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KEMALIST AUTHORITARIANISM AND FASCIST TRENDS IN TURKEY DURING THE INTER-WAR PERIOD

Introduction

The foundation of the Turkish Republic in the twentieth century, the last stage in the dissolution of the multinational Ottoman empire, represents at the same time the first revision of the system of Versailles. Enemies of Versailles and - prominent among them - future fascist leaders hailed the Turkish success as an encouraging sign for their cause.¹ The new regime in Anatolia developed soon a rigid single-party rule under the charismatic national leader Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). In what ways, if at all, was the Kemalist regime of the 1920s and 30s comparable to fascist dictatorships in Europe? This question occupied the minds of many contemporary observers and has been (at least implicitly) asked by students of Turkish republican history ever since.

That Kemalism was not fascist has been virtually the unanimous opinion of the Turkish academic community. The prevailing interpretation stresses that Mustafa Kemal wished to create a westernized, 'civilized' society on the basis of parliamentary democracy, but that because his reform program encountered considerable resistance by an apathetic, backward, and sometimes even outright reactionary society, he was obliged to apply authoritarian

¹ Ernst Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche. Die Action Française, der italienische Faschismus, der Nationalsozialismus* (Munich-Zurich, Special Ed., 1979), p. 37. In 1939, Hitler told a delegation from Ankara that "Turkey was our model". See Gotthard Jäschke, *Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-1941. Geschichtskalender* (Leipzig, 1943), p. 73, and Falih Rıfkı Atay, *Çankaya. Atatürk'ün doğumundan ölümine kadar* (Çankaya: Atatürk from his Birth to his Death) (Istanbul, 2. ed., 1980), p. 319, 451.

methods. The period of single-party rule during the inter-war years is seen merely as a necessary transitional step on the way to a pluralistic democracy after 1945.²

Scholarship in Western languages confirms this picture to a large extent. The dominant modernisation paradigm in the early post-war period viewed Kemalism primarily as "a large-scale, deliberate attempt to take a whole nation across the frontier from one civilization to another."³ The Kemalist regime had been since 1919 "engaged in a systematic and persistent attempt to modernize the country's social and political structure, attitudes, and behaviour."⁴ In the climate of the Cold War friendly authors were inclined to play down the undemocratic features of the Turkish Republic, less criticism appeared as playing the Soviet game; some authors seem to have been more concerned with exculpating Kemalism of "any political or ideological leaning to the Soviet Union or to Communism", especially in the field of étatist economic policies, than with reflecting on its possible fascist content.⁵

In the literature of more recent decades there is a growing tendency to emphasize the autocratic aspects of the Kemalist regime. Thus it is generally recognized that Turkey's government in the inter-war period was an "authoritarian one-party regime", "a dictatorship", showing even "totalitarian tendencies".⁶ In this connection also the model character of Italian fascism for the Kemalist concept has been frequently discussed, the most elaborate analysis stemming from Çağlar Keyder.⁷ However, authors tend to attribute

² See the critical analysis of İsmail Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası'nın tüzüğü (1927) ve Kürt sorunu* (The Statute of the Republican People's Party (1927) and the Kurdish Question) (Ankara, 2. ed., 1991), pp. 13-66.

³ Bernard Lewis, "Turkey: Westernization", in Gustave E. von Grunebaum (ed.), *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization* (Chicago, 1955), pp. 311-331, here p. 315.

⁴ Dankwart A. Rustow and Robert E. Ward, "Introduction", in R. E. Ward and D. A. Rustow (eds.), *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton, 1964), pp. 3-13, here p. 9f.

⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London-New York-Toronto, 1961), pp. 279-280.

⁶ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern History* (London-New York, 1993), pp. 184, 187-189. See also Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London, 1992), p. 27.

⁷ Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey. A Study in Capitalist Development* (London-New York, 1987), pp. 98-100, 107-109.

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the "fascist traits" of the Turkish regime to some sort of imitative, in contrast to structural, fascism.⁸ Perhaps unwittingly it is implied that not so much Turkey's own historical development accounted for the emergence of the Kemalist single-party regime but rather the circumstantial attractiveness of the fascist alternative, 'liberalism and democracy' having been, "largely due to the instability in Western Europe", already "discredited in the eyes of many Kemalists".⁹ In support of this view there is a common reference to the fact that Kemalism lacked "a coherent, all-embracing ideology".¹⁰ It has even been pointed out that "there was very little ideological indoctrination and little attempt was made to build a personality cult around Kemal Atatürk".¹¹ Furthermore, some argue, as Keyder does, that "fascism is born out of a particular class base" and that "Turkish social, economic and political development had not yet reached a level where fascism in the Southern European sense" could be "considered desirable by the ruling coalition".¹²

It is not the intention of the present chapter to question the basic validity of the above arguments. In other words, it is not being proposed that the Kemalist single-party state was a fascist regime. It is intended, however, to effect a shift of emphasis. On the basis of a survey of the ideological developments during the Young Turk period, as well as of textual analyses of the key documents of Kemalist era, it will be shown that the republican regime in Turkey developed from the outset in an authoritarian, if not a totalitarian, direction.¹³ This suggests that the single-party state in Turkey was subject to

⁸ For this differentiation see Stuart J. Woolf (ed.) *The Nature of Fascism* (London, 1968), p. 6.

⁹ Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London, 1992), p. 61. See also Keyder, *State and Class*, p. 89, and Ümit Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, "Kemalism, Hyper-Nationalism and Islam in Turkey", *History of European Ideas* 18 (1994), pp. 255-70.

¹⁰ Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern History*, p. 189.

¹¹ Clement H. Dodd, "Revolution in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey", in N. O'Sullivan (ed.), *Revolutionary Theory and Political Reality* (Brighton, 1983), p. 183.

¹² Keyder, *State and Class*, p. 108, 109.

¹³ "Authoritarian regimes, by definition, have a concentration of power and therefore cannot tolerate contending centres of power, as do pluralist systems. Yet, unlike the more 'totalitarian' systems that also concentrate power, the authoritarian type basically lacks the practical ideology and organization needed to atomize potentially rival groups and to create new ones under its control." Clement H. Moore, "Authoritarian Politics in Unincorporated Society", *Comparative Politics* 6 (1973/74), pp. 193-218, here p. 193.

its own logic of historical continuity and that, consequently, assumptions as to its 'imitative' character vis-à-vis a triumphant fascism in Europe should be reconsidered.

Young Turk Legacy

The political system of the early Turkish Republic answered in the first place the needs of a war-stricken country that was heir to a demised imperial structure. At the same time it reflected an ancient state tradition, represented at the beginning of the twentieth century by a modern bureaucratic élite. Today, the importance of this tradition is readily admitted, albeit its specific imprint upon the political culture of the country remains controversial. As far as the period before the nineteenth century is concerned, two opposing principles, a Weberian patrimonialism (sultanism) on the one hand and the "supremacy of the objective rules which place limits and guide the ruler in making decisions and determining policies" on the other, seem to have characterized the Ottoman system.¹⁴ But in recent years a growing number of scholars began to challenge the conventional European view of the Ottoman state of the early modern period as a despotic rule. In this regard, "additional focus on non-western state-society relations" has been pleaded which would provide "a significant case of the state as bargainer, negotiating and embracing individuals, social classes, and especially groups such as bandits, in order to control them and to establish its centralized rule over vast territory."¹⁵

In respect to the nineteenth century the question becomes even more complex. In the face of the deteriorating international position of the Empire during the first half of the nineteenth century the compartmentalization of society along confessional lines (the so-called *millet* system) seemed to be the major hindrance in front of a general modernization thrust that was perceived by sections of the ruling class as a precondition for 'saving the state'. Since the emergence of an independent Greece, European intervention in favour of Christian populations was thought to be the most serious threat to Ottoman territorial integrity. Introduction of equality before the law, irrespective of religious affiliation, became therefore the political issue of the day. Henceforth, Muslims and non-Muslims had to pay the same amount of taxes, could bring their lawsuits before confessionally mixed tribunals, were

¹⁴ Halil İnalcık, "Decision Making in the Ottoman State", in Caesar E. Farah (ed.), *Decision Making in the Ottoman Empire* (Kirksville, MO, 1993), pp. 9-18, here p. 15.

¹⁵ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Peculiar Route of Ottoman State Centralization* (Ithaca, NY, 1994), p. 230.

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equally subject to military service and had equal opportunity to enter state schools or the civil service. In the words of a specialist of this period:

the ultimate implication was that *millet* barriers would be broken down, that the creation of a multinational brotherhood of all Ottoman subjects was the official aim, and, therefore, that the concepts of state and citizenship would become increasingly western and secularized.¹⁶

However, such reforms had to be pushed through not only against the opposition of Muslim public opinion which associated westernization with increasing cultural and religious alienation in society, but also against the non-Muslim communal establishments which were loath to renouncing their age-old privileges; nor did the European powers, which regularly pressed for egalitarian principles, show any inclination to relinquish the system of 'capitulations' that assured to their subjects an extra-territorial status in the Near East coupled with wide-ranging commercial advantages. In these circumstances, westernizing reforms remained patchwork and fell far short of attaining Ottomanist objectives. At the same time, however, they seemed responsible for the negative effects of European economic penetration that occurred under the banner of free trade: For the intensification of relations with the West had led to a more pronounced ethnic division of labour, non-Muslim commercial groups proving themselves in a better position to assume the role of the mediator for foreign interests, whereas the Muslims felt threatened by socio-economic marginalization. The emerging Ottoman middle classes were thus predominantly non-Muslim, a fact that from the bureaucratic standpoint did not bode well for the future. The survival of the empire depended on the success of the reforms, and this success in turn depended on the continuing loyalty of the economically active strata of society. But the upsurge of secessionist nationalism within the individual non-Muslim communities, aggravated also by Ottoman failure to secure a viable position for the indigenous entrepreneurial groups vis-à-vis privileged foreign interests, left little room for the acceptance of an ideology geared to superimpose an Ottoman political solidarity over the existing multi-ethnic structures. Even the promulgation of the constitutional regime in 1876 could not reverse the tendencies of disintegration. Financial insolvency (1875) followed by a cata-

¹⁶ Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton, repr. 1973), p. 40.

strophic military defeat (1877/78), bringing with it heavy losses in lives and territory, were severe blows to the prestige of westernizing policies and the idea of equality in the Ottoman state.

The ensuing reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909) differed from the reform era *Tanzimat* significantly. With the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from the lost territories, Asia Minor was becoming more Muslim in character. European interference, too, had assumed in the meanwhile more concrete forms; Art. 23 of the Treaty of Berlin (1878) stipulated regional autonomy under European supervision for certain parts of the empire. Not only Crete, Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia were soon to become scenes of fierce nationality struggles, but also an Armenian national movement pursuing the goal of an autonomous or independent Armenian state in Asia Minor began to menace Ottoman imperial unity seriously. Ottomanism as the official ideology of a secularized multi-ethnic empire seemed thoroughly discredited.

The neo-absolutist regime utilized the deteriorated domestic and international conditions for its own legitimation. Liberal reform as a political option appearing out of question and the threat from European imperialism having assumed new dimensions, it became easier for the sultan to appeal to Islamic solidarity. Emphasizing his role as the caliph of Islam, he was able to reconcile at least the non-Turkish Muslim ethnic groups, such as the Kurds, the Albanians, and the Arabs, who had been disaffected by the reform bureaucrats of the previous era. The result was an impressive closing of ranks between the sultan and the Muslim public opinion, which on the other hand accentuated the estrangement of westernized intellectuals.¹⁷

The Young Turk opposition that developed after the 1890s was an expression of the deep frustration and embitterment felt by Ottoman intellectuals. Politically, it was a desperate effort to halt the dissolution of the Ottoman state by means of a reconciliation of disparate nationalist strivings within the framework of a bureaucratically controlled constitutional system. With such a program the Young Turks appeared as heirs to *Tanzimat* liberalism. Yet an analysis of their political ideas reveals, hardly concealed beneath the liberal surface, a remarkable affinity with 'proto-fascist' currents in Europe. Thus most Young Turks were influenced by the positivism of Auguste Comte, the founder of the counter-revolutionary philosophic school

¹⁷ Şerif Mardin, "L'Aliénation des Jeunes Turcs: Essai d'explication partielle d'une 'conscience révolutionnaire'", in L. Bacqué-Grammont and P. Dumont (eds.), *Economie et société dans l'Empire ottoman* (Paris, 1983), pp. 157-165.

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of the nineteenth century,¹⁸ as well as with social Darwinist ideas of the period. Through Ahmed Rıza (1859-1930), the best-known Young Turk at the turn of the century, the positivist motto *l'ordre et progrès* found its way even into the title of the leading Young Turk organization, the 'Committee of Union and Progress' (CUP). In the manner of the positivists, the Young Turks had a mechanical concept of society, each element of which constituting a part of the whole and having therefore a set of rights and duties vis-à-vis the rest. The solution of the basic problem of the Ottoman state, its backwardness and seemingly imminent dissolution, was to be sought in the establishment of a scientific form of government, the religious conservatism of the masses appearing as a serious obstacle to such a development.¹⁹

A complementary influence on the Young Turk thinking emanated from Gustave Le Bon who offered a solution to the delicate problem of the relationship between a dominant élite and the masses in the grip of "collective hallucinations".²⁰ Progress could be expected only from the guidance of a select few, even though it could be expeditious to appeal to religion in order to mobilize the masses against the autocracy. It was Abdullah Cevdet (1869-1932), the representative of the most secularist and westernist faction of the Young Turks, who translated the ideas of Le Bon into an Ottoman-Turkish context.²¹ After him the élitist worldview was to remain an idiosyncrasy of a whole generation of Young Turks well into the twentieth century.

The 'revolution'²² of 1908 brought at first a resurgence of Ottomanist policies, and the prospect of a pluralist parliamentary democracy was greeted

¹⁸ Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche*, p. 62.

¹⁹ Şerif Mardin, *Jön türklerin siyasi fikirleri 1895-1908* (The Political Ideas of the Young Turks 1895-1908) (Istanbul, 2nd ed., 1983), pp. 129-162. On the specific mentality and political ideas of the Young Turks see also M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir siyasal örgüt olarak "Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti" ve "Jön Türklük", I: (1889-1902)* (The 'Ottoman Society of Union and Progress' as a Political Organization and the 'Young Turkism', I: 1889-1902) (Istanbul, 1986), pp. 9-72, 604-644, and *idem*, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York-Oxford, 1995), pp. 200-212.

²⁰ A. James Gregor, *The Ideology of Fascism* (New York, 1969), p. 51.

²¹ Mardin, *Jön türklerin siyasi fikirleri*, p. 176f; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir siyasal düşünür olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve dönemi* (Doctor Abdullah Cevdet as a Political Thinker and His Time) (Istanbul, 1981), pp. 165-67.

²² The term *inkilâb* which the Young Turks themselves applied to their action in 1908 should correctly be rendered with 'transformation' instead of 'revolution'. See Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1876-1924* (Leiden, 1985), p. 83.

euphorically by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. But soon secessionist aspirations of various national parties began once again to determine the course of political events. The government, under the influence of the CUP, resorted to authoritarian measures such as suppression of civic liberties, manipulation of elections and martial law. The Ottomanist hopes finally collapsed in the Balkan War of 1912 which brought a humiliating defeat and the loss for the Empire of practically all of 'European Turkey'. This development facilitated in early 1913 a CUP staged *coup d'état*, resulting in a single-party dictatorship that was to last until the end of the First World War.

The most seminal 'ideologue' during this period of transition from the multi-ethnic empire to the national state of Turkey was Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924). On the basis of his knowledge of the French sociologists Gabriel Tarde, Gustave Le Bon, Alfred Fouillée, and especially Emile Durkheim, he was appointed in 1912 the first professor of sociology in Istanbul and is considered as the man who introduced the Durkheimian corporatist thinking in the Ottoman Empire.²³ It has been rightly pointed out that:

Gökalp's corporatist thinking has provided the paradigmatic worldview for the several dominant political ideologies and public philosophies in Turkey; and that, more specifically, Unionism (1908-1918) and Kemalism (1923-1950) as singular official ideologies, as well as contemporary Kemalism(s) (1960-1980), are but programmatic and, in the narrow sense, ideological variations of his inclusive system.²⁴

As an idealistic positivist and adherent of the solidaristic corporatist school *à la Durkheim*, Gökalp regarded liberal market economy and representative parliamentary democracy as anachronistic institutions and pleaded in 1914 for a populist approach to social questions, a restructuring of the political system according to the principle of occupational representation, and a 'national economy' in the interest of small-producers. Once the First World War broke out, Gökalp assumed the task of theoretically reconciling European

²³ Zafer Toprak, "Türkiye'de korporatizmin doğuşu" (The Emergence of Corporatism in Turkey), *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 12, Winter 1980, pp. 41-49.

²⁴ Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*, p. 7.

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corporatism, Islamic tradition, and incipient cultural Turkism in an ideological synthesis with the manifest goal of creating the 'new citizen' disciplined under the control of social conscience.²⁵

By distinguishing between 'civilization' and 'culture', Gökalp opened a new perspective to the question as to the elements and aspects the Islamic Ottoman society could adopt from western civilization without impairing or abandoning its own traditions.²⁶ 'Civilization' meant for him the sum of the material accomplishments of technology and science. Once 'civilization' was accepted as a universal category, it was not possible, in Gökalp's view, to equate neither Islam with civilization, nor western civilization with Christianity. 'Culture', on the other hand, was conceived as referring to the manners and customs, the ethical and moral norms and values of a given nation and was thus unique. Nation finally, which was the bearer of culture, represented in this perspective the most developed level of society. But nation could only exist on the basis of a common national language, race and religion being counted as secondary factors. Yet Islam and the Turkish nation were not antagonistic concepts, for religion served as an important component of national culture. However, the origins of this culture were to be sought in the first place in the everyday life of the common people as well as in the pre-Islamic history of the Turks, and this was the primary task of Turkism.

Education assumed particular importance in Gökalp's concept; it was considered the motor of social change. In accordance with his interpretation of civilization and culture as two different categories, Gökalp distinguished between 'instruction' and 'education'. The purpose of instruction was to convey the knowledge of the methods and findings of science and technology; the object of education, on the other hand, was the implantation of the values of the national culture. Gökalp criticized the contemporary Ottoman school system for reflecting western utilitarian principles. It merely familiarized the youth with the rules and techniques of civilization, which amounted to a mechanical imitation of the West. But the crisis the Ottoman society was experiencing was a moral one. The real task was, therefore, not so much the

²⁵ Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*, p. 26f.

²⁶ For the writings of Gökalp on this question see Niyazi Berkes (ed. and transl.), *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization. Selected Essays of Ziya Gökalp* (New York, 1959); Ziya Gökalp, *The Principles of Turkism*, transl. by R. Devereux (Leiden, 1968); Richard Hartmann, "Ziya Gök Alp's Grundlagen des türkischen Nationalismus", *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 28 (1925), pp. 578-610; Uriel Heyd, *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism. The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gökalp* (London, 1950).

improvement of the methods of instruction in public schools but rather a re-orientation from 'instruction' to 'education' on the basis of a new ethics that was to be derived from the national culture. By national culture was meant, of course, the Turkish national culture, and the reference itself, apart from furnishing an evidence of the dwindling importance of Ottomanism, had both populist and Turkist implications.²⁷

Both concepts, Turkism and populism, were imports from Tsarist Russia, where since the 1880s a Muslim (Tatar) middle class had developed a modern school system with Turkish as the medium of instruction. The Tatar bourgeois modernism (*Djadidism*), articulated at first in purely cultural terms, developed eventually into a pan-Turkish ideology, stressing the need for the union of all Turkey-Muslim peoples under the leadership of the Ottoman state.²⁸ Through the activities of men like Ismail Bey Gaspirinsky (1851-1914) and Yusuf Akçura (1878-1935) close links with the Young Turk movement inside and outside the Ottoman Empire were established.²⁹ In 1904, Akçura's famous pamphlet on the "Three Kinds of Policy" appeared where it was argued that Ottomanism as a viable policy had failed and that the future would belong to nationalism based on ethnic identity. In the Ottoman context, this meant relinquishing the Ottomanist imperial concept in favour of a Pan-Turkish ethnic nationalism. Of special interest is Akçura's Darwinist perception of society which reveals his affinity with the mainstream Young Turk thinking:

Every society, in the expectation of securing its own interests, is in a process of continuous change ... In the course of this continuous change, the interest which is brought to fulfilment is survival. Since life is strongly continuing, its existence necessitates the existence of power. This means that every society finds

²⁷ On the coincidence of Turkish and populist components of the Young Turk thinking during this period see İlhan Tekeli and Gencay Şaylan, "Türkiye'de halkçılık ideolojisinin evrimi" (The Evolution of the Ideology of Populism in Turkey), *Toplum ve Bilim* 6-7 (Summer-Fall 1978), p. 62.

²⁸ Edward J. Lazzerini, "Ethnicity and the Uses of History: The Case of the Volga Tatars and Jadidism", *Central Asian Survey* 1 (1982/83), pp. 61-69.

²⁹ On Gaspirinsky see Edward J. Lazzerini, *Ismail Bey Gaspirinskii and Muslim Modernism in Russia, 1878-1914*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Washington, 1973, and Hakan Kırımlı, *National Movements and National Identity among the Crimean Tatars (1850-1916)* (Leiden-New York-Cologne, 1996), pp. 32-55; on Akçura see François Georgeon, *Aux origines du nationalisme turc: Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935)* (Paris, 1980).

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its own interest in survival, that is in acquiring and increasing its power. Hence, as among all living species struggling for survival, we witness a ceaseless conflict among societies. We are obliged to accept this condition. The interest of each society is in its existence, consequently in being powerful.³⁰

After 1908, Akçura pursued his Turkist political goals in the Ottoman capital. The foundation of *Türk Derneği* (Turkish Society, 1908) was followed by that of *Türk Ocağı* (Turkish Hearth, 1912), the foremost Turkish association until the 1930s.³¹ In 1911 Akçura began to publish the principal Turkish organ, *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Homeland), which boasted among its contributors Ziya Gökalp.³² Akçura and Gökalp collaborated closely both regarding populism and on the issue of 'national economy'. But in *Halka Doğru* (Towards the People), which appeared since 1912 as a supplement to Akçura's *Türk Yurdu*, both men propagated rather different concepts of populism. Whereas Gökalp expected the cosmopolitan élite to go 'towards the people' in order to learn the national culture, Akçura's concern was of a practical nature: he demanded an intellectual commitment to raise the socio-economic level of the impoverished rural and urban artisanal masses in order to elevate the Turkish nation.³³ His preoccupation with the idea of creating a national bourgeoisie found an outlet in long-drawn polemics with the adherents of economic liberalism. With the theoretical support of Alexander

³⁰ "Yusuf Akçura's *Üç tarz-ı siyaset* (Three Kinds of Policy)", introduced and translated by İsmail Fehmi, *Oriente Moderno* 61 (1981), p. 11. F. Georgeon warns against assuming that Akçura's Darwinism was an isolated case. See *Aux origines du nationalisme turc*, p. 21.

³¹ François Georgeon, "Les Foyers Turcs à l'époque kémaliste", in J. L. Bacqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (eds.), *La Turquie et la France à l'époque d'Atatürk* (Paris, 1982), pp. 199-214, *idem*, "Nationalisme et populisme en Turquie: L'expérience des 'Foyers Turcs' (1912-1931)", *Cahiers du Groupe d'études sur la Turquie contemporaine* 1 (Winter 1984-1985), pp. 19-29; Kenan Akyüz, "Türk Ocakları" (The Turkish Hearths), *Belleten*, No. 196 (April 1986), pp. 201-228.

³² Paul Dumont, "La revue *Türk Yurdu* et les musulmans de l'Empire russe", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 15 (1974), pp. 315-331; Hüseyin Tuncer, *Türk Yurdu (1911-1931) üzerine bir inceleme* (A Study on "Türk Yurdu" (1911-1931)), (Ankara, 1990); Madami Arai, "Between State and Nation: A New Light on the Journal *Türk Yurdu*", *Turcica* 24 (1992), pp. 277-95.

³³ Compare Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*, pp. 69-74, and Georgeon, *Aux origines du nationalisme turc*, pp. 66-88. On the review *Halka Doğru*, see Zafer Toprak, "Osmanlı Narodnikleri: 'Halka Doğru' gidenler" (Ottoman Narodniks: Those who went 'Towards the People'), *Toplum ve Bilim* 24 (Winter 1984), pp. 69-81.

Helphand (Parvus), who contributed to *Türk Yurdu* regularly, *laissez-faire* policies of the government were taken under attack, Akçura propagating in their stead a state-controlled economy with the view of supplanting the foreign and non-Turkish indigenous merchants and entrepreneurs by a national Turkish bourgeoisie.

This unrelenting engagement began to bear fruit as soon as the Great War broke out. The unilateral abolition of the 'Capitulation's' in 1914 was followed by numerous economic and political measures which amounted to a combined effort to nationalize economic life. Throughout the war, the CUP consciously emphasized the ethnic dimensions of the socio-economic problems of the country, favouring Muslim commercial groups against non-Muslim Ottoman subjects.³⁴ Compulsory use of Turkish as the language of business also by franchised foreign companies, a successful co-operative movement that fostered the interests of Muslim producers and consumers as against the non-Muslim merchant class, state intervention in foreign trade, in currency transactions, in banking - all contributed directly or indirectly to the attainment of the same nationalist objective. The deportation of Armenians since 1915, which amounted to an 'ethnic cleansing', had in this regard special significance; the socio-economic vacuum that resulted could only be filled by Muslim commercial elements.³⁵ Thus Akçura emphasized in 1916 that:

just as the Jews and Germans constituted the bourgeoisie in Poland, in Turkey it was the native Jews, Greeks, and Armenians who were the agents and middlemen of European capitalism ... If the Turks fail to produce among themselves a bourgeois class ..., the chances of survival of a Turkish society composed only of peasants and officials will be very slim.³⁶

³⁴ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat" (1908-1918)* (The 'National Economy' in Turkey, 1908-1918) (Ankara, 1982), p 21.

³⁵ For an evaluation of the literature on the Armenian genocide in this light see Fikret Adanır, "Die Armenische Frage und der Völkermord an den Armeniern im Osmanischen Reich. Betroffenheit im Reflex nationalistischer Geschichtsschreibung", in: Ernst Karpf (ed.), *Erlebnis - Gedächtnis - Sinn. Authentische und konstruierte Erinnerung* (forthcoming).

³⁶ Yusuf Akçura, *Türk Yurdu*, no. 140, Aug. 12, 1333/Aug. 25, 1916, p. 2521f., quoted in Berkes, *Secularism*, p. 426.

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Authors like Akçura, Gökalp and Tekin Alp³⁷ propagated the 'German Way', that is the *Nationalökonomie à la Friedrich List*, as the method of development suitable to Turkey. As the number of 'national' joint stock companies increased, the corporatist concept too received a fresh impulse; Gökalp declared that the state's active role in economy was a 'moral service' to the country³⁸ and demanded that artisans' corporations, which had been active until then on an urban level only, be given a national scope so that the age of occupational organization replaced the class society.³⁹

Ascent of Mustafa Kemal to Leadership

With the defeat of 1918 the Ottoman imperial idea became irrelevant, the leading CUP politicians went into exile, and their liberal opponents who had sympathized with the Entente established themselves in power. The country was weary of war and held the Young Turks responsible for the catastrophe. But when it became known that the victor states intended to partition even Anatolia, social forces that had been fostered by the CUP policies – the emerging 'national bourgeoisie' – could not help but resist, since otherwise the Christian Armenians and Greeks would become masters over a predominantly Muslim populace. For the latter, Anatolia represented the last area of retreat; and the circumstance that the sultan's government accepted the Entente scheme of partition meant that the incipient Muslim resistance had to look elsewhere for political leadership.

This brought the old provincial élites: the sheiks, the notables and – not least – the local politicians and bureaucrats who used to form the lower echelons of the CUP once more to the fore.⁴⁰ Since late 1918 societies for the 'Defense of Rights' were founded in various parts of Anatolia and Thrace

³⁷ Tekin Alp (1883-1961), alias Moise Cohen, author also of Pan-Turkist publications (*Türkismus und Pantürkism*, Weimar 1915), was an 'authority' of the CUP in economic matters. See Jacob M. Landau, *Tekinalp: Turkish Patriot 1883-1961* (Istanbul and Leiden, 1984); *idem*, "Munis Tekinalp's Economic Views Regarding the Ottoman Empire and Turkey", in Hans Georg Majer (ed.), *Osmanistische Studien zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte. In memoriam Vančo Boškov* (Wiesbaden, 1986), pp. 94-103.

³⁸ Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp*, p. 108.

³⁹ See Toprak, *Türkiye'de "Millî İktisat"*, p. 35.

⁴⁰ The contribution of the CUP to the organization of the Turkish national movement is emphasized by Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor. The Rôle of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926* (Leiden, 1984), pp. 68-105.

with the manifest purpose of mobilizing the population against the territorial claims of the Christian minorities. The appointment of Mustafa Kemal, one of the few generals who still enjoyed prestige, to an army command in Anatolia in May 1919 brought a new dynamism and a potential of co-ordination and unification into this movement.

Who was Mustafa Kemal? Born in 1881 in Salonika, Mustafa Kemal was a member of the Young Turk opposition since 1907. However, after 1908 he had been pushed to the backbenches in the course of internal rivalries within the CUP. In Tripolis in 1911/12 and subsequently in Thrace in 1912/13 he served under Enver Bey, the future generalissimo of World War I. The relationship between them was from the start rather cool. During the battles at the Dardanelles in the spring of 1915 Mustafa Kemal acquired a reputation as a courageous soldier and intelligent officer, which enabled him in the following years to assume a critical stance towards the policies of the commander-in-chief. At the end of the war, when the leading politicians of the CUP were discredited, many saw in Mustafa Kemal Enver's successor.

These relations should be kept in mind when analyzing the intricate balance of power within the national resistance movement in Anatolia in the period of 1919-1923 from which Mustafa Kemal eventually emerged as the undisputed leader of the new Turkey. The CUP leaders in exile had not given up entirely their claim to have a say in matters related to the future of Turkey; Enver Pasha and his associates continued to influence the developments from their new base in Bolshevik Russia.⁴¹ Muslim but pro-Bolshevik groups within the cadres of the old CUP in Anatolia represented therefore a challenge to Mustafa Kemal's leadership, necessitating him along with other considerations to enter upon a virtual *Realpolitik* vis-à-vis the communist neighbour. Mustafa Kemal seems to have promised already in May 1919 the establishment of a kind of 'state socialism' in Anatolia. In return he hoped to receive military and financial aid which was deemed essential for the success of his movement. In this framework, Bolshevik sympathizers within the nationalist camp were tolerated; Mustafa Kemal even arranged the establishment of an official Communist Party of Turkey by his associates in October

⁴¹ See Paul Dumont, "La Fascination du Bolchévisme: Enver Pacha et le Parti des Soviets Populaires, 1919-1922", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 16 (1975), pp. 141-166; Kâzım Karabekir, *İstiklâl harbimizde Enver Paşa ve İttihat ve Terakki erkânı* (Enver Pasha and the CUP Leaders in our War of Independence), (Istanbul, 1990); Masayuki Yamauchi, *The Green Crescent under the Red Star. Enver Pasha in Soviet Russia 1919-1922* (Tokyo, 1991).

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1920.⁴² However, in his dealings with representatives of Western powers, he was careful to point out that the cultural traditions of the Turks left no room for a Bolshevik experiment in Anatolia.⁴³

Despite Bolshevik influences and pressures (also from the adherents of Enver) the nationalists around Mustafa Kemal in Ankara did not favour an institutionalization of a peasant militia as the power basis of the new regime but insisted on revitalizing the traditional regular army. With the first military successes in late 1920 and early 1921, Ankara changed its attitude towards left-wing groups in the country; not only was the official Turkish Communist Party dissolved, but also the leaders of the 'authentic' Turkish Communist Party, founded by Mustafa Subhi and recognized by the III. International, were mysteriously liquidated on their way to Ankara in January 1921.⁴⁴ This indicated a significant consolidation of control by Mustafa Kemal over the developments in Anatolia, the main determinants of which should be sought in the field of populist, religious and ethnic politics.

Although the 'ideologues' of the Kemalist movement were the same familiar names from the CUP era such as Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura and other intellectuals, the basis of ideological mobilization could hardly be the Turkish of the closing phase of World War I. In view of the patchwork of Anatolian ethnic structure and the fact that not a Turkish identity but the interests of the Muslim population as a whole were being threatened, it seemed expedient to accentuate the common Islamic heritage. Thus in March 1920 Mustafa Kemal asked the representatives of the Anatolian press "to be always circumspect and appreciative when writing about religious matters and to use a language likely to exalt the idea of inviolability of the Caliphate".⁴⁵

⁴² Paul Dumont, "La révolution impossible. Les courants d'opposition en Anatolie 1920-1921", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 19 (1978), pp. 143-74; Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de sol akımlar I (1908-1925)* (Leftist Currents in Turkey I: 1908-1925), 4th ed., Vol. 1-2 (Istanbul, 1991), Vol. 1, pp. 92-94; Vol. 2, pp. 215-51 (documents).

⁴³ Paul Dumont, "L'Axe Moscou-Ankara: Les relations turco-soviétiques de 1919 à 1922", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 18 (1977), pp. 165-193, here 167-69.

⁴⁴ On relations between the Kemalist movement and the Turkish Communist Party of Mustafa Suphi see Paul Dumont, "Bolchevisme et Orient. Le parti communiste turc de Mustafa Suphi, 1918-1921", in: *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 18 (1977), pp. 377-409, and Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol akımlar I*, Vol. 1, pp. 98-103, Vol. 2, pp. 258-380 (documents).

⁴⁵ Quotation in Taha Parla, *Kemalist tek parti ideolojisi ve CHP'nin Altı Ok'u* (The Ideology of the Kemalist Single-Party Regime and the 'Six Arrows' of the Republican People's Party) (Istanbul, 1992), p. 177. See further Paul Dumont, "Hojas for the Revolution: the Religious

And in matters of education a new curriculum prepared in May 1920 highlighted the importance of religious instruction for the attainment of national goals.⁴⁶ In a noteworthy speech before the Grand National Assembly, again in early 1920, Mustafa Kemal reminded the deputies that they were not just Turks or Circassians or Kurds, but rather representatives of Muslim populations which formed a community of solidarity, and the unity which the national movement was determined to accomplish was going to be an Islamic one encompassing all ethnic elements.⁴⁷ This political platform left the nature of the relations between the Ankara government and the Sultan-Caliph in Istanbul deliberately ambiguous. On the one hand, these relations were utterly tense, even inimical; on the other hand, Mustafa Kemal and his circle reiterated consistently that the national struggle was being waged also with the aim of emancipating the Sultan-Caliph from subservience to foreigners, his authority being formally recognized by the nationalists in Ankara.⁴⁸

Along with appeals to Islamic solidarity populism served as the principal instrument of national mobilization. Especially the adherents of the old CUP in Ankara elaborated a new populist program the chief propositions of which were (a) that sovereignty belonged to the people, (b) that there were no social classes in Turkey, the main contradiction being the one between the ruling bureaucracy and the populace, and (c) that some sort of occupational representation would be the right thing for the country.⁴⁹ Mustafa Kemal's

Strategy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk", *Journal of the American Institute for the Study of Middle Eastern Civilization* 1/3-4, 1980-81, pp. 17-32.

⁴⁶ See İlhan Başgöz and Howard E. Wilson, *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940* (Bloomington-The Hague, 1968), pp. 31-44.

⁴⁷ *Atatürk'ün söylev ve demeçleri, I: 1919-1938* (Atatürk's Speeches and Statements), ed. Nimet Arsan (Ankara, 2nd ed., 1961), pp. 73-74.

⁴⁸ See İhsan Güneş, *Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin düşünsel yapısı (1920-1923)* (The Intellectual Structure of the First Grand National Assembly of Turkey, 1920-1923) (Eskişehir, 1985), p. 158.

⁴⁹ See İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin, "(Kör) Ali İhsan (İloğlu) Bey ve temsili-mesleki programı" ((Blind) Ali İhsan (İloğlu) Bey and His Program of Occupational Representation), in: *Atatürk döneminin ekonomik ve toplumsal sorunları* (Istanbul, 1977), pp. 283-363; Zafer Toprak, "Halkçılık ideolojisinin oluşumu" (The Development of Populist Ideology), in: *Atatürk döneminin ekonomik ve toplumsal sorunları* (Istanbul, 1977), 13-38, here 18-19; Tekeli and Eaylan, "Türkiye'de halkçılık ideolojisinin evrimi", p. 67 f.; Baskın Oran, *Atatürk milliyetçiliği* (The Atatürk Nationalism), 2nd ed. (Ankara, 1990), pp. 135-39; Tunçay, *Türkiye'de sol akımlar I (1908-1925)*, Vol. 1, pp. 90 f.; Vol. 2, pp. 167-71.

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version of populism in this period made no allowance for a professional representation, probably because Mustafa Kemal and his circle remained suspicious of the CUP influences.⁵⁰ On the other hand, populism was at the core also of the Kemalist program which he submitted to discussion in September 1920. This program stressed popular sovereignty as the first axiom, implying in the long run the elimination of all reference to an Islamic legitimacy in the constitution. Another important aspect was the espousal of the unity of powers which meant the concentration of the legislative, executive and judicial prerogatives in the body corporate of the Assembly.⁵¹ Both concepts found their way into the new constitution of January 20, 1921, the relevant passage of which designated the chairman of the Assembly as the natural president of the council of ministers.⁵²

However, the Kemalist program was challenged from the start by an articulate opposition. It was especially the concentration of all powers in the legal entity of the Assembly that caused the most debate. In the process, a radical group of young deputies emerged as ardent supporters of the Kemalist concepts. For example, Mahmud Esat, a future minister of justice, went so far as to characterize the separation of powers as a defunct liberal system totally unsuitable for Turkey. In December 1921 Mustafa Kemal himself asserted that the principle of separation of powers was something to be observed neither in real life nor in nature and that those in the world who wished a better form of government would one day come out in favour of the form of government implemented by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.⁵³

Small wonder in the light of these discussions that the country found itself, despite the impressive military victory attained in the late summer of 1922, confronted with profound political problems. There was unanimity in the Assembly that the reigning Sultan Mehmed VI was no longer tenable, although a substantial majority, including close collaborators of Mustafa Kemal, favoured retaining the Ottoman dynasty. Mustafa Kemal, on the other

⁵⁰ Toprak, "Türkiye'de korporatizmin doğuşu", p. 49; Tekeli and Eaylan, "Türkiye'de halkçılık ideolojisinin evrimi", p. 69.

⁵¹ Güneş, *Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin düşünsel yapısı*, p. 157 f.

⁵² Güneş, *Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin düşünsel yapısı*, p. 193.

⁵³ Güneş, *Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin düşünsel yapısı*, p. 198 f.

hand, was absolutely determined to abolish the Sultanat, while the Caliphate with a new status resembling that of the Roman Catholic Papacy might continue to exist.⁵⁴ Notwithstanding his immense prestige as the saviour of the country, however, Mustafa Kemal was able to enforce his will only after he had insinuated the eventuality of a *coup d'état* (November 1922).⁵⁵

After the conclusion of the peace treaty of Lausanne in July, 1923, personal rivalries within the leadership came into the open. The critics were unhappy with Mustafa Kemal's autocratic style of government which became increasingly manifest when he dissolved the Assembly in April, followed by an election campaign in June and July, in which free opinion and eligibility for nomination were severely limited (among others by a revised Law on High Treason), and when he saw to it that practically no former opponent entered the new assembly which convened in August 1923.⁵⁶ In September, Mustafa Kemal converted the parliamentary Group of the Defense of Rights into a political party under the name of 'People's Party' (*Halk Fırkası*). He assumed the chairmanship of the new party, retaining at the same time the presidency of the National Assembly. As a further blow to the liberal opposition, which had its main support in Istanbul, the small Anatolian town of Ankara was proclaimed the new capital of the country on October 13, 1923, and about two weeks later, Mustafa Kemal succeeded in having the constitution revised, Turkey declared a republic and he himself elected its first president.

Consolidation of Single-Party Regime

Former comrades of Mustafa Kemal began to fear the erection of a dictatorship. Some of them hoped to instrumentalize the Caliphate as a counter-balance against such a strong leader. The latter, fully aware of the potential the Caliphate represented for a political opposition, staged a virtual *fait*

⁵⁴ Halil İnalçık, "The Caliphate and Atatürk's *inkilâb*", *Belleter* 46 (1982), pp. 353-365.

⁵⁵ See Feridun Fazıl Tülbentçi, *Cumhuriyet nasıl kuruldu?* (How was the Republic Founded?) (Istanbul, 1955), p. 27.

⁵⁶ Ahmet Demirel, "1923 Seçimleri" (The Elections of 1923), *Tarih ve Toplum* 144 (December 1995), pp. 23-31. On the opposition to Kemalist policies in this period see further Ahmet Demirel, *Birinci Meclis'te muhalefet: İkinci Grup* (The Opposition in the First Parliament: The Second Group) (Istanbul 1994), and Kâzım Karabekir, *Paşaların kavgası: Atatürk-Karabekir* (The Quarrel of Generals: Atatürk vs. Karabekir), ed. İsmet Bozdağ (Istanbul, 1991).

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accompli: in the absence from Ankara of some distinguished politicians and generals such as Hüseyin Rauf (Orbay), Ali Fuad (Cebesoy), Refet (Bele) and Kâzım (Karabekir), the Assembly passed a law on March 3, 1924, abolishing the Caliphate.⁵⁷ At the same time, the Ministry of Religious Foundations was dissolved. A special law introduced the principle of 'unification of education' (*tevhid-i tedrisat*) which meant the complete secularization of the school system, entailing among others the immediate closure of several hundred Muslim theological colleges (*medrese*), while the religious affairs of the population were placed under the direction of a special governmental department. Although Islam according to the new constitution of April 20, 1924, was still the state religion, the government introduced a new policy which declared an 'enlightened Islam' as the proper faith for the Turks.⁵⁸

These swift and sweeping changes formed the background to rising political tensions in the early Republic. In November 1924 a group of prominent military figures of the War of Independence including two of the three army inspectors resigned from their military posts as well as from the People's Party. Under the leadership of ex-General Kâzım Karabekir the 'Progressive Republican Party' was established in the same month, the program of which upheld such liberal principles as the separation of powers, the inviolability of civic liberties, free trade and a greater respect for 'religious beliefs and convictions'.⁵⁹ This turn of events was rather embarrassing for the Kemalist leadership, although it was temporarily obliged to tolerate the parliamentary opposition. But when in February 1925 a Kurdish rebellion broke out in south-eastern Anatolia, which had both Kurdish-nationalist and Ottoman-restorative aims, the Kemalist regime reacted promptly and with draconian methods not only against the rebels in the East but also against the political opposition and the critical press in the rest of the country.⁶⁰ Despite

⁵⁷ For an overview of these developments see Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti yönetimi'nin kurulması*, pp. 68-86;

⁵⁸ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 87-90.

⁵⁹ Manifesto and program in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 370-71 and 376-81; English translations of these texts in Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic*, 136-38 and 138-55. For an analysis of the program see *ibid.*, pp. 95-109.

⁶⁰ On the Kurdish uprising of 1925 see Robert W. Olson, "The Sheik Sait Rebellion in Turkey (1925): A Study in the Consolidation of a Developed Uninstitutionalized Nationalism and the Rise of an Incipient (Kurdish) Nationalism", *Die Welt des Islams* 18 (1978), no. 3-4, pp. 195-211, and Martin van Bruinessen, "Popular Islam, Kurdish Nationalism and Rural

the fact that the uprising was suppressed by the end of May, the government introduced a Law on the Maintenance of Order along with commissioning extraordinary courts, the so-called Independence Tribunals, with ensuing liquidation of political enemies. On June 3, 1925 – only six months after its foundation – the Progressive Republican Party was banned.⁶¹

As the Independence Tribunals persecuted the opponents of the Republic – on June 29, 1925, 47 persons were executed in Diyarbakir in connection with the Kurdish uprising⁶² – Mustafa Kemal initiated his westernizing reforms. In a tour through provincial Anatolia in August 1925 he exhibited a Panama hat as a 'symbol of civilization', characterizing civilization thereby as "such a fire that burns and liquidates those who remain indifferent to it."⁶³ A special law passed in November 1925 made wearing a hat or cap instead of the fez, the traditional form of headgear, obligatory; those who ignored this rule were to be brought before an Independence Tribunal. Indeed, there was no pardon for citizens who protested against this queer imposition: about 50 persons were condemned to death between November 1925 and February 1926.⁶⁴

Revolt: the Rebellion of Shaikh Said in Turkey (1925)", in Janos M. Bak and Gerhard Benecke (eds.), *Religion and Rural Revolt* (Manchester, 1984), pp. 281-295.

⁶¹ In a speech made in 1927, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü (1884-1973) conceded that the dangerous situation in 1925 "did not stem from the Kurdish uprising of Sheikh Said alone; actually, the real danger was represented by the widespread confusion and disorder in the political life of the country." This latter factor was "a serious hindrance before progress"; it was due to the activities of "degenerate intellectuals and of politicians who view the freedom of religion as an instrument to attack the freedom of conscience of other people." *İsmet İnönü'nün TBMM'deki konuşmaları 1920-1973* (İsmet İnönü's Speeches in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey), Vol. 1: (1920-1938) (Ankara, 1992), p. 250. The most authoritative synthesis in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 127-49. See also Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic*, pp. 83-94. For general histories of the 'Independence Tribunals' see Ergun Aybars, *İstiklal Mahkemeleri* (Independence Tribunals), Vol. 1-2 (Izmir, 1988), and A. Turan Alkan, *İstiklal Mahkemeleri* (Independence Tribunals) (Istanbul, 1993).

⁶² Alkan, *İstiklal Mahkemeleri*, p. 70 f.

⁶³ Eevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam: Mustafa Kemal* (The Sole Man: Mustafa Kemal), Vol. 3, 10th impr. (Istanbul 1988), p. 240.

⁶⁴ See Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 149-159, and Alkan, *İstiklal Mahkemeleri*, pp. 77-83.

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A virtual atmosphere of terror enveloped the political class of Turkey when in June 1926 a conspiracy against the life of Mustafa Kemal was uncovered in Izmir. Although the persons involved – including the ring-leader, a former deputy with CUP affiliations – were arrested, the Independence Tribunal began to proceed, obviously on political grounds, also against third party persons. Apart from several adherents of the CUP, the founders of the already dissolved Progressive Republican Party – former generals, ministers and even a prime minister, all comrades of Mustafa Kemal until 1923 – had to account for their past deeds, the allegations being in no way connected with the plot against the life of the president. Dozens of politicians were condemned to death. Those who were lucky enough to get acquitted – all ex-generals – remained outside of public life as long as Mustafa Kemal lived.⁶⁵

After these purges the conditions were ripe for the establishment in Turkey of a single-party regime. Mustafa Kemal utilized for this purpose the new elections for the National Assembly which were due in 1927. Already the fact that Mustafa Kemal himself hand-picked each candidate was a major change. At the end of August 1927 he made the list of all candidates public, with the supplementary wish that the citizens should take note of these persons with whom he, Mustafa Kemal, had thought it suitable to collaborate. The respective constituencies of these candidates would be announced later on.⁶⁶ The candidates thus selected were 'elected' on September 2, 1927, and on October 15 they came together at the Second Congress of the People's Party (since 1924 Republican People's Party, hereafter abbreviated as RPP) to hear Mustafa Kemal's famous speech which lasted more than 36 hours.⁶⁷

As Tunçay has observed, this speech was a reckoning with contemporary rivals rather than a rendering of account of the policies executed since 1919.⁶⁸ Mustafa Kemal justified the oppressive methods applied under the

⁶⁵ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 161-68.

⁶⁶ Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası'nın tüzüğü*, p. 73.

⁶⁷ Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), *Nutuk*, I: 1919-1920, II: 1920-1927, III: *Vesikalar* (A Speech, I: 1919-20, II: 1920-27, III: Documents) (Istanbul, 1960-1963). See also *Die neue Türkei 1919-1927. Rede gehalten von Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pascha in Angora vom 15.-20. Oktober 1927 vor den Abgeordneten und Delegierten der Republikanischen Volkspartei*, Vol. 1-3 (Leipzig, 1928).

⁶⁸ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 179.

Law on Maintenance of Order as necessary in order to secure for the Turkish nation an honourable place in the civilized world and to strengthen the foundations of the Republic.⁶⁹ A more detailed analysis of the text, as undertaken by Parla, reveals the basic traits of Mustafa Kemal's view of himself and of his country and helps us to grasp better the true nature of his regime.⁷⁰ The 'saviour' of Turkey was apparently convinced that history was made by great men and that he surely was one such man receiving his legitimacy not from concrete political bodies, but from the nation conceived in abstract. Consequently, he saw his decisions outside the reach of institutions, laws or assemblies. Additionally, his style of rule was paternalistic, patriarchalist, autocratic and élitist. In other words, Mustafa Kemal was a charismatic leader in the Weberian sense of the term, a person who believed in heroic deeds and that heroes deserved to be adored and worshipped.

Evidently, Mustafa Kemal did not have much confidence in democratic, pluralistic, consultative or collective politics. The RPP and the National Assembly in Ankara were merely needed as instances of formal confirmation. All other institutions and even the nation did not possess authority or legitimacy of their own. It was especially important that no person or institution intervened as mediator between the leader and the nation. The leader would tolerate criticism neither within his own nor from an opposition party. His own person and his party alone guaranteed the national unity, rendering opposition to them almost equivalent to high treason.

What was the ultimate goal of this man? His main concern was, obviously, how to create an independent nation-state and a new political regime, how to substitute the multinational Ottoman empire by a secular republic of the Turks. In this context, he considered a republic the opposite of a monarchy, a form of government based on the principle of popular sovereignty; and his nationalism as reflected in the 'Speech' is cultural, emotional and territorial, geared to increase self-confidence and to create a stronger identity with the purpose of setting into motion a dynamic process of modernization.⁷¹

Another indication of profound change after the purges can be seen in the statutes of the RPP which were adopted by the Second Congress in 1927.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 182 f.

⁷⁰ Taha Parla, *Türkiye'de siyasal kültürün resmî kaynakları*, Vol. 1: *Atatürk'ün Nutuk'u* (Official Sources of Political Culture in Turkey, I: The Speech of Atatürk) (Istanbul, 1991).

⁷¹ This is a rough paraphrase of Parla's conclusions, see *Atatürk'ün Nutuk'u*, pp. 167-70.

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This document merely legalized the until then *de facto* state of affairs. "To guard the republican form of government, which has been raising the Turkish nation continuously to a higher level of prestige and affluence, against every kind of danger" was amongst the principal political goals (Art. 2). To emancipate beliefs and consciences "from diverse intermingling of politics" was another important aim, and all laws, organizations and similar needs of the nation would be realized "according to the principles and forms of the modern positive sciences, that is to say, in matters related to the state and nation, worldly and religious concerns would be kept separate" (Art. 3). The populist precept "by the people, for the people" was an important issue for the Party, whereby people was defined as a collectivity of citizens who did not recognize any family, class, community or individual privileges (Art. 4). The strongest bond between these citizens was the unity of language, feeling and thinking, and the Party had the duty to spread the Turkish language and culture in every sphere of public life (Art. 5). Finally, Art. 6 designated Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Party, as its general chairman, and Art. 7 established that the above stipulations could under no circumstances be modified, thus implying that the chairmanship of Mustafa Kemal, too, was permanent.⁷²

Solidarist-Corporatist Tendencies

The term 'populism' gained in this period a fundamental importance in Turkish politics, experiencing at the same time a significant shift in content. As has been shown above, during the years 1919-1923 it was understood to mean primarily popular sovereignty. But it was also used in its romantic denotation as belief in the rights, wisdom, or virtues of the common people. For example, we see Mustafa Kemal as late as March, 1923, criticizing the élitism of the educated in the following words:

Between the class of intellectuals and the mentality and expectations of the people there should be a natural consensus. That is to say, the ideas the intellectuals try to inculcate should originate from the soul and conscience of the common people. However, is this the case in our country? Do the ideas of the intellectuals stem from the depths of the soul of our people? Certainly not.⁷³

⁷² Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 382; Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası'nın tüzüğü (1927)*, pp. 80-81.

⁷³ *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri (Atatürk's Speeches and Statements)*, Vol. II, ed. Nimet Arsan (Ankara, 2nd ed., 1959), p. 140, quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 216.

But by 1923 Mustafa Kemal had already begun to convey a somewhat different populist message, his statements becoming reminiscent of the solidarist-corporatist approach of Ziya Gökalp. His speech in Balıkesir on February 8, 1923, in which he dwelt upon the principles of the prospective People's Party, has often been quoted as an indication of this change:

The party will represent the nation as a whole, not just one social class. We have an agricultural society. Such a society involves the great land owners and the farmers who have large land holdings. How many people possess large land holdings in our country? We learn from investigations that no one has such large holdings. Consequently, these landowners are persons to be protected. Then there are tradesmen and small town merchants. We must protect their rights, too, and provide for their security now and in the future. Apart from these people, there are no big capitalists. How many millionaires do we have? None. We shall not be the enemies of those who have some money. On the contrary, we will try to create millionaires and billionaires in our country. Then, there are the workers. Their number does not exceed twenty thousand. Like the farmers working in the field, they must be protected and their rights defended.⁷⁴

Obviously, this text anticipates the notion of single-party rule that sees its primary mission in accommodating the conflicting social interests within a national framework – a notion which was to become one of the maxims of the Kemalist regime. It also bears testimony to the continuing influence of ideological currents from the previous Young Turk period. Finally, a return to those concepts which burden a select few with the mission of leading the ignorant masses onto the path of progress harmonizes well with the emerging Kemalist authoritarianism that drew legitimacy from its *mission civilisatrice* in an Islamic social context. At any rate, Kemalist populism after 1923 considered the populace more and more as an ignorant mass unable to discern its true interests, and ideologues from the Young Turk era were on the spot to furnish encouragement. Abdullah Cevdet, for example, whose name stood for radical westernization after 1923, not only pictured Islam as the main hindrance to progress in Turkey, but also tried to put the ideas of Gustave Le Bon into reality by suggesting that Mustafa Kemal should behave as a true leader, that is to say, he should not care what the common people thought of his actions. After all, "from a psychological point of view the most distinguished and exalted ability of Mustafa Kemal Pasha" was "to perceive the

⁷⁴ Başgöz and Wilson, *Educational Problems in Turkey*, p. 47. The Turkish version of this passage in Tekeli and Şaylan, "Türkiye'de halkçılık ideolojisinin evrimi", p. 73 f.

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unconscious inclinations and needs of the people and to satisfy these inclinations and needs with a great thrust of conviction and decisiveness".⁷⁵ In a similar vein, Ziya Gökalp, too, justified and encouraged the autocratic tendencies of the new leader of Turkey:

Whereas individual ideas are the personal ideas of individuals, collective representations are the mental patterns that are common to all individuals of a society, or more accurately, that exist consciously in the collective consciousness. Individual ideas exercise no real influence in society, but they become an important factor in social life when they are based on a social force and acquire the nature of a collective representation. Thus, the ideas of a saviour who enjoys a great moral influence soon become part of the common thoughts of the whole people. Individual ideas of a similar nature also have an influence in social life. When a nation possesses a great personality who has proved by great victories his genius, self-sacrifice, and heroism, he can easily effect all sorts of reforms through his ability to create collective representations. Today we have such a genius. A personality of this nature who is recognized as a saviour and genius by the public consciousness can achieve by a word or speech or statement reforms and advances that ordinary persons could never achieve, regard-less of the degree of their scientific knowledge, physical strength, and activity.⁷⁶

Under the impression of radical change since 1923, many intellectuals saw themselves in a historically privileged position of being burdened with the creation of an entirely new order which would supplant a morally bankrupt imperial system and its decadent culture. The feeling of starting from zero was especially strong in the field of demography and settlement, since deportations, massacres and compulsory exchange of populations between 1912 and 1923 had depopulated large areas in Anatolia and Thrace. How was the vacuum left behind by the departure of non-Muslims capital, manpower and know-how to be filled? How were the hundreds of thousands of Muslim immigrants, a substantial part of whom spoke no Turkish, to be integrated into the emerging Turkish nation?⁷⁷ The creation of a Turkish

⁷⁵ Hanioglu, *Bir siyasi düşünür olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet*, p. 391.

⁷⁶ Ziya Gökalp, *The Principles of Turkism*, transl. by Robert Devereux (Leiden, 1968), p. 52, as quoted in Akural, *Ziya Gökalp. The Influence of His Thought on Kemalist Reforms*, p. 102 f.

⁷⁷ Cevat Geray, *Türkiye'den ve Türkiye'ye göçler ve göçmenlerin iskânî (1923-1961)* (Emigrations from and Immigrations to Turkey and the Settlement of Immigrants, 1923-1961) (Ankara, 1962); İlhan Tekeli, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan günümüze nüfusun zorunlu yer değiştirmesi ve iskan sorunu" (From Ottoman Empire to the Present the Problem of Com-

national identity – along with bringing the country onto the path of sustained economic development – was indeed the toughest task of the Kemalist élite.

The Turkish Hearths of the Young Turk period, which were reactivated after 1923, were expected to increase their cultural activities and thus to contribute to the process of nation-building. But who was a Turk? Could a Muslim Bosnian, a Circassian, an Arab or a Kurd become a member of the Turkish Hearths? After the Kurdish rebellion of 1925, this question was answered by an integrative definition of Turkishness; the decisive criterion was accordingly not ethnic origin but the subjective opting of the individual for the Turkish cultural and national identity. Behind such a conceptualization lay the aim of national homogenization, the attainment of the unity of language, culture and thinking, as required by the 1927 statutes of the RPP. Already at the Turkish Hearths' congress in April, 1925, Prime Minister İsmet Pasha had declared that nationalism was the only cohesive force and that it was the intent of the republican regime to turkify all citizens of Turkey.⁷⁸

However, national assimilation was only one dimension of the complex transformation process; as important was the tenacity with which the regime tried to bring about a rupture with the cultural heritage of the Ottoman centuries. The replacement of the Islamic with the Christian-Gregorian calendar in 1925 and especially the adoption of the Swiss civil code in 1926 were measures of considerable practical value and represented at the same, especially in the latter case, a fulfilment of an old Young Turk project.⁷⁹

In 1928 Mustafa Kemal initiated further reforms which were to attain the significance of a real break in the cultural and religious life of the population: In April, an amendment to the constitution removed the article that designated Islam as the religion of the state. In May the Arabic numerals were replaced by the Western symbols for numbers. In June the substitution of Arabic by Turkish as the language of religious services in the mosques was

pulsory Migration of Population and Resettlement), *Toplum ve Bilim* 50 (Summer 1990), pp. 49-71; Justin McCarthy, "Muslim Refugees in Turkey: the Balkan Wars, World War I, and the Turkish War of Independence", in *Essays in Honor of Andreas Tietze*, ed. by Heath W. Lowry and Donald Quataert (Istanbul-Washington D.C., 1993), pp. 87-111.

⁷⁸ Georgeon, "Nationalisme et populisme en Turquie: L'expérience des "Foyers Turcs" (1912-1931)", pp. 21 f.

⁷⁹ See Gotthard Jäschke, "Die Form der Eheschließung nach türkischem Recht. Ein Beitrag zum internationalen Privatrecht", *Welt des Islams* 22 (1940), pp. 1-66.

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announced. And in November by a special law the new Turkish alphabet (developed on the basis of Latin characters) was introduced. Practically overnight generations of educated adults were reduced to illiterates, while the younger generations were severed from their cultural heritage.

The new script was just a beginning; it anticipated on the one hand a still more comprehensive language reform that bore testimony to:

the fervent belief in the omnipotence of the human will and in the creative élan of the revolution [which] gave rise to the [Kemalist] conviction that language, like any other social institution, could be reshaped according to a preconceived plan.⁸⁰

On the other hand, it made necessary an extensive alphabetization campaign reaching into the remotest parts of the country and intended simultaneously as a means of political mobilization.⁸¹ As a result of these reforms there appeared to be emerging, on the eve of the Great Depression, a fascinating 'New Turkey' and a 'New Turk', both the work of a single man: "Il est incontestable que le type d'homme représenté par le nouveau Turc est une création spéciale d'Atatürk."⁸²

Totality of Party, State, Nation

The world economic crisis of the Thirties hit Turkey as hard as any other country. Because the grain prices fell, especially the peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the population, suffered. The central government could hardly help them, since the meagre resources were allocated either for an ambitious program of nationalization of foreign companies still operating in the country or for the construction of new railroads, if not already ear-

⁸⁰ Uriel Heyd, *Language Reform in Modern Turkey* (Jerusalem, 1954), p. 21.

⁸¹ As a result of this campaign, the rate of literacy rose from 10.5 per cent in 1927 to 20.4 per cent in 1935. See Mustafa Albayrak, "Millet mekteplerinin yapısı ve çalışmaları" (Structure and Activities of the Nation Schools), *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 10 (1994), pp. 471-83, here p. 482.

⁸² Tekin Alp, *Le Kemalisme* (Paris, 1937), p. 62. A good contemporary description of the Turkish transformation can be found in Donald E. Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk: Social Process in the Turkish Reformation* (Philadelphia, 1939). See further Norbert von Bischoff, *Ankara - Eine Deutung des neuen Werdens in der Türkei* (Vienna-Munich, 1935); Stephan Ronart, *Die Türkei von heute* (Amsterdam, 1936); Edmund Schopen, *Die neue Türkei* (Leipzig, 1938).

marked for the modernization of Ankara to make it a worthy capital of the nation.⁸³ The leadership was compelled to take notice of the popular discontent, the economic crisis being "plainly visible to even the most ardent admirers of the regime".⁸⁴

Its response was comprehensive enough and occurred on three different planes: the economical, the political and the ideological. In the economic field, the relatively liberal policies followed since 1923 were abandoned in favour of a course geared to accomplish economic autarky.⁸⁵ In the field of internal politics a daring experiment was undertaken: Perhaps as an outlet to help vent the accumulated dissatisfaction in the country, Mustafa Kemal engineered in early August 1930 the establishment of an oppositional party under the chairmanship of Fethi Okyar, one his close associates and a former prime minister.⁸⁶ He is reported to have encouraged Fethi Okyar with the following words:

The spectacle we offer today is more or less one of a *dictature* ... However, I have not created the republic for my personal benefit. We are all transitory in this world. If I would die today, the institution that I would leave behind would be despotism. But as my legacy to the nation, I do not wish to leave despotism and thus enter history as a despot.⁸⁷

⁸³ Yorgaki Effimiadis, *Cihan iktisad buhranı önünde Türkiye* (Turkey in Face of the World Economic Crisis), Vol. 1-2 (Istanbul, 1935-36); Şevket Raşit Hatipoğlu, *Die Agrarkrise in der Türkei/Türkiyede Zirai Buhran* (Ankara, 1936); Oya Köymen, "Charakter und Dynamik des Wandels in der türkischen Landwirtschaft zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen", in Linda Schatkowski Schilcher and Claus Scharf (eds.), *Der Nahe Osten in der Zwischenkriegszeit 1919-1939. Die Interdependenz von Politik, Wirtschaft und Ideologie* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 203-221.

⁸⁴ Walter F. Weiker, *Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey. The Free Party and Its Aftermath* (Leiden, 1973), p. 59.

⁸⁵ Feroz Ahmad, "The Political Economy of Kemalism", in Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (eds.), *Atatürk. Founder of a Modern State* (London, 1981), pp. 145-63, and Korkut Boratav, "Kemalist Economic Policies and Etatism", *ibid.*, pp. 165-90.

⁸⁶ Fethi Okyar, *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası - Nasıl doğdu, nasıl feshedildi?* (The Free Republican Party - How It Was Born, How Abolished) (Istanbul, 1987), pp. 7-83; Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Serbest Fırka hatıraları* (Memoirs on the Free Republican Party) (Istanbul, 2nd ed., 1969).

⁸⁷ Fethi Okyar, *Üç devirde bir adam* (A Man in Three Periods), ed. Cernal Kutay (Istanbul, 1980), quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 252.

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The 'Free Republican Party' demanded in its program the abolishment of state monopolies, a reduction of taxes, a friendlier climate for foreign capital and a larger share for free enterprise in the economy.⁸⁸ This venture in democracy turned out to be a spectacular success and was at the same time a bitter disappointment for Mustafa Kemal, who apparently hoped that public opinion at least out of respect for him would not abandon the RPP so quickly. For everywhere the new party was greeted so enthusiastically that one could speak of a political landslide. The leaders of the opposition were themselves rather embarrassed, and a sign from the 'Great Leader' (Ulu Önder) Mustafa Kemal was enough for them to dissolve their party – barely three months after its foundation – on November 17, 1930.

This experiment in democracy shocked the leadership profoundly. On the same day the Free Republican Party was dissolved, Mustafa Kemal set out on a tour of the provinces that was to last three months. He was accompanied by younger RPP politicians such as Recep (Peker), Reşit Galip and Ahmet Hamdi (Başar) who were known for their corporatist and anti-liberal views.⁸⁹ They all were keen on ascertaining the causes of the discontent and working out remedial proposals. The direction the development would take was intimated in a speech Mustafa Kemal held in Konya at the end of February 1931. He expressed the wish to have all citizens including the youth as members of his party. Even those under 18 years of age should be affiliated with the RPP as 'designated' members.⁹⁰

Obviously, the intention was to achieve a totalitarian system which left no room for any civil, cultural or political activity outside the control of the party-state. The cessation of the activities of the Turkish Hearths, the most important independent association in the service of Turkism and nationalism since 1912, was telling in this regard. In early April 1931 the Central Committee of the Hearths announced the dissolution of their organization and the transfer of its property to the Republican People's Party. The explanation given was the need felt by the Great Leader to co-ordinate all nationalist and

⁸⁸ Muzaffer Sencer, *Türkiye'de siyasal partilerin sosyal temelleri* (Social Fundaments of the Political Parties in Turkey), Istanbul 1974, 142-153.

⁸⁹ Ahmet Hamdi Başar, *Atatürk'le üç ay ve 1930'dan sonra Türkiye* (Three Months with Atatürk and Turkey after 1930) (Istanbul, 1945).

⁹⁰ *Atatürk'ün söylev ve demeçleri, II*, p. 270.

revolutionary forces under the roof of a single organization.⁹¹ Soon the Freemason Lodges of Turkey, too, had to suspend their activities, since they were told that the ideals they adhered to – nationalism, populism and republicanism – were championed now by the Party. Other organizations such as the Press Association of Turkey, the Association of Reserve Officers, the Women's Union of Turkey, etc., followed suit.⁹²

But the RPP, too, needed a reshuffle. In March 1931 Mustafa Kemal asked for new 'elections', even though he was convinced that his party had 'the full support of the nation'. In order to prove that the Party had such support and, further, "in order to assess the degree to which the nation will approve of the new measures which will be taken in the near future", he deemed it suitable that "our deputies renew their mandates. Once the confidence of the nation, the source of inspiration and power in all our enterprises, becomes manifest, it will be seen how unshakeable the basis of our national ideal is."⁹³ Already at the beginning of May, the new legislative period of the Parliament could be opened, with Mustafa Kemal being elected President of the Republic unanimously for the third time. A few days later the Third Congress of the RPP convened. On top of the agenda was the sanctioning of the new program and regulations of the Party that had been prepared, after careful study of contemporary European models, by the new Secretary-General Recep (Peker).⁹⁴

These documents⁹⁵ mark the beginning of a new period in the history of Turkey which was to last into the post-World War II era. For the first time, the RPP claimed to represent the whole nation which was conceived as a classless, solidaristic and united social formation, and the chief characteristics (*ana vasıflar*) of the single-party were proclaimed to be Republicanism, Nationalism, Populism, Etatism, Laicism and Revolutionism as symbolized by the 'Six Arrows' of the new party emblem. What was the in-

⁹¹ See *Türk Yurdu* 39-233 (March 1931), p. 61, quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 297 f., fn. 19.

⁹² Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 297, fn. 18.

⁹³ *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 5 March 1931, quoted in Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası'nın tüzüğü*, pp. 125-6.

⁹⁴ On translated foreign party programs see Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 312, fn. 35.

⁹⁵ Full texts of the documents in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 429-54.

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tention? Evidently, the leadership had reached the conclusion that oppressive methods were unavoidable if the reforms were going to be implemented at all. And these reforms were believed to be absolutely necessary. For example, the Party had felt compelled to pursue an etatist policy of industrialization, because only in that way could it hope to attain economic self-sufficiency. Moreover, the leadership saw itself not only in "full conformity with the most modern currents of thought in the world", but also believed it was ushering in "a mentality that best suited the specific conditions of our country."⁹⁶ This meant decreeing reforms from above, and any opposition to it would be classified automatically as 'counterrevolutionary'.⁹⁷

This shift in policy necessitated a coherent ideology and simultaneously a comprehensive educational effort accompanied by systematized propaganda in order to diffuse the official worldview among the masses. The RPP program and regulations of 1931 created the indispensable framework: Henceforth, the primary task of public education was to enable the citizens to acquire republican, nationalist and secular convictions. Along with intellectual the physical development of the youth, too, should be promoted, not least with a view to elevating the "character to the high level inspired by our great national history". History teaching was therefore of particular importance. All citizens were to be given the opportunity to become familiar with "the profound history of the Turks", for only historical knowledge was conducive to strengthening the self-esteem of the people, to heightening its resistance to foreign ideas which threatened national existence.

Already in 1930, a group of historians was commissioned with writing a work to be titled "Outlines of Turkish History".⁹⁸ In the same year it appeared in a limited edition for the assessment of specialists.⁹⁹ The reason

⁹⁶ Recep (Peker), *C.H.F. programının izahı* (Commentary on the Program of the Republican People's Party) (Ankara, 1931), p. 9.

⁹⁷ Tekeli and Şaylan, "Türkiye'de halkçılık ideolojisinin evrimi", p. 80 f.

⁹⁸ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 300-303. For the following see also Fikret Adanır, "Zum Geschichtsbild der nationalen Erziehung in der Türkei", *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 10 (1988), pp. 7-40, and *idem*, "Turkey", in Karl Pellens, Siegfried Quandt and Hans Süßmuth (eds.), *Historical Culture - Historical Communication. International Bibliography* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), pp. 367-93.

⁹⁹ Bülürâ Ersanli Behar, *İktidar ve tarih: Türkiye'de 'resmi tarih' tezinin oluşumu, 1929-1937* (Political Power and History: The Development of the 'Official History' Thesis in Turkey 1929-1937) (Istanbul, 1992), pp. 102-107.

why such a book was deemed necessary is explained by the fact that the historical role of the Turks had been consciously or unconsciously underestimated, if not entirely distorted in the historiography. Consequently, people acquired false ideas about their past. The time had come to interpret history from a national standpoint, so that the creative talents of the people could realize their true potentials.¹⁰⁰ The new concept of national history was immediately incorporated into the curricula. The four-volume "History", a textbook for secondary schools that appeared in 1931, closely followed the principles set down in the "Outlines ...". The first volume was devoted to Pre- and Early History, the emphasis being on the Turks and their contribution to the development of ancient civilizations. Volume II described the place of the Turks in the medieval Islamic world. The six Ottoman centuries were treated in a most cursory fashion in one half of Volume III, while the other half was reserved for the history of national liberation movements. The history of the Turkish Republic, however, which was not even a decade old, was given the most extensive treatment, filling the whole Volume IV, the thickest of the series. In short, school education clearly emphasized the pre-Islamic and Kemalist periods of Turkish history.¹⁰¹

The new concept of history-teaching needed scholarly underpinnings. To that end a "Society for Research on Turkish History" (*Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti*) was founded in 1931, which developed later into the Turkish Historical Society (*Türk Tarih Kurumu*).¹⁰² The first congress of Turkish historians met in the summer of 1932 in Ankara in order to discuss the problems of the new interpretation.¹⁰³ As a result, the 'Turkish History Thesis' crystallized around the following notions: The Turks were a white, Aryan people. Their original homeland was Central Asia, the cradle of civilization. Due to climatic changes (desiccation), the Turks swarmed out already in prehistoric times in all directions, carrying civilization into other parts of the

¹⁰⁰ Afet et al., *Türk tarihinin anahatları* (The Outlines of Turkish History) (Istanbul, 1930), introduction, quoted in Behar, *İktidar ve tarih*, pp. 104 f.

¹⁰¹ See Behar, *İktidar ve tarih*, pp. 108-118.

¹⁰² See the voluminous study by Fahri Çoker, *Türk Tarih Kurumu: Kuruluş amacı ve çalışmaları* (Turkish Historical Society: The Purpose of its Foundation and its Activities) (Ankara, 1983).

¹⁰³ Maarif Vekâleti and Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti, *Birinci Türk Tarih Kongresi (Ankara, 2-11 Temmuz 1932). Konferanslar, müzakere zabıtları* (The First Turkish History Congress (Ankara, 2-11 July 1932). Proceedings) (Istanbul, (1932)).

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world. The ancient civilizations of China, India, Egypt or Italy were all indebted to the Turkish heritage. The Sumerians and the Hittites were unquestionably Turkish peoples. Thus, especially Asia Minor had been since time immemorial – and not just since the arrival of the Seljuk Turks in the eleventh century – a Turkish homeland.¹⁰⁴

Some academicians of the University of Istanbul remained rather unconvinced of this new thesis.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, when Reşit Galip, who as Secretary-General of the Society for the Study of Turkish History was a co-author of the new historical myth, became Minister of National Education in late 1932, he seemed eager to punish the University of Istanbul, the last liberal institution in the country: In the summer of 1933, academic autonomy was abrogated and 92 professors and assistants were dismissed at once.¹⁰⁶ The result was the 'reformed' university under tight ministerial control, at which the teaching was entrusted more and more to German academicians (mostly of Jewish origin) who were happy to have found refuge in Istanbul and thus were understandably loath to get involved in political issues of the host country.¹⁰⁷ Another (and equally important) aim of the Ministry was "to

¹⁰⁴ A selection of titles from the published volume of the proceedings of the First Turkish History Congress are revealing: Afet İnan, "Tarihten evvel and tarih fecrinde" (Before and at the Dawn of History), in *Birinci Türk Tarih Kongresi (Ankara, 2-11 Temmuz 1932). Konferanslar, müzakere zabıtları* (Istanbul, (1932)), pp. 18-41; Reşit Galip, "Türk ırk ve medeniyet tarihine umumî bir bakış" (An Overview of the History of the Turkish Race and Civilization), *ibid.*, pp. 99-161; Hasan Cemil, "Ege Medeniyetinin menşesine umumî bakış" (An Overview of the Origins of the Aegean Civilization), *ibid.*, 199-214; Yusuf Ziya, "Mısır din ve ilâhlarının Türklükle alakası" (The Relation of Religion and Gods of Egypt with Turkishness), *ibid.*, pp. 243-60. In respect to nationalist and even racist implications İsmail Beşikçi, *Türk Tarih Tezi, Güneş-Dil Teorisi ve Kürt Sorunu* (The Turkish History Thesis, the Theory of Sun Language and the Kurdish Question) (Ankara, 1978). See also Halil Berktaş, "Der Aufstieg und die gegenwärtige Krise der nationalistischen Geschichtsschreibung in der Türkei", *Periplus* 1 (1991), pp. 102-125, here 106-108.

¹⁰⁵ On the critical interventions of Zeki Velidi (Togan) see *Birinci Türk Tarih Kongresi*, pp. 167-76 and 369-76.

¹⁰⁶ Nurşen Mazici, "Öncesi ve sonrasıyla 1933 Üniversite Reformu" (The University Reform of 1933 with its Premises and Consequences), in: *Birikim* 76 (August 1995), 56-70. On Reşit Galip see also Mete Tunçay and Haldun Özen, "1933 Darülfünun tesviyesi veya bir Tek-Parti politikacısının önlenebilir yükselişi ve düşüşü" (The 1933 University Settlement or the Irresistible Rise and Fall of a Single-Party Politician), *Tarih ve Toplum* 10 (October 1984), pp. 6-20.

¹⁰⁷ Horst Widmann, *Exil und Bildungshilfe. Die deutschsprachige Emigration in die Türkei nach 1933* (Bern-Frankfurt am Main, 1973); Fritz Neumark, *Zuflucht am Bosphorus*.

closely relate the university to the revolution".¹⁰⁸ For that purpose, an Institute of the History of the Turkish Revolution (*İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü*) was founded, and as of March 1934 students of all departments had to take the courses offered by that Institute. Interestingly, the first lecturers were prominent politicians of the RPP such as Recep Peker and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt; on March 20, 1934, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü himself lectured in Ankara on the same topic.¹⁰⁹

The Turkish Thesis of History was bolstered by a 'Sun Theory of Language', developed by the Society for Research on the Turkish Language (*Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti*). This society was set up in Ankara immediately after the History Congress in order to organize the First Language Congress in Istanbul already in late September 1932.¹¹⁰ Its aim was "to bring out the genuine beauty and richness of the Turkish language and to elevate it to the high rank it deserves among world languages".¹¹¹ Behind this goal lay the fantastic notion that since the Turks of Central Asia had taken along their civilization to other parts of the world, so they must have taken along also their language. From here it was just a short step to the inference that Turkish must lie at the bottom of most languages of the world. In order to promote further research on this question, the 'Faculty for Languages, History and Geography' was established in 1936, which was to form the core of the University of Ankara. Simultaneously, the national language, now considered to be one of the oldest and most important languages of the world, began to

Deutsche Gelehrte, Politiker und Künstler in der Emigration 1933-1953 (Frankfurt am Main, 1980); Ernst E. Hirsch, *Aus des Kaisers Zeiten durch die Weimarer Republik in das Land Atatürks* (Munich, 1982).

¹⁰⁸ Başgöz and Wilson, *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940*, p. 167.

¹⁰⁹ Recep Peker, *İnkılâp dersleri notları* (Notes of the Lectures on the Revolution), (Ankara, 1935-1936); Hakkı Uyar, "Türk İhtilâli'nin Düsturları ve Mahmut Esat Bozkurt" (The Principles of the Turkish Revolution and Mahmut Esat Bozkurt), *Tarih ve Toplum* 99 (March 1992), pp. 18-24; 100 (April 1992), pp. 39-46.18-19; Hakkı Uyar, "Türk Devrimi'ni teorileştirme çabaları: Mahmut Esat Bozkurt örneği" (Efforts at Theorizing the Turkish Revolution: The Example of Mahmut Esat Bozkurt), *Tarih ve Toplum* 119 (November 1993), pp. 9-15; 120 (December 1993), pp. 9-16.

¹¹⁰ Jacob M. Landau, "The First Turkish Language Congress", in Joshua A. Fishman (ed.), *The Earliest Stage of Language Planning. The 'First Congress' Phenomenon* (Berlin-New York, 1993), pp. 271-92.

¹¹¹ Heyd, *Language Reform in Modern Turkey*, pp. 25 f.

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be cleansed systematically of foreign - Arabic and Persian - influences and enriched by new Turkish words. The youth, which was learning only the Latin script, was now also cut off linguistically from Ottoman literature and could hardly communicate intellectually with the elder generations.¹¹²

But in an effort to win over ever larger segments of the population, the leadership was determined to exploit also the possibilities of modern adult education. Mustafa Kemal thought on establishing community centres "which will bring the people of this nation closer together and will help raise the standards of the youth." The buildings should have each a hall large enough to accommodate about 1500 persons, plus providing other installations necessary for general education, such as cinemas, libraries, theatres, etc. From February 1932 on the institution called 'People's House' (*Halk Evi*) became a reality, at first in urban centres only, but after 1939, as 'People's Rooms' (*Halk Odalari*), also in smaller towns. Their activities covered from art, music, theatre, regional historical studies to sports practically every cultural field. In a way they represented the continuation of the former Turkish Hearths movement, but now in a more popular and more politicized vein. Conceived as community centres with the function of political socialization, the Houses were controlled firmly by the RPP.¹¹³ The buildings flew the banner of the Republican People's Party. The façades bore patriotic slogans or mottoes; at the entrance of one house in Eastern Anatolia, for example, one could read "Happy Indeed Is the Turk".¹¹⁴

In his opening speech of the Fourth Congress of the RPP in 1935, Mustafa Kemal praised the Party's embracing the nation through the activities of

¹¹² Heyd, *Language Reform in Modern Turkey*, p. 109. See also Jean Deny, "La réforme actuelle de la langue turque", *En Terre d'Islam* 10 (1935), pp. 223-47; Ettero Rossi, "La riforma linguistica in Turchia", in: *Oriente Moderno* 15 (1935), pp. 45-57;

¹¹³ Başgöz and Wilson, *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940*, pp. 149-58; Kemal H. Karpat, "The People's Houses in Turkey. Establishment and Growth", *Middle East Journal* 17 (1963), pp. 55-67; *ibid.*, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey 1931-1951", *Die Welt des Islams* 15 (1974), pp. 69-84. See also A. A. Kolešnikov, *Narodnye doma v obščestvenno-političeskoj i kul'turnoj ožizni Tureckoj respubliki* (The People's Houses in the Sociopolitical and Cultural Life of the Turkish Republic) (Moscow, 1984).

¹¹⁴ Ehud Hourminer, "The People's Houses in Turkey", *Asian and African Studies* 1 (1965), pp. 81-121, here p. 86.

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the People's Houses as a "social and cultural revolution".¹¹⁵ This assertion was accurate at least in respect to the cultural revolution, and laicism was perhaps the most important dimension of that development. In the early years of the Republic many had thought that Mustafa Kemal intended to have a reformation of Islam in Turkey. In 1928 a special commission was set up within the Theological Department of the University of Istanbul to prepare a proposal to that end.¹¹⁶ But after 1928 a new relation of the state to religion became manifest:

Islam became the Kemalists' favourite target of contempt. They thought it gloomy, hostile to life, and altogether absurd. The Kemalists regarded formal Islam - and any other religion, for that matter - as superfluous and some of them moved gradually from their initial fragile belief to a belligerent disbelief. In short, they were critical but not constructive.¹¹⁷

The Republic had certainly no intention to reform and thus rejuvenate the religion; some Kemalists even justified their dislike of democracy under the pretext that in Turkey it would mean the rule of hedges and reactionaries.¹¹⁸ Soon the regime was not content with formal secularization in the sense of separating the affairs of state from those of religion. It overtly began to attack religion in a way that from the perspective of the Muslims was blasphemy.¹¹⁹

Indeed, the excessive hero cult and the mythicizing of national symbols during the Thirties have been interpreted by some authors as attempts to

¹¹⁵ See Taha Parla, *Türkiye'de siyasal kültürün resmî kaynakları*, Vol. 2: *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri* (Official Sources of Political Culture in Turkey, II: Atatürk's Speeches and Statements) (Istanbul, 1991), p. 118.

¹¹⁶ On Mustafa Kemal's attempts of reform in religion see Osman Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi* (The History of Turkish Education) (Istanbul, new ed., 1977), Vol. 5, pp. 1930-70.

¹¹⁷ Akural, *Ziya Gökalp: The Influence of His Thought on Kemalist Reforms*, p. 102.

¹¹⁸ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 224 f.

¹¹⁹ It seems that in matters of belief Mustafa Kemal was a naturalist and determinist. History textbooks of his period not only had a special chapter explaining the creation of the world according to Darwin, but God's revelation to Muhammed, a central event in Islam, too, was described in terms of human nature and psychology. See Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi*, Vol. V, pp. 1994-99.

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offer alternatives to Islam.¹²⁰ The following definition of fatherland in the 1935 program of the RPP seems to corroborate this view: "The Fatherland is the sacred country within our present political boundaries, where the Turkish Nation lives with its ancient and illustrious history, and with its past glories still in the depths of its soil."¹²¹ After the Fourth Congress of the RPP (1935), the ideology of the Party began to be propounded even in quasi-religious terms, as when the Secretary-General Recep Peker expressed the opinion that Kemalism was a cultural and religious communion.¹²² Another member of the Party openly referred to it as religion in a book he published.¹²³

The 'Great Leader' Mustafa Kemal himself was soon attributed qualities which approximated divineness. Thus in theatre performances in People's Houses he was portrayed virtually as a deity. In a country like Turkey which had a high illiteracy rate and where people were not always able to differentiate between the reality of life and the reality of art, the theatre was recognized by the Party as an important means of propaganda.¹²⁴ The plays to be performed in the People's Houses were specially ordered by the Ministry of the Interior from nationalist playwrights. Mustafa Kemal often interfered personally and modified the manuscripts to his own liking. Out of 50 plays produced in 1933, 38 dealt with the Turkish Revolution. In them the ideology of the Republic was being inculcated in the audience explicitly as a new religion. For example, Çankaya, Mustafa Kemal's residence near Ankara, was often referred to as the Kaaba of Turkey. Other striking parallelisms were Allah = Mustafa Kemal, Koran = the 'Speech', Islam = Positivism.

Certainly, rural Turkey lay out of the reach of such cultural and political mobilization. The educational system was not yet developed enough to carry

¹²⁰ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 214 f.

¹²¹ Suna Kili, *Kemalism* (Istanbul, 1969), p. 77. For the full text of the program see CHP (Republikanische Volkspartei), *Programm (genehmigt vom IV. Großen Parteitag)* (Ankara, Mai 1935), and Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, Appendix E.

¹²² Jäschke, *Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-1941*, p. 8.

¹²³ Mehmet Şeref Aykut, *Kamâlizm* (Istanbul, 1936), pp. 3, 32. Quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 327.

¹²⁴ For this and the following see Levent Boyacıoğlu, "Tek Parti Döneminde İnkılâp Temsilleri" (The Representation of the Revolution on the Stage during the Single Party Period), *Tarih ve Toplum* 102 (June 1992), pp. 30-36; 103 (July 1992), pp. 30-35; 104 (August 1992), pp. 26-33; 105 (September 1992), pp. 13-24.

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the Kemalist ideas into the villages.¹²⁵ By 1936 only a fourth of the peasant children visited primary school. In order to accelerate the process of alphabetization and enlightenment of the rural population, an original approach, better suited to Turkish reality, was taken: the project of 'Village Institutes' (*Köy Enstitüleri*). Young women and men from rural areas should attend for five years the new teachers' training colleges, which were to be erected in rural areas and would be largely self-sufficient. Apart from conveying pedagogical knowledge, training in crafts and teaching agricultural methods should occupy a prominent place in the curriculum. From the graduates one expected that as village teachers they would be able to construct their own school buildings with the help of the peasants, but without any state help. Furthermore, thanks to their knowledge of crafts, farming and hygiene, they should serve as advisors to the rural population in all facets of everyday life.¹²⁶

The youth, urban or rural, was a major focus of attention in the Kemalist endeavour. It was to the youth that Mustafa Kemal entrusted the future of the Republic in the concluding passage of his speech of 1927, where he assigned to it the duty of preserving and defending the Turkish Republic forever. The strength it would need for this was inherent 'in the noble blood' which flowed in its veins.¹²⁷ The moral edification and physical induration of the youth as well as the health of future generations remained a constant concern of the leadership. For example, only couples who passed a special blood test were allowed to marry – a regulation that made race-conscious people in other

¹²⁵ Compare Hakkı Uyar and Türkan Çetin, "Tek Parti Yönetimi'nde köylüye yönelik propaganda: Yurt Gazetesi" (Propaganda Aiming at Peasantry during the Single-Party Rule: The Newspaper "Yurt"), *Toplumsal Tarih* 1 (January 1994), pp. 51-58.

¹²⁶ On village institutes see İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Eğitim yolu ile canlandırılacak köy* (Village Revival through Education) (Istanbul, 2nd ed., 1947); Fay Kirby Berkes, *The Village Institute Movement of Turkey: An Educational Mobilization for Social Change*, PhD thesis, Columbia University, 1960; Regine Erichsen, "Die Dorfinstitute in ausländischen Schriften. Die Rezeption des türkischen Landentwicklungsmodells - Ein Literaturbericht", *Zeitschrift für Türkeistudien* 1990/2, pp. 295-308. On peasantism of the RPP in this period see Füsün Üstel, "Tek Parti Döneminde Köycülük ideolojisi ya da Nusret Kemal Köymen" (The Ideology of Peasantism during the Single Party Period or Nusret Kemal Köymen), *Tarih ve Toplum* 74 (February 1990), pp. 47-51.

¹²⁷ *Nutuk*, Vol. II, p. 898.

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countries envious.¹²⁸ The Physical Education Act of 1937 and additional decrees in 1938 made sports obligatory for men from 12 to 45 years of age and for women from 12 to 30, and young men between 18 and 20 were urged to join youth clubs.¹²⁹

In return, the youth displayed a remarkable conformity in fulfilling official requirements. After 1928, it participated in various campaigns to enforce the usage of Turkish in public, the expulsion of non-Turk employees from state service or the union of the sandjak Alexandrette (under French mandate) with the Turkish fatherland.¹³⁰ In 1934 Jewish citizens in towns of Thrace were harassed, their homes broken into, their stores plundered, with the result that many had to flee for their lives.¹³¹ It was occurrences of this kind that prompted a German sympathizer to observe already in 1933 that in Turkey "the idea of race" was much more strongly developed than in any other country and that "the universal significance of the struggle of the Turkish people lay in the survival of its race." Although the Boy Scouts of Mustafa Kemal were perhaps not trained as thoroughly as the *Hitlerjugend* in Germany or the *Ballila* and *Avanguardisti* in Italy, they still represented a promising start towards a bright future, and the Kemalist project in this field was in no way an imitation of European models, but could look back on its own traditions.¹³²

As the Thirties progressed, the control of all aspects of the political, economic and cultural life of the nation by Mustafa Kemal and his political

¹²⁸ See Manfred Zapp, "Türkischer Nationalsozialismus", *Preussische Jahrbücher* 233 (July-September 1933), p. 110.

¹²⁹ Jäschke, *Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-1941*, p. 59.

¹³⁰ Tefvik Çavdar, "Cumhuriyet döneminde gençlik" (Youth during the Republic), in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 3 (Istanbul, 1983), pp. 801-12, here pp. 808-09. See also Gotthard Jäschke, *Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-1941. Geschichtskalender mit Personen- und Sachregister* (Leipzig, 1943), p. 75.

¹³¹ See Halûk Karabatak, "1934 Trakya olayları ve Yahudiler" (The Events of 1934 in Thrace and the Jews), *Tarih ve Toplum* 146 (February 1996), pp. 4-16, and Avner Levi, "1934 Trakya Yahudi olayları ve alınamayan ders" (The Jewish Events of 1934 in Thrace and the Lesson that Was Not Learnt), *Tarih ve Toplum* 151 (July 1996), pp. 10-17.

¹³² Zapp, "Türkischer Nationalsozialismus", pp. 105, 110 f. On the Society of Turkish Strength established in 1913 and similar efforts see Zafer Toprak, "İttihat ve Terakki'nin paramiliter gençlik örgütleri" (The Paramilitary Youth Organizations of the Union and Progress), *Bogaziçi Üniversitesi Dergisi, Beşeri Bilimler* 7 (1979), pp. 95-113.

instrument, the RPP, became more rigid. In 1936 Prime Minister İnönü announced in his capacity as the Vice-Chairman of the RPP the decision that the Party and the Government would co-operate henceforth still closer, even aiming at unity of action. The Minister of the Interior would function as Secretary-General of the Party and the governors would assume the chairmanships of the RPP branches in the provinces.¹³³ In February 1937 the 'Six Principles' of the Party were integrated into the Constitution of the Republic in order to perpetuate the nationalist, populist, étatist, and laiciest characteristics of the state, and from August 1938 on all public buildings in the country fly the six-arrowed flag of the RPP.¹³⁴ When Mustafa Kemal died on November 10, 1938, an extraordinary Congress of the RPP elevated İsmet İnönü to his predecessor's position as the new permanent chairman of the Party; as President of the Republic İnönü was also *Millî Şef*, that is the 'National Leader', Mustafa Kemal being referred to now as the 'Eternal Leader' (*Ebedî Şef*).¹³⁵

Kemalism versus Fascism

The establishment of single-party rule in Turkey during the inter-war period was of considerable interest to contemporary orientalists and political scientists. Mihail Manoilescu, author of some remarkable books on the mastering of the world economic crisis of the Thirties, counted Mustafa Kemal's RPP along with Mussolini's *Partito Nazionale Fascista*, Salazar's *União Nacional* and Hitler's *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* as a particularly successful example of single-party rule in Europe.¹³⁶ Italian authors, whose

¹³³ Beşikçi, *Cumhuriyet Halk Firkası'nın tüzüğü*, p. 146.

¹³⁴ Jäschke, *Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-1941*, p. 62.

¹³⁵ Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef dönemi (1938-1945). Dönemin iç ve dış politikası üzerine bir araştırma* (The Period of the National Leader in Turkey. An Study on the Internal and External Policy of the Period), (Ankara, 1986).

¹³⁶ Mihail Manoilescu, *Théorie du protectionnisme et de l'échange international* (Paris, 1929); *ibid.*, *Le Siècle du corporatisme* (Paris, 1934); *ibid.*, *Le Parti unique* (Paris, 1936). On Manoilescu's theories regarding single-party rule see Andrew C. Janos, "The One-Party State and Social Mobilization: East Europe between the Wars", in Samuel P. Huntington and Clement H. Moore (eds.), *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society. The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems* (New York, 1970), pp. 213 f.; Philippe C. Schmitter, "Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the Political Consequences of Delayed-Depended Development on the Periphery of Western Europe", in Kenneth Jowitt (ed.), *Social Change in Ro-*

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country had only recently been pursuing imperialistic goals in Asia Minor,¹³⁷ also observed the developments in Turkey closely and soon came to believe that the emerging Kemalist system was borrowing heavily from Italian fascism.¹³⁸

Indeed, Turkish nationalists were favourably impressed by Mussolini's early accomplishments. Hamdullah Suphi, the chairman of the Turkish Hearths since 1912, praised Fascism in 1930 as a patriotic movement pursuing economic prosperity and harmony in socio-political life and added that he saw in Fascist nationalism "both our past and future".¹³⁹ The Italian model was discussed again in connection with the establishment of the People's Houses, but Kemalists played the issue down by pointing to the Soviet Union's mass education organization as their real inspiration.¹⁴⁰ In the economic field, the para-governmental nature of the Turkish Association for National Economy and Parsimony betrayed Italian influence, especially when one considers that at the 1930 Industrial Congress its members recommended setting up Italian *corporazioni*.¹⁴¹ The influential politician and journalist Falih Rifki [Atay] suggested in 1931 the adoption of communist and fascist party structures. The following year, after he had accompanied Prime Minister İnönü to the Soviet Union and to Italy, he proposed taking over

mania, 1860-1940 (Berkeley, 1978), pp. 117-139; Stefan Welzk, *Nationalkapitalismus versus Weltmarktintegration? Rumänien 1830-1944* (Saarbrücken, 1982), pp. 138 ff.

¹³⁷ Marta Petricioli, *L'Italia in Asia Minore. Equilibrio mediterraneo e ambizioni imperialiste alla vigilia della prima guerra mondiale* (Florence, 1983).

¹³⁸ In his "Il programma e il Regolamento del Partito Repubblicano del Popolo", *Oriente Moderno* 11 (1931), pp. 431-37, Ettore Rossi insinuated that the Turks imitated the Italian fascism. See Giacomo E. Carretto, "Polemiche fra kemalismo, fascismo, comunismo, negli anni '30", *Storia Contemporanea* 8 (March, 1977), No. 1, pp. 489-530, here p. 496. There is also a Turkish translation of Carretto's article under the title: "1930'larda Kemalizm - Faşizm - Komünizm üzerine polemikler", *Tarih ve Toplum* 17 (May 1985), pp. 56-60, and 18 (June 1985), pp. 62-72.

¹³⁹ *Türk Yurdu* (May 1930), pp. 9 f., quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, pp. 296 f., fn. 17.

¹⁴⁰ Başgöz and Wilson, *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940*, pp. 152-53.

¹⁴¹ See Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, p. 98.

communist methods with a view to disciplining the Turkish masses and corporatist fascist methods with a view to fostering the Turkish étatist economy.¹⁴²

But when Kemalists themselves became involved in ideological systematization, they felt the need to stress their differences from fascism. The intellectual movement around the monthly review *Kadro*, which appeared in Ankara from January 1932 until December 1934, played a significant part in this context. Şevket Süreyya [Aydemir], a one-time pan-Turkish who later turned Marxist and received an education in Moscow, published a pamphlet in Ankara in 1931 on the "Ideology of the Revolution". This met with the approval of Mustafa Kemal. On this basis Aydemir and his five associates (after conferring also with the Party Secretary-General) could launch the first issue of the new periodical *Kadro*.¹⁴³ The need for such a review at that particular point in time was explained in the first issue with the following words:

Turkey is involved in a process of profound transformation (*inkilâb*) ... We have experienced a revolution. However, revolution is not the object, but only the means of the transformation ... The will and the interests of that transformation are represented in the will of a small but conscious avantgarde, a small but progressive cadre [hence *Kadro*], which feels and implements the transformation.¹⁴⁴

The objective of the review was to accomplish a synthesis of the existing theoretical and intellectual components of the Turkish revolution into a cohe-

¹⁴² Falih Rifki (Atay) *Yeni Rusya ve Faşist Roma* (New Russia and Fascist Rom) (Ankara, 1931), p. 171; *ibid.*, *Moskova-Roma* (Ankara, 1932), p. 5; both quoted in Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 313, fn. 35.

¹⁴³ See Fikret Adanır, "Zur 'Etatismus'-Diskussion in der Türkei in der Weltwirtschaftskrise. Die Zeitschrift *Kadro* 1932-1934", in Linda Schatkowski Schilcher and Claus Scharf (eds.), *Der Nahe Osten in der Zwischenkriegszeit. Die Interdependenz von Politik, Wirtschaft und Ideologie* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 355-73. (Originally a paper submitted to a conference on "Southeastern Europe in the Field of Tension of the Great Powers 1919-1939" organized in December, 1979, by the Institut für Europäische Geschichte in Mainz.) See also İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin, "Türkiye'de bir aydın hareketi: Kadro" (A Movement of Turkish Intelligentsia: Kadro), *Toplum ve Bilim* 24 (1984), pp. 35-67; Haldun Gülalp, "Nationalism, Statism and the Turkish Revolution: an Early 'Dependency' Theory", *Review of Middle East Studies* 4 (1988), pp. 69-85.

¹⁴⁴ *Kadro* 1 (January 1932), p. 3.

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rent system of thought, and the interpretation the *Kadro* authors offered amounted to a theory of a 'Third Way' between capitalism and socialism. The order of the modern world was seen as characterized by two fundamental contradictions: the first between the classes in industrialized countries with a highly developed technology, the second between countries in which technology was concentrated and those which had lost their former industries but which wanted to develop them again according to modern conditions, that is, the colonies and semi-colonies, or to put it differently, the countries delivering raw materials and agrarian products.¹⁴⁵

The first contradiction could be overcome by class struggle, whereas the second only by wars of national liberation.¹⁴⁶ It was an illusion to believe that the class struggles in the industrialized world would resolve contradictions between the industrialized and the agrarian countries. Even the Soviet system, which was considered by contemporary Western scholarship as the anti-capitalist principle materialized, could only achieve a transformation of one contradiction into another as long as it, too, aimed at capital concentration in certain regions of the globe and thus depriving the non-developed countries of high technology. In these countries no class had control over so much technology or means of production as to necessitate a class struggle. If the national liberation movements would follow strategies of development suited to their objective situations and possibilities, class contradictions would never become socially and politically so dominant. Thus, in order to eliminate the national and economic dependence on the core areas and at the same time to prevent the rise of contradictions between the social interests within one's own country, the national liberation movements must strive for state control over high technology as well as the important sectors of the national economy.¹⁴⁷

It was evident that national liberation movements started with the Turkish War of Independence in 1919.¹⁴⁸ The Turkish development served as a

¹⁴⁵ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İnkilâp ve Kadro* (The Transformation and the Cadre) (Ankara, 2nd ed., 1968), p. 46.

¹⁴⁶ Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), "Millî kurtuluş hareketlerinin ana prensipleri" (The Main Principles of National Liberation Movements), *Kadro* 8 (August 1932), pp. 6-12. See also *idem*, *İnkilâp ve Kadro*, pp. 229-40.

¹⁴⁷ Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), "Millî kurtuluş hareketleri hakkında bizim tezimiz" (Our Thesis Regarding National Liberation Movements), *Kadro* 12 (December 1932), pp. 38-44.

¹⁴⁸ Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), *İnkilâp ve Kadro*, pp. 131-41.

model for the countries still unliberated.¹⁴⁹ All these countries formed a community of fate, regardless of differences in geography, race, language or other characteristics. China and India would soon follow the Turkish example.¹⁵⁰ The number of countries which would develop along anti-capitalistic and anti-imperialistic lines after the example of Turkey would thus increase steadily.

The transition from a colonial economy to a national one would be achieved – for the first time in history – in Turkey.¹⁵¹ The *Kadro* authors were convinced that the world economic crisis would not hinder this transition, on the contrary, it would facilitate it. A development policy, however, which aimed at capital accumulation in the 'classical' manner, that is, by way of free competition of individual capitalists in the framework of a liberal economy, was out of question for Turkey.¹⁵² As had been shown by the history of the original accumulation of capital in the West, such a development necessitated colonies or open markets. In any case, the West, which had a lead of 100 years, would certainly know how to prevent such an accumulation. Therefore, the state must consider it its duty to organize the accumulation of capital in the interest of the entire nation.¹⁵³

In face of the conditions in the world, first, economic autarky must be strived for, not as a final goal but rather as a transitional solution; in the future the national economies would, of course, participate in international trade as autonomous entities.¹⁵⁴ Secondly, development policies must absolutely give priority to industrialization. "For the terms of trade between the

¹⁴⁹ Vedat Nedim (Tör), "Müstemleke iktisadiyatından millet iktisadiyatına" (From Colonial Economy to National Economy), *Kadro* 1 (January 1932), pp. 8-11.

¹⁵⁰ Burhan Asaf (Belge), "Çin ve Hindistan" (China and India), *Kadro* 1 (January 1932), pp. 45-47; idem, "Asya" (Asia), *Kadro* 3 (March 1932), pp. 11-16.

¹⁵¹ Vedat Nedim (Tör), "Müstemleke iktisadiyatından millet iktisadiyatına II", *Kadro* 2 (February 1932), pp. 9-14.

¹⁵² Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), *İnkilâp ve Kadro*, pp. 211-19.

¹⁵³ İsmail Hüsrev (Tökin), "Garpte sermaye teraktümünde müstemlekelerin rolü" (The Role of Colonies in Accumulation of Capital in the West), *Kadro* 32 (August 1934), pp. 17-21.

¹⁵⁴ Vedat Nedim (Tör), "Değişen cihan münasebetleri içinde Türkiye" (Turkey in a Changing World), *Kadro* 5 (May 1932), pp. 13-18.

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agrarian and industrial countries are developing to the disadvantage of the former. Exactly here lies the motor which drives the mechanism of colonial exploitation."¹⁵⁵ But industrialization in a country, which was experiencing national liberation, required a planned economy.¹⁵⁶ The preparation of a national plan was a task for a cadre conscious of its historical mission, and not for a handful of European experts. (One should employ them as technical advisors only, one should never ask their opinion regarding development policies, for they were, as Europeans, bound by their education to their class and hardly able to understand the problems of a classless, non-European developing country.)¹⁵⁷ In numerous theoretical and pragmatic articles the authors of *Kadro* propagated etatism as the only system which was suitable to make Turkey, already politically independent, also economically self-sufficient. Even Prime Minister İsmet Pasha supported this view in an article he wrote for *Kadro*.¹⁵⁸

With their authoritarian concept of the state, in which an elite without any democratic legitimacy was to determine socio-economic and political development, the *Kadro* authors were bound to encounter criticism. The opponents of etatism pointed out that the *Kadro* movement had a concept of the nation entirely abstracted from its components, the individual human beings.¹⁵⁹ Reproaches were directed at the *Kadro* movement also for the resemblance of their etatism to the fascist state.¹⁶⁰ The *Kadro* authors were thus compelled to show how they differed from fascism. İsmail Hüsrev stressed the following: "The national liberation movement does not aspire to

¹⁵⁵ Vedat Nedim (Tör), "Nasıl ve niçin sanayileşmemiz lâzım?" (Why and How We Must Industrialize?), *Kadro* 6 (June 1932), pp. 14.

¹⁵⁶ Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), "Plan mefhumu hakkında" (On the Concept of Plan), *Kadro* 5 (May 1932), pp. 5-12.

¹⁵⁷ Vedat Nedim (Tör), "Siniflaşmamak ve iktisat siyaseti" (How to Evade the Formation of a Class Society and the Economic Policy), *Kadro* 11 (November 1932), p. 20.

¹⁵⁸ İsmet (İnönü), "Firkamızın devletçilik vasfı" (The Etatist Character of Our Party), *Kadro* 22 (October 1933), pp. 4-6.

¹⁵⁹ A polemic against the ideas of *Kadro* see Ahmet (Ağaoğlu), *Devlet ve fert* (The State and the Individual) (Istanbul, 1933), pp. 6-76.

¹⁶⁰ Parallels between the Kemalist regime and the Italian Fascism were stressed by Hans Kohn, "Ten Years of Turkish Republic", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (October 1933), pp. 141-55.

individualism of class, but to national integrity ... Fascism by contrast consists of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through the fascist party."¹⁶¹ Şevket Süreyya looked at the problem from a historical perspective and emphasized that Turkish nationalism was the product of a specific historical process fundamentally different from the one leading to the rise of fascism in Europe. For him fascism meant aggressive, colonialistic class capitalism, which on the one hand was directed against economic liberalism and political democracy internally (because they endangered capitalism itself); and on the other it was directed against liberal imperialism externally, because this imperialism had become unable to control national liberation movements in the colonies. The national liberation movements finally were a reaction to the colonialistic and imperialistic character of capitalism. Thus Turkish etatism could hardly be compared with the fascist state.¹⁶²

Fascism, understood as 'state-controlled imperialism', was repeatedly attacked in the editorial columns of *Kadro*. But the periodical actually only reflected the official policy of Republican Turkey. Although it was the first state to succeed in revising the system of Versailles (in the peace treaty of Lausanne), Turkey was since 1926 an anti-revisionist power in European politics. The Turkish government continued to try to modify the treaty system during the 1930's to their advantage, but restricted their efforts to diplomatic activity. (An example of this is the Convention of Montreux which permitted with the consent of all interested powers the remilitarization of the Straits.) Ankara was seriously perturbed by a fascist Italy that pursued an expansionist policy in the eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans. The Italian aggression in Abyssinia in 1935 was perhaps the decisive factor that brought

¹⁶¹ İsmail Hüsrev (Tökin), "Millî kurtuluş devletçiliği II" (The Etatism of National Liberation), *Kadro* 19 (Juli 1933), p. 31. In the view of Feroz Ahmad the anti-Italian stance of the *Kadro* anticipated the Kemalist opposition to Italian imperialism after 1934, see "Die Suche nach einer Ideologie in der kemalistischen Türkei 1919-1939", in Linda Schatkowski Schilcher and Claus Scharf (eds.), *Der Nahe Osten in der Zwischenkriegszeit 1919-1939. Die Interdependenz von Politik, Wirtschaft und Ideologie* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 341-354, here p. 353.

¹⁶² Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), "Beynelmülê fikir hareketleri arasında Türk nasyonalizmi III" (Turkish Nationalism amongst International Currents of Ideas), *Kadro* 21 (September 1933), pp. 7 f.

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about a reorientation in the foreign policy of the Kemalist regime. Turkish neutrality during the Second World War should be seen against this background.¹⁶³

Conclusion

The above analysis suggests that the Kemalist regime of the inter-war period had in many respects a parallel development to that of fascism elsewhere. Still the question, how fascist Kemalist Turkey was, can hardly be answered exhaustively within the limits of this paper. Mete Tunçay, whose work I have drawn upon extensively, points in this connection to difficulties of definition, arguing that the factors which brought about fascism were extremely complex. It was true that in the case of Turkey, too, one could distinguish fascist elements. But on the basis of which set of factors should one designate the Turkish one-party system as fascism? Tunçay warns therefore against a too simplistic comparison which is based on a selection of conveniently fitting elements. His own conclusion is that the specific compound which brings about fascism did not exist in Turkey during the inter-war period.¹⁶⁴ The crucial question is thus one of definition, how to determine the elements of that 'specific compound', also in face of the fact that there is apparently no all-encompassing and generally accepted theory of fascism.¹⁶⁵

Two different points of departure in fascist studies during the last decades seem to be especially relevant for this chapter: the conceptualization of fascism on the one hand as a prototype, on the other hand as an ideal-type.¹⁶⁶ The first mode sees Italy as the original model on which all the other cases were patterned. The history of Italian Fascism should therefore be the point of departure for every comparative study.¹⁶⁷ The second mode represents a

¹⁶³ Anthony R. De Luca, *Great Powers Rivalry at the Turkish Straits: the Montreux Convention and Conference of 1936* (Boulder, 1981); Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War. An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge, 1989).

¹⁶⁴ Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti*, p. 329.

¹⁶⁴ Wolfgang Wippermann, *Faschismustheorien. Zum Stand der gegenwärtigen Diskussion* (Darmstadt, 5th ed., 1989), p. 111.

¹⁶⁵ Edward R. Tannenbaum, *The Fascist Experience. Italian Society and Culture 1922-1945* (New-London, 1972), p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ Wippermann, *Faschismustheorien*, p. 112.

¹⁶⁷ "In a significant sense it can be said that contemporary radical revolutionary mass movements possessed of nationalist and developmental intentions, and animated by totalitarian aspi-

more universalistic approach. Fascism is seen not so much as a real-type phenomenon of a specific historical period but rather as a generic pattern with a potential of materialization in any modern state.¹⁶⁸ A recent comparison undertaken in this perspective between Italian Fascist and German Nazi movements, for example, has established that both regimes were "part of a generic fascist style of governing."¹⁶⁹ Obviously, the concept of generic fascism has primarily heuristic value. Roger Griffin has elaborated further in this direction, focusing on establishing a 'mythic core' at the bottom of generic fascism.¹⁷⁰ He believes to have found it in the "vision of the (perceived) crisis of the nation as betokening the birth-pangs of a new order. It crystallizes in the image of the national community, once purged and rejuvenated, rising phoenix-like from the ashes of a morally bankrupt state system and the decadent culture associated with it", and he sees at the core of this fascist mentality "the *idée fixe* of devoting, and, if necessary sacrificing, individual existence to the struggle against the forces of degeneration which had seemingly brought the nation low, and of helping relaunch it towards greatness and glory."¹⁷¹ The regime that results from such a struggle would be (a) anti-liberal, (b) anti-conservative, (c) tending to glorify certain epochs in nation's history, (d) inclined to charismatic leadership, (e) deifying such mythical concepts as the nation, the leader, the national identity, etc., and (f) idealizing homogeneity in the national community.¹⁷²

When approached from this angle, the conclusion to be drawn from the analysis in this chapter is that the political system in Turkey during the inter-war period had a strong fascist content, albeit differing in many respects from Italian Fascism. But a further implication of the analysis is that even a direct historical comparison – on the basis of the concept of fascism as a

rations, are variants of paradigmatic Fascism." A. James Gregor, *The Ideology of Fascism* (New York, 1969), p. 382. See also *idem*, *Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship* (Princeton, 1979).

¹⁶⁸ Alexander J. De Grand, *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The 'Fascist' Style of Rule* (London and New York, 1995), p. 82. For a criticism of the 'the reductionist fallacy' inherent to the ideal-type approach see Tannenbaum, *The Fascist Experience*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁹ Roger Griffin, "General Introduction", in R. Griffin (ed.) *Fascism* (Oxford-New York, 1995), p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 4-9.

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'real-type' – between the Fascist single-party rule in Italy and its Kemalist counterpart would reveal a much closer affinity between the two contemporary systems than has been suspected so far. But such a comparison would mean another study.