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 303.) Soysal also made the last statement of the SKD on 10 November 1968, the anniversary of Atatürk's death, in which he said 'Our objective is not to replicate Atatürk, but to attain his goals of an independent Turkey and popular rule in its fullest capacity.'
- 82 That was Kıray's study in Ereğli in the Black Sea Region. See Mübaccel Kıray, 'Ağır Sanayiden önce Bir Sahil Kasabası: Ereğli', *Yön*, 4, no. 93, 1964, pp. 10-11. For an analysis of Maurice Duverger on Turkish political life see Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Türk Düşünce Dünyasının Bunalımı*, İletişim, 2002, pp. 175-95. Kayalı studies the ideological closeness between Avcıoğlu and Duverger.
- 83 Avcıoğlu, 'Parlamontoculuk', *Yön*, 5, 158, 1966, p. 3.
- 84 *Yön* accused Turhan Feyzioğlu of betrayal as he had been one of the leaders defending freedom against the DP in the 1950s. He was then condemned for 'treason' for taking sides with the US to build a 'Philippine democracy' in Turkey and was named 'a 1967 version of Çerkez Ethem' ('Çerkez Ethem 1967', *Yön*, 6, no. 202, 1967, p. 7). In Kemalist tradition, Çerkez Ethem, who was the leader of a separate troop fighting in the Independence War against the Greeks, had betrayed the country and joined the ranks of the Greeks. According to *Yön*, Feyzioğlu had links with the CIA and Americans who were trying to install a two-party system in Turkey, one on the right the other on the left, but both dictated by American politics. This system was regarded as Philippine democracy by *Yön*. His move was also regarded as a plan to demolish the power of vigorous forces. Feyzioğlu, meanwhile, attacked left-of-centre defenders, including İnönü, for being used by the *Yön* circle, who were actually communists. See 'Genel Başkanın Güvenini Yitiren Turhan Feyzioğlu İstifa Etmelidir!', *Yön*, 6, no. 199, 1967, p. 4; 'Feyzioğlu'nun yeni manevraları', *Yön* 2, no. 200, 1967, p. 4; 'Zinde Kuvvetleri Tahrip Planı', *Yön*, 6, no. 202, 1967, p. 7; 'CHP'de Küçük Kurultay', *Yön*, 6, no. 202, 1967, p. 4. See also Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 226-9 for ongoing polemics between Feyzioğlu and *Yön*.
- 85 Feyzioğlu left the party and established a new anti-socialist party, the Trust Party [Güven Partisi].
- 86 *Yön* also founded a publishing house (around 1962/3) to disseminate their ideas through a selection of original or translated books. All books that came out included a foreword by D. Avcıoğlu. The first two books were written by Niyazi Berkes (*200 Yıldır Neden Bocalıyoruz?* and *Batıcılık, Ulusçuluk, ve Toplumsal Devrimler*) and more or less formed the base of the Kemalist theses of the *Yön* circle. *Yön* published *Kurtuluş Savaşı Destanı* by Nazım Hikmet, and Garaudy's book. Subsequent books were centred on imperialism and the class base of the struggle in Third World countries with national and socialist forces. The book

- published under the title *Asya'da Marksizm ve Milliyetçilik* by research assistants H el ene Carr ere and Stuart Schram of the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques in Paris advocated that military and civil bureaucrats and intellectuals in Third World countries could play a progressive role (in contrast to in the West). The last book to be published by Y on was M. Fahri's *Amerikan Harp Doktrinleri* (1966), which was introduced by Avci oglu as 'an essential book' for military and civil intellectuals. The book was intended to display how 'Mustafa Kemal's Turkey' had fallen under the hegemony of the 'Wall Street–Pentagon alliance'.
- 87 Garaudy's book was translated because of an interest in Islamic Socialism [Islam Sosyalizmi] – one of the nuances of Y on in its rather eclectic understanding of socialism. Though earlier contributors were indifferent and even hostile to Islam (of the * eriat çılar* more specifically), the term began to be used in Y on from 1963 onwards, around the same time as the relation of Islam to Arabic socialism was being debated in Egypt (one of the countries Y on followed very closely) and in Ba'ath circles in Syria and Iraq. One of the chief proponents of Islamic socialism was Professor Cahit Tanyol of the Institute of Sociology in Istanbul University. He believed that this trend could bridge the gap between socialism and Islam as experienced in some Arab states, and he reminded his readers that Islam was the poor man's religion. The discussion received further impetus with the translation of Garaudy's book. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 61–2.
- 88 This essay and the political thought of Mihri Belli will be discussed in Chapter 6.
- 89 See next chapter.
- 90 Those who joined the discussions were Mihri Belli, Muvaffak  eref, Ahmet Say, Can Y cel, Vahap Erdođdu, Erdođan Ba ar (Berktay), Arslan Ba er Kafaoglu, and from the Y on circle Dođan Avci oglu, İlhan Sel uk and İlhami Soysal.
- 91 Avci oglu, 'Sosyalist Strateji ve Prof. S. Aren', *Y n*, 6, no. 197, 1967, p. 16.
- 92 Avci oglu, 'Sosyalizm Tartıřmaları: Bir Sosyalist Stratejinin Esasları', *Y n*, no. 185, 1966, pp. 7–8.
- 93 Avci oglu himself had not explained this as 'Bonapartism'; this is the interpretation of the present author.
- 94 Avci oglu, 'Sosyalizm Tartıřmaları'.
- 95 Avci oglu referred in this context mainly to the views and terminology of the T P, and especially the terms used by its leader, Aybar.
- 96 Avci oglu, 'Sosyalizm Tartıřmaları'.
- 97 Ibid.
- 98 Ibid.; 'Ol u', *Y n*, 5, no. 174, 1966, p. 3.
- 99 This was based on a CIA report revealed to the public by senator for life Haydar Tun kanat. Avci oglu stressed that the CIA report had defined *kapıkulu ceberrutları* as the main obstacles against American imperialism. The proletariat, syndicates and the T P were not mentioned at all. 'Bir Sosyalist Stratejinin Esasları'.
- 100 Avci oglu, 'Sınıf M cadelesi, Sosyalizm ve Milliyet ilik', *Y n*, 5, no. 182, 1966, p. 3.

#### Chapter 4

- 1 Atılgan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 231.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Comparing the work with that of another very influential leftist figure (and a well-known sociologist), Behice Boran, displays this point perfectly. Her book *T rkiye*

*ve Sosyalizm Sorunları* [Turkey and Problems of Socialism] (1968) with a similar content was published around the same time and ran to only two editions, whereas Avcıoğlu's book sold several hundred thousand copies. Jacob Landau remarks that the book went through four editions in just one year, unusual not only for Turkey, but anywhere in the world for such a bulky work (*Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 80).

- 4 Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı*, p. 103; Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 234.
- 5 At least the work was immensely successful in terms of receiving attention from the army, as it became almost a reference book within the army. General Faruk Gürler, for example, had said to General Celil Gürkan 'I'd consider an officer who has not read *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* ignorant'; quoted in Birand *et al.*, *12 Mart*, p. 175.
- 6 Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni (Dün-Bugün-Yarın)*, 3rd ed. Bilgi Yn., 1969, p. 232, for example.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 339.
- 8 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 777.
- 9 'Turkey' obviously referred to the Ottoman empire.
- 10 That was actually the main title of the first chapter of volume one.
- 11 *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 11–16.
- 12 See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 357–8. Avcıoğlu also noted that during the Independence War populism [halkçılık] was a very popular ideology, and the first parliament consisting of intellectuals and local gentry prepared a declaration of populism in which they stated that they were anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. However, what they meant by anti-capitalism was being *against* Western capitalism but *for* national capitalism. He drew attention to the fact that the local gentry also considered itself as part of the people [halk]. The new regime was also named the people's government [Halk Hükümeti] after the example of the Soviet system [şura sistemi]. Avcıoğlu emphasized that it was the people's rule only in form, not in essence, as power was vested in the hands of ağas, sheiks and local gentry.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 315.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 511.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 1091.
- 16 *Ibid.*, pp. 773–4.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 774. Quoted in the autobiography of Sıtkı Ulay, who complained about being encircled by businessmen and Masons.
- 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 774–5.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 378.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 401.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 451.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 573. Vehbi Koç for example, the biggest industrialist in Turkey, was also a major importer and representative of foreign firms. Avcıoğlu also noted that the import business had become a major branch of Turkish commerce. In Istanbul's Chamber of Commerce alone, 6,000 importers were registered, but only 300 exporters. The importers had also become disproportionately richer. Importers do not compete with local industrialists – as would be supposed – but actually work collaboratively, and, as in the case of Vehbi Koç, industrialists are themselves importers as well. See, for more of Avcıoğlu's views on this aspect, Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 81–2.

- 23 See, for example, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 195.
- 24 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 937.
- 25 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 658. ['Beyler, Ağalar ve Kapitalist Gelişme'].
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 943.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 952. Avcioglu asserted that the establishment of OYAK was not appropriate to the traditions of Atatürk's army, as the fund was ruled by high-ranking officers who had direct business relations with foreign and internal entrepreneurs unlike other social security funds.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 956.
- 30 In this respect Avcioglu investigated the potential of the working class, noting that the number of workers was growing, but many of them were employed in small workshops in a paternalist system and afraid to unionize. Fighting for their rights was a new concept for the Turkish working class, unlike the working classes in the West. Yet there were 199 strikes in the years 1963–7, 20 per cent in the public sector and 80 per cent in the private sector, where working conditions were far worse than those in the public sector. The number of agricultural workers was rising and they were dissatisfied with the land-holding system and with those who had supported the TİP in the 1965 election for their propaganda on land-holding reform.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 1219. These views were based on various researches.
- 32 Avcioglu claimed that after the 1960 intervention Americans decided to support the Justice Party [Adalet Partisi] as 'their own people'. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 82.
- 33 *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 718.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 1220–4.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 1218.
- 36 Jacob Landau (*Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 83) finds this claim eloquently persuasive.
- 37 Quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 240, and see Fikret Ötyam, 'Doğan Avcioglu ile bir Konuşma', in Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı*, p. 83.
- 38 Another point of interest was the very low participation in the election (actually the lowest since free elections were allowed). Only 64.3 per cent of people eligible to vote had participated (in 1965 this was 71.3 per cent, but in 1954, 88.6 per cent and as recently as 1961, 81 per cent) which showed discontent with parties and politicians. The votes for Demirel decreased by 6.4 per cent to 46.5 per cent. The TİP had only two seats in parliament. Ahmad and Ahmad, *Türkiye'de Çok Partili Politikanın Açıklamalı Kronolojisi 1945–1971*, pp. 202, 192.
- 39 'Devrim Bildirisi', *Devrim*, 1, no. 1, 1969, p. 14.
- 40 *Madanoğlu Dosyası I*, Töre-Devlet Yayınları, 1973, p. 53.
- 41 General Cemal Madanoğlu was one of the leaders of the 27 May intervention. He was appointed by President Sunay as quota senator in 1966. Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 162.
- 42 Osman Köksal – the commander of the Presidential Troop of guardsmen and among the officers to take President Celal Bayar into custody – when analysing the failure of 27 May, claimed that the only power that would not be toppled was intellect, and there was no revolution that would not be successful when intellect

- and sword united. Osman Köksal, 'İhtilal', *Devrim*, 1, no. 32, 1970, p. 3; see also 'Madanoğlu 27 Mayıs'ı Anlatıyor', *Devrim*, 1, no. 32, 1970, p. 8.
- 43 *Devrim* was published in Ankara, in an eight-page daily newspaper format during the period 21 October 1969–27 April 1971. The publisher was again Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu.
- 44 'İdare-i maslahatçılar esaslı devrim yapamaz.'
- 45 Though almost all the newspaper was not only edited but written by Avcioğlu himself, he was not listed as the editor to save him from spending time in court – as there were to be many lawsuits against the journal. Hasan Cemal, *Kimse Kızmasın Kendimi Yazdım*, Doğan Yayınları, pp. 204, 206.
- 46 Atılgan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 310.
- 47 Avcioğlu had told Fikret Otyam in an interview that they were planning to prepare *Devrim* with a larger group. Fikret Otyam, 'Doğan Avcioğlu ile Bir Konuşma', in Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı*, pp. 281–3.
- 48 Such as Muammer Aksoy, Bahri Savcı, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Türkkaya Atatöv, Arslan Başer Kafaoglu, İbrahim Çamlı, Rauf Mutluay, Doğan Hızlan, Cevdet Kudret, Metin And, Konur Ertop, Adalet Ağaloğlu, Güngör Dilden, Şiar Yalçın, Ceyhun Atıf Kansu and Erol Toy.
- 49 According to the prosecutor's report, the Madanoğlu junta was established by serving officers, retired officers and civilians. General Madanoğlu had formed the core cadre of the junta from officers of the rank of colonel. The junta was initially divided into two wings, Ankara and Istanbul, to be enlarged after the 1965 elections with an Izmir wing. *Madanoğlu Dosyası*, pp. 33–53.
- 50 Mahir Kaynak, an agent in the Madanoğlu junta who was exposed after 1971 (see below), claimed, however, that Mihri Belli was secretly involved with General Madanoğlu. He was a go-between who was going to be appointed to various positions after the intervention. It was instead Avcioğlu and his friends who did not trust Belli, as he had been thrown out by the Marxists (actually, from the Communist Party of Turkey) and was a Westernizer, and allegedly had relations with British and Americans. (Nazlı Ilıcak, *12 Mart Cuntaları: Demokrasinin Sırtındaki Hançer*, Timaş, 2001: 'Madanoğlu Cuntasını Açığa Çıkaran MIT mensubu Mahir Kaynak'la 12 Mart Üzerine bir konuşma', p. 240.) Belli also later spoke of hostility of the *Devrim* circle to him and the NDR movements, and he even claimed that the 'leftist junta' was established against their movement. Quoted in Yalçın Küçük, *Aydın Üzerine Tezler-5: 1830–1980*, Tekin Yayınevi, 1988, p. 630.
- 51 The programme of the 'National Liberation Revolution' [NLR] was introduced in *Devrim Üzerine* as follows: 'The objective of the NLR is to build a modern and fully independent Turkey as soon as possible ... For this reason it is necessary to break capitalist structures.' The measures were: land reform, nationalization of foreign trade, banking, insurance and major industries; constructing heavy industry, democratic rights for the masses and building a national army and having an independent foreign policy so as to have full independence. Avcioğlu, *Devrim Üzerine*, Bilgi Yayınevi, 1971, pp. 10–11.
- 52 *Devrim*, no. 18, 1970, pp. 1, 7; no. 27, 1970, pp. 1, 7; no. 30, 1970, pp. 1, 7.
- 53 These terms were also used in *Yön*, and İlhami Soysal in *Akşam* and İlhan Selçuk in *Cumhuriyet* in particular regularly used the same pejorative terms.
- 54 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 38. Altan was one of the most widely read leftist journalists especially in intellectual youth circles (a study of Ankara

- University students, for example, found that he was their favourite columnist) and a thinker in the top ranks of the TİP. He was elected to the National Assembly in 1965, but not re-elected in 1969. His speeches in the National Assembly, along with his indefatigable writing, so provoked others (especially the AP) that an attempt was made to withdraw his parliamentary immunity and bring him to trial, but this failed (Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 163–4). He was attacked and almost lynched (beaten severely by AP deputies) in the Assembly during one of his speeches.
- 55 'Ben Milletvekili iken'. The memoirs of Çetin Altan were published over seventy-eight weeks. He recorded his parliamentary activity in the series in *Devrim*, which was published as a book of the same title in 1971.
- 56 There was a series of writings by Doğan Avcıoğlu with the main title 'Türk ordusu ve Amerika 1947–1969'. For example, see the first issue (21 October 1969), p. 3: 'Türk Ordusunda Amerikan Düşmanlığı Var mı?'. This essay emphasized that the CIA had threatened some officers, and after the 1964 Cyprus problem some officers resented the presence of the US within the Turkish army.
- 57 The title of the column was 'Geriçi Basın'da ne var ne yok'. It ran for seventy-one weeks.
- 58 *Devrim* lumped together the professions, religious leaders (sheik and dede), and feudal or çiftlik lords (ağas) in the same category as all were regarded as pertaining to pre-capitalist institutions and structures.
- 59 These were the secondary titles of the manifesto: Karanlık bir Gidiş, Ekonomik Çıkılmaz, Toplumsal Çıkılmaz, Eğitim ve Sağlıkta Çıkılmaz, Zengin-Fakir Uçurumu, 'Ulusal Ordu' Özlemi, Neden Kalkınamadık?, Nasıl Kalkınırız?, Kemalist Devrim Yarıda Bırakılmıştır, Tutucu Güçler Koalisyonu, Sandık Demokrasisi, Partilerin Çıkılmazı, Kemalistlerin Tarihi Ödevi.
- 60 Though such revolutions (though this was not stated) were of the classical character of a bourgeois revolution, in the manifesto it was emphasized that the bourgeoisie in Turkey – unlike in early modern Western countries – collaborated with conservative powers, landowners and ağas, and instead of strengthening the economic independence of the country they served as commissioners of foreign capital, upholding dependency on modern capitalist countries.
- 61 Uğur Mumcu, 'Parlamentoculuk Tartışmaları', *Devrim*, no. 20, 1970, p. 2. See also for similar views, Avcıoğlu, *Devrim Üzerine*, p. 146
- 62 Mumcu, 'Parlamentoculuk Tartışmaları'.
- 63 Professor. G. Mirsky, 'Bir Sovyet Görüşü: Üçüncü Dünya'da Son gelişmeler', *Devrim*, 1, 1969, p. 3.
- 64 'Devrimci Subayların Yönettiği Bir Ülke: Peru', *Devrim*, 37, 1970, p. 6; 'Brezilya'da Gerillacı Subaylar', *Devrim*, 38, 1970, p. 6. 'Dünyadan Haberler: Libya: Genç Subaylardan Ders Alalım', *Devrim*, 39, 1970, p. 6; 'Küba Denemesinin Öğrettikleri', *Devrim*, 42, 1970, pp. 1, 7; 'Şili'de Sandıklal Sosyalizm', *Devrim*, 48, 1970, p. 6. For the Cuban case also, General Peron's regret that he did not choose to be a Castro and as a result the US deposed him as well, was noted. See 'General Peron'un Özeleştirisi: Ben Bir Castro Olabilirdim!', *Devrim*, 40, 1970, p. 2.
- 65 In the meantime, officers who were not brave enough to abolish the parliamentary system were criticized. See Avcıoğlu, 'Şili'de Sandıklal Sosyalizm'. Avcıoğlu argued that the victory of Allende showed 'sweet' democracy revolutionaries that revolution could not come out of the ballot box. Though Allende did come

- to power through elections he could not change the system. 'Şili'de Sandıklal Sosyalizm', p. 6.
- 66 See, for example, 'Devrimci Subayların Yönettiği bir Ülke: Peru', *Devrim*, 37, 1970, p. 6.
- 67 Though sceptical, very strikingly, Mahir Kaynak claimed that the Soviet Union would not support a communist Turkey, as it would be fearful of relations both with the Turkic people within its borders and a communist Turkey. Avcıoğlu, however, thought that the West oppressed the Turks in Turkey and the development of Turkey was prevented by the Western powers. However, a communist Turkey unified with the Turkic states of the USSR would make Turkey a strong country. Kaynak further claimed that Avcıoğlu made fun of pan-Turanists as he thought 'one day it will not be us saving the Turks in the Soviet Union, but them saving us'. Thus he was a nationalist, and at the same time leftist, as he believed in the development of Turkey. Mahir Kaynak also revealed that he did not believe the USSR had ever caused any harm to Turkey. See Nazlı Ilıcak, *12 Mart Cuntaları: Demokrasinin Sırtındaki Hançer*, Timaş, 2001: 'Madanoğlu Cuntasını Açığa Çıkaran MIT mensubu Mahir Kaynak'la 12 Mart Üzerine bir konuşma, p. 244.
- 68 Muzaffer Karan, 'Bağımsız Türkiye mi, Kemalist Türkiye mi?', *Devrim*, 37, 1970, p. 3.
- 69 See, for example, Uğur Mumcu, 'Ecevit'in Devrimciliği', *Devrim*, 39, 1970, p. 2, and Mumcu, 'CHP'de hiçbir değişiklik getirmeyecek olan Erken Kurultay', *Devrim*, 37, 1970, p. 8.
- 70 'Atatürk, Devrimcilik ve Ecevit', *Devrim*, 38, 1970, p. 5.
- 71 Some countries were also cited as examples. In the essay on Peru it was emphasized, for example, that land reform very close to the plans of Ecevit was put forward by Belaunde Terry, but it was the army who finally realized it. 'Devrimci Subayların Yönettiği bir Ülke: Peru'. (No information on the identity of the writer or the translator.) The rule of Belaunde Terry was defined as a 'centre-left reformism comedy' and it was recalled that the army had to intervene as Terry's programme could not be carried out in five years.
- 72 Almost all the radical statements were found in articles dealing with Ecevit and the CHP; see the notes below.
- 73 Avcıoğlu, 'Ecevit Bir Kuyruklu Yıldızdır', *Devrim*, 39, 1970, p. 2.
- 74 Avcıoğlu claimed, for example, that Ecevit was a 'pacifist, humanist and mysticist' and 'his socialism' was nothing but that of a 'bourgeois humanist'. 'CHP de hiçbir değişiklik getirmeyecek', *Devrim*, 37, 1970, p. 8. Avcıoğlu (in 'Ecevit Bir Kuyruklu Yıldızdır') also claimed that Ecevit's popularity was ephemeral; like a 'comet' he would 'shine like a star but then burn out'.
- 75 *Devrim*, 38, 1970, p. 5.
- 76 For example, in 'Ecevit ve Ordu', *Devrim*, 11 August 1970, quoted in Avcıoğlu, *Devrim ve 'Demokrasi' Üzerine*, Tekin Yayınevi, 1980, p. 352.
- 77 'Ecevit ve Ordu', quoted in Avcıoğlu, *Devrim ve 'Demokrasi' Üzerine*, pp. 349-50.
- 78 Reactionary pashas were those not joining the Independence War, or the guards of Sultan Abdülhamit, etc. Avcıoğlu, *Devrim ve 'Demokrasi' Üzerine*, pp. 350.
- 79 'Ecevit Bir Kuyruklu Yıldızdır', quoted in Avcıoğlu, *Devrim ve 'Demokrasi' Üzerine*, pp. 342-7.

- 80 Quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 243.
- 81 Avcioğlu accepted this possible intervention as a sociological law: the regimes which could not solve their problems were destined to be toppled. The 'sweet' democracy attempt in Turkey was destined to go bankrupt. Avcioğlu, *Devrim Üzerine*, p. 149.
- 82 Avcioğlu, 'Dar Kapı', *Devrim*, 58, 1970, p. 1; also in *Devrim Üzerine*, p. 149.
- 83 *Madanoğlu Dosyası I*, pp. 33–42. See also *Madanoğlu Cuntası*, İstanbul, Boğaziçi Yayınları, 1973. Almost the only written document on this junta is the indictment of the prosecutor prepared by the İstanbul martial law military district attorney after the 12 March 1971 military intervention, and, as might be expected, it was based on the allegations of the prosecutor. However, there have been several accounts by the people involved admitting that there was such a relationship. Most people associated with the junta revealed the plans and identities of the civil-military alliance, thus there is little reason to be sceptical about the existence of this conspiracy. See, for example, Nadire Mater, 'İlhan Selçuk ile Görüşme', *Türkiye Sorunları* 1, 1, pp. 11–39. Cemal, *Kimse Kızmasın Kendimi Yazdım*.
- 84 *Madanoğlu Cuntası*, pp. 42–3; *Madanoğlu Dosyası*, pp. 55–6.
- 85 Akyaz, *Askeri Müdahalelerin Orduya Etkisi*, p. 281.
- 86 In the İT, members were expected to take an oath on the Koran, the flag and a weapon. The difference was thus between the Koran and Atatürk.
- 87 See, for different scenarios and their interpretations, Birand *et al.*, *12 Mart; Ilıcak, 12 Mart Cuntaları*; Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset; Madanoğlu Dosyası*; Ertuğrul Alatlı, *Belgeleryle 9 Mart 1971 'Antiparlamentarist-Baasçı' Darbe Girişimi (Yörumsuz)*, Alfa yn., 2002; Celil Gürkan, *12 Mart'a Beş Kala*, Tekin Yayınevi, 1986; Muhsin Barur, *Anılar ve Görüşler*, Milliyet Yayınları, 1985; Ersal Yavi, *İhtilalci Subaylar: Türk Ordusu İçindeki, Gizli İhtilal Örgütleri, Fotoğraflar, Belgeler, Tanıklar, Anılarla 1964–1994 Dönemi*, Yazıcı Yayınevi, 2005; Soner Yalçın and Doğan Yurdakul, *Bay Pipo: Bir MİT Görevlisinin Svadışı Yaşamı: Hıram Abas*, Doğan Kitap, 1999; Cüneyt Arcayürek, *Darbeler ve Gizli Servisler*, Bilgi Yayınevi, 1989.
- 88 See Chapter 6 for THKP-C.
- 89 Interview with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, İstanbul, 27 September 2000, quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 321. Also, Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 90 Interview with Aydın Çubukçu, Ankara, 18 July 2000, quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 321. *Devrim* had published a fake interview with Deniz Gezmiş after the bank robbery, where he claimed that THKO was not involved. See Chapter 6 for more on THKO.
- 91 Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 246–7.
- 92 The remedy programme included measures such as the disavowal of loans to usurers, creating a social housing policy, reducing inequity in income distribution and carrying out land reform. Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, pp. 247–8.
- 93 There is some controversy about who prepared the drafts for the constitution. According to Navy Commander Erol Bilibik, the draft was prepared by the owner of *Devrim*, Cemal Reşit Eyüpoğlu, and edited by Doğan Avcioğlu. Yet Avcioğlu had claimed that Mümtaz Soysal, Bahri Savcı, İlhan Selçuk and İsmet

- Sungurbey assisted them. Bilibik stated that the draft was submitted to him and he worked with Eyüpoğlu in his apartment every night to finish the draft. He also supported Celil Gürkan's argument that all three forces were also trying to prepare an intervention and programme. They exchanged plans but could not join forces as a purely military conspiracy could not combine with organizations that included civilians. Cumhuriyet, 'Pazar Konuşu', 10 March 1996, quoted in Alatlı, *Belgeleryle 9 Mart 1971*, p. 252.
- 94 '12 Mart'ın Kudretli Generali Muhsin Batur'un Tarihi İtirafı', M. Ali Eren, *Haftalık Aksiyon Dergisi*, 13–19 January 1966, pp. 24–9. See for the dossier Alatlı, *Belgeleryle 9 Mart 1971*, pp. 393–419, also Gürkan, *12 Mart'a Beş Kala*, pp. 231–49.
- 95 General Celil Gürkan in particular, one of the three generals discharged from the army for disciplinary reasons on 16 March, claimed that it was Generals Muhsin Batur and Faruk Gürler (commander of the land forces) who had given orders to plan an intervention and the drafting of a constitution. Gürkan, *12 Mart'a Beş Kala*, p. 228. For further information on the draft, described by Gürkan as having 'pure Atatürkist' content and not, as claimed by Batur, Marxist-communist content, see *ibid.*, pp. 231–49.
- 96 Akyaz, *Askeri Müdahalelerin Orduya Etkisi*, pp. 131–2.
- 97 Batur, *Anılar ve Görüşler*, p. 228. Also in Yavi, *İhtilalci Subaylar*, pp. 172–4.
- 98 Atılğan, interview with Sevinç Yurdakul (ex-wife of Avcıoğlu), Ankara, 3 September 2000, in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 323.
- 99 An official of the Soviet consulate visited Avcıoğlu at the *Devrim* office and thinking (or knowing) that they were being listened to, he wrote on a sheet of paper in backward characters that there was an agent among them. The *Devrim* cadre actually knew that their journal was watched by MIT as, amazingly, a letter sent within MIT was sent to the party office of the TİP by mistake. TİP had informed *Devrim* about the letter.
- 100 Mahir Kaynak was an assistant in the Faculty of Economics at the time, and his code name within the junta was 'Fakulteli'.
- 101 The activity of the junta was followed from 19 March 1967 until 8 April 1971. There were a total of thirteen voice recordings of the meetings, though they were not accepted by the court as evidence, as secret recording was illegal. *Madanoğlu Dosyası*, p. 78.
- 102 Nurdan Sürsal, working for the Intelligence Service, had made a mistake and sent the letters within MIT pertaining to *Devrim* to the party building of the TİP in Izmir around November 1970. It was understood through this formal letter from MIT that the letters sent to the TİP and *Devrim* were, illegally and secretly, opened, read and xeroxed by the Intelligence Service and then sent on to their addresses. *Devrim* and the TİP started a lawsuit against the National Post Service (PTT) and MIT. The opening of the letters was news and was even debated in parliament. Yalçın and Yurdakul, *Bay Pipo*, pp. 157–9.
- 103 *Madanoğlu Dosyası*, p. 75. İlhan Selçuk claimed in an interview with Atılğan in 2000 that Avcıoğlu was not a military supporter. He thought that revolution could only take place through a revolutionary party that organized the working class, otherwise there would just be a junta, which Avcıoğlu did not want at all (Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 247). There were apparently personal conflicts (about very minor issues) between Avcıoğlu

- and Selçuk and that was the basic reason behind Selçuk's separation. Avcıoğlu claimed they had several quarrels and Selçuk was supporting Ecevit, criticizing the position of *Devrim* against Ecevit. Quoted from the testimony of Avcıoğlu taken in Ziverbey, in İlicak, *12 Mart Cuntaları*, p. 292.
- 104 He was very much determined to carry out the intervention plan and was ready to take any risk. He had told his first wife in the early 1960s that 'either I will be a prime minister or be executed'. Atılğan, interview with Sevil Yurdakul, quoted in Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 323.
- 105 İlicak, *12 Mart Cuntaları*, pp. 292, 271. However, towards the final hour it seems that even Avcıoğlu himself, earlier so sure of success, was desperate and later described the intervention as a suicide attempt, mainly because the conspiracy had involved too many people, compromising its secrecy, ideological coherence and unity.
- 106 Avcıoğlu, 'Bekleyiş', *Devrim*, 71, 2 March 1971, p. 1.
- 107 'Ordu, antikemalist gidişe "artık dur" dedi', *Devrim*, 73, 1971, p. 1.
- 108 'Ordu ve Halk', *Devrim*, 73, 1971, p. 8.
- 109 'Reform Hayalciliği', *Devrim*, 75, 1971, pp. 1-7.
- 110 On 20 April 1971, quoted in Akyaz, *Askeri Müdahalelerin Orduya Etkisi*, p. 288.
- 111 The journalists Çetin Altan and İlhan Selçuk were arrested immediately. Well-known intellectuals Mümtaz Soysal, Cemal Madanoğlu, Doğan Avcıoğlu, İlhami Soysal, Altan Öymen, Uğur Alacakaptan, Uğur Mumcu, Uluç Gürkan, Bahri Savcı, Muammer Aksoy, Nihat Sarguun, Zafer Tarık Tunaya, Yaşar Kemal, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Fakir Baykurt and Kemal Türkler were also arrested. Interestingly, Muammer Aksoy, Bahri Savcı, Mümtaz Soysal, Bülent Nuri Esen, Zafer Tarık Tunaya and Uğur Alacakaptan were among the academics who had prepared the 1961 constitution. Çetin Altan wrote a novel, *Büyük Gözaltı*, based on his memoirs, which gained him international fame while in custody under the MIT, where he was threatened with death at any moment.
- 112 Yalçın and Yurdakul, *Bay Pipo*, pp. 189-90. For MIT centres in Ankara and in İstanbul see *ibid.*, p. 205. Vice Prime Minister Said Koçuş claimed that the MIT and agents provocateurs played a greater role in these mass arrests and their government did not even know about them. Said Koçuş, *Günaydın*, 27 October 1974, quoted in Avcıoğlu, *Devrim ve Demokrasi Üzerine*, p. 103.
- 113 In a meeting of the air force attended by thirty generals twenty-five asked for direct military rule. Akyaz, *Askeri Müdahalelerin Orduya Etkisi*, p. 328.
- 114 Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 162. First General Staff Officer Talat Turhan was accused of placing a bomb underneath the Bosphorus Bridge, which was under construction at the time. He was taken into custody in July 1972, and subjected to torture for thirty-one days. See Talat Turhan, *Bomba Davası Savunma 1-2*, Kendi yayını, 1986. Meanwhile, on 7 July 1971, six retired and six serving officers, including General Cemal Madanoğlu himself and retired Colonel Osman Köksal, were arrested with seventeen civilians. Among the civilians were Doğan Avcıoğlu, Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu, İlhan Selçuk, İlhami Soysal and Ali Sirmen. As early as 15 March 1971, three generals and eight colonels were discharged from the military on account of their political activities.
- 115 Avcıoğlu related how he was treated in Ziverbey and how all the materials (such as beds and implements of torture) were imported from the US in his book *Devrim ve Demokrasi Üzerine* (p. 103). Apparently, Avcıoğlu, Selçuk and Soysal had decided

- upon their testimony beforehand, and thus interrogation did not lead to anything which could be used to charge the generals. Yalçın and Yurdakul, *Bay Pipo*, p. 231.
- 116 Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 162.
- 117 Sadi Koçaş, *12 Mart Anıları*, Reyo Basımevi, 1978, p. 318.
- 118 Mahir Kaynak was asked to stay in the group and confess to the actions of the conspiracy as a remorseful actor in court. He did not accept this, thinking it was more honourable and a lesser evil to be exposed. 'Madanoğlu Cuntasını Açığa Çıkaran MIT mensubu Mahir Kaynak'la 12 Mart Üzerine bir konuşma': Ilıcık, *12 Mart Cuntaları*, p. 239.
- 119 Tape recording was an illegal activity, and the testimony of Mahir Kaynak was not trusted, as there was some conflicting information in his account that directly concerned General Gürler. Apparently, and strikingly, one of the reports was changed so that Gürler could be charged. Yalçın and Yurdakul, *Bay Pipo*, p. 233.

### Chapter 5

- 1 It appeared as a weekly in Istanbul from 19 March 1963 until it was closed down under martial law on 16 July 1963, about one and a half months after the closure of *Yön*. It started publication again on 17 April 1964 in Ankara as a monthly; the last issue was in November 1965. The name of the periodical – meaning 'social justice' – characterized the general tone, namely its insistent demand for social justice. Nihat Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, *Anılar Belgeler*, Felis yn., 2001, vol. II, pp. 1109, 1112, 1126.
- 2 Party activities were reported, party views were explained and defended, the speeches of leaders were reprinted, and articles written by spokesmen of the party, writers and journalists were published in *Sosyal Adalet*. The articles were written mainly by Mehmet Ali Aybar, Sadun Aren, Behice Boran, Senator Niyazi Ağırnaslı, trade unionist Kemal Türkler and Professor Türkkiye Ataöv, and writers and journalists such as Aziz Nesin, Fethi Naci and Mahmut Makal.
- 3 For example, Istanbul members of the TİP had published *Emekçinin Alınteri* on 18 September 1965.
- 4 Alper Aktan, Cevdet Sezer, Tuncay Bökesoy, Hüseyin Ergün, Umur Mumcu, Ümit Hassan and Aktan Ataoğlu were among the usual contributors. The first issue appeared on 22 April 1965 and was immediately subject to violence from right-wing militants during its sale by university students in Kızılay-Ankara. Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 1142, 1145.
- 5 *Emek* was first published on 1 May 1969. It represented the voice of the Aren–Boran group after the separation of Aybar from the party.
- 6 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 137.
- 7 Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, p. 359.
- 8 The founders Kemal Türkler, Şaban Yıldız, Rıza Kuas, Kemal Nebioğlu, Avni Erakalın, Salih Özkarabay, İbrahim Denizcier, Adnan Arkin, Hüseyin Uslubaş, Ahmet Muşlu and Saffet Göksüzoğlu came from different trade unions and they did not act as their representatives. All lived in Istanbul and were relatively young, the average age being forty-one. Avni Erakalın was the first chair, Kemal Türkler was the vice-chair and Şaban Yıldız was general secretary. Surprisingly, some of the original founders – Saffet Göksüzoğlu, Hüseyin Uslubaş and Ahmet Muşlu – were accused of espionage activities. This remained an allegation only against the first two,

- but Ahmet Muşlu later gave evidence in court as a member of the MIT (National Intelligence Service of Turkey). 'Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Sosyalizm (1960'tan sonra)', *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol. VII, 1998, p. 2120.
- 9 Before the TİP was founded, Aybar and a group of leftist lawyers and trade unionists were planning to found a socialist party that would not act as a vanguard party according to Leninist party theory. When they heard that some syndicalists were trying to found a workers' party the plans were dropped. H. Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a Türkiye'de Siyasal Fikir Hareketleri*, Birey Yayıncılık, 1995, p. 80.
  - 10 Aybar was discharged from the university while he was an assistant professor at the Istanbul University faculty of law.
  - 11 Aybar was unanimously offered the chairmanship of the TİP by its founders and accepted it on 1 February 1962. Landau asserts that his approach was not only more radical than that of the founders, it was also more purposeful and energetic. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 124–5.
  - 12 Quoted in Metin Çulhaoğlu, 'The History of the Socialist-Communist Movement in Turkey by Four Major Indicators', N. Balkan and S. Savran (eds), *The Politics of Permanent Crisis: Class, Ideology, and State in Turkey*, New Science Publishers, 2002, p. 182.
  - 13 Boran, one of the chief TİP ideologists, was involved in politics even when she was a lecturer in sociology at Ankara University. She was arrested in 1951 for being a member of the Communist Party of Turkey but was released because of lack of evidence. She had been a contributor to many leftist journals and an initiator of the Turkish Association of Peace Lovers. She was sentenced to fifteen months in jail for protesting against the sending of Turkish troops to Korea. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 125. Boran was suspected of being a member of the TKP through her entire political career, but that was never verified. She implied her party relation while she was in exile. Boran was also one of the main founders of the United Communist Party of Turkey [Türkiye Birleşik Komünist Partisi: TBKP]. She died in the party's early days and was named honorary chair.
  - 14 Aren was arrested in 1955 as a suspected communist but he was also released unchanged. He was in London when the 1951 trials started and Zeki Baştımar had denied having known him. In his autobiography Sadun Aren said that he had considered himself a party member in the late 1940s. He had met Zeki Baştımar only once and did not have any relationship with the party while abroad as TKP members had already been arrested. See Sadun Aren, *Puslu Camm Arkasından*, Imge Kitabevi, 2nd ed., 2006, pp. 56–70.
  - 15 There have been allegations about Aybar's relationship to the TKP. It is almost certain that he was close to the party and knew Zeki Baştımar personally. Aren implies Aybar's links to the TKP in his autobiography. However, Zülfikar Özdoğan, himself a party member in the 1970s and currently Turkish Department Director in IISG, who has access to the TKP archives including the closed party membership lists, told me firmly that Aybar was not a listed party member. However, he also believes he was sympathetic to the party and had not chosen to join or perhaps had unofficial relations. Ulus, interview with Özdoğan, 10 April 2007, Amsterdam.
  - 16 Sadun Aren, for example, emphasizes that the party had been founded independently from the TKP and, therefore, from the USSR as well. He remarks that there

- were no relations with the TKP or with the USSR. However, according to him there was ideological loyalty to the USSR, as at the time 'all Marxist socialist parties had a common strategy' and Soviet-type socialism was hegemonic. Aren, *Puslu Camın Arkasından*, pp. 107–8.
- 17 The first programme was prepared and published in 1961 as a sixteen-page booklet (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, İstanbul). The next programme was a more detailed and developed version of this, with a 166-page book presented and approved by the TİP's 1964 general congress (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, Karınca Yn., 1964). It remained in force until the party was shut down in 1971. See for details on both programmes, Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, pp. 137–42.
  - 18 Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Türkiye'de İşçi Partisi Tarihi*, vol. I, BDS Yayınları, 1988, p. 204.
  - 19 One of the main reforms was in agriculture. The TİP advocated land reform and distribution of the land to end exploitation by ağas and usurers.
  - 20 In terms of economic policy, the TİP advocated a mixed economy and broadening of the state sector, especially in essential and big industries, but protecting the private sector in smaller-size enterprises. In this sense, the TİP shared a common programme of *étatisme* with *Yön* as mentioned in Chapter 1. However, there was a significant difference as the TİP programme (according to the third issue of 'Main Principles') stated, 'labouring people were going to join directly and control planned etatism' (Erkin Topkaya, *Program ve Tüzükleriyle Türkiye'de Başlıca Siyasi Partiler*, Ulus, 1969, p. 393). In *Yön*, however, state control over the economy was going to be reshaped and controlled by intermediate layers (or vigorous forces), namely by civil and military intelligentsia after power was vested in them. They were also going to consider the interests of the labouring classes, but there was no mention of their direct involvement in decision-making processes.
  - 21 The programme was very close to that advocated in *Yön*. According to Aydınoğlu this was quite understandable as the programme was developed by intellectuals who had signed the *Yön* declaration. The intellectuals were not able to change the social base of the policies as developed in *Yön* during the two-year period in which they had joined in preparation of the party programme (Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 68). Aydınoğlu attributes the main weakness of the programme to its distance from a Marxist analysis of Turkish society and its relation to a Marxist programme.
  - 22 *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, p. 7.
  - 23 NDR advocates believed that democratic revolution had not been fully achieved yet, hence they defended an initial NDR as a first phase towards the socialist revolution. The TİP posed this question to those who claimed the NDR period was not completed: 'How otherwise could the National Independence War and the foundation of the Republic afterwards be regarded?' Boran argued against NDR critics that a bourgeois revolution under the vanguard of a national bourgeois and the middle-class elements of an underdeveloped country could only succeed this far. Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, pp. 254–5.
  - 24 Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, Gerçek, 1968, pp. 322–36. The TİP had for a long time used the term 'toplumcular' to denote socialists, as this term was taboo.
  - 25 The motion of the Second General Congress of the TİP, quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 1180–4. It was emphasized in the motion that the primary struggle was against imperialism, as industrialization, social justice,

- democratization, social reforms (especially land reform), i.e. the grounds for the transition into a socialist regime, all depended on the independence of Turkey.
- 26 The congress called to the whole nation to join a passive resistance movement against the USA. The TİP declared this the 'Second Independence War'.
- 27 See, for example, the final statement [Sonuç Bildirgesi] of the Second Congress. Aybar noted in *Dönüşüm* the TİP's difference with respect to the national front. He said that 'the struggle for national liberation would be made by the united force of all anti-imperialist forces in the national front but under the democratic leadership of the socialist party'. Aybar emphasized that it would be a grave mistake not to see the class character of the national front and to deny its socialist character. He declared finally that the struggle would be led under the light of socialist theory and the democratic leadership of the TİP. Aybar, 'Sosyalizmi Halk Kurar', *Dönüşüm*, no. 8, 1 December 1966, p. 6.
- 28 Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, p. 606. Also see below for details of this.
- 29 Boran's editorial was published immediately after the second intervention attempt by Colonel Aydemir. That essay was directed to those leftists supporting intervention, especially explicit in the *Yön* circle. 'Kestirme Yol Yoktur', *Sosyal Adalet*, no. 11, 28 May 1963, p. 3.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Sadun Aren also believed that socialism could be attained through democratic methods in a relatively short time as a result of the conflicts within the dominant classes and the national and foreign pressure for reforms. He also thought that the labouring classes had started to become aware of their power in a multi-party system. Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a*, p. 93.
- 32 See, for example, the Aybar's speech at the Istanbul City Congress, quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, pp. 405-6.
- 33 Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, p. 226.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Boran, 'İlerici Güçlerin İşbirliği ve Sosyalizm', *Dönüşüm*, 2, no. 12, 1 February 1967, p. 4.
- 36 Boran, 'Memleket Kalkınması ve Aydınlar', *Yeni Ufuklar*, 1962, 11, no. 124, pp. 7-14.
- 37 The discussion between the TİP and *Yön* increased during two periods, the first around 1962-3, with a series of discussions on a variety of strategies and roads towards socialism. This had also become an issue during preparations for the establishment of the SKD, when the TİP asked for a clear definition of socialism to be advocated (Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, p. 101). Mümtaz Soysal, one of the founders of the SKD, explained that the controversy during the establishment of the SKD was over strategy, whether to wait for a long-term struggle to organize the working class, or to act rapidly to stop the capitalist course by activating the civil and military Kemalist bourgeoisie (quoted *ibid.*, p. 104). The second wave of discussions was staged immediately after the general election of 1965, in the summer of 1966, on the revolutionary stage, and again about strategies with the objective of influencing the TİP to support a probable military intervention in the future. For a general account of these discussions, see Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, pp. 64-80.
- 38 See, for example, Aybar's speech at the Istanbul City Congress in October 1965, and his statement to the Ankara City Congress October 1965 (read by Boran), quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, pp. 405-6, 418-19.

- 39 See, for example, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, Karınca Matbaası, 1964, pp. 157–9.
- 40 Rasih Nuri İleri, 'Bağımsızlık, Sosyalizm ve İşçi Sınıfı', *Yön*, no. 171, 8 July 1966. İleri was among members of the TİP General Executive Board. Quoted in İleri, *Mibri Belli Olayı I, M.D.D.-Yön tartışmaları, Sosyalist Aydınlik Davası*, Anadolu Yayınları, 1976, pp. 34–5.
- 41 See below for more on this issue.
- 42 *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, pp. 157–9.
- 43 See, for example, Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, pp. 179–668.
- 44 See for example, 'Rejimi Savunmak için', *Sosyal Adalet*, no. 3, 1963, p. 4; 'Bildiri', *Sosyal Adalet*, no. 11, 1963, p. 4. Strikingly, in the printed notice in no. 219 about the main line of TİP politics on election propaganda forced on all party members, Aybar stated that the party was the heir to all the good deeds of Turkish history. The party was sincerely committed to Atatürk's revolution and 27 May, as they were against exploitation and backwardness and were political independence movements within the struggle of the whole nation. The events of 27 May had led to the opening of democracy and social justice for all poor people (quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 1114–15).
- 45 Aybar's message on '27 May Freedom and Constitution Day', *Sosyal Adalet*, no. 15, June 1965, p. 24.
- 46 Muzaffer Karan (of '14'lüler) had joined the party in May 1965. Aybar stated to the press that 'the link between the TİP and 27 May was established through this. That link already existed, but now it has been made more firm'. Quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1144.
- 47 *Yön* pointed to such contradictions in the TİP, which TİP leaders had chosen not to respond to. See, for example, Avcioglu, 'Bir Sosyalist Stratejinin Esasları', *Yön*, no. C, 1966, p. 13.
- 48 See, for example, Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, pp. 474–5. Aybar regarded those who were 'thinking to build socialism by a new attempt like 27 May' as misguided. Boran likewise reacted to intellectuals who just flirt with the army in 'İlerici Güçlerin İşbirliği ve Sosyalizm', *Dönüşüm*, no. 12, 1967, p. 4.
- 49 Compare, for example, similar opinions stated by two successive leaders of the party in the early 1960s and early 1970s: Aybar, *Sosyal Adalet*, no. 7, 1963, p. 3; Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, pp. 227–8.
- 50 Those sent to parliament were Mehmet Ali Aybar, Sadun Aren, Çetin Altan (Istanbul), Rıza Kuas (Ankara), Muzaffer Karan (Denizli), Tarık Ziya Ekinci (Diyarbakır), Yahya Kanbolat (Hatay), Cemal Hakkı Selek (İzmir), Adil Kurter (Kars), Behice Boran (Urfalı), Yunus Koçak (Konya), Kemal Nebioğlu (Tekirdağ), Ali Karcı (Adana), Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı (Yozgat) and Şaban Erik (Malatya). Muzaffer Karan, from the MBK, left the party, allegedly accusing it of communism, thus the number of members of the party in parliament dropped to fourteen. Belge, *Sosyalizm Türkiye ve Gelecek*, p. 2122.
- 51 Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, p. 489.
- 52 About one-third of the votes were received from Istanbul, not from the poor working-class districts but from middle-class areas. Murat Belge, 'Sol', *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, ed. İrvan Cemil Schick, Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak, Belge Yn., 1990, p. 169.
- 53 Yet the situation changed rapidly as the TİP had forecast; the working class was politically active at the beginning of the 1970s. Ibid.

- 54 That was the statement made by Doğan Avcıoğlu in his editorial immediately after the elections. He tried to start a debate to evaluate the current situation and to determine the forces of struggle and relevant strategies. 'Rejimin Geleceği', *Yön*, 5, no. 167, 1966, p. 3.
- 55 Avcıoğlu, 'TİP'e Dair', *Yön*, 5, no. 168, 1966, p. 3.
- 56 The discussions continued from 1 June 1966 to 14 October 1966. They concentrated on strategy rather than on theoretical debate. Aydınoğlu (*Türk Solu*, p. 84) stresses that this was because the *Yön* circle was trying to prepare the ground for future action, a military intervention, and was thinking of influencing the TİP to act as a social base for the intervention. See Chapter 3 for more on *Yön*'s position relevant to this topic.
- 57 Erdoğan Başar Berktaş, Muvaffak Şeref, Ahmet Say, Vahap Erdoğan, Can Yücel and Arslan Başer Kafaçoğlu were among those supporting NDR within the TİP. (Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 219.) Yücel later criticized himself and explained that he had not fully developed his ideas on strategy, and would have done better to wait for the declaration of the party. (Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, p. 1171.)
- 58 This was more the case for the old communists such as Mihri Belli, but as mentioned in Chapter 3, even Avcıoğlu had criticized the TİP using Marxist terminology, accusing it for example of rightist and leftist deviations.
- 59 Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 84.
- 60 See, for example, Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, pp. 465, 474, 495, 606, 688 and Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, pp. 254-5. One of the earliest responses to Avcıoğlu was actually by Abidin Dino. According to Dino, the TİP was not a 'romantic' party and an option to bring change from above without depending on people should not be viewed as realist politics. However, Dino acknowledged the problem of the conservative powers' hegemony over the millions of peasants, and he believed it was up to the people within the party who were familiar with the reality of the villages to reach out to the peasantry and to think of a solution. Abidin Dino, 'Realistler-Romantikler', *Sosyal Adalet*, 20, November 1965, pp. 18-20.
- 61 Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 79. Aydınoğlu points out that the TİP had refused the educational demands of party members at the Malatya Congress, as they ignored or even feared theory. He argued that consequently, the party was unable to solve the problems facing the party and perhaps the country (ibid., pp. 90-1).
- 62 The debate centred on the social structure of Turkey. Aybar, for example, used the terms 'Ottoman-style state rule' (all-powerful and top-down rule) from August 1966 onwards. Barış Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, İletişim, 2002, p. 226.
- 63 The CHP was regarded as the heir of an 'Ottoman-style despotic state' [Osmanlı tipi ceberrut devletin mirasçısı]. According to Aydınoğlu, the TİP formulated new theories on state and class on account of its rivalry with the CHP after the party declared its left-of-centre position. He argues that the new ideas of the TİP had nothing to do with a class-independence perspective, however. *Türk Solu*, p. 78.
- 64 'Sosyalizmi Halk Kurar', *Dönüşüm*, November 1966, p. 3.
- 65 The TİP had a narrow understanding of the concept of the working class. The party acknowledged only workers employed in industry as the working class.

- Nihat Sargın, general secretary of the TİP, also confirmed this idea. Interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul.
- 66 Boran, 'İlerici Güçlerin İşbirliği ve Sosyalizm', *Dönüşüm*, 2, no. 12, 1967, p. 5.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, p. 225.
- 69 Ümran Baran, who had earlier led the Fatih Town Congress, was one of the candidates. According to Nihat Sargın, the party administration was quite surprised that this person whom 'nobody knew' got so many votes against Aren, who won by a margin of only a few votes. See for details, Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, pp. 404-8.
- 70 Aybar gave a speech at the congress attacking the intellectual movement and emphasized that when the intellectual caste came to power after a coup the transformation into socialism would not be possible, and, as seen in Turkey before, the country would fall into the hands of the imperialists again.
- 71 Aren, *Tip Olayı, 1961-1971*, Cem, 1993, p. 108.
- 72 Vahap Erdoğan, 'TİP nereye gidiyor', *Yön*, 5, no. 189, 1966, pp. 10-13.
- 73 According to Sadun Aren, after the Malatya Congress, about two hundred dissident members were called before a disciplinary board and eventually thrown out of the party. Aren, *Tip Olayı*, p. 109.
- 74 Interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul.
- 75 Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961-1971)*, pp. 442-4. The complete motion is quoted *ibid.*, pp. 1180-4. Even though this position seemed like an insistence on class independence, the general TİP discourse and the organization of the party did not reflect such a view. The party could not eliminate sociological or ethnic differences and group attitudes in favour of political bases. At the Malatya Congress and later, the party was divided into three positions: intellectuals, trade unionists and 'Easterners' [doğulular, i.e. the Kurds]. In 1967 or thereabouts, Aybar and Boran had turned their attention to the peasantry, thinking socialism could be attained through the votes of the peasants. Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 88.
- 76 Murat Belge, 'Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Sosyalizm (1960'tan sonra)', *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, 7, p. 1956.
- 77 Nihat Sargın's wife Yıldız Baştımar was a cousin of Zeki Baştımar's. They lived in the same house for a long time as Zeki Baştımar's parents had died early and Yıldız Baştımar's parents had taken care of him. Nihat Sargın claims they had no idea when Zeki Baştımar fled to the Soviet Union to become general secretary of the TKP Foreign Bureau. He thinks Zeki Baştımar was probably trying to protect the family and therefore they had no prior knowledge of his escape. He also told me that they had not exchanged any news in the 1960s, and claimed that Aybar had wanted to meet him, the 'young Sargın', in the 1950s, as he was such a close relative of Zeki Baştımar's. Ulus, interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul.
- 78 Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, p. 264.
- 79 Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, pp. 488, 474, 502.
- 80 See for Divitçioğlu's influence on Aybar, Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, pp. 221-4, 226.
- 81 See for a general discussion (not specific to the TİP) on AMP, Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a*, pp. 122-47. Other writers to apply AMP to the history of the Ottoman state were Muzaffer Sencer, Kemal Tahir and Niyazi Berkes.

- 82 'Asiatic Society', *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, ed. Tom Bottomore, Blackwell, 1983, pp. 32–5. The AMP concept had actually first come to the fore in the 1960s with the translation of the French Marxist writer Roger Garaudy's work on socialism and Islamism, the foreword to which had been written by Avcioğlu and Belli. Roger Garaudy, *Sosyalizm ve İslamiyet*, trans. Doğan Avcioğlu and E. Tüfekçi [Mihri Belli], Yön yn., 1965. For the influence of this book on radical Turkish leftists, especially on discussions on the possibility of revolution and the form of this in an Eastern country like Turkey and on AMP, see Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, pp. 208–18.
- 83 Selahattin Hilav, 'Bilim Açısından Din', *Yön*, no. 149, 4 February 1966; 'Asya-Tipi Üretim Nedir? (1)', *Yön*, no. 150, 11 February 1966; 'Asya-Tipi Üretim Nedir? (2)', *Yön*, no. 151, 18 February 1966.
- 84 Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, p. 236. According to Ünlü, Aybar in one of his speeches in October 1968, mentioned that the AMP concept was never developed fully by Marx. Also in one of his articles he defined the Ottoman state as feudal. Yet in the same article he mentioned AMP as one of the stages of societies. Ünlü concludes that AMP was an effective device for conceptualizing the authoritarian bureaucratic caste Aybar wrote about from 1945 onwards. However, he could not use the AMP concept freely on account of his scientific preciseness. *Ibid.*, pp. 236–7.
- 85 After the Leningrad conference of 1931 the relevance of AMP for the analysis of Asian societies was rejected. The decision was confirmed by Stalin's adherence to a mechanistically unilinear perspective in which each historical stage followed on from the one before according to necessary laws. The rejection of AMP put Asian societies under the general categories of slavery or feudalism. The process of de-Stalinization contributed to a revival of interest in AMP in the 1960s, especially with Althusser's structuralist Marxism. 'Asiatic Society', p. 35.
- 86 Divitçioğlu defined this system (mainly seen in Asian-type underdeveloped countries) as 'slightly distorted-AMP' [az-bozuk ATÜT]. Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı ve Azgelişmiş Ülkeler*, Elif Yay., 1966, p. 11.
- 87 It was not of course that they rejoiced in the DP gaining power, but in the people eliminating the oldest hegemonic power. People could then eliminate another hegemonic power – capitalism – and carry a socialist party to power. Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, p. 234. Most Turkish socialists and communists, including at the time Avcioğlu and Belli for example, regarded the DP as an anti-revolutionary party.
- 88 Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, pp. 228–30.
- 89 *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- 90 This was before Atatürk's era of course, in 1886 (First Constitution) and in 1908 (Second Constitution) under the Ottoman empire. See, for a brief account, Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, pp. 112–13, 139–43.
- 91 Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, p. 652. Aybar's writings on history and his use of concepts such as class were rather imprecise and unclear. Aybar regarded both the CHP and the DP, two political parties, as of the bureaucratic class without explaining precisely what he meant by that. Furthermore, he argued that the bureaucracy had made a coalition with the ağa-comprador class, also without explaining the relationship. The most important question would be, if Turkish society was divided into two basic classes – ruling and exploited – as in

- the Ottoman state, where would each of the categories, pro-American bureaucrats and Atatürkist bureaucrats, fall? (See *ibid.*, pp. 646–57.)
- 92 ‘Sosyalizmi Halk Kurar’, *Dönüşüm*, November 1966, p. 3.
- 93 Aybar’s speech to the Third General Congress. Quoted in Sargin, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 728.
- 94 Küçükömer denounced the military-civilian intelligentsia, as they were the dominant class under the Ottoman regime, which was an Asiatic despotism, and this stratum had brought imperialism to Turkey, which had destroyed all Turkish industry. Hence, there was opposition by the local shop owners, Janissaries, ulema – whom Küçükömer regarded as of the people – against Westernization and against these bureaucratic power-holders. People had to resort to traditional beliefs because of their (economically rooted) xenophobia. *Düzenin Yabancılaşması*, Ant Yay., 1969, pp. 38, 52–3.
- 95 Küçükömer implied NDR followers. See the following chapter.
- 96 ‘TİP’in Programı Değişmelidir’, *Ant*, no. 99, 19 November 1968, p. 7.
- 97 Kemal Sülker papers, IISG, Box 591–630, dossier 626. Küçükömer had an important role in this congress. He was given the duty of uniting different opinions within the party, especially those separating Aybar and Aren–Boran. Küçükömer, however, thought that such problems were due to the incompleteness of the TİP’s programme. He argued at the congress that the programme must be renewed. Sargin, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 724–5.
- 98 Murat Belge recounts also that he, Çetin Özek, İdris Küçükömer and Murat Sarca were discussing in *Ant* the possibility of a dialogue with Muslims, who were generally regarded as bigots or reactionaries. Tuba Çandar, *Murat Belge: Bir Hayat, Doğan Kitap*, Mart 2007, p. 254. Küçükömer’s work, which has become the symbol of socialists embracing civilian society, is, though innovative and spirited, highly confusing and problematic. For a criticism, see Nuray Mert, ‘İdris Küçükömer ve ‘Düzenin Yabancılaşması’’, *Doğu-Batı*, 3, no. 11, 2000, pp. 63–74.
- 99 According to Aybar, the basic contradiction in Turkish society, that of the class conflict, was overdetermined by the problem of freedom. This was also why he consistently used the concept of ‘libertarian socialism’ [hürriyetçi sosyalizm]. Ünlü (*Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar*, pp. 264–5) added that Aybar could use such terminology tactically to elicit the support of the Alevite and Kurdish people. Belge also saw how emphasizing freedom instead of the class struggle pleased Eastern delegates (Belge, ‘TİP’, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol. VII, 1998, p. 2127). Yet Aybar was probably quite sincere in using these terms. One of his closest friends, the internationally acclaimed novelist Yaşar Kemal, states that Aybar had similar views even in the 1940s, and he was against dictatorships like the Soviet Union. ‘Büyük bir Düşünürün Son Kitabı’, foreword to *M. Ali Aybar, Sosyalizm Üzerine Düşünceler*, p. 8.
- 100 That was exactly the reason why the communist leadership had suppressed the concept of AMP after 1931, as the idea of a ruling class controlling the means of administration without ownership of private property indicated a continuity of political power from Tsarist to Stalinist Russia. As mentioned earlier, revival of the AMP concept was linked to the de-Stalinization process in the 1960s. ‘Asiatic Society’, p. 35.
- 101 Aybar openly stated his views against the USSR, and remarked that it was an unresolved problematic issue whether the bureaucracy was a class or not. He claimed that the bureaucracy in the USSR had a number of resemblances to that

- of the Ottoman empire. Yalçın Küçük criticized this view (without citing Aybar) by defining it as 'Marcuse deviation', as Herbert Marcuse considered the Soviet bureaucracy a class. Yalçın Küçük, 'Tıp'teki Bunalımın Nedeni', *Ant*, no. 104, 24 December 1968. The question was first posed (within the concept of AMP) by Wittfogel's studies on *Oriental Despotism* (1957) and on the hydraulic economy in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* where he applied Weber's notion of 'patrimonial bureaucracy'. See 'Asiatic Society', p. 35.
- 102 Asaf Savaş Akat remarked that the work pointed to the fact that state ownership of the means of production did not necessarily overcome exploitation. According to him, it enabled many leftists to see the Soviet Union from a clearer perspective. See Akat, 'İdris Küçükömer'in Mirası', *İdris Küçükömer, Anılar ve Düşünceler*, Bütün Eserleri 6, pp. 30–1.
- 103 Speech at Beşiktaş Town Congress, 21 July. Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 661.
- 104 One of the articles was titled 'Çekoslovakya Olayları Karşısında TİP'in Görüşleri', *ibid.*, pp. 661–3.
- 105 *Ibid.*, pp. 663–5.
- 106 Party members and young socialists were afraid that his ideas would be used for anti-communist propaganda. Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 81.
- 107 Ulus, interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul.
- 108 According to Aybar, common people in Turkey from lower classes and various ethnic and religious groups were faced with humiliation and mistreatment in various ways. Class exploitation was not a satisfactory conceptualization to understand the humiliation [horlanma] ordinary people had to suffer every day.
- 109 Aybar's idea was to build a type of socialism specifically to fit Turkey, though its principles were to be derived from Marxism, especially using concepts from surplus-value theory. He wanted a socialist system that did not depend on the bureaucracy, but was instead built by the labouring classes from bottom to top. He remarked that Turkey was a peculiar country, with no similarities to the West or East, as it had been a great empire which was now reduced to a semi-colonial status, had won its independence by a war and was losing it again and was therefore still an underdeveloped country. The socialism of the TİP was, then, not an import from other socialist countries. Quoted in Yetkin (from an interview with Aybar in *Ant*, on 14 February 1967) in *Türkiye'de Soldaki Bölünmeler (1960–1970)*, Toplum Yayınevi, 1970, p. 35. See for Aybar's views on 'Turkish socialism', Aybar, *Türkiye'de İşçi Partisi Tarihi*, vol. III, pp. 129–31. For a different view, see Aren, *Puslu Camın Arkasından*, pp. 137–41.
- 110 Aybar disagreed with the accusations and believed that he was accused only because he had criticized the Soviet Union. Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 683. He also was very surprised at being accused of speaking of a Turkish form of socialism by Behice Boran, who had devoted an entire book to explaining the Turkish form of socialism. Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm*, pp. 124–5.
- 111 They were Dr Nihat Sargın, Minnetullah Haydaraoğlu, Sadun Aren, Behice Boran and Şaban Erik. See Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 680–1. This proposal is known as '5'li Önerge'. Also see Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a*, pp. 82–3 for more on this.
- 112 Nihat Sargın, who was very close to Aybar, told me that Aybar had misunderstood their private conversation and assumed that their reaction was indeed due to an order from Moscow. Interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, Istanbul.

- 113 One opposition group was the 'anti-Aybar group' (under the leadership of the five signatories mentioned above), and the second group stood in opposition to both the pro-Aybar and the anti-Aybar group. This group, 'Third Way' [Üçüncü Yol], mostly defended their views in the journal *Ant* published by Doğan Özgüden. They argued that the TİP must prepare a new programme and solve its organizational problems in the meantime. İdris Küçükömer, Murat Sarıca, Nurkalp Devrim, Oya Baydar and Murat Belge were members of that third oppositional group. Belge, 'TİP', p. 2128.
- 114 *Ibid.*, p. 2129.
- 115 Boran was elected at the Fourth Congress of the TİP on 29–31 October 1970. Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1380.
- 116 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 156.
- 117 Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, p. 8.
- 118 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 119 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 120 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 121 *Ibid.*
- 122 *Ibid.*
- 123 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 124 Boran emphasized that the petty bourgeoisie, when its status is in danger, tends to adopt socialism, either real socialism or authoritarian socialism, looking down on the people. Yet when society is at great risk and close to collapse it becomes a force that supports fascism (p. 19). Her ideas were derived directly from Marxist views on the petty bourgeoisie or the middle class. See 'Middle Class', *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, pp. 334–5.
- 125 Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, pp. 18–19.
- 126 *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- 127 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 128 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 129 *Ibid.*
- 130 The state ownership of the means of production and the protection of national industry (if it really was the case in the early republican period) were certainly not the characteristics of political economy specific to socialist regimes. Most capitalist regimes at least go through such a phase in periods of crisis. However, it has been one of the most durable and central misapprehensions of Turkish leftists that they associate state ownership of the means of production directly with anti-capitalism and immediately then with socialism. This misapprehension was mainly due to the existence of such a system in the USSR, which defined itself as a socialist state.
- 131 Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, pp. 17–21.
- 132 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 133 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 134 *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 52.
- 135 *Ibid.*, pp. 45–6.
- 136 Boran claimed that the 1960 coup was an action against the DP and defending the CHP. *Ibid.*, pp. 51–2.
- 137 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 138 *Ibid.*, pp. 227–8.

- 139 Ibid., p. 229.
- 140 Ibid., pp. 229–30.
- 141 Çulhaoğlu, 'History of the Socialist-Communist Movement in Turkey', p. 186.
- 142 The TİP was dominant in the 'Idea Clubs', especially the most famous one that was shaped by Professor Sadun Aren at Ankara University's political science department. The clubs were linked nationwide under the 'Federation of Idea Clubs', where TİP youth members were prominent. However, the NDR movement won control of this federation in 1968 and turned it into an organization known by the name 'Dev-Genç', the Federation of Turkish Revolutionary Youth. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, pp. 371–2. See Chapter 6 for more on youth socialist activity.
- 143 Çulhaoğlu, 'History of the Socialist-Communist Movement in Turkey', p. 186. Conditions were not favourable for a peaceful struggle, either. The socio-political structure had no tolerance for leftist radical movements and under these conditions it was not easy to continue a steady, non-violent course. Belge, 'TİP', p. 2131.
- 144 The NDR faction had managed to win at a congress, though they were not actually the majority. But in the Fourth Congress held on 29–31 October 1970 in Ankara, the NDR group also split and the *Emek* group (known as the Aren-Boran group) was victorious. Behice Boran was chosen as party leader. Belge, 'TİP', p. 2130.
- 145 The TİP participated in sixty-seven cities (fifty-four in 1965) and still obtained fewer votes, 243,631, with its share dropping to 2.7 per cent. Only Aybar and Rıza Kuas became delegates, although the decrease in the number of delegates was also due to change in electoral law. The percentage of the votes won by the party had actually increased to about 6 per cent and then dropped during the election because of the split in the party. Belge, 'TİP', p. 2129.
- 146 The poll was conducted on the basis of the majority-proportional system and not proportional representation, and the votes cast for small parties in all electoral districts were discounted in 1969. The new law was an initiative of the AP to serve the interests of the large parties instead of the small parties such as the TİP. Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 67.
- 147 Aybar admitted in an interview with the *Yeni Gazete* before the election that 'the hardest struggle is not against American imperialism and its local cohorts or even for the realisation of socialist ideals in the best form. The hardest struggle is that which we socialists ourselves are forced to conduct against each other.' Quoted in Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 67.
- 148 Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 873.
- 149 Aybar later admitted that he had attributed much importance to the peasants as he was observing a 'great awakening of the peasants'. Quoted in Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 58.
- 150 *TİP Basın Bülteni*, 7 July 1969, quoted on p. 266.
- 151 Artun Ünsal claims in his study that there was no organic relation between the TİP and DİSK, unlike the British Labour Party and the TUC (Trades Union Congress) or the Communist Party of France and the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail). He shows that the number of DİSK members had reached 80,000 in 1967, whereas the TİP only had 13,000 members, at least on paper. There was no hierarchical relationship between the two institutions. Most DİSK members were not even sympathetic to the TİP. Actually, Boran later accused the trade unionists of

- causing the poor relations of the TİP with the working class as she thought the trade unionists prevented the formation of closer links since they did not want to lose their hegemonic space and their power over the working class. See Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa: Türkiye İşçi Partisi (1961–1971)*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt yn., pp. 259–69.
- 152 Ibid., pp. 266–7.
- 153 Tanık Ziya Ekinci was TİP general secretary representing the interests of the Easterners.
- 154 These were generally members of the intelligentsia supporting NDR; see the next chapter.
- 155 Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, pp. 68–9.
- 156 *Emek*, no. 181, 1970, p. 20.
- 157 Twenty-five TİP delegates associated with the journal *Sosyalist Aydınlık* had joined the alternative assembly. Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 976. See the next chapter for the *Sosyalist Aydınlık* circle and Revolutionary Congress.
- 158 Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, pp. 76–7.
- 159 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 76.
- 160 However, before the congress, three Kurdish members, K. Burkan, N. Kutlay and M. Zana, put forward a proposal to the Central Board of Administration (MYK) to purge NDR supporters, but later the Kurdish group did not support the Boran group against the NDR faction. Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 962–7.
- 161 They defined this as ‘liquidation of petty-bourgeois ideologies’. At the Fourth Congress, NDR was condemned as it rejected the struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie and instead advocated the struggle against feudalism, which diverted the revolutionary movement from its real direction. That was a concession to the bourgeoisie as it rejected the anti-capitalist essence of the struggle. Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1374.
- 162 See Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, ‘Kongre Kararları’, pp. 997–9.
- 163 It was not specified in which regions feudalism continued.
- 164 The working class comprised the agricultural proletariat, small peasantry and other labouring classes.
- 165 Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa*, p. 492. Actually, at the Third Congress of the TİP the oppression and unequal treatment of the Arabic and Kurdish people in Turkey was condemned by a motion. ‘TİP 3. Büyük Kongre Kararları’, Kemal Sülker papers, IISG, Box 591–630, Dossier 596, p. 2.
- 166 Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 77.
- 167 Quoted in Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 995.
- 168 Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 1000–1. For the English translation of the resolution on the Kurdish question, see Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 78.
- 169 Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa*, p. 492. Ünsal regards Boran’s decision as a failure in administration.
- 170 Çulhaoğlu, ‘History of the Socialist-Communist Movement in Turkey’, p. 183. DİSK was founded officially on 12–13 February 1967, the same date in February on which the TİP was founded.
- 171 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 94.
- 172 Kemal Türkler, chairman of DİSK, had also spoken at the Fourth Congress and defined the mutual relationship between DİSK and the party, emphasizing the need to consolidate relations. However, he commented on the factional struggle in the party, observing that it had led to a rift between the political and trade union organization of the workers.

- He argued that unless the links were renewed the TİP would have no prospect of a future within the working class of the country. Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 79.
- 173 The campaign started on 8 January 1971 with a press conference held by Boran and was to last a week. The statement 'Faşizme karşı Birleşelim' warned that democracy was in danger and either a military regime or a fascist one dressed as democracy was coming. Quoted in Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1384.
- 174 *Ibid.*, p. 1051.
- 175 Fifteen leftist chambers declared a common statement to defend 12 March, and DİSK published a pamphlet expressing similar sentiments.
- 176 Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, pp. 1053–4.
- 177 *Ibid.*, p. 1081.

### Chapter 6

- 1 Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1081.
- 2 *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* was written by Lenin in Geneva, in June–July 1905. The book was published in late July 1905 by the Central Committee of the RSDLP. It was republished twice in Russia in the same year, once by the Central Committee of the RSDLP, and the second time by the Moscow Committee of the Party, this time in an edition of 10,000 copies. Lenin had *Two Tactics* published in the miscellany *Twelve Years* in 1907, supplementing the book with new notes. The material prepared by Lenin for this book, his plans, précis and other notes were published in *Lenin Miscellany V*, pp. 315–20, and *XVI*, pp. 151–6.
- 3 Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, pp. 104–5.
- 4 Even though Belli was not a Maoist and never acknowledged himself as such, his main work on the strategy of NDR was inspired by Mao Tse-Tung. Compare Belli, *Milli Demokratik Devrim*, with Mao Tse-Tung, *The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party*, Foreign Language Press, Peking 1965, which except for some details could have been a translation.
- 5 It is more than probable that Belli and his close friends from the TKP considered themselves as the TKP, the vanguard party of the proletariat. Belli in an interview told me that the TKP was never dissolved. Interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 6 Belge, 'Sol', p. 171.
- 7 Belli, *İnsanlar Tanıdım: Mihri Belli'nin Anıları*, 3rd ed., Doğan Kitap, 2000, pp. 101–60, 277–353.
- 8 E. Tüfekçi, 'Demokratik Devrim: kiminle beraber, Kime Karşı?', *Yön*, 5, no. 175, 1966, pp. 10–11.
- 9 'E' is the initial letter of 'eski', literally 'old' in Turkish. The pen name as a whole implied an old Communist Party member, a 'veteran'.
- 10 Mihri Belli, 'Devrimci Şiar Meselesi', *Türk Solu*, no. 5, 1967, p. 4.
- 11 See for example, Münir Aktolga, 'Milli Demokratik Devrim', *Türk Solu*, no. 7, 1967, p. 5. Aktolga claims in this article that the 'revolution in a single phase' strategy was not successful as experience had shown more than once.
- 12 Şevki Akşit, 'Antiemperyalist Eylemde Milli Güçlerin Dayanışması Zorunluluğu ve Sosyalist Partilerin Tutumu', *Türk Solu*, no. 2, 1967, p. 6.

- 13 Belli, 'Milli Demokratik Devrim', *Türk Solu*'na ek, no. 53, 19 November 1968, p. 6.
- 14 Ibid., p. 10.
- 15 Ibid., p. 12.
- 16 Ibid., p. 18.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 22–31.
- 19 Ibid., p. 23.
- 20 Ibid., p. 24.
- 21 Ibid. I have retained the way Belli described these 'movements' of the military-civilian intelligentsia. [1908 Hürriyet hareketini, Atatürk devrimini ve 27 Mayıs'ı bu biçimde değerlendirmek gerekir.] Moreover, the use of various terms to refer to the same group is confusing but it is in the original text. It is not possible to understand fully how this group was categorized from the text. Belli is quite consistent and clear when writing about the other social groups or classes. I think the problem is due to the fact that the Marxist literature Belli was familiar with does not provide any framework to clearly understand or justify the army or the military-civilian intelligentsia having a special role in a revolution. Therefore, Belli retreated from his dogmatic knowledge on other classes and devised his own eclectic terminology and point of view about the role of the army.
- 22 Ibid., p. 19.
- 23 Ibid., pp. 24–5.
- 24 It is interesting that a 'Marxist' questions a powerful economic force having also become a powerful political force.
- 25 Belli, 'Milli Demokratik Devrim', p. 25.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid., p. 26.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid., p. 27.
- 30 Belli is probably implying the foundation of OYAK. As NDR was going to wage the 'Second Independence War', the 'Independence War' (of 1919–23) was termed the First Independence War. *Milli Demokratik Devrim* (reprint), Yurtsever Yayınları, 1972.
- 31 See, for example, Belli, 'Milli Demokratik Devrim', p. 27.
- 32 Ibid., p. 26.
- 33 Belli, 'O Ezanlar Senin İçin Okunuyor', *Türk Solu*, 39, 13 August 1968, p. 6.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 'Millet Gerçeği', *Aydınlık*, 7, May 1969, p. 24.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ulus, interview with Nihat Sargın.
- 39 Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a*, p. 108. See Chapter 5 for NDR opposition in the TİP.
- 40 Vahap Erdoğan, 'TİP nereye gidiyor: Önümüzdeki Devrimci Adım ve TİP'in Tarihsel Görevi', *Yön*, 189, 1966, pp. 11–13.
- 41 Ibid., p. 12.
- 42 Ibid.

- 43 Belli, 'Devrimci Şiar Meselesi', *Türk Solu*, no. 5, 1967, p. 4.
- 44 In interview Belli said that there were socialist and communist military commanders and officers he knew personally. They had close contact and met regularly and that was why and how he could say that some military officers would unite with the socialists under a socialist movement. Ulus, interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 45 Belli, 'Ortanın Solu Nedir, Ne Değildir?', *Türk Solu*, no. 5, 1967. Belli also argued that it was better not to use the term 'socialism' in general, but only to try to realize it.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Muzaffer Erdost collected the ideas on NDR that he had developed in *Türk Solu* and *Aydınlık*, and especially criticisms of the ideas of Aybar, in his book '*Türkiye Sosyalizmi*' ve *Sosyalizm*. Erdost criticized Aybar particularly for using the term 'Turkish socialism'. Erdost argued that socialism was a universal system; there could not be a unique type of socialism for Turkey. However, the ways to transform into socialism could differ. He also criticized adopting the radical terminology of the socialist revolution when the programme of the party was not a socialist programme. See Erdost, '*Türkiye Sosyalizmi*' ve *Sosyalizm*, Sol yn., 1969, pp. 7–89.
- 48 Erdost '*Türkiye Sosyalizmi*', p. 88. The division of the bureaucracy based on the division of the petty bourgeoisie was inspired by the work of Mao Tse-Tung which was published by the Sol publishing house as *Teori ve Pratik*, Sol Yayınları, 1966.
- 49 '*Türkiye Sosyalizmi*', pp. 52–8.
- 50 When I tried to ask Belli this question in interview he told me that a revolutionary must consider only the first stage ahead of him as revolutionary theory must depend on the concrete situation. Therefore, he did not try to forecast what would happen if the army had taken control after a successful NDR, for example. Ulus, interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 51 Erdost held that because of its class structure (as coming from essentially revolutionary poor segments of urban and rural places) these strata had always been progressive and revolutionary in petty-bourgeois terms. '*Türkiye Sosyalizmi*', p. 83
- 52 Ibid., p. 84.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Ibid., p. 86.
- 55 'Atatürkçü Dernekler Ortak Bildirisi', Suavi Aydın, 'Milli Demokratik Devrim'den 'Ulusal Sol'a Türk Solunda Özgücü Eğilim', *Toplum ve Bilim*, 78, Autumn 1998, p. 71.
- 56 Aydın, 'Milli Demokratik', p. 11. See for the protocol, *Dönüşüm*, no. 6, 1 November 1966.
- 57 *Dönüşüm*, no. 8, 1 December 1966, p. 6.
- 58 *Türk Solu* [Turkish Left] was first published on 17 November 1966.
- 59 See for example, Belli, 'Ya Güçbirliği Ya Faşizm', *Türk Solu*, 1, no. 24, 29 April 1968, p. 1.
- 60 Ali Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç Tarihi, Belgelerle Bir Dönemin Serüveni*, Doruk, Ankara, 1997, p. 165.
- 61 TİP did not favour Dev-Güç, and forced its student clubs, FKF, to separate from Dev-Güç, but after the voting FKF stayed in. Ibid. p. 166
- 62 'Dev-Güç', *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2082.
- 63 Kıvılcımlı also regarded the TİP's action as anti-Leninism; *ibid.*

- 64 The statement was announced at exactly the same time as the religious reactionaries were going to hold a meeting at the end of March called '2. Şahlanış Mitingi?'
- 65 See the statement quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, p. 165.
- 66 Unsigned, 'Dev-Güç Gerçekten Dev olan Bir Güçtür', *Türk Solu*, 1, no. 26, 14 May 1968, p. 1
- 67 Belli, 'Ya Güçbirliği Ya Faşizm.'
- 68 However, the proponents of NDR rejected a non-capitalist development road, which *Yön* and SCS proposed, as they held that such a path was possible only for countries even less developed than Turkey, such as Ghana or Somalia. Lipovsky, *Socialist Movement in Turkey*, p. 11.
- 69 See the statement for Dev-Güç read by Kadri Kaplan on 17 March 1969 on behalf of 'Revolutionary Associations', in 'Dev-Güç İlerici Güçleri 5 yönlü Demokratik savaşa çağırıldı', *Türk Solu*, no. 71, 1969, p. 4.
- 70 Belli held that everyone knew if the power changed hands in the near future 'it won't be communists who will take over, but the petty-bourgeoisie, the military-civilian intelligentsia.' This remark was directed at the anti-communist slogans of the AP 'Kahrolsun Komünistler!', which according to Belli were not actually against the communists.
- 71 A similar view is expressed by Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu*, p. 115.
- 72 Ulus, interview with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, 18 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 73 E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes – A History of the World 1914–1991*, Vintage Books, 1996, p. 196.
- 74 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 30.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 76 Ertuğrul Kürkçü, for example, said that when the students began reading Marx and Lenin they realized that the order could only be changed by revolution. They started to be suspicious of the legalistic road of the TIP. Kürkçü, interview with Bedri Baykam, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, İmge Kitapevi, 1998, p. 410.
- 77 However, Turkish students had not separated from orthodox communism or Stalinism unlike their comrades in France. Belge, 'Sol', p. 171.
- 78 Quoted in B. Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey, 1920–1991: Soviet Foreign Policy, Turkey and Communism*, Routledge, 2006, p. 91.
- 79 See, for example, Belli, 'Gençliğin Direnişi: Nerde Hareket, Orda Bereket'. Quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, pp. 188–90.
- 80 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2085.
- 81 Interview with Mustafa Lütfi Kıyıcı, one of the founders of DÖB, quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, p. 219.
- 82 'Gençlik ve Antiemperyalist Kavga', quoted *ibid.*, pp. 227–8.
- 83 *Ibid.*
- 84 Haşmet Atahan, a student of DÖB, for example, remarks on the difference of the police reaction to social movements from that of the army. Military officers were kind to students. The students had warm feelings towards the military personnel. Quoted in Baykam, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, pp. 29–30.
- 85 Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, Ozan Yayıncılık, 7th ed., 2003, p. 120.
- 86 'DÖB'lilerin Yürüyüş Günlüğü: Amerikan Emperyalizmine Karşı Milli Kurtuluş Yolunda İzindeyiz/DÖB'. Quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, p. 223.

- 87 Mustafa Gürkan, who was among the marchers, said that the ceremony, ironically, was no different from an official ceremony at Anıtkabir. Quoted in Baykam, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, p. 244.
- 88 Aydın, 'Milli Demokratik', p. 78.
- 89 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 39.
- 90 Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 91 See the following chapters for Dr Kuvılcımlı.
- 92 Some members of Dev-Genç attacked the medical faculty of Hacettepe University and beat SGÖ members supporting the TİP on 6 June 1970. Again, on 13 September 1970, some students including student leaders Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, and Ertuğrul Kürkçü attacked the TİP and SGÖ central buildings. They attacked whoever they met and stole some of the furniture. According to the statement made by Yusuf Küpeli, Mahir Çayan led the raid and stated to *Aydınlık* that they were going to eliminate the TİP in the same way that Stalin had his opponents. Quoted in Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu: Demokrasi Mücadelesinde Sosyalist bir Öğrenci Hareketi*, Ozan Yan., 2002, pp. 622–3. For both events, see *ibid.*, pp. 620–3.
- 93 Ulus, interview with Yıldırım, 19 March 2007, Leiden.
- 94 Kürkçü, quoted in Baykam, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, pp. 418–19. Kürkçü said that Uluç Gürkan in particular had links with the *Devrim* circle and contacted Dev-Genç through its chair Kürkçü to provoke the military to intervene.
- 95 *Ibid.*, pp. 416–22. Mustafa Gürkan from DÖB and THKO claimed as well that Nahit Töre and he were contacted by İlhan Selçuk (of the *Devrim* circle) and informed about the 9 March junta. Selçuk asked them to support the intervention. Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 244–5.
- 96 Ulus, interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 97 A group had gathered around Perinçek consisting mostly of academics in the Ankara political science faculty of upper-middle-class origin.
- 98 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2145.
- 99 *İşçi-Köylü*, 7, 1969, p. 4.
- 100 Çayan, 'Yeni Oportünizmin Niteliği Üzerine' (June 1970), in *Bütün Yazılar*, Evren Yayınları, 1971, ed. M. Ali Moğultay, p. 160.
- 101 *İşçi Köylü*, 7, 1969, p. 4.
- 102 Halil Berktaş, 'Bilimsel Sosyalist Devrim Anlayışı', *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi*, 14, December 1969, p. 147; S. Alpay, 'Türkiye'nin Düzeni Üzerine', *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi*, 12, October 1969, p. 464.
- 103 *Ibid.*
- 104 Ulus, interview with Yıldırım, 19 March 2007, Leiden. Yıldırım was a student at Boğaziçi University at the time and was very close to Kaypakkaya as well as Perinçek.
- 105 'Left deviation' in terms of form, 'right deviation' in terms of 'essence'. Alpay, 'Türkiye'nin Düzeni Üzerine', p. 464
- 106 Alpay argued that the proletariat could do that by uniting with intellectuals who accepted scientific socialism as their guide and by founding a party based on this ideological base to lead all the classes. *Ibid.*, pp. 464–5.
- 107 According to Alpay, their basic nature was not being bureaucrats, but petty-bourgeois intellectuals. *Ibid.*, p. 455.
- 108 *Ibid.*, p. 466.
- 109 Berktaş, 'Bilimsel Sosyalist Devrim Anlayışı', p. 141.

- 110 Berktaş, *ibid.*, p. 147.
- 111 *Ibid.*, p. 453
- 112 Alpay, 'Türkiye'nin Düzeni Üzerine', p. 450.
- 113 *Ibid.*, p. 451.
- 114 On 20 January 1970 both lines of *Aydınlık* and Dev-Genç had a joint meeting to discuss the problems leading to separation. Vahap Erdoğan and Seyhan Erdoğan attended representing ASD, Atilla Sarp represented Dev-Genç, Doğu Perinçek and Şahin Alpay represented the PDA. For details, see Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, p. 458; also in Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, pp. 154–7.
- 115 Cengiz Çandar, 'Oportünistler Emperyalizmin Hizmetinde', *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi*, 13, November 1969, pp. 25–33.
- 116 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 117 For example, in 'Aydınlık'ta Dünya ve Türkiye: asker-sivil aydın zümre saflarında mücadele şiddetleniyor', *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık*, January 1970, p. 235.
- 118 Alpay, 'Türkiye'nin Düzeni Üzerine', p. 562.
- 119 Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, p. 139.
- 120 *Ibid.*, p. 142. According to Yıldırım there was no such relation with a military junta. Ulus, interview with Yıldırım, 19 March 2007, Leiden.
- 121 According to Mehmet Emin and Ruhi Koç the guerrilla force in the West was organized in the villages around Söke. Halil Berktaş especially tried to indoctrinate the peasantry to fight against feudal landlords. However, adopting the Indian style they were not to use rifles but ordinary agricultural tools to kill the landlords. The peasantry did not really believe in such a combat tactic. The main problem, however, was that there were actually no feudal landlords in the Aegean villages. There were only rich landowners. Therefore, the Chinese and Indian realities did not actually fit the realities of the socio-economic conditions of Turkey. Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara; Ulus, interview with Yıldırım, 19 March 2007, Leiden.
- 122 Vahap and Seyhan Erdoğan, Mihri Belli and Mahir Çayan remained on the editorial board of *Aydınlık*, with Çayan becoming editor after a while.
- 123 The cover of the journal PDA was first printed in blue, but was then changed to white to resemble the *Peking Review* of China. Therefore it was called 'beyaz or ak aydınlık'. Alpat, 'Beyaz Aydınlık (Ak Aydınlık)', *Popüler Türk Solu Sözlüğü*, Mayıs Yn., 1998, p. 48.
- 124 See for example, Çayan, 'Yeni Oportünizmin Niteliği Üzerine', p. 98.
- 125 *Ibid.* pp. 449–50.
- 126 Belli, 'Proleter Devrimci Örgüt İçin Program Taslağı', *Türkiye Solu*, 1, April 1971, p. 1.
- 127 Aydın, 'Milli Demokratik', p. 80. Belli had announced that as the journal *Türk Solu* was generally under the influence of the old PDA they had started to publish a new journal titled *Türkiye Solu* and continued to publish *Aydınlık* for more theoretical writing.
- 128 Actually, the inconsistency of the PDA and its very partisan attitudes in the 1970s raised suspicions about the movement and its leader. Many people within the left suspected Doğu Perinçek and his close associates of being MIT agents or of having very close relations with the state.
- 129 See Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, pp. 97–9.
- 130 *Ibid.*, p. 95.

- 131 *Ibid.*, p. 351.
- 132 *Ibid.*, pp. 114–15. Çayan also argued that Kemalism was characterized only by its ideology of national liberation and secularism. He believed that essentially Kemalism did not have specific policies about economics, as it was a petty-bourgeois ideology. Kemalism would have no meaning if stripped of its anti-imperialism.
- 133 Çayan, *ibid.*, p. 100. Çayan here mostly referred to the CHP, and claimed that the party had lost its roots in Kemalism, and confused Kemalism with ‘formal Kemalism’, known in Turkey as ‘Gardrop Atatürkçülüğü’.
- 134 In his main work ‘Kesintisiz Devrim’ (Uninterrupted Revolution), Çayan argued that Lenin’s universal principles for political practice had centred on theories about the revolution, state and the party. Çayan, *Toplu Yazılar*, Devrimci Yol, 1978, p. 533.
- 135 On 7 March 1970 there was a fight involving arms and knives between ASD and PDA supporters in DTCF canteens. Feyizoglu, *Mahir: On’ların Öyküsü*, p. 156.
- 136 This took place in Istanbul on the night of 5 June 1970. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
- 137 Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, p. 146.
- 138 These were the recordings of telephone communications between Haşmet Atahan and other Dev-Genç members. The tapes were found in ITU campuses during a police search and taken as evidence for an investigation into the involvement of students in the workers’ revolt. All recordings were quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, pp. 394–402.
- 139 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 397.
- 140 See, for example, Sırrı Öztürk, *15–16 Haziran Direnişin Anıları*, Sorun Yn., 1976, p. 12.
- 141 Yusuf Küpeli, ‘15–16 Haziran Direnişi Dev-Genç broşürü’, quoted in Yıldırım, *FKF Dev-Genç*, pp. 392–3.
- 142 Ruhi Koç told me in interview that they had a significant number of followers in the navy. He thinks most of these military officers or students were Kemalist, anti-imperialist or reformist but there were even some socialists as well, though they were probably a minority. He said that Sarp Kuray believed that they had control of warships. Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 143 The political opponents of the PDA (ASD, TİP and the *Devrim* circle) were blamed for accepting the bourgeois notion of the state which was advocated by the revisionists and reinvented by the modern revisionists of the Soviet Union. The PDA disapproved of the Soviet view that socialism could be built by a non-capitalist road under the leadership of civilian-military intellectuals. They described this as a phony revolutionary idea. This idea rejected the Leninist state theory and the proletarian dictatorship theory based on it, and instead advocated a peaceful transition. According to the PDA, the Marxism-Leninism/Mao Tse-Tung view or the revolutionary road was instead to tear down the repressive mechanism of all imperialists and reactionaries, with violence and through a popular war.
- 144 ‘Burjuva Reformcularından ve Revizyonistlerinden Bizi Ayıran Temel Mesele: Ordunun Rolü ve Anlamı’, *PDA*, no. 31, 23 February 1971, p. 1.
- 145 *Ibid.*
- 146 Gün Zileli, one of the leaders of the PDA, claimed that after the breakup with ASD PDA suddenly took a more leftist position to weaken its rival. They had started to criticize the bourgeois state theories, but this was just a tactical change. According to Zileli, in its essence the PDA had powerful illusions about the army

- and Kemalism. Gün Zileli, *Yarıлма (1954–1972)*, Ozan Yayıncılık, 2000, p. 395.
- 147 'Burjuva Reformcularından ve Revizyonistlerinden Bizi Ayıran Temel Mesele', p. 1.
- 148 *PDA*, July 1970, pp. 7–21.
- 149 *PDA*, November 1970, p. 25.
- 150 *Ibid.*, p. 358.
- 151 'H. Kıvılcımlı Eleştirisi-4: H. Kıvılcımlı Halk Savaşı Yolunu Reddediyor', *PDA*, no. 36, 30 March 1971, p. 6. See the following chapters for the political thinking of Dr Kıvılcımlı and his views on the army.
- 152 This had actually become a habit of the PDA circle, as they had deserted every political group they were in and immediately afterwards started to attack that group fiercely. Perinçek was first in the TİP and after he had moved to the NDR circle he and the group attacked the TİP for being opportunist and bourgeois reformist. After the split with Belli the circle was the main concern of the PDA. Kıvılcımlı contributed to almost all issues of *PDA* but was then harshly attacked by the group. It is difficult to understand how the group, which comprised bright, highly educated people, most of whom were scholars of political science or social sciences, could not understand the situation within other groups or see their views early and form stable revolutionary politics.
- 153 Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara. According to Belli there was a big reaction to the PDA at the time not only for ideological-political reasons but also because of the class difference between PDA and other revolutionaries. PDA followers were from a higher class and this was turned into class hatred by the other revolutionary groups. Kaypakkaya, who was from a lower class, revealed in his writings his deep reaction to the daily lives of the PDA leadership he later separated from. Metin Kayaoğlu, 'Kaypakkaya'da Özgülleşen Devrimci Diyalektik', *Teori ve Politika*, no. 42–3, Summer/Autumn 2006, p. 83.
- 154 Belli, 'Proleter Devrimci Örgüt İçin Program Taslağı', pp. 571–607.
- 155 'Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergiye Açık Mektup', in Çayan, *Toplu Yazılar*, pp. 153–91.
- 156 Belli, on the other hand, believed that Çayan and Gezmiş had misunderstood the conditions and as a result of their impatience engaged in armed struggle which provided the excuse for a reactionary coup and fascist assault on the left. Belli was very close to Gezmiş and was personally very fond of him. Gezmiş had shown Belli Marighella's book on urban guerrillas which Belli later read and found to be nonsense. He tried to stop Gezmiş from engaging in armed struggle and later regretted that he had not taken stronger measures to stop him. He did not understand why Çayan had not joined the assembly or the reason for the separation of Çayanists given in the letter soon after. He argued that Çayan regretted separating from Belli later on. According to Belli, *Aydınlık* defended not only the ideological vanguard of the working class, but also in effect its hegemony in NDR unlike THKP-C. Belli, *İnsanlar Tanıdım*, pp. 520–5, 585, 605–6. Also Ulus, interview with Belli. Close friends of Çayan, on the other hand, argue that Çayan was never regretful about the separation. Kürkçü, however, told me that Çayan did have regrets when they were immediately caught by the police and one of Çayan's closest friends died in police fire. They were in prison at the time and Çayan was thinking that he had failed completely and also lost friends, which was his responsibility. It was under these circumstances that he wished he had not separated from the Belli group.

- Ulus, interview with Kürkçü, 18 May 2006, Istanbul. But he did not hesitate to risk his life in order to save his comrades, the leadership of THKO, from being executed.
- 157 *Kurtuluş* was the political journal of the NDR line, less theoretical than *Aydınlık*, addressing the workers and the peasantry.
- 158 Ulus, interview with Kürkçü.
- 159 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2158.
- 160 Ulus, interview with Mustafa Yalçiner, 7 October 2007, Istanbul.
- 161 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2180.
- 162 The right-wing students were organized under the umbrella of 'Fighting Associations against Communism' [Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri], controlled and trained by Alparslan Türkeş. Türkeş was one of the military officers who had seized power in the military intervention of 1960, and was later exiled for alleged authoritarianism, as mentioned in the first chapter. Türkeş resigned his commission in 1963 after returning to Turkey and then entered politics.
- 163 Ruhi Koç, for example, one of the major student leaders in Ankara, told me that the leftists had not even thought about getting armed before these attacks. After the murder of Taylan Özgür all groups immediately tried to arm themselves. However, he also claims that most only had a rifle to protect themselves, rather than being armed for guerrilla war. Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 164 M. Şevket Eygi, for example, wrote in the daily *Bugün* on 16 February 1969, the day that marchers were attacked during the anti-imperialist mass protest in Taksim, that a jihad was unavoidable.
- 165 Ertuğrul Kürkçü, 'Che'nin Çağrısını Dikkate Almak', *Praksis*, 6, 2002, pp. 23–52.
- 166 Most students who were active in these days consider that this was actually a provocation to the leftist students, that they were compelled to arm and to start guerrilla warfare. Interviews with Ruhi Koç and Mehmet Emin Yıldırım.
- 167 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2168.
- 168 However, Çayan later emphasized that THKP-C regarded urban and countryside guerrilla warfare and other forms of mass political struggle as a dialectical whole. 'Kesintisiz Devrim 2–3', in *Toplu Yazular*, pp. 247–305.
- 169 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 43.
- 170 This idea was put clearly and theoretically for the first time in Turkish socialism by Mahir Çayan. His major work was 'Uninterrupted Revolution' [Kesintisiz Devrim]. Alpat, 'Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Cephesi (THKP-C)', *Popüler Türk Solu Sözlüğü*, p. 318.
- 171 İlhan Akdere and Zeynep Karadeniz, *Türkiye Solu'nun Eleştirel Tarihi*, 2nd ed., Evrensel Basım Yayın, 1994, p. 250. For criticism of Çayan, see pp. 250–3.
- 172 See Çayan, 'Kesintisiz Devrim 2–3'.
- 173 Yusuf Küpeli, who had acted as the chair of FKF before and established the THKP-C with Çayan, was against the political line of Çayan, as he thought that the armed struggle was not a mass line, but the individual use of terror. According to Lenin's *What's to be Done* they were acting then as 'Narodnik anarchists'. He asked that armed propaganda be ended immediately (especially kidnapping) and advocated instead rapid organization through the working class. Küpeli thought that the bank robberies were actually the result of Deniz Gezmiş's competition

- with the THKO. He considered Çayan's 'politicized military war' strategy simply nonsense. Yusuf Küpeli and Münir Aktolga were expelled from THKP-C for their deviant views. Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, p. 314.
- 174 THKP-C was never officially formed. Mahir Çayan had talked about the establishment of a party front to his closest comrades, Ertuğrul Kürkçü and Münir Ramazan Aktolga, on 15 April 1971 in Istanbul. It was the first time he had used or suggested the name THKP-C, but it was not discussed by the others. The article Çayan wrote in the journal *İleri* for its third issue on June 1970, 'Honduras Devriminin Yolu', was published as the manifesto of THKP later. But THKP-C never had regulations (Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, pp. 310–13). Hence, it is not correct to refer to the group as THKP-C before that period, although they were known later and tried under that name. I have used the name of the front as well to refer to the group that was later to establish THKP.
- 175 Ertuğrul Kürkçü, 'THKP-C', *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, pp. 2198–9. Ertuğrul Kürkçü claimed that a guerrilla-type organization was not discussed widely but accepted as Çayan's suggestion. The actions of THKP-C were not planned in detail beforehand but decisions were taken within action, in other words they had become a guerrilla force through the movement itself. Quoted in Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, p. 315.
- 176 Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 177 Interview with Mehmet Beşlioğlu, in Baykam, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, pp. 50–1. Beşlioğlu had contact with the *Devrim* circle.
- 178 Mustafa Gürkan, Hüseyin Onur, Sarp Kuray and Atilla Sarp were among the most prominent student leaders present at the meeting. The others were perceived as supporting a junta solution. Çayan had explained their infiltration into the army via Orhan Savaşçı and their links with the army as due to Münir Aktolga. Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, pp. 215–17. Ruhi Koç also remarked that all the groups had links with the army and were thinking of co-operating, but each group had also competed so as to be recognized as the major group after the intervention. He also stated that after the kidnapping of the American servicemen Gezmiş was able to escape from Ankara with the help of Orhan Kabibay, who was the civilian leader in relation to the military junta. Ulus, interview with Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 179 Ulus, interview with Ruhi Koç, 16 April 2007, Ankara.
- 180 See interview with Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, 'Kaçırları herkesi Sevindirdi', *Birgün*, 'Kızıldere Serisi', 1–4 April 2005, online at [www.sesonline.net](http://www.sesonline.net), accessed 15 April 2005.
- 181 Orhan Savaşçı was the brother of Gülten Savaşçı and they had met Çayan when they were engaged.
- 182 Quoted in Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, p. 297. Orhan Savaşçı and other THKP-C members in the army did not want to join the junta on 8–9 March as they regarded themselves as leftists and communists but not 'juntist'. According to Münir Ramazan Aktolga, the army was uneasy about the situation, as the air force base belonged to THKP-C. He also stated that Major İbrahim Keskin kept them informed about the junta plans. (Ibid., pp. 495–6.) Orhan Savaşçı similarly reported that they were asked to support the coup initiated by General Muhsin Batur. *Yeni Gündem*, no. 53, 1987, pp. 8–14.
- 183 Feyizoğlu, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü*, pp. 298–9.

- 184 'Dönemin Dev-Genç Genel Başkanı Ertuğrul Kürkçü'nün Gözüyle 12 Mart', *Post Express*, no. 3, 2006, p. 27.
- 185 Ertuğrul Kürkçü explained that the attitude of Dev-Genç was wrong and claimed it was the result of a reconciliation with other leftist organizations which were split between supporting or reacting to the intervention immediately. The decision was to support the coup if the reforms promised were carried out. Kürkçü said now that Dev-Genç should not have agreed with other leftist organizations or the military intervention. Interview with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, *Birgün*, 'Kızıldere Serisi'.
- 186 Belli, *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi*, quoted in Sargın, *TIP'li Yıllar (1961–1971)*, p. 1051.
- 187 *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, p. 2185.
- 188 Kürkçü, interview with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, *Birgün*, p. 24
- 189 Ibid.
- 190 Ibid.
- 191 Ulus, interview with Koç.
- 192 Evren acknowledged that the contra-guerrillas were involved in clandestine activities in the period including the murder of left-wing militants in Kızıldere in 1972.
- 193 His writings generally cover the period after 12 March. Therefore, I have not included his opinions and the ideology of TKP-ML as it was formed after this date. Kaypakkaya was a pioneer in drawing attention to the exploitation and oppression of the Kurdish people; however he could not produce a revolutionary theory based on the class struggle for Turkey as he also was a follower of Mao's NDR. Hence he also marginalized the class struggle in favour of the national liberation struggle of both the Turkish and Kurdish people. He especially considered the social base of imperialism as the feudal classes rather than comprador bourgeois. However, he expressed strong opposition to Kemalism and declared that Kemalism had started to represent counter-revolutionism even during the War of Independence. He argued that the duty of the communists at the time was not to support Kemalism but to establish a democratic people's dictatorship which represented the working class-peasantry alliance. For his views, see İbrahim Kaypakkaya, *Seçme Yazılar*, Altıncağ Yayıncılık, 1999.
- 194 Ulus, Interview with Bozkurt Nuhoğlu, 20 October 2007, Istanbul.
- 195 Laçiner, 'Ordu-Sosyalizm', *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu*, p. 336.
- 196 Quoted in Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 46.
- 197 Kaypakkaya or TKP-ML was the most extreme in this sense. Kaypakkaya defined Kemalism as a fascist military dictatorship over the working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeois and democratic intelligentsia. He accused the Kemalist dictatorship of oppression, especially of the Kurds, and even organizing mass massacres. See Kaypakkaya, *Seçme Yazılar*, pp. 114–20.
- 198 Ulus, interview with Kürkçü, 18 May 2006, Istanbul.

### Chapter 7

- 1 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 97.
- 2 This is known in Turkish history as '1951 tevkifatı'. Almost all the members of the TKP, which amounted only to about two hundred people, were arrested and given sentences of up to ten years.

- 3 Ulus, interview with Belli, 17 May 2006, Istanbul.
- 4 The TKP was split in 1979; the branch in England accused the TKP of passivism. Alpat, 'Türkiye Komünist Partisi (TKP)', *Popüler Türk Solu Sözlüğü*, p. 326.
- 5 The early history of organized communism in Turkey is fairly well known, particularly thanks to G.S. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey*, Stanford University Press, 1967, and Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar (1908–1925)*, 1978; later years are not as well covered. It is hard to find information and the existing works are generally partisan Soviet publications or the anti-communist propaganda of Turkish authors.
- 6 Mete Tunçay, *Eski Sol Üzerine Yeni Bilgiler*, Belge Yn., 1982, p. 65.
- 7 The date of the murder of the leading cadre of the TKP became the first and one of the most important dates of martyrdom of the radical left in Turkey.
- 8 See Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey*, pp. 24–5 for details.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Mihri Belli, *TKP'nin Tarihsel Konumu*, Emekçi Yay., 1976, p. 72.
- 11 Şefik Hüsnü, *Yazı ve Konuşmalar*, Kaynak yn., 1995, p. 253.
- 12 Şefik Hüsnü, *Türkiye'de Sosyal Sınıflar*, Kaynak yn., 1997, p. 70.
- 13 Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey*, p. 46.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar*, p. 184.
- 16 Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey*, pp. 41–2.
- 17 Ibid., p. 46.
- 18 Hüsnü, *Yazı ve Konuşmalar*, p. 35.
- 19 Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey*, p. 47.
- 20 Quoted ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Attila İlhan, 'Türk Sosyalizm Tarihi Üzerine (Söyleşi)', *Ulusal Dergisi*, nos. 5–6, 1998, p. 53.
- 24 Gökay, *Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey*, p. 47.
- 25 Ibid., p. 58.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Şefik Hüsnü, *Yazı ve Konuşmalar*, p. 292.
- 28 The memory of the TSP faded quickly, to the extent that Esat Adil was regarded as a 'forgotten man of Turkish Socialism'. For the TSP, see Özgür Gökmen, 'Türkiye Sosyalizminin Unutulmuş Partisi', *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 78, Autumn 1998, pp. 170–1. In contrast to the TKP, the TSP was a local, national and independent Turkish socialist party. Ibid., pp. 172, 174.
- 29 Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa*, p. 44. The TKP had internal disputes after the 1951 arrests, as was typical of the small party group from its onset. In the early period there were personal conflicts between Şefik Hüsnü, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and Nazım Hikmet. After the 1951 arrests there was a dispute between Reşat Fuat Baraner and Mihri Belli against Zeki Baştımar, who was accused of being an agent. Baştımar became the general secretary of the foreign office in the early 1960s and expelled Baraner and his friends from the party. As Mihri Belli organized the NDR movement against the TİP, Baştımar and his successor İsmail Bilen did not take up a critical position against the TİP. Behice Boran and some TİP members had a close relationship with Zeki Baştımar. Ibid., p. 56.

- 30 Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, p. 104.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 105.
- 32 It was impossible for members living in Turkey to actually know who were communists or not and to avoid arrest and charges, and many Marxist leftists, including communists, labelled themselves as socialists. The outcome of that was that anyone – a social democrat, for instance – could be accused of communism and being a tool of the Soviet Union by anti-communists.
- 33 Those present at the congress included such famous names as Yakup Demir (Zeki Baştımar), Marat (İsmail Bilen), the internally acclaimed poet Nazım Hikmet, Abidin Dino, Bilal Şen, Sabiha Sertel, Yıldız Sertel, Ahmet Saydan (Aram Pehlivanian), Vartan İhmalyan, Doktor (Hayk Açıkgöz), Fahri Erdiñç and Gün.
- 34 The situation of the party and the country was discussed within the framework of a report of the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The foreign office was not elected, but co-opted, probably from Moscow. Bilal Şen remarked that ‘the talks’ at the conference were the most free ever. ‘1962 Konferansı Tutanığı’, *TKP MK Dış Bürosu 1962 Konferansı*, TÜSTAV, Belge 4, 2002, p. 9.
- 35 See, for example, Erden Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP (1963–1965 TKP Belgelerinde)*, TÜSTAV, 2003, pp. 147–9
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 102.
- 37 See *ibid.*, pp. 40–1. That was the report that the Soviet party handed to the TKP. The TKP was asked to support not only the acceptance of the minority status of Kurdish people but the support of their national liberation war as well. Zeki Baştımar remarked that the party supported the democratic rights of the Kurdish people. However, there was still discussion on whether to support the independence war of the Kurds or to advocate the liberation of the Turkish people first. Aram stressed that even though the party had always supported autonomy of the Kurds it was never voiced publicly. He argued that the TKP’s support for the Kurdish independence war could lead to reaction (he probably implied the Turkish people here) and therefore the party must keep this secret. Nazım Hikmet demanded that the party must take a clear position on issues such as the freedom of the national language, and thought that the Kurdish movement did not demand more than this. He also argued that the Kurdish people could fight for their own liberation without the prior liberation of the Turkish people. He gave the example of France versus Algeria, and argued that as the Algerian people should not wait for the liberation of France, Kurdish people also need not wait for the liberation of Turkey.
- 38 See *ibid.*, pp. 25–9, 34–8.
- 39 Abidin Dino said that Orhanlı Erkanlı told Niyazi Berkes that he was a socialist. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 40 Quoted in *TKP MK Dış Bürosu 1962 Konferansı*, pp. 58–9.
- 41 Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP*, p. 104.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 274–5.
- 43 Yakup Demir and Ahmet Akıncı, ‘Türkiye: Gelişme Yolları’, *Yeni Çağ*, no. 6, June 1965, p. 478.
- 44 Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP*, pp. 28–9. The party approved the broadcast immediately after the abortive coup attempt by Colonel Talat Aydemir on 22 February, as the coup was supported. The coup attempt was perceived as

- an action against the most reactionary section of the bourgeois. According to the TKP, Aydemir's coup attempt was to realize some of the demands of the people. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–5.
- 45 This was noted by Bilal Şen in March 1963 in the title of the note he prepared, 'Komünist ve işçi Hareketindeki Ters Akımlar Üzerine', and in the section with the sub-title 'Sömürücü Sınıflar arasındaki İç Tezatlardan Faydalanma'. Şen carried out self-criticism and warned that the party could not use internal conflicts within the bourgeoisie that revealed themselves on 27 May and 28 April. He argued that the TKP must support one side in extreme conflicts, either the AP or the pro-27 May movements, whether this also meant supporting İnönü or not. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp. 52–4. In the early 1960s there was an ideological separation between the appointed members Bilal Şen and Gün Benderli and the other three members, Zeki Baştımar, İsmail Bilen, and Aram Pehlivan. The disagreement had centred on the attitude towards the military intervention of 27 May 1960 and the 1961 constitution, which is directly relevant to this topic. Bilal Şen had declared that the attitude of İsmail Bilen and the TKP at the time towards the military intervention was 'left sectarian'. He was, however, removed from the Leipzig party group secretariat of the party at the end of 1964.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- 48 *Ibid.*, Demir and Akıncı, 'Türkiye: Gelişme Yolları', p. 320.
- 49 TKP Central Committee First Secretariat Y. Demir at the Berlin International meeting for the centenary of the First International, *ibid.*, p. 147.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 149.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 199–200, 203.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- 54 'TKP MK Bildirisi' [25.11.1964], *Yeni Çağ*, no. 11–12, November–December 1964, pp. 646–7, quoted in Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP*, p. 152.
- 55 Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP*, p. 279.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- 57 In this respect, the party advocated abandoning the traditional resentment against İnönü so as to support him when necessary. See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 186–7.
- 58 *Ibid.*, pp. 51–3.
- 59 'Demokratik Kuvvetlerin Önünde Duran ve Çözüm Bekleyen Meseleler Üstüne Düşünceler', seminar note prepared by Veli Gündüz (Mustafa Fahri Oktay), *ibid.*, pp. 199–200.
- 60 *Ibid.*, pp. 200–3.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 199.
- 62 *Milli Demokratik Devrim ve İcüyüü*, Uyanı Yayınları, undated. Even though there is no indication on the booklet it is obvious that the piece was written by the TKP. Zülfikar Özdoğan, who had been a journalist for the TKP and who had received a communist education and party training in the USSR in the 1970s and has for the last fifteen years been working as the archives manager of the Turkish department in the IISH, confirmed that the booklet was written by the TKP. According to Özdoğan, the distribution of the booklet in Turkey was the *only* action of the TKP foreign bureau in Turkey in the 1960s. (Interview with Özdoğan, 20 March

- 2007, Amsterdam.) Thousands of copies were found in the streets of Istanbul one morning as the booklet was distributed secretly. There is no publishing house called 'Uyarı' and as obvious from the title the piece is a *warning* for leftists in Turkey. The article warns leftists and especially young people following the NDR circle about the real character of the movement and the real identity of its leaders without specifying names.
- 63 See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 5–7.
- 64 In the article some liquidators and *provocateurs* were accused of establishing contacts with minor figures and exchanging information through these contacts. According to the accusation, the police received information about the TKP through these contacts. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7. Belli was accused implicitly as he had established a contact through letters with a young woman called Sevim Tari, who had become first his friend and then his wife. The police had obtained the letters, which also contained information about the party, through Belli and Tari.
- 65 The party advocated land reform as the first social revolution.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 68 *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 33.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 21.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 71 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 72 *Ibid.*, pp. 25–6.
- 73 *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- 74 Both Nihat Sargın and Zülfikar Özdoğan argued in the interviews that the TİP and the TKP were separate organizations and that the TKP did not interfere with the TİP. However, it was obvious that the TKP foreign bureau supported the line of the TİP especially after the problems among the Belli circle and in the TİP. Özdoğan stated that some leading members of the TİP must have followed the line of the TKP and Moscow very closely. Ulus, interview with Özdoğan, 20 March 2007, Amsterdam.
- 75 Yayınları, *Milli Demokratik Devrim ve İcyüzü*, p. 4.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 79 *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 81 Ahmet Saydan, 'Yurtta', *Barış ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, 2, February 1971.
- 82 Ahmet Saydan, '15–16 Haziran Olaylarını İzleyen Gelişmeler', *Barış ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, 8–9, 1970.
- 83 *Ibid.*
- 84 Saydan, 'Yurtta'.
- 85 Ahmet Saydan, 'Özel Sayfalar, Bu Ayın Olayları, Yurtta: 12 Mart muhtırası', *Barış ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, no. 3, 1971.
- 86 'Özel sayfalar: TKP Merkez Komitesi Birinci Sekreteri Yakub Demir yoldaşın, Londra'da çıkan (Yunanca) "Elefteri Partida" gazetesi muhabetine verdiği mülakat', *Barış ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, no. 10, 1971.
- 87 Laçiner, 'Ordu-Sosyalizm', p. 342.

### Chapter 8

- 1 Kivilcimlı was born in Pristina, Macedonia in 1902. He joined the TKP in the early 1920s. He attended the Second Congress of the TKP (1924) as a delegate and was elected to the central committee in Beşiktaş, Istanbul. Alpat, 'Hikmet Kivilcimlı, *Popüler Türk Solu Sözlüğü*, p. 153.
- 2 Kivilcimlı himself was one of the 'Kuvayı Milliye' (volunteer troops) of 'Yörük Ali Efe Çetesi' during the Independence War.
- 3 Kivilcimlı explained that what was termed in the West socialism was in Turkey 'İkinci Kuvayı Milliyetçilik'. 'Vatan Partisi Genel Başkanı Dr. Hikmet Kivilcimlı ile Konuşma', *Sosyalist*, 20 June 1967.
- 4 He had to flee the country as there was a warrant for his address for his relations with revolutionary naval officers, and he needed medical treatment as he was suffering from cancer. He was not accepted by any of the socialist countries of the day, however, mostly as a result of pressure from the TKP foreign bureau. He wrote a bitter letter to Brezhnev complaining about the situation. He spent his last days in extreme suffering and after being expelled from several Eastern bloc countries finally died in his country of birth, the former Yugoslavia.
- 5 *Yol* [The Road] was an early work which he completed during four and a half years in prison in Elazığ from 1929. It was a series of works, eight books in total, each between a hundred and a hundred and fifty pages long. He criticized the party position and proposed his own tactics, strategy and politics. He tackled the issues of the bourgeoisie, proletariat, peasantry and the Kurdish problem. He wanted to analyse the experiments of other countries and search for what was original in Turkey. This same object continued in his subsequent works. 'Dr. Hikmet Kivilcimlı'nın Hayatı Mücadelesi ve Eserleri Üstüne', online at [www.nadir.org/nadir/periodika/widerstand/turkisch/doktor2.htm](http://www.nadir.org/nadir/periodika/widerstand/turkisch/doktor2.htm) (access date: 8 January 2006).
- 6 Kivilcimlı worked on *Historical Work* for several years and he published widely in the field of history. One of the main components of *Historical Work, Tarih, Devrim ve Sosyalizm* [History, Revolution and Socialism] was published in 1965. It was followed by *İlkel Sosyalizmden Kapitalizme İlk Geçiş: İngiltere* [The First Transition from Primitive Socialism to Capitalism: England], *Toplum Biçimlerinin Gelişimi* [The Development of Forms of Societies] and *Türkiye'de Kapitalizmin Gelişimi* [The Development of Capitalism in Turkey]. These works were developed and prepared for publication under the title *Tarih Tezi* [Historical Work]. However, the work was only published posthumously in 1974. 'Emine Kivilcimlı'nın Notu', *Tarih Tezi*, Tarih ve Devrim yn., 1974, p. 7.
- 7 He was arrested as the result of a misunderstanding by Nazım Hikmet. A naval officer had contacted Hikmet, who however mistook him for an agent thinking that it was a set-up. Hikmet informed the police and after interrogation the officers close to Kivilcimlı were arrested, including Kivilcimlı himself. He was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. He had already served about five and a half years in prison.
- 8 See, for example, Ali Osman Alayoğlu, 'İlk Kivilcim', *Teori ve Politika*, 40, Winter 2006, pp. 115–34; Mehmet Güneş, 'Kilit Halka', *Teori ve Politika*, 40, Winter 2006, pp. 79–114; Fikret Kızıltan, 'Kivilcimlı'nın Mirasının Güncel Anlamı Üzerine Değınmeler', *Teori ve Politika*, 40, Winter 2006, pp. 61–78; Doğu

- Perinçek, *Osmanlı'dan Bugüne Toplum ve Devlet*, Kaynak yn., 1991; *Dr. Hikmet Kıvılcımlı ve Devrimci Hareketin Genel Otokritiği*, Alaz yn., 1994.
- 9 See, for example, 'Solda Başsız Develik', *Sosyalist*, 15 December 1970, online at [www.comlink.de/demir/kivilcimli](http://www.comlink.de/demir/kivilcimli) (access date: 10 January 2006)
- 10 Aydınoglu, *Türk Solu*, p. 160.
- 11 'Türkiye'de Sosyalist Konferansı İçin', *Sosyalist*, 20 January–7 February 1967.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 See for his use of language, Aydınoglu, *Türk Solu*, pp. 160–1. The language is a major barrier for those who would like to study the political thinking of Kıvılcımlı. His writings are sometimes attractive and enjoyable, but unfortunately generally incomprehensible as he uses an unusual language full of idioms and metaphors. His writings are sometimes attractive and enjoyable, but unfortunately generally incomprehensible. See also Murat Belge, 'Dr. Hikmet Kıvılcımlı'nın Tarih Tezi Üzerine', *Birikim*, no. 4, June 1975, on the peculiarity of Kıvılcımlı's language. Demir Küçükaydın on the other hand claims that Kıvılcımlı does not use a peculiar language, but instead he uses a language of the common people and it only seems strange or peculiar to intellectuals as they do not know how common people speak. See [www.comlink.de/demir/kivilcimli](http://www.comlink.de/demir/kivilcimli). Nail Satlıgan defines Kıvılcımlı's language as 'cryptique' and in contrast to Küçükaydın argues that the language appeared strange as some idioms had been translated literally from Western languages. 'TKP, Mihri Belli, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı', *Devrimci Marksizm: Teori-Pratik Dergi*, 2, November 2006, p. 46.
- 14 *27 Mayıs ve Yön Hareketinin Sınıfsal Eleştirisi*, Ant Yayınları, İstanbul, Nisan 1970.
- 15 Ibid.; *Opportunizm Nedir*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, 1970; *Devrim Zorlaması-Demokratik Zortlama*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, 1970; *Uyarmak için uyanmalı Uyanmak için Uyarmalı*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, İkinci Baskı 1970; *Anarşi Yok Büyük Derleş*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, 1970.
- 16 'Devrimcilerde Başsız Develik II, Ak-Aydınlık Sosyalist Kurultay Düşü', *Sosyalist*, 22 December 1970. See also his booklet, *Devrim Zorlaması-Demokratik Zortlama*.
- 17 See, for example, 'Mao! Mao!', *Sosyalist*, 15 December 1970.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 'Yeni Aşamada Aynı Parola', *Sosyalist*, 9 March 1971.
- 20 Hikmet Kıvılcımlı papers IISG, letters of Kıvılcımlı, box 100, 21. 5. 1971, p. 34.
- 21 See 'Türkiye'de Sosyalist Konferansı İçin', *Sosyalist*, 20 January–7 February 1967; 'Proleterya Partisi Nedir?', *Sosyalist*, 16 February 1971; 'Yeni Aşamada Aynı Parola: Proleterya Partisi', *Sosyalist*, 9 March 1971.
- 22 See 'Solda Başsız Develik', 'Devrimcilikte Başsız Develik', *Sosyalist*, 15 December 1970; 'Devrimcilikte Başsız Develik-II', *Sosyalist*, 22 December 1970; 'Sosyalizm'de Başsız Develik', *Sosyalist*, 29 December 1970; 'Başsız Develige Son', *Sosyalist*, 12 January 1971.
- 23 'Türkiye'nin Teorik Devrim Orijinalliği', *Sosyalist*, 29 December 1970; 'I. Pratik Devrim Orijinalliğimiz: Gençlik', *Sosyalist*, 5 January 1970; 'II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalliğimiz: Ordu', *Sosyalist*, 12 January 1970.
- 24 See, for example, *Tarih Tezi*, pp. 71–2.
- 25 Ibid., p. 228.
- 26 Ibid., p. 49.

- 27 Ibid., pp. 49–53.
- 28 However, Kıvılcımlı could not explain why Turkey could not transform itself after the fall of the Ottoman empire and the consequences of the hybrid character of the revolution.
- 29 Apparently he considered the army as the revolutionary power in a hybrid character of the Turkish revolution. Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa*, p. 121.
- 30 See, for example, *Osmanlı Tarihinin Maddesi*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları (reprint), 1974, vol. I, p. 173. His deep knowledge of Muslim history and early Turkish history is very striking, even though his method of inquiry, use of language and data and style of writing are very remote from scientific historical analysis and more in the manner of a popular form of story-telling.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid., p. 200.
- 34 Kıvılcımlı actually argued that every country, including the Western European states, was founded by armed warriors – knights in the case of Western Europe – whose origins lay in barbarian socialist times. ‘II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalligimiz: ORDU’.
- 35 *Osmanlı Tarihinin Maddesi*, pp. 164–6.
- 36 Ibid., p. 165.
- 37 ‘II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalligimiz: ORDU’.
- 38 *Osmanlı Tarihinin Maddesi*, p. 14.
- 39 Ibid., p. 12.
- 40 Ibid., p. 13.
- 41 *27 Mayıs ve Yön Hareketinin Sınıfsal Eleştirisi*.
- 42 ‘Hükümet-Ordu-Sınıf’, *Sosyalist*, 23 March 1971.
- 43 See, for example, ‘Türkiye’nin Teorik Devrim Orijinalligi’.
- 44 ‘Demokrasi ve Gölgeler’, *Türk Solu*, no. 79, 20 May 1969, p.11.
- 45 ‘II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalligimiz: Ordu’.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ibid. De Gaulle’s comment was made to the editor of the *New York Times* in 1961.
- 48 He emphasized time and again that he referred to the ‘army youth’, not the ‘army’, which he called ‘army fossils’.
- 49 ‘II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalligimiz: Ordu’.
- 50 Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, *Sosyalist Gazetesi Yazıları*, ‘Suçlu: Ayağa Kalk!’, p. 70, online at <http://kutuphane.tbmm.gov.tr>.
- 51 Satlıgan, ‘TKP, Mihri Belli, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı’, pp. 47–8.
- 52 *Dev Genç Seminerleri*, Kıvılcım Yayınları, 1989, p. 88. The Dev-Genç Istanbul section had organized a series of seminars in IPDS where the main speaker was Dr Kıvılcımlı at the beginning of 1970. The seminars were taped and later printed by Kıvılcımlı followers and later still appeared as a book.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 ‘Hükümet-Ordu-Sınıf’.
- 55 ‘II. Pratik Devrim Orijinalligimiz: ORDU’.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 ‘Şapa Oturtulan Parlamentarizm’, *Sosyalist*, 30 March 1971.
- 58 Ibid.

- 59 He added also that they were built by capitalism, which also actually created the nations.
- 60 'Şapa Oturtulan Parlamentarizm'
- 61 Kıvılcımlı distinguished between 'army youth' and the 'army fossils' and attributed a revolutionary tradition (as Young Turks) only to the first group, even though he did not precisely explain these terms.
- 62 'Bizantizm mi, Sosyalizm mi?', *Sosyalist*, 7 February 1967.
- 63 'Demokrasi ve Gölgeler', *Türk Solu*, no. 82, 10 June 1969, p. 3.
- 64 *Dev Genç Seminerleri*, p. 77.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 68 As far as I have been able to establish Kıvılcımlı was also unique among the left in expressing sorrow at the execution of Menderes, though he was politically opposed to him. 'Adam Kandırmak İstemiyoruz', *Sosyalist*, 15 December 1970.
- 69 *Dev Genç Seminerleri*, p. 88.
- 70 The full text of these letters was published five years later in a small booklet. See Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, *İkinci Kuvayimilliyeciliğimiz (M.B.K.'ne İki Açık Mektup)*, Tarihsel Maddecilik Yayınları, 1965.
- 71 'M.B.K.'nin 'Azameti ve İnhitatu' (Ululuğu ve Ölülüğü)', *Sosyalist*, 7 February–4 March, 30 May–20 June 1967.
- 72 'Ordu Kılıcını Attı!', *Sosyalist*, 16 March 1971.
- 73 Ulus, interview with Suat Şükrü Kundakçı, 3 November 2007, Istanbul.
- 74 'Halk Düşmanlarıyla Reform Yapılamaz', *Sosyalist*, no. 21, 23 March 1971.
- 75 *Ibid.*
- 76 On many occasions Kıvılcımlı actually made reference to the role of the army as guardian of the constitution, which he approved of. See, for example, 'Günün Yorumu', *Türk Solu*, no. 79, 20 May 1969, p. 8.
- 77 Metin Kayaoğlu, 'Kıvılcımlı: Teorik-Politik bir Marksizm İçin', *Teori ve Politika*, 40, 2006, pp. 14–20.
- 78 Kızıltan, 'Kıvılcımlı'nın Mirasının Güncel Anlamı Üzerine Değİnmeler', p. 77.
- 79 Alayoğlu, 'İlk Kıvılcım', p. 124.
- 80 Hikmet Kıvılcımlı papers, IISG, box 100, letters of Kıvılcımlı, 10. 5. 1971, p. 9.
- 81 *Ibid.*, 13. 5. 1971, p. 28.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 21. 5. 1971, p. 34.
- 83 *Ibid.*, p. 28.

### Chapter 9

- 1 Yurtsever, *Süreklilik ve Kopuş içinde Marksizm ve Türkiye Solu*, p. 269.
- 2 Fernando Claudin, *The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform*, Penguin Books, 1975, p. 246.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 247.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 265.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 270–1.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 342–6.
- 7 The Communist Party in Syria co-operated with al-Kutlah al-Wataniyah and

- other bourgeois parties between 1936 and 1945. Tareq Y. Ismael, *The Communist Movement in the Arab World*, RoutledgeCurzon, 2005, p. 16.
- 8 Claudin, *Communist Movement*, pp. 250–2.
  - 9 Fikret Başkaya, 'Komintern ve Milli Mücadele'nin Anti-Emperyalistliği Sorunu', *Paradigmanın İflası: Resmi İdeolojinin Eleştirisine Giriş*, 2nd ed., İstanbul, 1991, pp. 71–3. For the character of the national struggle, especially for criticisms of the views on the 'anti-imperialist' character of the war, see also Başkaya, 'Milli Mücadele'nin Niteliği', *Paradigmanın İflası*, pp. 29–50.
  - 10 For example in Muzaffer Erdost and Ali Kaymak, *Devrimimizin Bugünkü Sorunları Üzerine*, Yurtsever Yayınları, 1970, p. 14.
  - 11 *Ibid.*, p.16.
  - 12 There was a difference between Avcıoğlu's reconstruction of the Kemalist era and the perspectives of the Belli circle even though they shared the same basic outline. According to Avcıoğlu, Kemalists could not complete NDR (or a democratic bourgeois revolution) with land reform as there was no such demand from the peasantry and the regime also rested on the power of the big landlords. For Belli and Erdost, on the other hand, the Kemalists did not carry out land reform, largely as a result of the Kurdish problem; they did not change the feudal system, as they wanted to retain these elements. See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 14. Erdost and Kaymak do not actually specify the Kurdish people, but address them as minorities whom the imperialist nations wanted to build buffer states with, so it is obvious whom they refer to.
  - 13 Khrushchev, however, warned 'Arabs' to understand the relation between socialism and communism, and not to fall into the trap of imperialism through a politics of anti-communism. Abdel Moghny Said, *Arab Socialism*, Barnes and Noble, 1972, p. 82.
  - 14 'Ordu ve Sosyalizm', p. 342.
  - 15 Yalçın Küçük, *Türkiye Üzerine Tezler-3*, Tekin yay., 1986, p. 281.
  - 16 Metin Çulhaoğlu, 'Demokrasi Sorunu ve Nihai Hedef Üzerine', *Sosyalist Devrim Teorisi, Gelenek*, Kayhan mat., 2005, p. 88.
  - 17 Ulus, interview with Sargın, 30 November 2006, İstanbul. Sargın did not imply a TKP connection but he said that there was an attempt to engulf the party with NDR opposition.
  - 18 *Ibid.*
  - 19 *Ibid.*
  - 20 The typical bourgeois revolution, however, only applied to the French Revolution, whereas more recent bourgeois revolutions had been revolutions led from above, similar to that in Turkey.

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