

POWER OR THE PEOPLE:
A COMPARISON OF THE THOUGHTS OF DOĐAN AVCIOĐLU AND İDRİS
KÜÇÜKÖMER REGARDING THE INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE OF THE 1960S

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by

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“Power or the People: A Comparison of the Thoughts of Dođan Avcıođlu and İdris Küçükömer Regarding the Intellectual Climate of the 1960s”, a thesis prepared by Muhammed Fazıl Baş in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History.

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An abstract of the Thesis of Muhammed Fazıl Bař for the degree of Master of Arts from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken March 2008.

Title: Power or the People: A Comparison of the Thoughts of Dođan Avcıođlu and İdris Küçükömer Regarding the Intellectual Climate of the 1960s.

In the thesis, the thoughts of Dođan Avcıođlu and İdris Küçükömer are compared by focusing mainly on their most prominent works of *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* (1968) by Avcıođlu, and *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama* (1969) by Küçükömer. The 1960s which was as a period between two military interventions in Turkish politics in 1960 and 1971 were a very fruitful era for leftist thought and movements. This decade started as a quest for orientation and ended with various political strategies to seize the power which could not be implemented. This thesis compares the thoughts of those two contradicting intellectuals in order to shed light on those intellectual and political activities which can and actually must be evaluated also as important parts of the history of Turkish intellectual life.

The thoughts of both intellectual are compared on three important issues which were conceived as critical for the discussion era in the 1960s. These three points are the discussions on the Ottoman social order, the evaluation of the Turkish modernization and the evaluation of the relationship between politics and people. The main aim throughout the analysis is to define the essential characteristics of the thoughts on those issues and to show at the end of the analysis that all of the characteristics on different issues are interrelated and actually determine each other, which can give us a holistic picture both of the differentiation between Avcıođlu and Küçükömer and on the general condition in the decade.

The main claim of the thesis is that: Dođan Avcıođlu tried to develop a power-centered analysis regarding the socio-political structure in Turkey, which left him with a momentary and temporary political strategy. However, İdris Küçükömer tried to develop a people- and society-centered analysis. Therefore, his approach had a forward-looking aspect which can be reconsidered even today.

Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Yüksek Lisans derecesi için
Muhammed Fazıl Baş tarafından Mart 2008'de teslim edilen tezin kısa özeti

Başlık: İktidar ya da Halk: 1960'ların Entelektüel İklimini Dikkate Alarak Doğan
Avcıoğlu ve İdris Küçükömer'in Düşüncelerinin Bir Karşılaştırması

Bu tezde, Doğan Avcıoğlu ve İdris Küçükömer'in düşünceleri temel olarak Avcıoğlu'nun *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* (1968) ve Küçükömer'in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma* (1969) adlı eserleri merkeze alınarak karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu iki eserin, söz konusu entelektüellerin en öne çıkan kitapları olduğu düşünülmektedir. 1960 ve 1971 yıllarındaki iki askeri müdahaleyle başlayıp biten 1960'lar, Türkiye'de sol düşünce ve hareketler için çok verimli bir dönem olmuştur. Bu dönem, bir yön arayışı olarak başlamış, uygulamaya konulamayan siyasi stratejilerle bitmiştir. Bu tezin amacı bu sebeple, söz konusu birbiriyle birçok konuda çelişen iki entelektüeli karşılaştırarak, Türk düşünce tarihinin de aslında önemli bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmesi gereken bu entelektüel ve siyasi faaliyetlere bir ışık tutmaktır.

Bu tezde, iki entelektüelin de düşünceleri 1960'ların tartışma ortamı açısından önemli olduğunu düşündüğümüz üç konu çevresinde karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu konular şu şekildedir: Osmanlı toplum düzeni üzerine tartışmalar, Türk modernleşmesinin değerlendirilmesi ve siyaset ile halk arasındaki ilişki üzerine düşünceler. Analiz boyunca temel amaç, bu iki entelektüelin bu konular çerçevesindeki düşüncelerinin ana hatlarını çıkarmak ve nihai olarak da bu konuların temel karakteristiklerinin aslında birbirine sıkı sıkıya bağlı olduğunu ve hatta birbirlerini belirlediğini gösterebilmektir. Bu bize hem Avcıoğlu ve Küçükömer'in düşüncelerine hem de döneme dair daha bütüncül bir tablo çıkarmıştır.

Bu tezin temel iddiası şu şekildedir: Doğan Avcıoğlu Türkiye'nin siyasi ve sosyal konumunu dikkate alarak güç merkezli bir analiz yapmış fakat bu Avcıoğlu'nu geçici ve anlık bir siyasi stratejiye ulaştırmıştır ancak. Küçükömer ise analizin merkezine halkı ve toplumu almıştır. Bu sebeple, Küçükömer'in yaklaşımının bugün dahi tekrar gözden geçirilebilecek geleceğe dönük tarafı vardır.

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To my father and mother

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Turkish Intellectuals and Power

The emergence of Turkish intellectuals can be conceived as a natural consequence of Turkish modernization. However, throughout the classical Ottoman age, it is not possible to talk about a separate group of intellectuals. In the classical era, the intellectuals were the *ulema*, the religious bureaucracy of the state, and the intellectuals who were educated for the bureaucracy from converted children (*devşirme*). All those people were subordinated by the *sultan*.¹ Actually, we do not talk about a western-like genesis of modern intellectuals for Turkey: On one hand, the emergence of Turkish intellectuals was bound by the unique conditions of the Ottoman Empire, like the power hierarchy and westernization; on the other hand, the modernization itself was the cause of the new characteristics of those intellectuals.

The emergence of the intellectuals did not challenge this aspect of the state structure, as they were actually a part of the bureaucratic cadre of the state. Even the conflicts between bureaucratic *pashas* and young intellectuals did not have a comprehensive ideological base like the later conflict between Namık Kemal and Ali Pasha, which was mainly a consequence of the struggle over the sharing of power. Nonetheless, from the other side, the acquaintance of those young intellectuals with European ideas helped them develop alternative strategies or policies like

¹ Mustafa Kemal Şan, “Türk Aydınım Soykütüğü Üzerine Değerlendirmeler” in *Entelektüel ve İktidar*, ed. Kenan Çağan (İstanbul: Hece Yayınları, 2005.), pp. 271-307.

constitutionalism for the Empire. But this was nothing but the Europeanization of the Ottoman bureaucrats. They still tried to construct links within the Ottoman state or get help from opposing *pashas* in the state, like Mustafa Fazıl Pasha.² These attempts were alternative power games to the existing situation. The new intellectuals faced the obstacle that they still had no contact with the people among whom they could find revolutionist ideas and movements.

We may perceive the 1908 movement as the first power seizure of the Turkish intellectuals or the Young Turks. This power seizure brought new questions on the agenda: What should be the main strategy on political and economic means to govern the state? They were inexperienced in state affairs and their ideas were still not matured enough to give consistent decisions. As Bernard Lewis suggests, their main motivation was to depose Abdülhamit and replace him with a mighty government which would be able to deal with the problems the Empire was facing.³ Therefore, after 1908, we encounter a catastrophic atmosphere in political and ideological discussions. The intellectuals seized the power but they simultaneously created their opposition thanks to the relatively free intellectual environment of the era.

The proclamation of the Republic of Turkey brought a new situation for the intellectuals, involving a collaboration of the bureaucratic cadre and intellectuals in the power. The joint structure of the state in the late Ottoman era between the sultan and the Young Turks altered into a monist structure of Kemalism in which the intellectuals became subordinate to the governing party. Some opponent intellectuals

² See Şerif Mardin, *Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesinin Doğuşu* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003.), pp. 37-60.

³ Bernard Lewis, *Modern Türkiye'nin Doğuşu* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2004.), p. 212.

of the previous periods, like Fuat Köprülü, decided to join the governing elites. Especially before the proclamation of the Republic, Köprülü was very suspicious and critical of the issues which were implemented after the proclamation, like the language issue. Though Köprülü also maintained his criticisms in the Republican era, he would often have to accept, become silent or compromise with the official thesis of the Kemalist cadre.⁴ Another example of opposing intellectuals was Mehmet Akif Ersoy. Ersoy left the country in 1926 and did not return until 1936 by accepting a so-called “voluntary exile” in Egypt though he was the author of the Turkish National Anthem.

Until the 1930s, different socio-political ideas were visible as long as they did not break their ties within the relationships of the state. The era had the atmosphere of a quest in which the strategy of modernization had to be decided. But with the 1930s, opposing views were mostly suppressed, which is apparent in the cases of Ahmet Hamdi Başar and the intellectuals of *Kadro* review, who tried to construct a theory for the Republican cadre.⁵ In the 1940s, after the death of Mustafa Kemal and the reinforcement of the governments under the İsmet İnönü presidency, the relationship between the state and intellectuals was in accordance with the conjuncture in the world and Turkey. The DTCF (Faculty of Language, History and Geography, University of Ankara) discharge in 1948, when Behice Boran, Muzaffer

⁴ See Halil Berktaş, *Cumhuriyet İdeolojisi ve Fuat Köprülü* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1983), p. 43, 58.

⁵ Süleyman Güngör, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin İlk Yıllarında Politikacı Aydın İlişkisi* (Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, 2001)

Şerif, Pertev Naili Boratav and Niyazi Berkes were discharged from the university because they were politically left-leaning, is a good example of the era.⁶

These oppressive policies against intellectuals and also the political conjuncture in the world and consequently in Turkey enabled the intellectuals to oppose openly the power of the state. Especially, the shift to the multi-party system opened a relatively autonomous era for intellectual opposition against the Kemalist regime. For example, Mehmet Ali Aybar, one of the most influential socialists in the 1960s, became a parliamentary candidate independently from the lists of the Democrat Party.⁷

But we should talk about a second development here for the emergence of opposition intellectuals. In the election on 14 May 1950, the Democrat Party seized power by winning the majority of the votes, which caused the bureaucracy together with the military officers and Kemalist intellectuals, interrelated during the previous governments of the RPP, to fall into disrepute. In this context, the Kemalist intellectuals began to oppose the Democrat Party government. Also, new evaluations of the westernization process appeared in which new alternatives came on the agenda. For example, the *Forum* review followed a Kemalist-right politics benefiting from American democratic values, especially between 1954 and 1958.⁸ Second, the rise of decolonization movements and Arabic socialism, which was actually a part of

⁶ Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Türk Düşünce Dünyasında Yol İzleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), p. 74.

⁷ Barış Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002.), pp. 90-103.

⁸ Yücel Bulut, “Soğuk Savaş Atmosferinde DP’ye Muhalif Bir Dergi: *Forum*”, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, no. 3 (2004), pp. 527-550.

the nationalism and independence movements,⁹ influenced some of the Turkish intellectuals, who started to think of a nationalist westernization understanding based on socialism as a response to the Democrat Party which was accused by the opponent intellectuals of being pro-American. Especially towards the end of the 1950s, the Kemalist protests against the oppressing policies of the Democrat Party rose as a front composed of intellectuals (mainly academics), students, and civil and military officers.

Actually, we have to make a differentiation between the attitudes of intellectuals during the single and multi-party era. During the multi-party era, the power center of the single-party era which the Kemalist intellectuals were depending on dissolved itself with the power seizure of the Democrat Party. This development seemed, according to Sabri Ülgener's description of intellectual's attitudes during the shift from a monopolistic system to a multipolistic one. Ülgener writes that,

[w]ith democracy, the intellectual is after the *collective patronizer* (public opinion, vast masses of audience, reader and spectator) whose borders are ambiguous. We face with an ultimately different kind of intellectual who run at any moment out of breath after the masses in order to not lose their affinity.¹⁰

However, we can not say that the case in the 1950s was exactly what Ülgener claims. The intellectuals lost the power center or "disjunctive patronizer" (*münferit velinimet*), which was the RPP government. However, rather than try to incline towards the public opinion, they tried to create an alternative power center to the

⁹ Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1966), p. 6.

¹⁰ Sabri Ülgener, *Zihniyet, Aydınlar ve İzm'ler* (İstanbul: Derin Yayınları, 2006), pp. 114-115. "Aydın, demokrasi ile beraber sınırları belli olmayan kollektif velinimetin (halk efkârı, geniş seyirci, okuyucu ve dinleyici kütlesi) peşindedir. İlgisini kaybetmemek için kütlenin nefes nefese her an peşinden koşan apayrı bir aydın çeşidi ile karşı karşıyayız."

“collective patronizer”. This power center, which was supposed to act voluntarily (often legitimated by students as a response to “The Allocution to the Youth” of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1927) would be “the vital forces” (*zinde güçler*) composed of intellectuals, students, civil and military officers. This fact, as a tension between the two power centers, the vital forces and the DP government backed by the common people, would also constitute the main points of conflict between Doğan Avcıoğlu and İdris Küçükömer in the late 1960s.

Doğan Avcıoğlu and İdris Küçükömer

These developments in the late 1950s prepared an appropriate climate for the rise of a leftist thought and politics after the 1960 coup d’etat. Both Doğan Avcıoğlu and İdris Küçükömer can be evaluated as the followers of this intellectual and leftist protest. They both, like most of the leftist intellectuals did if not all, encouraged the National Unity Committee (*Milli Birlik Komitesi*), the governing group of people composed of military officers after the 1960 coup d’etat, to further its “progressive” intervention in Turkish politics by implementing new social adjustments. But the steps of the NUC were a disappointing for the leftist intellectuals because the military cadre governing the country after the coup d’etat created a status quo by which, the intellectuals asserted, Turkey could not maintain its developmentalism.

This disappointment had different responses in Avcıoğlu’s and Küçükömer’s thoughts in the second half of the 1960s. Avcıoğlu left his expectations about the parliamentarist Turkish politics and tried to construct a front composed of the “vital forces” to make a nationalist-socialist revolution. On the other hand, Küçükömer revised his analysis of Turkish society and shifted from a juntaist politics to a more parliamentarist socialism. Their works, *The Order of Turkey* (Türkiye’nin Düzeni)

by Doğan Avcıoğlu and *The Alienation of the Order: Westernization* (Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma) by Küçükömer, the former published in 1968 and the latter in 1969, can be perceived as the crystallization of their analysis as a basis for political strategy.

In the following chapters, the above-mentioned differentiation between Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer will be clarified by mainly focusing on their best-known books published in 1968 and 1969. By focusing on their books, the intellectual atmosphere of the 1960s will also be examined. Especially in the 1960s, the discussions and literature on socialism had a vast area. Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer can be perceived also as part of this atmosphere and leftist-socialist group of intellectuals. But, if we do not conceive the socialist tendencies in the 1960s as a part of the historical Turkish intellectual life, the danger of isolationing these two intellectuals in a certain conjuncture may arise. Therefore, the main aim will be to evaluate two so-called leftist intellectuals as two Turkish intellectuals, as a part of the Turkish intellectual life by which Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer were influenced to which they contributed.

Content of the Thesis

In this thesis, the above mentioned two works of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer will be analyzed regarding the leftist intellectual climate of the 1960s. These two works are primarily studied for two reasons: First, the intellectual standpoint of intellectuals in the 1960s changed from the beginning of the era, which can be indicated by the 1960 coup d'état on May 27, to the end of the decade, which is referred to as the 1971 military intervention on March 12. The early 1960s were the years of a quest for a

direction as was visible in the name of the primary review of those years, *Yön*. Nonetheless, towards the end of the decade, the ideas of the intellectuals seem to have to be crystallized in certain decisions in their thoughts regarding the political and social developments. So, the intellectuals of the 1960s also published their most prominent works. *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* by Avcıoğlu and *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama* by Küçükömer were two of those most prominent works. Second, later works of both intellectuals have been excluded from the thesis mainly, though they were also taken into consideration in their general lines. The thesis examines the thoughts of both Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer within the context of the intellectual climate of the 1960s. The 1972 military intervention actually is conceived to have played the role of a breaking point for a differentiation between 1960s and 1970s, making such an exclusion necessary.

My main is as follows: First, by trying to clarify their differences on politics, I examine their places in the Turkish thought world, especially giving special attention to the relationship between intellectuals, power and the people. I hope the arguments on this point will offer some clues on the function of Turkish politics, even referring to recent developments in Turkey. Second, I will try to give some attention to their place in the leftist intellectual climate of the 1960s in order to see their responses to the daily developments in the leftist political movement, intellectual discussions and daily politics.

Except for the introduction, the thesis consists of four chapters and one conclusion. The analysis is based on two main aspects of the thoughts of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer: Their historical perspectives and their evaluations of the relationship between politics and the people.

The first two chapters will deal with the historical perspectives of the intellectuals. In the second chapter, their approach to the discussions on the Ottoman social order will be analyzed. The discussions on the Ottoman social order actually appeared on the base of the Marxist methodology and conceptualizations. Thus, the relationship between their analyses and Marxist methodology regarding that socialist influence on the intellectuals in the era will be investigated, too.

In the third chapter, the historical perspectives of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer on the Turkish modernization or westernization will be discussed. By evaluating the experience of the westernization attempts in Turkey and the role of the intellectuals in the discussions about the issue, the similarities and differences between the previous analyses and the analyses of Küçükömer and Avcıoğlu will be shown.

In the fourth chapter, the main focus is the relationship between politics and the people. The thoughts of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer on social stratification and its effects on the experience of the Turkish democracy after 1945 will be investigated. Also, their responses to daily changes in Turkish politics and the effects of those changes on their analyses will be evaluated, too.

The fifth chapter can be evaluated as an appendix chapter for both of the discussions dealt within the previous chapters and also for the thoughts of Küçükömer. It focuses primarily on the third congress of Worker's Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*) in 1968, which Küçükömer attended. The discussions before and during the congress are important to show the general atmosphere the Turkish leftist intellectuals and politicians experienced after 1965. Also, the discussions during the congress may show us the bases of Küçükömer's thought, introduced in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*.

In the conclusion chapter, the interrelationship between all their analyses in the discussions on the Ottoman social order, on the history of westernization, and on the relationship between politics and the people will be discussed. The differentiation between Avcioğlu and Küçükömer will be clarified based on their places in the Turkish intellectual world and the leftist intellectual climate of the 1960s.

CHAPTER TWO

BETWEEN PRAGMATISM AND SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS: DISCUSSIONS ON THE OTTOMAN SOCIAL ORDER

This chapter looks at evaluations of Doğan Avcıoğlu and İdris Küçükömer on the discussions on the Ottoman social order in the 1960s by giving special attention to their works, *The Order of Turkey* and *The Alienation of the Order: Westernization*. The discussions on the Ottoman social order consisted of approaches relating to the pre-modern mode of production in Turkey. The standpoints the intellectuals took determined their later evaluations on political strategies for the development of Turkey. The main aim here will be to show the relationship between their methodological attentions and their work. At this point, I will try to clarify their relationship with Marxism on the methodological level and to show that methodological differences let them to different strategic outcomes in politics. Also the relationship between their work and the discussions in the 1960s will be explored, in order to clarify the interdependence of their scientific standpoints with the political developments of the period. Actually, these discussions were a direct response to the political atmosphere of the 1960s. The discussions were the basis on which a political strategy would be constructed. Therefore, these discussions have also a discursive aspect on certain points which not only analytically but politically had an affect on the discussions in the 1960s.

The historical perspectives of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer will be differentiated according to political pragmatism (Avcıoğlu) and loyalty to scientific analysis (Küçükömer) in which the political pragmatism would mean a concession from scientific analysis.

The Ottoman Social Order

The question of why Turkish intellectuals inclined to deal with history and especially with the Ottoman social order is an important question. There are some factors depending on the conjuncture of the 1950s and 1960s. Actually, if we focus on the academic environment, we will see that the inclination in sociological history was a response to the structuralist-functionalist formation of previous years. Structuralist-functionalism and behavioral sociology appeared in the 1940s to evaluate Turkish society on its social dynamics based on area studies. But, with the 1960s, intellectuals from all academic fields saw the incompetence of this approach in social sciences; so, they felt the necessity to do historical studies on Turkish history rather than limiting themselves with area studies.¹¹

This development in Turkish intellectual life, however, can be perceived also as a natural evolution of the discussions among intellectuals, again closely related to the historical changes in the country. Baykan Sezer writes that the discussions on Turkish social history constitute a second period in Republican history. The first period included discussions on establishing newly founded western institutions like secularism or nationalism, but in the second period,

¹¹ Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, “1960’larda Türk Sosyologlarının Tarihe İlgi Duyma Nedenleri Üzerine”, in *Türk Sosyoloji Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar* (İstanbul: Birey Yayınları, 2002), p. 304.

“[t]he primary aim was now to define and qualify Turkish society with her main outline and inclinations. The beginning of the new period can be perceived as the consequence of natural evolution of the Turkish thought. The required accumulation which will enable us to evaluate the Turkish society in its totality is materialized.”¹²

However, Sezer adds in a footnote to this paragraph that this subject-change in intellectual life was mostly dependent on external resources rather than being only motivated by internal developments in Turkish society. Therefore, especially for the discussions on the Ottoman social order, the above-mentioned emphasis on external resources first has to be understood.

As Kurtuluş Kayalı suggests, the late Ottoman intellectuals often made historical-sociological evaluations, especially regarding the framework drawn by Ibn Khaldun.¹³ One of the most important articles published right before the proclamation of the Republic was Mehmet Ali Şevki’s “The Explanation of the Ottoman History with Social Science” (*Osmanlı Tarihinin İlmî İctima İle İzahı*).¹⁴ In the Republican era, we see also great efforts in historical research. Those studies were, on the one side, promoted by the Institution of the Turkish History to found a

¹² Baykan Sezer, “Türk Toplum Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 4, p. 46. “Artık ana amaç, Türk toplumunu ana çizgi ve eğilimleriyle tanımlamak ve niteleyebilmektir. Yeni dönemin başlaması bir yerde Türk düşüncesinin doğal gelişmesinin bir sonucu olarak kabul edilebilir. Türk toplumunu bütünü içinde ele almamıza izin verecek gerekli birikim gerçekleşmiştir.” We must remember that this article is dated 1978, which means that we cannot simply reflect it to the 1960s. But, it would be still true to say that the beginning of this development in Turkish intellectual life lies in the 1960s.

¹³ Kurtuluş Kayalı, “Türk Sosyologlarının Tarihe Yönelimleri Konusunda Bazı Düşünceler”, in *Düşüncenin Coğrafyası 1: Toplumdan Soyutlanmış Düşünce ve Direnç Potansiyeli* (Ankara: Deniz Kitabevi, 2005), pp. 99-100.

¹⁴ See Mehmet Ali Şevki, *Osmanlı Tarihinin Sosyal Bilimle Açıklanması* (İstanbul: Elif Yayınları, 1968), pp. 27-48. The mentioned article in this book is dated 1335, according to Rumi calendar, which may correspond to the end of the 1910s. Actually, the republication of this edition of Şevki’s articles is also important if we focus on the republication date which is 1968. The language of articles was updated in contemporary Turkish by Muzaffer Sencer, who was one of the prominent figures studying the Ottoman social order in the 1960s.

“romantic historical thesis” for the Republic, and on the other hand, they were also autonomous studies like the works of the intellectuals of *Kadro* review, which tried to deal with the underdevelopment issues, also benefiting from the works of foreign intellectuals, like Karl Marx and Werner Sombart, on capitalism. As suggested, these studies can be perceived as “a continuation of the historical perspectives” developed in the works of Yusuf Akçura. The 1960s were especially important in terms of the interest in the historical studies. Academics from different disciplines handled with the questions on Turkish history by remembering the studies in the 1930s; but, they were influenced mostly by discussions of Marxists outside of Turkey, especially by the discussions on the AMP in France in the early 1960s.¹⁵

If we focus on the discussions on the Asiatic Mode of Production, we will see that this conceptualization of Asiatic societies were on the agenda in the 1920s in the Soviet Russia, especially as a question “over the correct course of the Chinese revolution.” Nonetheless, in the following years, the conceptualization of the Asiatic mode of production disappeared with the ultimate power seizure of Stalin both in Soviet Russia and also Comintern. The AMP was clearly an obstruction for Comintern’s plans to decolonize colonized societies, because the AMP focused on geographical differences rather than production processes, which could therefore threaten Comintern’s authority over geographically different countries.¹⁶ But with the de-Stalinization process after his death and especially thanks to the work of *Oriental Despotism* (1957) of Karl Wittfogel, the discussion came back on the

¹⁵ Zafer Toprak (et al.) , “Tarih Yazımının Evrimi ve Türkiye’de Çağdaş Tarih” in *Sosyal Bilimler Öngörü Çalışması 2003-2023* (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2007), pp. 209-212.

¹⁶ Joshua A. Fogel, “The Debates Over the Asiatic Mode of Production in Soviet Russia, China and Japan,” *The American Historical Review*. V: 93 no. 1 (February 1988), pp. 56-79.

agenda in the 1960s.¹⁷ The evaluations on modernization theories or underdevelopment issues also played an important role in the reappearance of the issue, which actually brought the question of orientalism embedded in Marxist approaches also onto agenda.¹⁸

The Turkish intellectuals were unaware of these discussions on the Asiatic mode of production until the mid-1960s. This era actually corresponded to the reappearance of the discussion. Selahattin Hilav suggests three reasons why the Turkish intellectuals and especially socialist intellectuals were unaware of those discussions. First, there was a control on intellectual activities between 1920 and 1960. Second, the rise of Stalinism did not allow these discussions to come onto agenda in Turkey, as it was case also in other countries. Third, the Turkish socialists tried to test their limited theory with practice due to the control over political activities.¹⁹

However, with the 1960s, Turkish intellectuals began to investigate the possibilities of socio-historical studies which they encountered both in studies on the modernization, underdevelopment and modes of productions of those countries. As Kurtuluş Kayalı mentions, the acquaintance with these concepts occurred through discussions in France on those issues.²⁰ In France, especially towards the end of the

¹⁷ Suavi Aydın and Kerem Ünüvar, “ATÜT tartışmaları ve Sol” in *Sol*. Edited by Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), p. 1082.

¹⁸ Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (Cambridge: Harward University Press, 1983), pp. 32-36.

¹⁹ Selahattin Hilav, “Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı ve Türkiye Sosyalist Hareketi,” in *Asya Tipi Üretim Tarzı* (İstanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1970), p. 12.

²⁰ Kurtuluş Kayalı, “ATÜT Tartışmalarının Hafife Alınmasının Nedenleri ve Bu Tartışmaların Atlanan Ruhu,” in *Sol*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), p. 1089.

1960s, the Marxist Research and Studies Center (*Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Marxistes – CERM*) introduced several works on the issue, primarily focusing on African societies.²¹ But Two points must be mentioned here: First, that these studies appeared only by the late 1960s, their primary influences were more likely visible in the 1970s. Therefore, we may talk still about a lack of knowledge about the issue in the late 1960s, which was also asserted by Doğan Avcıoğlu. Second, the main motive behind these studies in countries other than Turkey was “underdevelopment”, whereas the Turkish intellectuals tried to establish a unique approach with those studies in which they tried emphasize the differentiating characteristics Turkey differentiating from western societies.²²

The intellectuals of the 1960s discussed the Ottoman social order based on mainly two approaches, two modes of productions stemming from the Marxist literature, Feudalism and the Asiatic Mode of Production (AMP).²³ The stances of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer also can be determined from this point of view. Although Avcıoğlu preferred to use the concept of pre-capitalism²⁴ for the description of the Ottoman social order, his approach can be evaluated as a part of the feudalist approach. In other words, his effort to define the Ottoman social order was oriented

²¹ Suavi Aydın and Kerem Ünüvar, “ATÜT tartışmaları ve Sol”, p. 1082. Also see Bill Freund, “The Modes of Production Debates in African Studies” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* v. 19 no. 1 (1985), p. 23-29.

²² Kurtuluş Kayalı, “Türk Sosyologlarının Tarihe Yönelimleri Konusunda Bazı Düşünceler,” pp. 102-103.

²³ Sezgin Kızılcıkelik, “Kemal Tahir’in Türk Sosyolojisindeki Yeri ve Önemi,” in *Kemal Tahir’in 30. Ölüm Yıldönümü Anısına* (İstanbul: Kızılcıkelik Yayınları, 2003), p. 111.; Baykan Sezer, “Türk Toplum Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar,” p. 49.

²⁴ Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınları, 1968) p. 17.

towards the limits of feudalism. The concept of pre-capitalism was actually based on the premises of feudalism.

On the other hand, İdris Küçükömer is known as one of the primary intellectuals who suggested the Asiatic Mode of Production.²⁵ He did not insist, however, on such a conceptualization in his work *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, on which we focus primarily. His preference for AMP can be drawn from his descriptions in this book. So, it can be claimed that he was oriented outwards of AMP although he tried to define a more AMP-like mode of production.

These discussions on the mode of production were deliberated on methodological and terminological bases. Therefore, this methodological atmosphere of the era has to be clarified to a certain extent. Although we mentioned the Marxist literature for the use of mode of productions, it is hard to claim that all the intellectuals of the period had a Marxist or even socialist ideological formation, especially if we remember that efforts were being made to harmonize Kemalism and socialism in the 1960s, not on an ideological basis but also on a strategic one. In other words, socialism was also dealt with and reevaluated by some intellectuals only because it was a key for the *Zeitgeist* of the era rather than indicating its ideological and consequently more Marxist aspects.

Primarily in the beginning of the decade, the main focus was on a quest for an ideological/strategic orientation which would be clarified toward the end of the decade: Some intellectuals ended more at a socialist but some other more on an anti-

²⁵ See Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a Türkiye'de Siyasal Fikir Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Birey yay, 2000), pp. 157-188; Asaf Savaş Akat, *İdris Küçükömer'in Mirası (Sanal Kitap) – Makaleler 1976-1987* (<http://akat.bilgi.edu.tr>), pp. 38-42.

imperialist (combined with Kemalist) standpoints.²⁶ However, regardless of their relationship with Marxism, the socialist climate of the decade let them to derive benefit from scientific Marxist literature. Their inclination is even clear in their attempt to describe the society in economic terms. As Kurtuluş Kayalı suggests, “the most prominent social sciences of the period were politics and economics thanks to the influence of the common intellectual tendency,”²⁷ which was in fact socialism.

The degree of connection of an intellectual to socialism in the 1960s could be observed most clearly in his/her attitude of historical perspective. It is because his/her main methodology for social phenomenon could be distinguished in his/her examinations of the Ottoman social order. Their historical perspectives determined their relationship to socialism, and (most commonly) their relationship to socialism determined their historical perspective. Or the impact of their political posture on methodology informed their understanding of socialism or on the possible role of socialism in Turkey.²⁸ Therefore, the historical perspectives of intellectuals may be conceived as the theoretical background of the political strategy that appeared in following years.

²⁶ The memoirs of Gün Zileli are good examples of the quest for ideology or political strategy in the 1960s. At the beginning of his political activism (when he was in his early twenties), Zileli was more socialism-oriented and tried to take responsibilities in the Workers Party of Turkey. But towards late 1960s, he somehow shifted to the National Democratic Revolution camp which became the opposition of the WPT and favored national revolution before socialist revolution by ignoring the socialist emphasis of their political orientation. It is very interesting to see how a young socialist came to a controversial place in a few years. See Gün Zileli, *Yarılma: 1954-1972* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları: 2004).

²⁷ Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Türk Düşünce Dünyasında Yol İzleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), p. 215. “(O) dönemde en öne çıkan sosyal bilim dalları yaygın olan düşünsel eğiliminin de etkisiyle siyaset bilimi ve iktisattır.”

²⁸ The question of which other factors determined their understanding of socialism as an ideology or a strategy still remains.

Therefore, the exploration of their methodological attitudes is a critical issue. Their determination on the mode of productions cannot lead us to a clear table of intellectual inclinations. We may claim that there was not an extra native suggestion on social order other than the insistence on feudalism and the AMP.²⁹ Therefore, it is important to deal more with their approaches to those modes of productions and their evaluations of them rather than to point out only their indications to a certain mode of production. Consequently, their political inclinations become essential.

A more political outlook can be achieved with the examination of methodologies. The usage of the same Marxist conceptual framework does not guarantee us the usage of the same methodology. Methodologies are determined actually by their political inclinations. Their political inclinations can be thought of as a key point to understand how those intellectuals tried to link the theoretical thought to the case of Turkish history. We must not forget that those intellectuals were more “Turkish” intellectuals rather than “socialist” or “Marxist”. Therefore, it is important to explore the relationship between the Turkish intellectual tradition to which these intellectuals were heirs more or less and their theoretical standpoints. The methodology gives us this relationship by indicating the emphasis of those intellectuals on certain points. Therefore, we may claim that the real distinction between Küçükömer and Avcıoğlu can be distinguished only by looking into their methodologies and political concerns that lie behind these methodologies.

²⁹ Kızılc¸elik, p. 110.

Marxism and Methodology

Historical materialism, as the Marxist methodological suggestion says, that a society is constructed on a basis of economic relationships which actually will be determined at the level of production. Therefore, a mode of production is formulated primarily according to the means, forces and relations of productions.³⁰ The transition from one to another mode of production stands out as a conflict between two forces, which are actually classes. So, history is in fact the history of class conflicts. Therefore, a mode of production in a western context can be crystallized by looking at the class structures bound to the production in that context. The modes of production from primitive communism to capitalism are all determined by Marx, according to these here basically defined descriptions of social development.

Another point on which deserves attention is the relationship between sub- and superstructural entities. Especially, the issue of ideology as a general title differs from the early days of Marxism to the later revisions of it. But we may claim that there is a common point on which we may conclude that there is a mutual relationship between sub- and superstructure but the final determinant is the economic level of society.³¹ So, an organic social development which can be embodied as a transition from one to another mode of production is experienced as a mutual relationship between economic and cultural relationships. A new mode of production appears with its new superstructure, but it emerges from the relationship between the relationship of preceding sub- and superstructure.

³⁰ Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst, *Pre-capitalist Modes of Productions* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975) p. 5.

³¹ G.A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 226.

Until now, a short and basic description of a western type of mode of production discussed. It is a western type because, as Marx suggested, Asiatic societies differed from western ones in the formation of economic and also political relationships. Therefore, a need to define the Asiatic Mode of Production appeared. As Baykan Sezer suggests, the AMP made no direct contribution to the western historical line, but it indirectly effected the formation of western societies.³² In other words, the AMP displays itself as a role prepared for those societies that appeared to be outside of the western historical paradigm. Without the AMP, the non-West could be evaluated either as parts of the Western world or as non-historic societies; a different historicity was not possible due to the Eurocentric standpoint. So, to claim that a non-western society has a feudal past would mean either to westernize the history of the non-western or to universalize the western. And the AMP would mean either to keep the non-western out of the western historical line or to non-historicize it. Attributing an alternative historicity was not on the agenda. Also Marx conceived the Asiatic societies as “static and unchanging”³³ and later this duality between societies together with the daily practice of Marxism in different societies as in the case of Russia, in 1917, inspired other Marxist intellectuals to develop different revolutionary strategies.³⁴ Therefore, the importance of different modes of production based on different historicity appears in revolutionary strategies for

³² Baykan Sezer cites that even the AMP was accepted as one of the stages in western historical line by emphasizing that Greek civilization was the cradle of the western progress line and the countries in the AMP played certain role in the construction of the Greek civilization. But we have to keep in mind that Sezer was in fact producing an answer to the discussions on feudalism and the AMP in the 1960s. So, we have to give attention that the AMP was actually accepted as a non-western mode of production. Baykan Sezer, “Türk Toplum Tarihi Üzerine Araştırmalar”, pp. 49-50.

³³ Hindess and Hirst, *Pre-capitalist Modes of Productions*, p. 201.

³⁴ For Antonio Gramsci’s evaluation of different strategies for eastern and western societies, see Perry Anderson, “The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci,” *The New Left Review*, no. 100 (November-December 1976), pp. 5-78.

Marxist intellectuals. All things considered together, it may be concluded that there arise many critical points in the differentiation between modes of production, but we have to take care of that on the level of methodology, “(t)he AMP must be considered within the Marxist theory of modes of production, within the field of concepts which define what a mode of production is and what possible mode of productions there are.”³⁵

A third point is that Marxism, as historical materialism itself, has a political and also philosophical background behind its scientific representation. Marx developed his evaluations on history with a critique of the historical and also philosophical perspective of Hegel, Feuerbach and also those of English economists like Adam Smith and Ricardo, on which he built a peculiar theory with its own historical and philosophical vision.³⁶ Here the main idea is that all the intellectuals who intend to benefit from Marxism as a science should also consider its politics and philosophy, because other political and philosophical postures may appear which may impose themselves on Marxism. Or the linkage between methodology and its locality may create some problematic areas which may constrain other intellectual endeavors.

All those points should be taken into consideration in the context of Turkey in the 1960s, an era that experienced a so-called socialist atmosphere that had many controversial points not only because of the lack of information about socialist

³⁵ Hindess and Hirst, *Pre-capitalist Modes of Productions*, p. 179.

³⁶ Ayhan Bıçak, *Tarih Düşüncesi IV: Tarih Metafizikleri* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2004), pp. 174-211.

literature and Turkish society, but also of ideologies and primarily Kemalism which were tried to be imposed in socialism.³⁷

Doğan Avcıoğlu and Pre-capitalism

Earlier, it was stated that Doğan Avcıoğlu's approach indirectly initiated feudalism although he preferred to define the Ottoman social order as pre-capitalist. To further this point in a more detailed way, we have to investigate first which questions he asked which can give us the real limitations and guidance of his study.

Avcıoğlu starts with a question about the relationship between Ottoman society and already known social orders: "Where can we put the Ottoman social order, which had a relatively high level of civilization in its age in respect to the social establishments history has faced? In other words, was Ottoman society feudal

³⁷ For another example see the works of Nuretin Topçu who tried to make a syntheses of nationalism, Islamism and socialism as a populist, "communal nationalism". See Süleyman Seyfi Öğün, *Türkiye'de Cemaatçi Miliyetçilik ve Nurettin Topçu* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 1992). Even, Doğan Avcıoğlu mentions Nuretin Topçu as an example of nationalist-Islamist intellectuals who seek for an utopic socialism by considering the controversion between capitalism and Islamic values. (See Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Gericilik-İlericilik", *Yön*, no. 175 (5 August 1966).) Also, we have to mention intellectuals from other ideological standpoints who felt themselves to produce an answer to all those socialist inclinations. For example, Sezai Karakoç, poet and one of the prominent Islamist intellectuals in the 1960s and thereafter, wrote a book on the economic structure of Islamic societies in which he criticizes the approaches on economics of Islamic societies which evaluate those societies according to the theories which were developed for western societies: "Some thinkers and authors who base their thought on western economic structures and concepts evaluated and indicated Islamic economic structure as liberal or socialist according their own inclinations of economic doctrine and judgement an Islam." See Sezai Karakoç, *İslam Toplumlarının Ekonomik Strüktürü*. (İstanbul: Diriliş Yayınları, 2003), p. 9. ("*Batı iktisat yapısını ve kavramlarını temel alan bazı düşünür ve yazarlar, kendi iktisadî doktrin eğilimine ve islâm hakkındaki hükmüne göre, islâm iktisat yapısını, liberal veya sosyalist bir yapı gibi görmüş ve göstermişlerdir.*") If we consider that the publication of this book dated 1967, we may conclude that his main concern was to produce an answer to the discussions of the era on socialist economic theory and structure. As Kurtuluş Kayalı points out, the debate on the relationship between Islamic societies and socialism went back to the translation of Roger Garaudy's book "Socialism and Islam" by Doğan Avcıoğlu and some other following works. Even though Karakoç, as Kayalı emphasizes, never intended to address concrete discussions in the era, it is clear that his works and some other previous articles deliberately influenced from all those discussions around economic structure and consequently from socialism. (See Kurtuluş Kayalı, "Sezai Karakoç'un Düşünceleri Konusunda Bazı Gözlemler Yapmayı Denemek" in *Düşüncenin Coğrafyası 1: Toplumdan Soyutlanmış Düşünce ve Direnç Potansiyeli*. (Ankara: Deniz Kitabevi, 2005), pp. 206-208.)

as the western countries were?”³⁸ Here the main issue is that Avcioğlu limits his analysis or starts his analysis with a pre-methodological premise, which is that the Ottoman social order should be evaluated under the already known categories of history, which are here the historical stages defined by the Marxist historical line. Though Marxism gives a possibility of scientific approach to social events, this attitude of Avcioğlu would mean that he limited himself to the taken conclusions of Marxism rather than benefiting first from its methodological approach, which led Marxists as scientists to those conclusions. A second premise appears when Avcioğlu evaluates the AMP favorers: “If we take into consideration the fact that Ottoman society reached a very progressive level compared to other societies of the same era, we can not accept Ottoman society as an example of the non-historic and unchanging AMP.”³⁹ So, combining these two premises into one, the final question appears: Was Ottoman society feudal or not?⁴⁰

Further evaluations of Avcioğlu on feudalism, western societies and Ottoman society can be viewed as an analysis that tries to build a unique approach to the Ottoman social order. Avcioğlu tried to make a differentiation between western feudalism and Ottoman social order on the basis of geographical-demographical differences, which led certain superstructural differences between societies. He added that this why had Ottoman society a centrist state structure.⁴¹ His point constitutes a parallel argument to the stance of Behice Boran, who defined the

³⁸ Avcioğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 9. “Çağına göre ileri bir uygarlık düzeyine ulaşmış olan Osmanlı düzeni, tarihin tanıdığı toplumsal kuruluşlar açısından, nereye yerleştirilebilir? Başka bir deyişle, o tarihlerde Osmanlı toplumu, Batı ülkeleri gibi, feodal düzenin içinde miydi?”

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 14.

Ottoman social order as feudal, but with a difference, that the Ottoman state had a “centralized feudalism” (*merkezi feodalite*)⁴². So, the factual difference between Boran and Avcioğlu is that Boran tried to figure out the typical similarities between western and Ottoman social orders on “distinguishing basic features” whereas Avcioğlu tried to determine the peculiar characteristics for each society, as Muzaffer Sencer criticizes many historians.⁴³ In fact, Boran tried to emphasize the substructural relations by omitting the superstructural differences whereas Avcioğlu emphasized the impact of the non-structural factors on superstructural appearance and some substructural relations, which led him to describe the Ottoman social order as pre-capitalist.⁴⁴

In Avcioğlu’s analysis there are some controversial points. The author first said that “While the Ottoman social order was based on the same mode of production, there appeared conditions (...) which required a different superstructural organization from the western feudal.”⁴⁵; however, he later described pre-capitalist Ottoman society as pseudo-feudalism.⁴⁶ As Bayram Kaçmazoğlu writes:

The conceptualization of ‘pre-capitalist’ social order may be and corresponds to a specific intermediate social order for the West which Marx developed for a transition process between capitalism and feudalism. That the Ottomans did not experience feudalism totally and that they could not carry out a transition to capitalism, shows that this employed concept does not suit its definition.⁴⁷

⁴² Muzaffer Sencer, *Osmanlı Toplum Yapısı* (İstanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1969), p. 65.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 62.

⁴⁴ Avcioğlu, *Türkiye’nin Düzeni.*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 14. “Osmanlı toplum düzeninde, aynı üretim tarzına dayanmakla birlikte, Batı feodalitesinden farklı bir üstyapı örgütlenmesini gerektiren (...) zorunluluklar olmuştur.”

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

⁴⁷ Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *27 Mayıs’tan 12 Mart’a Türkiye’de Siyasal Fikir Hareketleri*, (İstanbul: Birey Yayınları, 2000), p. 64. “(P)re-kapitalist toplum düzeni tanımı, öyle görünüyor ki, Marx’ın feodalizm ile kapitalizm arasındaki geçiş süreci için geliştirdiği ve böyle bir toplumu karşılayan, Batı’ya özgü bir toplum düzeni olsa gerek. Osmanlı’nın feodalizmi yaşamadığına ve

All things considered, it may be said that Avcıoğlu's analysis is built up around the conceptualization of feudalism, but with an ambiguous denomination of "pre-capitalism." Therefore, his attempt to differentiate Ottoman society was not an endeavor to vernacularize history. He already accepted the Marxist historical template with its given mode of productions, as mentioned above. The main factor behind this acceptance was his problematic actually was never to analyze the Ottoman social order on its sub- and superstructural phases, but to constitute a basis for the economic development of Turkey. This question of development introduced the thought of why Ottoman society departed from the western historical line. Therefore, according to Avcıoğlu, the pre-capitalist Ottoman society could not reach the capitalist stage because of the external influences of developing imperialism. In other words, substructural and internal factors were sidelined. This is why the AMP was disregarded by Avcıoğlu. The analysis of Avcıoğlu means that Ottoman society would reach the capitalist era like the other western societies if it had not experienced external influences. Taking into consideration the transition from feudalism to capitalism, we may conclude that Avcıoğlu's analysis was oriented towards feudalism.

A further issue is Avcıoğlu's emphasis on the influences of non-structural forces on the organic development of societies. That is to say, in the outline of theory, Ottoman and western societies would have evolved as a result of their own internal forces into capitalism; however, their evolution had collided with one another because of some

kapitalizme geçmeyi de başaramadığına göre, kullanılan terimin yerine tam olarak oturmadığını belirtmek gerekir."

non-structural events. The West had a historical advantage of non-structural forces, the capitalist-imperialist evolution of the West collapsed the mode of production of the Ottoman social order.⁴⁸ Avcıoğlu argued that this pillage of the West created a new relationship between the East and the West.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, this begs two questions: First, what was the main criterion that differentiated the East and the West? (If the criterion is type of mode of productions, how do we explain the role of Ottoman society?) And second was the relationship between the East and the West one of the developing motors of history? If it was true, how could the preceding relationships be defined and what was the influence of Ottoman society on western social orders, in substructural and superstructural terms?

We may remember here the approach of Baykan Sezer, who suggested the conflict between the East and the West as the main constructive factor of history. He shows us how this relationship evolved by the progression of history, starting from the formation or birth of the elementary modes of productions by non-structural forces to the twentieth century.⁵⁰ What we want to emphasize is that Sezer develops a methodology which he uses as the key of his analysis and introduces Marxism from which he benefits into his analysis by revising and criticizing its certain aspects. But if we look back into Avcıoğlu's analysis we encounter some uncertainties on the relationship between sub- and superstructure, the East and the West and also non-structural forces. Actually, Avcıoğlu suggested an analysis which would encompass

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 36. As we follow in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, Doğan Avcıoğlu does not define a certain mode of production type for the Turkish society after the collapse of the previous one; actually, the disorder prevails.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p. 27.

⁵⁰ Baykan Sezer, "Tarihte Doğu-Batı Çatışması – Ders Notları," in *Tarihte Doğu-Batı Çatışması* (İstanbul: Kızılirma Yayınları, 2005), pp. 45-119.

all of these factors, but the uncertainty on methodological level did not allow a comprehensive examination to appear.

İdris Küçükömer and the Asiatic Mode of Production

İdris Küçükömer is known as one of the leading proponents of the AMP in the discussions on the Ottoman social order. The emphasis on this point, however, can create a restrictive realm for the analysis of Küçükömer. Focus mainly on *Düzenin Yabancılaşması* obscures his efforts to argue persistently that Ottoman society had an AMP. Actually, the Asiatic Mode of Production was not mentioned by name; it is encountered only as a statement of “Asiatic despotism” (*Asyatik despotluk*) once.⁵¹ Except for this statement, Küçükömer only used the conceptualizations of “pre-capitalist mode of production” or “East”.⁵² The Asiatic Mode of Production would be handled comprehensively, however, in an article in 1977.⁵³ If we take into consideration that Küçükömer described the West as feudal, we may conclude that he did not want to make a discussion on the conflict between the AMP and feudalism. Küçükömer first aimed to uncover the conflict experienced in Turkey, to get to the bottom of this conflict and to construct a political strategy on his analysis. The questions of whether Turkey had a capitalist mode of production or whether Turkey could become a capitalist country were all components of an approach to understand how Turkey could be structurally oriented, also beyond a political standpoint. As a

⁵¹ İdris Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları: 2001), p. 36.

⁵² *ibid.*, p. 29.

⁵³ İdris Küçükömer, “Asyagil Üretim Biçimi, Yeniden Üretim ve Sivil Toplum”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, (Yaz 1977), pp. 3-30; *Sivil Toplum Yazıları* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1994), pp. 27-56.

comparison to Avcioğlu's question of whether the Ottoman social order was feudal, Küçükömer asked why the Ottomans could not pass to the capitalist order.⁵⁴ Küçükömer evaluated that the newly appearing relations of productions and accordingly Westernization as consequences of the transition periods of the seventeenth and eighteenth century directly created the factors influencing Turkish society in the twentieth century.

Methodology

The most important characteristic of Küçükömer's analysis is that the author applied his methodology very carefully. His methodology was based mainly on Marxist historical materialism and conceptualizations. He pursued his approach on western feudalism and the Ottoman social order constantly by asking questions about classes, relations of classes, and means and relations of productions. He represented his own methodology in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*.⁵⁵

While Küçükömer seems to have been orthodox Marxist in his loyalty to the terminology of the Marxist methodology, Sencer Divitçioğlu claims just the opposite:

It is well known that İdris never cared for orthodox Marxist "laws of historical evolution" while he was analyzing the social institutions of the medieval Turk(men) nomadic or Ottoman "Asiatic Mode of Production" or the Republic of Turkey, although he used Marxist tools like powers of production, relations of production and surplus (production, value).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, p. 29.

⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁶ Sencer Divitçioğlu, "İdris Küçükömer ya da 'Paşa' ve Bilim". *Tarih ve Toplum*, no. 44 (August 1987), pp. 78-79. "İdris'in, üretim güçleri, üretim ilişkileri ve artık (ürün, değer) gibi Marxist aletleri kullanmasına rağmen, gerek Orta-çağ Türk(men) göçebe, gerek Osmanlı 'Asya

Actually, there is no contradiction between these two statements. Küçükömer was very orthodox while he was benefiting from “Marxist tools,” but unorthodox while he was dealing with the methodology. This unorthodoxy was the result of his efforts to construct a unique approach for Turkey by clarifying its historical peculiarity, which inevitable would create a different theoretical scheme for Turkish society.

Another important point is that he was careful not to allow his methodology to be influenced by external ideological or methodological factors. As Doğan Ergun explains, Küçükömer’s methodological application has a monist and actually deductive character in which he emphasized the precedence of theory before observation and application.⁵⁷ Here, we may ask if theory is satisfactory for a comprehensive analysis by remembering some complaints on theoretical imposition which can cover the factual reality.⁵⁸ The point here, however, is that Küçükömer could apply Marxist methodology as a science by not allowing other ideological biases to penetrate it in a decade when methodological complexity prevailed over intellectuals who tried to figure out a way between, especially, socialism and Kemalism.

Üretim Tarzı’, gerekse Türkiye Cumhuriyeti sosyal kuruluşlarını incelerkenhiç bir surette Ortodoks Marxist ‘tarihin evrim yasalarına’ iltifat etmediği bilinmektedir.

⁵⁷ Doğan Ergun, *Sosyoloji ve Tarih*, (İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 1982), p. 124.

⁵⁸ One example would be E.P.Thompson’s approach in which he preferred to shape his analysis by the daily life of people or material of the study rather than to be subjected to the limits of the theory (Arif Dirlik, *Postkolonyal Aura: Küresel Kapitalizm Çağında Üçüncü Dünya Eleştirisi* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2005), p.54). And another approach is preferred by Niyazi Berkes in which he “gives priority to lived actuality rather than concepts” (Fahrettin Altun, “Niyazi Berkes ve Eserleri Hakkında”, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, 2004 v:1 i:2, p. 470.)

The Ottoman Social Order and Social Development

In Küçükömer's picture of the Ottoman social order, the Ottoman peasants who had distinctly different characteristics from those of the serfs of feudalism, formed a class-in-itself appearance; however, in their upheavals against the rule their consciousness did not achieve a class-for-itself level. Actually, there was no social class; *sultan*, the real owner of the means of production, and his bureaucracy did not compose the typical features of a class. They only collected the "surplus product" from the peasant.⁵⁹ Küçükömer focused here on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of Ottoman society when Europe entered its mercantilist period; he asked why Ottoman society had not been able to pass to mercantilism. In other words, Küçükömer deals with the era where the elementary symptoms of transformation in mode of productions and argued that people had not been able to create new developing relations of productions because they were faced with economic stagnation. There appear two types of obstructive factors: Internal and external. According to Küçükömer, "internal factors have primary importance though internal and external factors influence each other reciprocally" because he accepted that social development mainly occurred based on its own social dynamics.⁶⁰ Even in terms of the economic of stagnation, the transformation of relations of production continues. Especially, the characteristics of centralization of power, private property, etc., change dramatically.

⁵⁹ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, pp. 35-36.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

Küçükömer emphasized here that Ottoman society had been able to reach a mode of production different from the western experience. Therefore, it was not its non-historical characteristic that prevented Ottoman society from not passing into mercantilism; rather that it possessed a different historicity. So, with its own social dynamics, it still had had the chance to reach a more developing mode of production; however, the issue here is to find out the progressive social dynamics. The external factors with the superstructural conflicts played nonetheless a role which obstructed these progressive social dynamics.

In order to understand the differentiation between internal and external factors, we may look at these two paragraphs from Küçükömer:

The development within western capitalism has to be evaluated together with the values and ideals of western civilization. In fact, the economically high powerful countries of the West tried to make the countries who wished to develop to accept those values and ideals, although they did not possess similar production possibilities. Such an argument is totally a value judgment. This is doubtless a consequence of the harmony of production possibilities and values system of the West within its fulfilling social structure.⁶¹

And:

Every social system has its own obligations. The economic obligations play the primary role on the basis of those obligations. Such that, there are relations between the logic of the economic obligations and the logic of the whole social system. Now, all these relations constitute the social process. The process may not be single, and this (process) appears as a consequence of the historical structure of the system, or rather as a consequence of the difference between historical structures. However, it is inappropriate to implement a process which does not complement this structure to the system or to expect from the current structure (to create) a historical process which arose from another structure.⁶²

⁶¹ İdris Küçükömer, *Gelişmiş ve Az Gelişmiş Ülkelerin İlişkileri Üzerine*. (İstanbul: Hamle Matbaası, 1966), p. 16. "Batı kapitalizmi içinde gelişmek, Batı uygarlığının değerleri ve idealleri ile birlikte düşünülür. Gerçekte Batı'nın üstün ekonomik güce sahip ülkeleri, gelişmek isteyen ülkelere bu değer ve ideolojileri, benzer üretim olanakları olmadığı halde, kabul ettirmeye çalışmaktadır. Böyle bir savunma tamamen bir değer yargısıdır. Bu şüphesiz Batının tamamlanmış kendi toplumsal yapısı içinde üretim olanakları ile değerler sisteminin uyuşmasının bir sonucudur. Toplumda denge ancak ekonomik, politik ve sosyal kurumlar tamamlanması ile sağlanır."

⁶² Ibid., p. 18. "Her sosyal sistemin zorunlulukları vardır. Bu zorunlulukların temelinde ekonomik zorunluluklar başlıca rolü oynarlar. Öyle ki, ekonomik zorunlulukların mantığı ile sosyal

In those two quotations, written three years before *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, the main motives constituting the thought of İdris Küçükömer were present. The relationship between developed and underdeveloped or developing countries was based on imperialist relationships, and the argument that the latter could achieve development through following the development line of the developed countries was just a myth. The economic structure of a certain society constituted a social system together with the superstructural institutions or notions (“values and ideals”). The transfer of those economic or superstructural components regardless of the transferred social system caused only the consolidation of the imperialist relationship on behalf of the imperialist or developed countries. Therefore, the external intervention in a certain country, which was the case for Ottoman society, would not improve the social relationship, but only would enable certain social strata in the country to reinforce their position as far as they maintained their links with the imperialist countries. However, the organic development of society would not be achieved because the strategy did not depend on the improvement of the whole social system based on its own social dynamics.

Taking into consideration all above mentioned points, it may be conclude that Küçükömer suggested first to question the social system (or historicity) of Ottoman society and Turkey in the first hand, and second to compose a wholistic strategy to achieve development in Turkey. In this framework, all external interventions in the social system were excluded. That the up-to-down modernization strategy meant also

sistemin bütünüünün mantığı arasında ilişkiler vardır. İşte bu ilişkilerin tümü sosyal süreci meydana getirir. Süreç tek olmayabilir, ve bu, sistemin tarihi yapısından, daha doğrusu tarihi yapıların farklı bulunmasından doğar. Fakat, bu yapıya uygun olmayan süreci sisteme uygulamak ve mevcut yapıdan başka bir yapıda meydana gelmiş olan tarihi süreci beklemekyersizdir."

some sort of external intervention of a social stratum through institutional changes based on westernization, this conventional development strategy of Republican Turkey constituted only the obstruction of the social system from development or, in Küçükömer's words, the alienation of the order.

Interim Result: Differences between Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer

The false supposition that the army has a developing function in Turkey is a consequence of false analysis of our social structure. People incline to this fault because they aggravate the effect of imperialism and construct parallelism between the class structure of Turkey and class structure of pre-industrial western societies. This condition appears as a consequence of the acceptance of the western models while analyzing the social structure, of the qualification of the 1908 movement as a bourgeois revolution, and of the mistake to evaluate that everything stems from the West. The emphasis on imperialism stemming from the understanding which does not give importance on the internal structure analysis and/or evaluates them (internal structures) as fully dependent on external structure, with the slogan "Damned West and machine civilization", is also the evidence of the gaze from the same primitive perspective.⁶³

The main difference between Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer becomes visible in their attitude to be predicated on the Marxist historical line with its described mode of productions or on the methodological, namely the scientific face of Marxism. We claim that Avcıoğlu based his analysis on the first one and Küçükömer on the second.

⁶³ Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Ordu ve Siyaset 27 Mayıs-12 Mart*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), p. 35. "Türkiye'de ordunun geliştirici işlevi olduğu doğrultusundaki yanlış sanı, toplum yapımızın yanlış tahlilinden kaynaklanır. Bu yanlışta, emperyalizmin etkisinin abartılmasından ve Türkiye'nin sınıfsal yapısıyla endüstri öncesi Batı toplumlarının sınıfsal yapısı arasında paralellikler kurulmasından dolayı yönelinmektedir. Bu durum toplum yapısı üzerine analizlerde Batılı modellerin kabulünden, 1908 hareketinin burjuva devrimi olarak nitelenmesinden ve Batıcılığa karşı olmayı, her şeyi Batı'dan kaynaklandığını sanma yanılgısından ötürü ortaya çıkmaktadır. "Kahrolsun Batı ve makina medeniyeti" sloganı ile iç yapı tahlillerini önemsemeyen ve/veya bunları bütünüyle dışa bağımlı sayma anlayışından kaynaklanan emperyalizm vurgusu, olaya aynı ilkel perspektiften bakıldığının kanıtıdır."

By making a definition of pre-capitalism, Avcioğlu sought to produce an alternative answer to the discussion among intellectuals of the Workers' Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*) on feudalism and the AMP. In fact, this point suggests that Avcioğlu restricts his field of investigation to the limits of the discussion. The discussion on the Ottoman social order was also a reflection of the power struggle among leftist groups, and especially between the WTP leadership and the National Democratic Revolution (*Mili Demokratik Devrim*) group. The socialist strategy would be determined according to the historical development of Turkey; therefore, we may say that the discussions on the Ottoman social order had not only scientific but also political aspects.

Doğan Avcioğlu gave most of his attention to the political aspects of the discussion. As Muzaffer Sencer says, the conceptualization of pre-capitalism was constructed benefiting from both feudalism and the AMP, and also Avcioğlu often pointed out that the level of knowledge on the Ottoman social order was not sufficient to determine a certain mode of production for Ottoman society:

[T]he views about the Ottoman order are far away from clarified evaluations. (...) There is a need of in depth studies. Thence, in order not to plaster the label of polemical 'feodal' to the Ottoman order, we will call it with a more general concept of 'pre-capitalist' on which everybody can accord.⁶⁴

So, his point was to accept "pre-capitalism" as a temporary name for the Ottoman social order which would dismiss the conflict between intellectuals who had

⁶⁴ Doğan Avcioğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 17. "Bununla birlikte, Osmanlı düzeni hakkındaki görüşler henüz yeterli bir açıklığa kavuşmuş olmaktan uzaktır. Meseleye bu açıdan bakış daha yeni yeni başlamaktadır. Derinlemesine araştırmalara ihtiyaç vardır. Bu sebeple, Osmanlı düzenine, henüz tartışma konusu olan 'feodal' etiketini yapıştırmaktan kaçınarak, herkesin üzerinde birleşebileceği, daha genel bir kavram olan 'pre-kapitalist' diyeceğiz."

serve to a more pragmatic and anti-imperialist (rather than socialist) coalition of leftist intellectuals as a component of vital forces.⁶⁵

Second, Avcıoğlu rejected any development possibility of Turkey with its organic forces based on mode of production with his suggestion that Turkey had lost its possibility to transit to capitalism because of external interventions to the country, which corresponded basically to imperialism. In other words, Turkey, which had experienced a western-like mode of production in its pre-capitalist era, would and could develop only through external ways because that it could not follow the internal paths of western development due to the imperialist intervention of capitalism. Here they, Avcıoğlu actually legitimized the up-to-down modernization attempts of the Republican or the single-party era in which the social engineering of the bureaucratic cadre can be evaluated as an external intervention in the society regardless of social dynamics of people on sub- and superstructural levels. Etatism, which was a development strategy for Avcıoğlu, appeared as a part of the materialization of this external intervention in society. It must be remembered that his emphasis on “vital forces” (*zinde güçler*) in the 1960s, which would implement the required legal adjustments to supply the convenient conditions for progress and also parliamentary democracy.

Küçükömer seemed to be orthodox Marxist in his use of Marxist methodology.⁶⁶ As discussed above, apart from this point, Küçükömer exemplified a

⁶⁵ In an article in *Yön*, Avcıoğlu criticizes the WPT as weakening the anti-imperialist coalition by creating classical (for socialist literature) but also artificial (for Turkish conditions) discussions on proletariat-bourgeoisie. This critic has two reasons in background: First, Avcıoğlu wants to emphasize anti-imperialism rather than socialism. And second, he does not trust in proletariat as the WTP leadership gives the workers the right to possess half of the seats in the party organs. According to Avcıoğlu, the people can not take the responsibility of leadership for socialist movement because of their ignorance and dependence to reactionary strata. The actual leader have to be the party and intellectuals themselves. This also indicates his disbelief in people and thrust in any component of vital forces towards seizing power in Turkey. Doğan Avcıoğlu, “TİP’e Dair”, *Yön*, No. 168 (17 June 1966).

Marxist scientist who applied the theory sincerely to the history of Turkey. This scientific loyalty introduced the following points in Küçükömer's approach to the Ottoman social order: That Küçükömer emphasized internal social dynamics for the development of a country; and he tried to explore the historical class structure of Turkey, rather than judging social strata in respect to their correspondences in the West. In other words, he tried to figure out the transformation of the structure of Turkey with its production relations from the Ottoman to the Republican periods.

Second, he discovered that superstructural factors in Turkey may have played a role they hindering the development of production relations. In other words, the secondary, superstructural conflict in Turkey which was experienced between secularists and Islamists covered the primary, substructural conflict in Turkey which was experienced in fact between notables (*eşraf, ağalar*) and the common people. Therefore, in order to uncover this primary conflict in Turkey, the conflict between secularists and Islamists had to be resolved, first and fore mostly. So, he suggested that in order to construct a developmental strategy for Turkey, internal changes had to be implemented, which was actually the development of civil society by which people would reach a political realm which meant political liberalization. This was a down-to-up development as opposed to the up-to-down strategy of Avcıoğlu, which materialized itself in the role of vital forces.

⁶⁶ Kurtuluş Kayalı, "ATÜT Tartışmalarının Hafife Alınmasının Nedenleri ve Bu Tartışmaların Atlanan Ruhu" in *Sol*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), p. 1089.

CHAPTER THREE

EVALUATION OF THE TURKISH MODERNIZATION

The Reevaluation of Westernization in the 1950s

As discussed above, the main motive behind the inclination of the intellectuals in the 1960s towards the reevaluation of history was on the first hand to understand the socio-historical structure of Turkey by which they could derive an appropriate political strategy. This inclination in history can be evaluated in two phases: First, the social structure of the Ottoman state before the age of dissolution. Actually, the focus on the Ottoman history was on the dissolution of the empire. The history of this era was crucial as far as it affected the causes of the dissolution because the previous social structure could also explain the dissolution period and the steps to deal with it.

In that manner, the second point in the evaluation of the Ottoman history was to understand the dissolution period. In order to understand this period, the socio-political adjustments of the Ottoman state had to be worked on. And those adjustments corresponded to what we today call Turkish modernization or westernization, if we take into account the relationship between Ottoman and the Western societies.

The issue of westernization was reevaluated by the intellectuals in the 1950s. The reason behind this was the socio-economic change triggered by the Democrat Party government. In the first half of the 1950s, there was visible economic development, especially in the agricultural sector, with the liberal policies adopted by the Democrat Party, although their first signals had been given in 1947 right after the Second

World War by the RPP government. This development was supported by American aid. But the crucial issue here was that the DP government was watching the interests of the peasants, which had not happened in previous decades.⁶⁷ The changes in Turkish society as a parallel development to the changes in international relations and the place of Turkey in those relations, however, diversified the westernization conceptions of intellectuals in the 1950s. There had been some different approaches to westernization in previous periods, but especially in the single-party era, those ideas had not been so discussable because of the political atmosphere. The approaches of the 1950s triggered a discussion which would mean also a critique of the previous periods.⁶⁸

Especially, in the period just after the 1908, various political and economic approaches on Turkish modernization had been suggested and discussed. This period can be perceived as a founding period for the main political ideologies in Turkey. And more importantly, this period, with its all political ideas (even Islamism), sealed the future of Turkey with the idea of westernization or modernization.⁶⁹ The

⁶⁷ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modern Türkiye'nin Tarih*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996.), pp. 325, 334.

⁶⁸ Bayram H. Kaçmazoğlu, *Demokrat Parti Dönemi Toplumsal Tartışmaları* (İstanbul: Birey Yayınları, 1998) pp. 37-50. Kaçmazoğlu asserts that the westernization issue in the decade is handled also under the conceptualization of “cultural alterations” (kültür değişimleri). One of the academics was Mümtaz Turhan, who actually suggested investigating why Turkey could not westernize appropriately until 1950s, in his book *Cultural Alterations* which was a “socio-psychological analysis” as its subtitle suggests. Mümtaz Turhan, *Kültür Değişimleri: Sosyal Psikoloji Bakımından Bir Tetkik*. (İstanbul: Devlet Kitapları, 1969). If we look at the content of the book, we see that Turhan in fact tries to make his analysis on a base of the relationship between culture and civilization which had been one of the main issues of Turkish westernization. This relationship was a question on the relationship between native and foreign or moral and material cultural aspects. He claimed a composition of conservatism and westernism by which westernization should be based on education but had a deeper meaning than the indoctrination understanding of Kemalism. Actually, the aim of the education should have to educate intellectual cadres. See Ahmet Çiğdem, “‘Türk Batılılaşması’nı Açıklayıcı Bir Kavram: Türk Başkallığı - Batılılaşma, Modernite ve Modernizasyon” in *Modernleşme ve Batıcılık*, edited by Tanıl Bora, Murat Gültekinil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 68-81.

⁶⁹ İsmail Kara, *Din ile Modernleşme Arasında: Çağdaş Türk Düşüncesinin Meseleleri* (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2003), pp. 41-46. In this section, Kara points out some problematics on

Republican era reinforced this westernization idea with the words of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk which can be summarized as “to reach the contemporary civilization level”.

In the 1950s, this consensus on the westernization understanding among intellectuals prevailed. The main problematic shifted now, however, from the idea of westernization to the question of what kind of westernization had to be implemented. This was to some extent the comeback or revision of the old discussions, which is visible most clearly in the analyses consisting of comparisons of the 1950s to the submissive westernization of the Tanzimat era. The main importance of the era is that intellectuals started to criticize the westernization understanding of not only the Democrat Party, but also the single-party era. Those critiques appeared at an appropriate time because there was a need for the reevaluation of the Kemalist adjustments of the previous decades. Especially, in the 1930s some Turkish intellectuals expected a jump in economic and cultural levels, which is visible, for example, in the futurist third chapter of the novel, *Ankara*, by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu.⁷⁰ The 1950s were especially appropriate for a reevaluation because Turkey had finished its shift towards democracy and the old cadre was estranged

the classification of the political standpoints of the Young Turks. He emphasizes that to classify them strictly is not possible because this era in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were years of foundation for new conceptualizations and all intellectuals benefited from both Islamic and also modernist principles, but with different emphasis on them. Also, there was no deliberate definition on those concepts like nation, westernization or modernization or even the role of Islam.

⁷⁰ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Ankara* (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliyet Matbaası, 1934). In this chapter, the events are experienced in the late 1930s and early 1940s. (The novel was published in 1934.) We see how an idealized society with harmonization of native and western culture was created. Even the main character of the novel, Selma Hanım, tries to adapt herself to this new society. Actually, she does not complain; however, in a comparison of Selma Hanım with a young lady, Yakup Kadri tries to show us here that the new society would be young, mature and even fused with each other following to the anxieties of the early Republican cadre. Yunus Balı describes intellectual characters like Selma Hanım as transitional intellectuals “who prepared the Republic and its basic values”. The comparison between Selma Hanım and the young lady corresponds also to a comparison between transitional intellectuals who experienced the pre-Republic period and the Republican generations Yakup Kadri was evaluating for the future years of Republican Turkey when the novel was published. See Yunus Balı, *Türk Romanında Aydın Problemi (1908-1950)* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2002), pp. 168-169, 195-202.

from the power. Development in the international arena must also be taken into account: The scenarios and theories on development and modernization, and the reality of the Cold War brought up the idea of westernization for discussion by intellectuals. Especially, the existence of non-aligned countries or the developments of decolonization together with nationalist and independence ideas influenced most of the leftist intellectuals who would be in charge in the 1960s.

Tarik Zafer Tunaya in 1960s discussed the old (before the 1950s) and new ideas on westernization together in his book on the movements of westernization. He investigated the ideas of reviews like *Forum* or intellectuals like Mümtaz Tarhan from the 1950s. But the most important thing here is that those newly appearing approaches were investigated also under two main inclinations, namely holist (*bütüncü*) and particularist (*kısmici*), together with the pre-1950 views.⁷¹

Westernization was still the motivation of the intellectuals, but the question was about its degree and the fields in which this aim would be fulfilled. So, whatever the conjuncture may have been, westernization maintained itself by inheriting some main points from previous decades. This ability of maintenance was especially bound to certain characteristics of the Turkish intellectuals from the Ottoman to the Republican period.

The correlation between the characteristics of Turkish intellectuals and westernization can be followed more clearly in the arguments of Nilgün Toker and Serdar Tekin on Turkish westernization.⁷² Toker and Tekin suggest that the early

⁷¹ Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türk Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Yedigün Matbaası, 1960.)

⁷² Nilgün Toker and Serdar Tekin, “Batıcı Siyasi Düşüncenin Karakteristikleri ve Evreleri” in *Modernleşme ve Batıcılık*, edited by Tanıl Bora, Murat Gültekinil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 82-106.

attempts at westernization were aimed at the recovery of the Ottoman state, but that later this turned into a more total vision of westernization. The attempts at recovery caused the idea of westernization to become limited by technical and applicative manners. This understanding corresponds to an approach that westernization could be achieved through juridical or superstructural adjustments rather than through a construction starting from the base. So, westernization in its early stages started with some adjustments in the military, which then spread slowly to medicine, law and education.

This *applicative* characteristic of westernization was closely related to the characteristics of the implementers of westernization who were Ottoman bureaucrats. The implementation by the bureaucrats meant that the new adjustments would be disconnected with a more basic social thought and that they would be implemented from top-to-bottom as a consequence of a comparison between the Western countries and the Ottoman state. Indeed, this disconnection was inevitable if the disconnection between common people and the palace is taken into consideration.⁷³ In later stages of westernization, this applicative approach was inherited by newly emerging Turkish intellectuals, because they were all students who had studied in the institutions produced by westernization, which caused them to share similar thoughts like bureaucratic stratum.⁷⁴ The common people, however, only followed those

⁷³ Şerif Mardin, "Türk Siyasasını Açıklayabilecek Bir Anahtar: Merkez-Çevre İlişkileri," in *Makaleler 1: Türkiye'de Toplum ve Siyaset*, ed. Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992.)

⁷⁴ Şerif Mardin, "Türkiye'de Din ve Laiklik" in *Makaleler 3: Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset*, ed. Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, pp. 35-77 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006.) We may compare here the relationship between state and intellectuals in Turkey and Russia. Murat Belge asserts, referring to a quotation from Trotsky, that the intellectuals were not an opposition power against the state whereas the Russian intelligentsia was hostile of "state, class discrimination and property owning classes". Belge continues that opposing intellectuals emerged in Turkey just in the 1960s. This difference between the characteristics of Turkish intellectuals and Russian intelligentsia was consequence of two reasons: The Russian modernization and education of Russian intellectuals

developments as far as they concerned them in their daily life. If those changes began to harm their interests, a conflict between the common people and the bureaucrat-intellectuals emerged.

The second phase in westernization that Toker and Tekin indicate was the totalization of westernization. In the late nineteenth century, the westernization attempts became more holistic and went beyond its technical characteristic. Now, the cultural and institutional components of a civilization seemed to be inseparable. As the authors suggest, the positivist and authoritarian view hoped to spread westernization with its cultural and institutional aspects to the whole society. The ties with traditions had to be broken. Thus, there appeared also an idea of rupture besides the applicative characteristics of westernization. But its applicative and rupturist aspects and the authoritarianism reinforced also the disconnection between intellectuals-bureaucrats and the people with a differentiation of contemporary and traditional, which at last created a “republic without public”. As Tekin and Toker suggest,

This total ideology (bound to the rupturist thought) corresponded to the demands of both the applicative mentality developed by the westernism of the nineteenth century and also the desire ‘to create a new society’ which was triggered by the Republic. It also fulfilled the special function of articulation of those demands to each other on an etatist axis.⁷⁵

started earlier than the Ottoman intellectuals. Therefore, the emergence of opposing intellectuals had in fact a parallel history to the Russian experience. Second, the formation of the Tsarina Yekaterina the Second (the opposing Russian intelligentsia started to rise at her era) depended more on European democratism rather than Russian despotism. See Murat Belge, “Osmanlı’da ve Rusya’da Aydınlar” in *Türk Aydını ve Kimlik Sorunu*, ed. Sabahattin Şen (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1995), pp. 123-132.

⁷⁵ Toker and Tekin, “Batıcı Siyasi Düşüncenin Karakteristikleri ve Evreleri”, p. 86. “(Kopuş düşüncesine bağlı bu toplam) ideoloji, gerek Batıcılık’ın 19. yüzyıl geliştği aplikatif zihniyetin, gerekse Cumhuriyetle beraber harekete geçen ‘yeni bir toplum yaratma’ arzusunun taleplerini karşılamakta; üstelik bu talepleri devletçi bir eksende birbirine eklemek gibi özel bir işlevi de yerine getirmektedir.”

If we compare these aspects of westernization with the discussions on the Ottoman social structure, we may make some conclusions: Regarding the applicativeness of westernization, the intellectuals started to question if substructural matters on the relations and means of productions should be taken into consideration. We may not conclude that intellectuals totally criticized and abdicated this aspect. With the newly emerging inclinations, they tried either to improve this applicativeness again taking care of the substructural relationships or to estranging themselves from this type of westernization. The former give way to the creation of a neo-Kemalist approach and westernist thought in the 1960s, whereas the latter put the reevaluation of the relationship between the modernization attempts and the attitudes of the common people and maybe reconsidered a more radical way of westernization starting from the base. The discussions on the Ottoman social order became, from this point of view, more crucial with the question of how the westernization should be implemented in society. This would at last relate to a question of political strategy. That Küçükömer and Avcıoğlu questioned even in the titles of their book the concept of “order” (*düzen*) gains a specific meaning regarding all of the above mentioned points.

Doğan Avcıoğlu: Turkish Modernization and Nationalist Revolutionism

As argued above, the thoughts of the Turkish intellectuals in the 1960s on westernization and political strategy were closely related to their approaches in the discussions on the Ottoman social order. As claimed, Avcıoğlu argued that it would be meaningless to deepen these discussions because Turkish intellectuals lacked the adequate knowledge to develop a thought on, conceptualize or examine Ottoman

social order. Thus, he suggested the concept of “pre-capitalism”, which would satisfy a mean point on which the intellectuals could be in consensus. It was stated that this attitude of Avcıoğlu served mostly an understanding of revolution through “vital forces” without a theoretical deepening, but with a pragmatic aim to it. Another point of Avcıoğlu’s approach to the Ottoman social order was that the main factors behind the dissolution of the classical social order were external, which corresponded mainly to the imperialist activities of western countries,⁷⁶ rather than internal. Thus, he concluded that the social adjustments which would allow society to develop should be also external, which corresponded clearly to an top-to-down modernization.

These two suggestions together, a top-down (external) social intervention without a theoretical deepening,⁷⁷ determined the westernization understanding of Avcıoğlu, totally. Actually, following this suggestion, it may be claimed that Avcıoğlu tried to read the westernization or Turkish modernization by putting nationalist-progressivist intellectuals at the center of the history. In Avcıoğlu’s words,

The history of Turkey of the last hundred years is a history of the vital forces. The Military Academy, the Military Medical School, the Civil Service School, etc., were all the hearths from which the vital forces who considered themselves responsible for the future of Turkey had been risen. The cadres

⁷⁶ The emphasis on external sources of change is also visible in Behice Boran. By differentiating Turkey from western countries, she says that underdeveloped countries and Turkey started to change from inside as a consequence of pressures from outside. Behice Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları* (İstanbul: Gün Yayınları, 1968), pp. 3-4.

⁷⁷ Our emphasis on “without a theoretical deepening” does not mean that Avcıoğlu was avoiding analyses of social facts. Actually, *Türkiye’nin Düzeni* includes quantitatively one of the most in-depth analyses of the works in the 1960s. But our focus is here the political urgency that was more significant than any other theoretical approach as some other socialist intellectuals were dealing with. We must take into consideration that when Avcıoğlu was criticizing the inadequacy of theoretical knowledge he was mainly referring to the discussions on the Ottoman social order in the Workers’ Party of Turkey.

brought up by the ideas developed in those hearths continuously worked so that Turkey would become happy, independent and civilized.⁷⁸

To exclude the substructural relationships which could uncover peoples' labor and common sense, and to reduce the development issue to an external intervention brings to mind the question of who should take responsibility for this external intervention. The answer could only be the persons who did not contribute to the social dissolution consciously or unconsciously, who did not follow an interest relationship in the social dissolution environment, and who could engage, create or suggest a new and progressive mentality to society. By social dissolution, the factors which disable social development and encourage reactionary ideas to prevail is meant. Here a second moment would be the rupture from the past idea and reactionary situation in order to implement the progressive ideas and adjustments. Thus, the persons who carried the burden of external intervention should have the power to deal with the traditional society. Those persons would, consequently, lead also the common people to participate in the progress. As Avcıoğlu pointed out by criticizing the democracy in the 1960s, this atmosphere fostered mainly reactionary and comprador classes and unless the revolutionary forces did not intervene in this condition, the existing order would be maintained. Those revolutionary forces should also gain the support of "conscious" and "organized" public body, which at the moment was unconsciously suffering from the policies of reactionary and comprador classes, but also still granting them the power with their unconscious votes.⁷⁹ This

⁷⁸ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Bu Sese Kulak Veriniz". *Devrim*, no. 25 (7 April 1970). "Türkiye'nin son yüz yıllık tarihi, biz zinde güçler tarihidir. Harbiye, Askeri Tıbbiye, Mülkiye vb., Türkiye'nin geleceğinden kendilerini sorumlu tutan zinde güçlerin yetiştiği ocaklar olmuşlardır. Bu ocaklarda gelişen fikirlerle yetişen kadrolar, Türkiye'nin mutlu bağımsız ve uygar olması yolunda devamlı çaba göstermişlerdir."

⁷⁹ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Dar Kapı," *Devrim*, no. 53 (24 November 1970).

evaluation of democracy can also be thought as an example of how the context in the Ottoman Empire was evaluated by the revolutionary forces in that era.

Regarding the social strata in the late Ottoman period, the only stratum that could carry the responsibility drawn by Avcıoğlu contained the intellectuals and bureaucrats. They appeared as the fruits of a new education system, could carry the western ideas to the Empire and had the claim to readjust society according to their own ideas and utopias.⁸⁰ Therefore, the westernization issue, according to Avcıoğlu, was actually the issue of the Turkish intellectuals, and he tried to find the answers to the question of what kind of a modernization was suggested by those intellectuals, which problems they encountered and what their relationships were to other social strata.

The Legacy of Namık Kemal and Young Turks

In order to understand Avcıoğlu's conceptualization of nationalist progressivist Turkish intellectuals, the westernization experience must be examined at its beginning. This not only shows why and against whom those intellectuals wanted to start a new modernization way, but also that the polarization visible in the

⁸⁰ The emphasis of Avcıoğlu on the education of newly appearing intellectuals and bureaucrats should be understood as a shift from the traditional value system to a new and progressivist one. This shift in the mentality of intellectuals is physically visible in the shift from the Ottoman empire to the Republican Turkey. The intellectuals tried to develop nationalist, populist and statist thought system on a secular basis. As Metin Heper points out, the aim of the formal education in Turkey have been "to create graduates intellectually superior and well versed in normative-theoretical formulations" based on revolutionary ideas as opposed to the old ones. Avcıoğlu, therefore, tried to indicate a linkage between the so-called Turkish revolution and the rise of Turkish intellectuals in late Ottoman period. See Metin Heper, "Political Modernization as Reflected in Bureaucratic Change: The Turkish Bureaucracy and a 'Historical Bureaucratic Empire' Tradition", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 7 no. 4 (October 1976), pp. 507-521.

westernization period that repeated itself throughout the Ottoman and the Republican era. The social places of actors altered from time to time, but their function in the conflict between progressivism and reactionarism did not change. The most obvious example of this conflict can be observed in the evaluation of Avcioğlu on the Democrat Party which he compared to the Tanzimat bureaucrats and westernization.⁸¹

Actually, “Tanzimat westernization” was a model which corresponded directly to the collaboration between imperialist forces and comprador actors. With the beginning of the dissolution and also decentralization of the Ottoman system, the power of the sultan started to be administrated by bureaucrats mostly. According to Avcioğlu, the government of those bureaucrats left the country open to any influence of imperialist activities. In fact, they together with Levantines, were the inner actors of the external intervention of imperialism into the society. The Baltalimanı Treaty (1838), which was signed between the Ottomans and Britain, was a key point for their government.⁸² Though many intellectuals in the 1960s emphasized these dissolving characteristics of Tanzimat westernization with a special look on the Baltalimanı Treaty, the distinguishing aspect here for Avcioğlu was that he tries to find out the roots of a conflict which had repeated itself from time to time throughout the history of Turkey. This conflict was between the comprador-like reactionary

⁸¹ See Doğan Avcioğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 245-413. The title of the third chapter of *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* is “The End of Revolutionism: Return to the Tanzimat Westernism”. In this chapter, Avcioğlu analyzes the multiparty years and consequently the Democrat Party government.

⁸² Ibid, pp. 51-53.

bureaucrats⁸³/strata representing an imperialist external intervention and newly appearing nationalist intellectuals representing a nationalist external intervention.

Those intellectuals were graduated from the newly established school for medicine and army. Two points are crucial here: First, the origins of those students. They were not the sons of bureaucrats or pashas, but originated from small families like craftsman's or minor official's. Avcioğlu states by referring to Şerif Mardin that Sultan Mahmut the Second took care that those students had no relationships with bureaucrats. Thus, they felt themselves actually strange to the state. As they had passed through a positivist education, they considered themselves free to trigger a new movement against what they evaluate as false in the state affairs according to their ideals.⁸⁴

Second, the new soldiers and students came from similar families. According to Avcioğlu, soldiers and students (or future intellectuals) could not take into consideration the role of the people at this point. Thus, they imagined themselves to be the only persons who could lead the country towards recovery and progress. This suggestion of Avcioğlu seems to legitimize the togetherness of intellectuals and soldiers, which played an essential role in the Turkish westernization. Or at least, he indicates the necessity or obligation to compose such a front of intellectuals and soldiers. His emphasis on the origins of this coalition becomes more important if we take into account the role of “vital forces” in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s.

⁸³ This characteristic of the bureaucrats were still a problematic for nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals after the proclamation of the Republican Turkey. But regarding the conjuncture of the day, the intellectuals had to cooperate with the bureaucrats.

⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 111-112.

What was the significance of Namık Kemal in this progressive thought? Avcioğlu states that Kemal was not different in his approach of transferring a concept of civilization. According to Kemal, if the western and traditional institutions could be merged together, a peculiar development for Turkey could be achieved. But this importation had a different characteristic if it is compared to previous approaches which served the interests of imperialism. Namık Kemal tried to “nationalize” all the attempts for development. Avcioğlu wanted to emphasize Kemal’s patriotism and populism. He (Kemal) was the first intellectual who indicated westernization with patriotic and anti-imperialist concerns. His aim was to create a nationalist cadre through constitutional and educational adjustment.

However, Namık Kemal’s remedy for the existing problems was ambiguous, says Avcioğlu. He added that Kemal put forward an idea of “liberty” or “constitutionalism” which could only feed the imagination of intellectuals but he did not show how economic or social progress would be achieved.⁸⁵ So, the real inheritance from Namık Kemal should be then his emphasis on patriotism according to Avcioğlu.

An emphasis on Namık Kemal can be seen in most of the works of intellectuals who worked on the Turkish thought world. But if we talk about a special emphasis on Kemal as a proto-founder of “vital forces”, it is especially visible in two intellectuals, Niyazi Berkes and Doğan Avcioğlu. Berkes described Kemal’s thoughts directly as an opposition to the Tanzimat westernism and stated that he, together with Süleyman Paşa, tried to found “a sort of vital forces” who would start a

⁸⁵ See Doğan Avcioğlu, “Kemalizmi İyi Anlamak Gerek,” *Devrim*, no. 4 (11 November 1969); and “Soyut’tan Somut’a,” *Devrim*, no. 66 (19 January 1971).

constitutional movement and reforms.⁸⁶ Avcioğlu seems to have been influenced by Berkes in indicating this attached “revolutionist” characteristic of Namık Kemal.

So, the Young Turks mainly inherited this patriotic/nationalist attitude of Namık Kemal. This heritage consisted also of a top-to-down modernization. But, this aspect of westernization was inevitable because the populism of Namık Kemal could not reach to people. It only found a correspondence in the ideas of intellectuals. In fact, the intellectuals were at a loss to take sides. They had neither the adequate knowledge about imperialism to construct a counter-thought nor a confidence in people to keep in touch with them. This condition was a historical consequence the intellectuals could not alter. So, the only maneuver area was patriotism/nationalism and top-to-down modernization.

Here a crucial point which would be very influential in following decades must be added: The aims of the Young Turks could not be achieved through propaganda alone. Regarding the condition of social strata and power distribution in society, they could not depend on the people as a force. So, they had to make a coalition with the military to achieve a revolution against the oppressive and reactionary power of Abdulhamit the Second.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Niyazi Berkes, *Türk Düşününde Batı Sorunu*. (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1975), pp. 38-42. We must also take into account that this work of Berkes was one of the two most significant works of him (The other work is *Secularization in Turkey*). This work was constituted of his articles in *Yön* review and have been his most influential book, as Kurtuluş Kayalı asserts. The influence of the book was a consequence the articles in the book were day-to-day responses to political developments in the era. (See Kurtuluş Kayalı, “Niyazi Berkes” in *Kemalizm*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 338-341)

⁸⁷ Avcioğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 113-119.

Unionism

The 1908 movement meant, from the above mentioned perspective, a revolution by the patriotic “military and civil vital forces”⁸⁸ against the oppression of Abdülhamit the Second and also imperialist intervention in the country. Actually, Avcıoğlu discussed the issue on a very economic basis because the dissolution of the state was a consequence of prevailing imperialism with a hand from compradors. From this point of view, the 1908 movement was the first attempt to break down the monopoly of the bureaucrats and Levantines. Avcıoğlu stated that the emerging nationalism and populism were products of this reaction against exploitation. Therefore it was not a class movement, but only protested the non-Muslim bourgeoisie.⁸⁹

An interesting point here is that the 1908 movement, which could not go beyond an accumulation of constitutionalism, enabled an appropriate environment for a discussion on economic inclinations. As Zafer Toprak mentions, the 1908 movement was motivated mostly by political and even economic liberalism. Both Prince Sabahaddin and Cavit Bey, the prominent figures of economic ideas after 1908, emphasized “individual enterprise” and also “concentration of capital.” But, in a short time it became clear that classical liberalism could not help the development efforts of the Unionist cadre; so, they eliminated economic liberalism to build a

⁸⁸ Avcıoğlu, “Bu Sese Kulak Veriniz.”

⁸⁹ Actually, the non-muslim subjects of the Ottoman empire can not be perceived as a monist society. They were conditioning their positions according to the imperial powers of the West. The jews and converts (dönme) in the Balkans were in fact favoring the influence of Germany and Austrian empire, whereas the Armenians and Greeks in the capital of the Ottoman state were pro-English and French. Therefore, the conflict between the Young Turks and Abdulhamit the Second was indirectly a reflection of a conflict between Germans-Austrians and English-French or Jews-Converts and Greeks-Armenians. The Jews and Converts, consequently, supported the 1908 movement, too. (See *ibid*, pp. 120-121.)

“national economy” based on the German economic approach, in which the main source of development was the principle of nationality. Therefore, the endeavor to eliminate the comprador and non-Muslim bourgeoisie and to create a native one was also related to those tendencies in economic policies and they were also compatible to the nationalist policies in culture. But we have to keep in mind what Toprak points out that the Turkish nationalism was a reaction against economic liberalism,⁹⁰ which Avcioğlu emphasizes persistently.

The elimination of economic liberalism, was accompanied by the elimination of political liberalism by the Union and Progress Party. After 1908, the Young Turk movement became legal and more than ten new parties were founded. In addition, 353 new newspapers and also new organizations among workers were visible. This was a response to the despotism of Abdülhamit the Second. But this liberal era ended in 1913 when the Unionist cadre made a *coup d'état* and took the whole power in their hands just two years later when the Freedom and Entente Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*) won the elections of the 1911. So, in 1913, the political liberalization of 1908 was also eliminated.

Taking these two points, the elimination of political and economic liberalism, into consideration, we see that Avcioğlu never criticized the coup d'état of the Unionist cadre and even supported the national economy endeavors. He said that these bona fide attempts failed. This situation had four main reasons: First, the circumstances in which the country found itself involved the concentration of power in the state in political and also economic terms. Second, the political and economic counterparts of

⁹⁰ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de “Milli İktisat” 1908–1918* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982), pp. 17-34.

the Unionist cadre lacked the required quality of nationalism and patriotism. Third, the unionist cadre actually created the roots of Kemalist reforms in education, secularism, women's rights and art. And fourth, the Unionist cadres were the only nationalist cadre upon which the Independence War could be built upon.⁹¹

So, the Union and Progress Party government was the first experience of Turkish nationalist intellectuals in power. They faced many problems of development and the recovery of the Ottoman state. They tried to implement many modern adjustments to society and introduced new ideas towards nationalization from populism to national economy. The problems they faced were actually the roots of the problems the Turkish intellectuals faced later in the Republican era, even in the 1950s. Therefore, Avcıoğlu tried to figure out a root in the Unionism which could correspond to the enlightening character of the Turkish intellectuals. Unionism, in this manner, corresponded to the top-to-down modernization of Turkey with a coalition between intellectuals and armed forces which gave way to the later westernization attempts of Kemalist intellectuals.⁹² The Unionist cadre, however,

⁹¹ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 111-135

⁹² Unionism has been evaluated in different meanings in different conjunctures. Especially in recent years, with the analyses on the rise of nationalism in Turkey and questions on the Armenian genocide etc. the conceptualization of unionism is perceived more as deliberate policies in the way of making of a nation state from a multi-ethnic empire. The so-called Armenian genocide as a matter of question is a key determinant of this conception with the economic policies of the Union and Progress Party against non-Muslim tradesmen. (As an example of unionism in this conceptualization, see Fikret Başkaya and Tolga Ersoy, ed. *Resmî İdeoloji Sözlüğü*. (İstanbul: Özgür Üniversite Kitaplığı, 2007.)) However, we have to take into consideration that unionism was perceived some how in a different meaning in the conjuncture of the 1960s, or at least for the intellectuals we are dealing in our thesis. In Avcıoğlu's and Küçükömer's work, unionism must be conceived far from its nationalist aspects even though it has to be also taken into account. Unionism here is either a constitutionalist movement trying to construct a national economy on progressive ideals, as Avcıoğlu suggests, or as an aspect of the relationship between politics and the people, as Küçükömer does. Also, Kurtuluş Kayalı asserts a Küçükömer's-like approach in his work on the relationship between the army and the state, in which he emphasizes the role of the army as an obstruction against the development of political liberalization. See Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Ordu ve Siyaset 27 Mayıs-12 Mart*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005.)

emerged in different circumstances, during the disappearing years of the Ottoman state, they represented an early stage in the modernization and developmental history of Turkey which later would be described by Avcıoğlu as the early stage of socialism.

Republican Era

Although we have mentioned that the Independence War was built upon the cadres and organizations of the Union and Progress Party, in fact, Avcıoğlu strictly pointed out that during the War there emerged a coalition between notables, bureaucrats, nationalist intellectuals and military officers. Different aspects of a leading role appeared during the Independence War. In 1964, Avcıoğlu put greater emphasis on the role of the most intellectual strata of the national bourgeoisie, who, he claimed, lead the War against capitalism and imperialism. Thus, the Independence War could also be evaluated as a bourgeois revolution, according to him.⁹³ However, he later pointed out more the role of the army by emphasizing Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's endeavor to clamp down on the military and civil intellectuals.⁹⁴ This difference in emphasis can be perceived as the changes in the conjunctures as the need for a national bourgeoisie free from imperialism was more important in the first half of the

A further point would be the ambiguity on conceptualization in the Union and Progress Party. Especially, the concept of nation was used and discussed on various grounds which does not allow us to fix it for the foundation of nationalism. The correspondence for "nation" (millet) in this era differed from *kavim* (referring to more ethnical understanding) to *ümmet* (referring to amore religious togetherness) which were indicating all different political standpoints. See İsmail Kara, *Din ile Modernleşme Arasında: Çağdaş Türk Düşüncesinin Meseleleri*. (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2003), pp. 15-16.

⁹³ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Medrese Atatürkçülüğünden Gerçek Atatürkçülüğe". *Yön*, no. 85 (13 November 1964).

⁹⁴ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Yahya Han Formülü" *Devrim*, no. 22 (17 March 1970).

1960s, whereas a revolution based on the vital forces composed of military and civil intellectuals was in the agenda of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Nevertheless, it still can be claimed that the coalition between above mentioned strata was the prominent feature which determined the early years of the Republic. According to Avcıoğlu, we may talk about three social strata besides the common people: the nationalist intellectuals-army officers, the old bureaucracy and the notables. The nationalist cadre had to make coalition with those two groups because in the Independence War they had acted together with the notables and also there were not enough bureaucrats among them to make the state work. But this coalition among groups disabled a total reform, which the nationalist cadre wanted to implement.⁹⁵

The most apparent balance between those groups is visible in the decisions of the İzmir Economic Congress (17 February – 4 March 1923). All the social groups attended the Congress, either directly or with representatives. Although the first parliament was composed of people with the spirit of Nationalist Forces (*Kuvay-ı Milliye*) and there were no big tradesmen or industrialists who had cooperated during the invasion days with the Ottoman palace and foreign forces, and although the members of the first parliament had a populist vision to favor the Turkish common people against imperialism, capitalism and the exploitation of notables, the policies were changed in a short time in the interest of the big tradesmen, industrialists and notables. The İzmir Congress was a key step in this political and economic change. The decisions of the congress favored mainly big tradesmen and large land-owners. This was a consequence of the lack of adequate knowledge, which was inherited

⁹⁵ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 176.

form the Ottoman era. Also, the bureaucracy and intellectuals hardly knew the common people. Thus, they inclined to import the western ideas, social and economic institutions and tried to cooperate with the strata acting against the interest of the common people.⁹⁶

Now, the relationship with imperialism changed also. The Republican cadre wished to construct an economy independent from imperialism, but it still would mean a native capitalism. This was a consequence of the fact that Turkey had no other example of capitalism and the coalition between notables and the nationalist cadre forced the nationalists into such a semi-liberal semi-etatist economy.⁹⁷ A third reason for the ambiguity in the environment was the inconsistency of some nationalist intellectuals. Avcıoğlu states that the schism between First and Second Group in the parliament, the foundation of the Progressivist Republican Party etc., were signs of a conflict between reactionarism and progressivism.⁹⁸ Thus, the first years of Republican Turkey have to be evaluated as transition years for the nationalist cadre.

But how should the so-called etatist period of the single party era be evaluated? If Avcıoğlu's suggestions on the early period are considered, it may be concluded that this second period should have enabled the nationalist cadre a more appropriate and controlled environment in which to implement their reforms. In

⁹⁶ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Kaynağa Dönüş." *Yön*, no. 47 (7 November 1962). Actually, the decision on supporting native tradesmen and notables seems to have been a decision maintaining the economic principles of the Union and Progress era. Indeed, after the war, most of the non-Muslim population within the borders of the National Pact (*Misak-ı Milli*) of 1920, the pact which set forth the national claims for Turkey, disappeared. So, a nationalist bourgeoisie had to be created, too.

⁹⁷ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 173.

⁹⁸ Ibid, pp. 153-154.

order to see if this conclusion is true or false, we have to examine the relationships between the above-mentioned groups.

First of all, it must be stated that Avcıoğlu did not evaluate etatism as a departure from capitalism. Actually, the etatism of the single-party era only reinforced the effects of capitalism. He claimed that there were two main failures after the Republic was proclaimed: First, the revolutionary cadre forgot to realize a land reform which would free the Turkish peasants from the pressure of the notables and usurers. Second, they were inclined to establish a national capitalism instead of etatism which would be harmonious with Turkish traditions. However, even the short period of the etatism became an era for improving the effects of capitalism, though it had also some successes.⁹⁹ He mentioned *Kadro* review which tried to figure out etatism as a third way, but he added that thanks to the tradesmen and notables who were still effective in economic decision-making etatism had gained a form which only served as a national capitalism.¹⁰⁰

Despite all those negative aspects of the single-party era, this period had a revolutionist effect in Turkish history, said Avcıoğlu. This was a key point in regard to the westernization thought. Avcıoğlu actually points out here two independence issues: First, independence from the imperialist powers, and second, independence from the intervention of the people in politics. If we focus here on the independence from the common people, we will see that Avcıoğlu emphasized this point because he claimed that the leadership of the nationalist cadre without any influence from the people had made the implementation and maintenance of nationalist revolutions

⁹⁹ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Cumhuriyet’in 42. Yılında”. *Yön*, 135 (29 October 1965).

¹⁰⁰ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye’nin Düzeni*, pp. 213-214.

possible, as far as the historical conditions enabled them. If the people would penetrate the politics through some channels like multiparty system etc., the second group among the intellectual cadre whom Avcioğlu describes as inconsistent could have gain power and construct obstructions before the revolutionist ideas. Avcioğlu's view on this issue was most clearly visible in his evaluations of the multiparty system, which he described as a shift from revolutionism to reactionarism:

A common claim is that "Turkey was revolutionist until 1938, she then became reactionarist". The above-mentioned statements are adequate to show the incorrectness of this claim. The nationalist-revolutionists tried to catch leaps in the way of contemporary civilization until the years of *shift into the multiparty life and departure towards America* (emphasis mine). The revolutionist period of the Republic would be end after 1945.¹⁰¹

The emphasis of Avcioğlu and his shift of the date from 1938 to 1945 provide us a key to his thought. Thus, he pointed out also the condition in the Democrat Party government because the Democrat Party and the period in which this party prevailed corresponded to reactionarism and just the opposition of the nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals. This duality in the political system had existed already from the time of the Young Turks, but its real fruits were to be experienced in the Republican era because the real inconsistency among some nationalist intellectuals¹⁰² appeared

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 241. "Yaygın bir iddia, 'Türkiye 1938'e kadar devrimciydi, sonra tutucu oldu' biçimindedir. Yukarıda yazılanlar bu iddianın asılsızlığını göstermeye yeterlidir. Milliyetçi - devrimciler, çok partili hayata geçiş ve Amerika'ya yönelik yıllarına kadar, ellerinden geldiği ölçüde çağdaş uygarlık yolunda atılımlar yapmaya çabalamışlardır. Cumhuriyet'in devrimci dönemi 1945'ten sonra kapanacaktır."

¹⁰² We must be careful here while evaluating the intellectuals who are described by Avcioğlu as "inconsistent". The inconsistency does not mean that those intellectuals belonged directly to the reactionarist front in the social frontation. Actually, the inconsistency appears when their nationalist characteristic interferes their non-progressivist attitudes. The early aim of the Young Turk era was in fact to recover the Ottoman state in which it could return to the stage of history as an influential power as she did in previous centuries: "After the July Revolution (of 1908), the unionists had two options: Either they would demolish old power sources and institutions and construct new ones or they would not touch to those institutions but use them on behalf of themselves. That they were enough reactionary and attached to traditions not to implement the former one, they tried to realize their revolutions with the state rather than against it and hoped to implement the reforms after seizing power." (Feroz Ahmad, *İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme*. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1999), p. 23.

especially just after the Independence War in the parliament. Those intellectuals mainly gathered in the Progressive Republican Party. The Democrat Party in this manner inherited this inconsistent characteristic of the PRP. The Party (the DP) represented the elimination of the revolutionist cadre and return to the Tanzimat westernization by encouraging the reactionarist social strata.

If we focus here on the shift in the multiparty system, we see that Avcioğlu asserted that this system was altering Turkish politics on behalf of the big tradesmen and land-owners. This corresponded to the function of democracy in Turkey, at least until the 1960s. The masses, open to temptation by the notables and big tradesmen, caused the nationalist-revolutionist cadre to become estrange from power and to become the opposing party for the first time in Republican history. The newly emerging liberalism began to eliminate the etatism of the single-party era which allowed the comprador capitalism, the cooperation of native economic strata with the foreign capitalist powers, to prevail instead of national capitalism. The nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals and army officers who became alone and unsupported in society sought to stop these developments with a coup d'état in 1960. This intervention into the political field against economic and political liberalism was

“Temmuz Devrimi’nden sonra İttihatçıların önünde iki seçenek vardı: Ya eski iktidar kaynaklarını ve kurumlarını yıkarak yerlerine yenilerini koyacaklardı, ya da var olan kurumlara dokunmayarak bunları kendi hareketleri yararına kullanacaklardı. Birincisini yapmay kalkışamayacak kadar tutucu ve geleneklere bağlı oldukları için kendi devrimlerini devlet iktidarına karşı değil, onunla birlikte gerçekleştirmeye çalıştılar ve iktidarı ele geçirdikten sonra reformlara başlayabileceklerini umdular.”)

This understanding can be perceived as a continuation of the westernization of the early Turkish modernization. But the proclamation of the Republic meant a rupture from previous state structure with a claim of change in material and moral culture. The inconsistent intellectuals seems to have not understand this rupturist aspect of the Republic or at least they were protesting it. This characteristic appeared as a retreat in the young Turk revolutionism which nationalism was a part of. Therefore, the clashing nationalism and revolutionism were creating an inconsistent environment in this conjuncture, Avcioğlu asserts.

experienced again, like the intervention of the Union and Progress Party in the early years of the century.

İdris Küçükömer: Turkish Modernization as the History of the “Secondary Conflict”
or the “Alienation of the Order”

Formerly, during the the discussions on the Ottoman social order, it was said that İdris Küçükömer explained the dissolution of the social order in the seventieth and eighteenth centuries mostly referring to internal factors even though the external factors had some minor effects on it. Thus, in order to achieve sustainable social progress, internal social dynamics had to be developed. Considering this claim of Küçükömer, we may suggest that Küçükömer centered the questions on whether these social dynamics had been able to be developed or not; if not, why they could not be developed, as the key points of his evaluation of the issue of westernization or Turkish modernization. The titles of the chapters in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma* show this remarkable aspect: The first two titles were “Turkey can not westernize” and “Why the Ottomans could not pass to the Capitalist Order”. So, Küçükömer claimed that every attempt of Turkey in the way of development through westernization was destined to fail. The problem was then not the strategy towards westernization, rather the notion itself.

This approach seems to have been new compared to the approaches which suggest that westernization as an aim was right but the adjustments were wrong. Thus, we may claim that Küçükömer suggested that direction and implementation could not be separated from each other; these two actually concluded in one aim. As mentioned previously in the third chapter, Küçükömer tried to deal more with the

possibilities of a certain social system rather than questioning the strategy of a development transfer from a developed country to an underdeveloped or developing country. Westernization in this framework corresponded directly to the importation of, in Küçükömer's words, the "values and ideals" of western civilization to Turkey. This situation created, consequently, the "alienation of the order" as an obstruction to the development of the social system.

Doğan Avcıoğlu's emphasis on the formation of the Turkish intellectuals and their role in society has been noted. This attention seems to have been on the formation of the Turkish political area in Küçükömer's approach. The reason behind this attention was the role of the current political field, and in fact the relationships in this field as an obstructing factor to the social development of Turkey. The relationships in the political field covered the primary social conflict, which was a conflict on the substructural level. The consciousness on this conflict was able to discover a possibility of social development even though that the political relationships cover to conceive the significance of the primary social conflict they constitute a secondary (*tali*) conflict, which was experienced on superstructural level.¹⁰³

The formation of social strata regarding the development of internal social dynamics and consequently substructural processes determined according to the formation of politics. This point can be explained by the fact that the superstructure obstructs the substructure. As mentioned before, Küçükömer was strictly bound to the Marxist conceptual framework and he suggested that the internal social dynamics could only develop through substructural processes which in Turkey appeared within

¹⁰³ Küçükömer, p. 13.

the relationship between the common people and the notables who either worked as tradesmen or land-owners. Thus, he indicated that the primary conflict lay in the substructural relationships whereas the secondary conflict lay in superstructure. As he pointed out that the secondary conflict was experienced between Islamist-easternist front and westernist-secularist front, his description indicated the cultural positions of different social groups which at last attested the above-mentioned framework.¹⁰⁴

The Formation of the Secondary Conflict at the Beginning of the Turkish Modernization

The title of Küçükömer's article in which he tried to analyze the modernization more deeply is "Pashas on the Left of the Center and Abdulhamit." Küçükömer's usage of "the left of the center" also for the political confrontation in the Ottoman period must be examined. Two conclusions may be drawn from this examination: 1) Küçükömer's interest in the Ottoman period was strictly bound to the concrete developments in the 1960s, as we remember that phrase of "the left of the center" was suggested by the RPP and İsmet İnönü in the midst of the 1960s. 2) By using this phrase smoothly for the Ottoman period, he bound the Ottoman period with the 1960s, which corresponded than a continuation in the Turkish history. So, the evaluation of Küçükömer on modernization history does not include a rupturist

¹⁰⁴ This conventional struggle in Turkish politics between two fronts was based primarily on cultural positions because neither the Islamist-easternist common people nor the westernist-secularist bureaucratic stratum possessed the means of production. This scheme was valid for Küçükömer at least until the 1960s. In the 1960s, the bureaucracy attempted to create its own economic means and some of them tried to be a part of the "capitalist class". This situation would create for the first time "completion of the bureaucracy in both ideological-political and also economic-militaristic ways. See İdris Küçükömer, "Kayseri'deki Oyun ve Oyuncular." *Ant*, no. 133 (19 July 1969).

aspect in which the Ottoman and Republican periods would be conceived as separate phases or stages.

In order to understand, how this relationship of the secondary conflict emerged, the moment when the Ottoman social order started to dissolve must be examined. With the dissolution, the authority of the sultan, who until this day had constituted the power center, started to cease. With this decentralization there appeared the necessity to implement new adjustments. Social strata under the authority of the sultan tried to follow the possibilities to enhance their power in the balance, which indeed caused new social conflicts and relationships. According to Küçükömer, the most prominent conflict appeared between Islamist-easternist public and the revisionist cadre of the Ottoman state.

The group composed of janissaries-*ulema*-craftsmen who faced the threat of diffusion due to both the new adjustments of the state and also experienced social dissolution, stuck to Islamism-easternism to deal with the emerging westernism. Küçükömer emphasized here the notion of *being obliged* to become Islamist-easternist, because this obligation had essentially an economic basis. In other words, the people had to emphasize their cultural dependence (“Islamism-easternism”) because of an economic obligation. Westernism presented new economic relationships which in turn made the traditional social strata to protest it by shelter old social values. However, this protest had no class characteristics in essence because there was no consciousness of deliberate opposition and actually this conflict

between two groups inhibited the rise of a class from the easternist-Islamist camp because this differentiation did not depend on the primary conflict.¹⁰⁵

On the other side of the conflict were bureaucracy and notables. The notables put themselves forward as a claim in the power center with the appearance of the Act of Alliance (*Sened-i İttifak*).¹⁰⁶ But, they had to debilitate the Islamist front in order to enhance their power area and also to effectuate new social adjustments in order to debiliate them. Consequently, the older conflict relationship between the sultan and *reaya*, Küçükömer asserts, have shifted to a conflict relationship between the front, composed of the bureaucrats and notables, and *reaya*.

The formation of the conflict between notables-bureaucracy and *reaya* may be evaluated as the genesis of the secondary conflict Küçükömer suggested us. However, the secondary conflict outstanding in the Republican era corresponded to an alteration in this original conflict. The original conflict had been based on two pillars: first, the enhancement of the power of bureaucracy and notables; and second, the implementation of westernist adjustments. Those two pillars, which were interrelated, had an obstructing effect on the production relationships. Küçükömer suggests that:

It can be claimed that the old values system, the Islamist culture, is irrational and mystic for Turkish society. But it is doubtless for us that secularism and westernization movement are more irrational and mystic for Turkish people.

¹⁰⁵ Küçükömer, p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Erik Jan Zürcher and Küçükömer share the same idea when they describe *Sened-i İttifak* as the Magna Carta of the Ottomans. Although, the sultan had never signed this act and tried to suppress most of the notables, this act has the importance of being the first act on power sharing in the Ottoman state involving the right of possessing large lands. Maybe this act was the highest point of the decentralization years in the late seventieth and early eighteenth centuries. Compare Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batlaşma*, p. 51 and Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996), p. 50. The importance of large landownership lied in the fact that the Ottomans never encouraged and indeed obstructed large landownership. See Şevket Pamuk, *Yüz Soruda Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914* (İstanbul: K Kitaplığı, 2003)

And the bureaucratic power with its secularist-westernist ideology is a government largely above the people and even against the people.¹⁰⁷

In this quotation, Küçükömer is seen having stood for both cultural positions; however, he indeed pointed out that the position of the bureaucracy created a gap between the common people and the governing elite. This gap actually enabled the bureaucracy to maintain its power above society, but this inorganic situation in the country obstructed the development of the economic relationships.

From another point of view, the limits of the first pillar in the early era of the westernization introduced a new conflict between bureaucracy and notables which made the notables to shift to the front of Islamism-easternism. This new alteration in the original conflict created the prominent conflict on which this study focuses.

The Secondary Conflict and the Notions of Representation and Dependence

The shift of the notables to the other front¹⁰⁸ was a consequence of a power conflict between the notables and the bureaucracy. The notables reinforced their role in the power balance thanks to decentralization of the social order, but the later adjustments enabled imperialism to penetrate the country, which the notables were against because imperialism caused the production relationships in Turkey to disappear.

¹⁰⁷ İdris Küçükömer, “Paşa’nın ve Amerika’nın Oyunları”. *Ant*, no. 121 (22 April 1969). “Türkiye toplumu için, eski değerler sisteminin, islamcı kültürün, irrasyonel mistik şeyler olduğu iddia edilebilir. Fakat, Türkiye halkı için laiklik ve batılşma akımının daha irrasyonel daha mistik olduğu da bize göre muhakkaktır. Ve bürokratik iktidar laik-laik batıcı ideolojisi ile büyük ölçüde halkın üstünde ve hatta ona karşı düşen bir iktidardır.”

¹⁰⁸ In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Janissaries had been dismissed and the influence of the *ulema* on state policies decreased dramatically. Thus, the Islamist-easternist front was composed now actually of the people (small craftsmen and peasants) and the local notables.

A third factor reinforcing the Islamist vs. westernist struggle was the reinforcement of the westernist superstructural adjustments which produced a dual superstructure, especially in education and the judiciary on behalf of non-Muslims in the country. Thus, a superstructural protest against superstructural adjustments escalated. The common people encountered the elimination of production opportunities and unemployment and argued that this situation was a consequence of habits like the reinforcement of the foreign cultural institutions with the Tanzimat. According to them, this situation was evidence of the increasing influence of infidels (*gavurlaşma*).¹⁰⁹

The shift of the conflict from the substructural to superstructural caused the political arena, and consequently political representation, to be limited to the groups who withheld the possibilities to intervene in politics who were actually the bureaucrats. People who had been taken no notice of until that time were being excluded even in this context. The only representative of the Islamist–easternist front seemed to be Abdulhamit the Second, surprisingly with his Islamist policies even though Abdulhamit was also the maintainer of modernization movement. But with the appearance of the 1908 movement, the whole governor of the political arena seemed to be the bureaucratic-intellectual cadre, actually the Young Turks or the Union and Progress Party. This development in the socio-political arena brought the question of political representation on the agenda for the Islamist-easternist front and especially for the notables.

The composition of the bureaucratic-intellectual group was based on the congress of 1902 on which also Doğan Avcıoğlu emphasizes. The split between

¹⁰⁹ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, p. 67.

“liberalist” and “etatist” in this congress reappeared in the elections after 1908 and those two groups tried to look for social strata on which they could depended:

(As far as we know) Tarık Zafer Tunaya was the first person who asserted this split into two camps in the political conflict. What we find here significant is that the current two camps were occupied by bureaucrats. *The issue of election was becoming important* because both camps were looking for legitimating. While they were bringing ideas forward, *they surely would also look for masses to depend on.*¹¹⁰

This paragraph quoted from *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma* brings up two essential aspects about the function of secondary conflict. First, the secondary conflict is a conflict among bureaucrats. We earlier pointed out this issue by suggesting that the conflict was congested in the political arena. The second aspect is the importance of the elections in the functioning of the secondary conflict which was also emphasized by Küçükömer in the paragraph. The elections enabled the political system and legitimizing on which the conflict would function. As Küçükömer pointed out in another article, the opposition (non-bureaucratic) strata could derive benefit from the potential of the Islamist-easternist people through elections, especially in the Republican Turkey after the reinforcement of the multiparty system.¹¹¹ However, its early marks were also visible in the atmosphere of the early 20th century between two bureaucratic camps. The necessity of elections consequently obliged these two camps to seek social strata on which they could depend.

¹¹⁰ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, p. 71. “T.Z. Tunaya, politik çatışmada bu iki kampa bölünmeyi (bilgimize göre) ilk defa ortaya koyan kimsedir. Bizim için önemli olan, mevcut iki kampı bürokratların paylaşma olayıdır. Her iki grup da meşruiyeti savunduklarından seçim işi önem kazanıyordu, fikirler ortaya atılırken dayanılacak kitleler de aranacaktı elbet.”

¹¹¹ İdris Küçükömer, “Yeni Dengede CHP’nin Rolü.” *Ant*, no.118 (1 April 1969).

Therefore, the Turkish political structure consisted of depending on the social relationships these bureaucratic camps had constructed with social strata. In regard to this description, the first bureaucratic group, actually the Unionist and Progress Party which wished to maintain the status quo, and its successors *represented* the westernist-secularist bureaucratic cadre. This tradition aimed to maintain the westernist tradition, and they exploited the surplus product of the goods produced in the country. Their policies had no aim to develop the means of productions.

The second bureaucratic group legitimized itself mainly by *depending on* the Islamist-easternist public, which made it evaluate the westernization issue more critically. This criticism meant, from another point of view, that this dependence on the people improved the channels to develop the means and relations of productions because the second bureaucratic group could build certain links with the masses who had primary roles in the production relations. Thus, Küçükömer suggested here that the conventional conceptualizations of the Kemalist intellectuals on reactionarism and progressivism had to be altered to reflect that the conventional left (the Union and Progress Party and its successors; thus, the RPP) had to be conceived as the right and vice versa was true, too. This description was constituted of mainly the famous right-left table of Küçükömer in his book *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*. (See Appendix A)

The differentiation between *representation* and *dependence* must be emphasized here. The existences of these conceptualizations were the consequence of the dominance of the political field with the bureaucratic cadre. Regarding this condition, either the bureaucracy represented its own interests or they depended on other social strata to pursue their own interests, but did not represent the interests of the common people. The political intervention of the people in the political system or

their political struggle was either eliminated or became indirect. The notables could penetrate the system temporarily thanks to its coalition with the bureaucratic cadre however the representation of the people was eliminated since the structure based on the secondary conflict was constructed. The primary and secondary conflict differentiates here on following grounds: In the primary conflict, the people were able to enable their real representation through its political struggle because the people are one of the parties of the conflict. Nonetheless, the people were indirectly taken into account in the secondary conflict. The people were under the shadow of a collaboration of bureaucracy and notables who in fact only depended on them and used the speculative power of them on behalf of their own policies. Therefore, the secondary conflict shaded the primary conflicts and obstructed its development. As Ahmet Murat Aytaç asserts, Küçükömer either addressed indeed a certain group who were nominees to represent the real interest of the people or he was warning socialist intellectuals of the 1960s.¹¹²

In regard to this described table, Küçükömer suggested a peculiar reading of modernization history. According to him, the history of the Turkish modernization was in fact a history of detention, the detention of social development due to the obstructive effect of the secondary conflict on the primary conflict.¹¹³ Thus, we may

¹¹² Ahmet Murat Aytaç, “1960 Sonrası Düşünüşte Siyaset ve Toplum İlişkileri: Berkes, Küçükömer ve Mardin Üzerine Bir Deneme,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 106 (2006).

¹¹³ Actually, the issue of detention covers all the westernization approaches, too. The question of modernization or westernization appeared as a response to a sense of detention in regard to the advancement of western societies. Murat Güzel, “Türk Düşüncesinde Europe Fetişizmi”, *Tezkire*, no. 29 (2002): 104-136. As Tekin and Toker asserts, Turkish intellectuals claimed westernism had a positivist and enlightenmentalist standpoint. Tekin and Toker, “Batıcı Siyasi Düşüncenin Karakteristikleri ve Evreleri”, pp. 84-87. The comparison of this point to the progressive historical line described by enlightenment philosophers can give us a significant hint as they suggested stages of history from primitiveness to advancement Marxist historical line was also fitting to those understanding. In fact, Küçükömer shares the idea of the backwardness of Ottoman society, too. However, his approach claims that the westernist idea to deal with this backwardness recreates it

argue that there was a continuation from the early days of the Turkish modernization to the 1960s, the continuation of the westernization as the alienation of the order.

A Comparison of Küçükömer's Approach to the Center-Periphery Analysis of Şerif Mardin

Şerif Mardin's article "Center Periphery Relation: a Key to Turkish Politics?"¹¹⁴ explains Küçükömer's approach more deliberately. First of all, as indicated before, the 1960s was a very fruitful era for studies on history or historical sociology. As Kurtuluş Kayalı asserts, Mardin can be evaluated also as a contributor to this era, especially with his book *The Political Views of the Young Turks* (1963). But his article on the relationship between center and periphery (1973) can also be perceived as a further analysis of historical sociology and politics. Therefore, the investigation of this article with the other works published in the 1960s and 1970s can give us different points of view regarding the different standpoints of leftist intellectuals and Şerif Mardin. In addition to this, Mardin's suggestion based on a center-periphery analysis evaluated a more Turkey-centered analysis although the schema of center-periphery was borrowed mostly from Edward Shils.¹¹⁵

again and again whereas the conventional approach discusses only about the methodology of westernism.

¹¹⁴ Şerif Mardin, "Türk Siyasetini Açıklayabilecek Bir Anahtar: Merkez-Çevre İlişkileri" in *Makaleler 1: Türkiye'de Toplum ve Siyaset*, edited by Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, 34-76. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992.)

¹¹⁵ Ahmet Murat Aytaç, "1960 Sonrası Düşünüşte Siyaset ve Toplum İlişkileri: Berkes, Küçükömer ve Mardin Üzerine Bir Deneme", *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 106 (2006).

Mardin's article will be discussed according to three points. First of all, we must give some attention to Mardin's main axiom, which he asserts with a quotation from Edward Shils: "The society has a center". As understood from the title of the article, Mardin borrows the conceptualizations of center and periphery as a suggestion to evaluate Turkish politics. Here, our emphasis would be the point that the center-periphery relationship has continuity in Turkish society from the classical Ottoman to the Republican era. Thus, the center-periphery relationship is not a consequence of Turkish modernization or westernization, but a structure also peculiar to Turkey, but with some alterations according to the conjuncture.

Second, in the classical period of the Ottoman state, we talk about a center-periphery relationship between *sultan* and *reaya*, whereas the relationship altered with the dissolution of the social order and Turkish modernization into a relationship between the bureaucratic center and a periphery of notables. While the social discontinuity between *bureaucracy* and the people still existed, the notables could form an intermediary role between them as a local decision-making actor. The most significant characteristics between the bureaucracy and the notables was that the notables were not allowed to interfere the national-wide decision-making processes. The rise of the Democratic Party was also a reflection of a claim to use its own initiative on the national scale, regarding changing economic and political conditions in Turkey and the world.

Cultural and economic differences between center and periphery always existed, but the cultural gap in the Republican era as a consequence of the modernization program caused a failure in the relationship between center and

periphery, “(this) cultural gap brought the revolutions to a deadlock politically.”¹¹⁶ Those revolutions or sutructural and superstructural adjustments remained local and created a disagreement between the operators and the common people. Consequently, a quest for legitimization emerged for the bureaucratic center.

Although there are similarities between the approaches of Mardin and Küçükömer, there are also big differences. First of all, Küçükömer also described continuity between the Ottoman and Republican eras, and united the whole Turkish modernization under one issue; however, he also tried to differentiate the classical Ottoman era from the last two centuries of Ottoman society after the beginning of social dissolution in the empire. The significance of this point is a consequence of their different evaluations on the social development. Actually, Küçükömer asserted also that there was an experience of power and actor shift in the relationship between sultan and *reaya* after modernization efforts had been started. Regarding this points, it seems that the center-periphery analysis was also included in the approach of Küçükömer, but with a different aspect. In Küçükömer’s work, the conflict at the beginning of the westernization was not presented as a natural continuation of the previous center-periphery relationship. In fact, it was a secondary conflict which covered the actual, primary conflict at the social base.

In comparison, we find one social level even (if it was not one dimensional) in Mardin’s suggestions, whereas we find two social levels in Küçükömer’s one. This analysis, based on one level, normalizes the existence of Kemalism: Kemalism can be seen as a natural evolution of the center-periphery relationship; the problems

¹¹⁶ Alim Arlı, *Oryantalizm Oksidentalizm ve Şerif Mardin*. (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2004), p. 84. “(Bu) kültürel boşluk devrimleri siyaseten bir çıkmaza sokmaktadır.”

experienced were only the consequences of false implementations. If Kemalism would charge the appropriate implementations to close the gap between the bureaucratic cadre and the people and functionalize the intermediary actors in national wide¹¹⁷ the problems of modernization could also be overcome.

Second, we have to look at the side of the conflicts emerging with the modernization. According to Mardin, the center was constituted of a bureaucracy whereas the periphery is composed of the togetherness between the people and the notables and indeed mostly of the notables. The people were included in the periphery with the intermediary role of the notables. The main issue in this relationship was the power conflict between the bureaucracy and the notables, and a cultural gap between the bureaucracy and the people. The composition of this power conflict and cultural gap was the real cause of the tension between center and periphery.

Nonetheless, in Küçükömer's approach, the secondary conflict was a conflict of two bureaucratic groups. The bureaucratic cadre, which even can not constitute a class, split into two because of a divergence in ideas, and then these two groups started to look for a social stratum on which to depend. In this manner, with the dependence of the second group on the Islamist-easternist public, the conflict between westernist-secularist bureaucracy and Islamist-easternist people was created once again. Actually, the people were excluded from the political sphere whereas the

¹¹⁷ Those intermediary actors were mainly local notables. As Mardin points out, personal relationships played a key role in the construction of so-called civil society. See Şerif Mardin, *Bediüzzaman Said Nursi Olayı: Modern Türkiye'de Din ve Toplumsal Değişim*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992, p. 24. Therefore, the personal relationships around Islamic notions and sects could also play an intermediary role beside local notables. Mardin asserts that our democratic tradition lacks the notion of civil society but had an Islamist populism which from the classical Ottoman era to the 1970s (Mardin indicates here the emergence of the Nationalist Peace Party (Milli Selamet Partisi) as a form of political Islam) could play a protesting role which could remember us the role of civil society in the west. See Şerif Mardin, "Sivil Toplum" in *Türkiye'de Toplum ve Siyaset*. Edited by Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder,. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992,) pp. 16-18.

notables could penetrate it as far as they wanted making coalitions with the bureaucratic cadre.

Thus, Şerif Mardin is predicated on only one conflict between different social strata whereas Küçükömer points out two conflicts, one intra-stratum (secondary) and one inter-stratum (primary) conflict. But the political sphere was covered with the intra-stratum conflict which spreads through the elections to the whole society. Therefore, the center-periphery relationship in Mardin's analysis can be perceived as consistent with the social development, and Küçükömer's description of the conflict between Islamists and westernist as secondary become meaningful.

Third, we have to look at the cultural-economic relationships in those social conflicts both in Mardin's and also Küçükömer's approaches. It was mentioned before that the cultural gap between the bureaucratic center and the periphery in Mardin's thought had an obstructive aspect to the revolutionist implementations of bureaucratic cadre. Moreover, there was also a differentiation of economic interests between center and periphery. However, the main motive in the center-periphery relationship was this cultural gap. In one of the conversations with Şerif Mardin, the interviewer reminds Mardin the critics of the critiques of his analysis that the analysis did not contain economic and class-based processes. Mardin's answer does not challenge this question.¹¹⁸ But regarding Küçükömer's analysis, we may talk about two levels of discussions based on cultural and economic relationships which were actually hierarchical. If the cultural secondary conflict could be get over, than the primary economic conflict would be focused on.

¹¹⁸ Ahmet Çiğdem et al. "Şerif Mardin'le Merkez-Çevre Analizi Üzerine,," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 105 (2006): 7-10.

Here we may look Ali Gevgilili's evaluation of the developing relationships in the periphery:

Beside the direct and autonomous access into the political life in rare conditions, the peripheral and group relationships enables people from various regions and strata also an indirect and involuntary or mobilized access in the starting stage (of the modernization). This political mobilization which was started due to peripheral constraints occasionally and also sometimes due to effective institutions and persons (like mosque, church, *bey*, *ağa*, *şeyh*, someone with excessive wealth and power) raises the contemporary political motivations functioning for the mobilized masses or in their name to consciousness level, in the last stage.¹¹⁹

Gevgilili presents this description as a general overview of the modernization process. But we may comment also that the center-periphery analysis accepted this general description as a useful means to describe the Turkish society. Or at least, Mardin tries to suggest that if the peripheral relationships could be raised to the above-mentioned level, the existing problems of Turkish society based on center-periphery relationship could be solved. However, Küçükömer asserted that due to political structure of Turkey such a peripheral relationship could not appear or the existing peripheral relationship based on the *dependence* relationship between the second bureaucratic group and the periphery was actually an obstruction to a political mobilization in the name of the masses. Gevgilili reminds us of this peculiarity of Turkish society by referring to Küçükömer:

The world view, cultural or socio-political struggle means sent by the foreign system creates doubtless a though dilemma or the phenomena of the

¹¹⁹ Ali Gevgilili, *Yükseliş ve Düşüş* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1981), pp. 198-199. "Çevre ve grup ilişkileri, çeşitli yörelerde ve kesimlerde bulunan insanlara, ender koşullarda siyasal yaşama doğrudan bir özerk katılmanın yanı sıra; başlangıç aşamalarında çeşitli çevre yönlendirmeleri altında istem dışı ya da sürüklenilerek (mobilize) katılmayı da getirir. Bazan çevresel zorlamalar bazan da (cami, kilise, bey, ağa, şeyh, aşırı varlıklı ve güçlü biri gibi) etkin kurum ya da kişiler nedeniyle başlatılan bu siyasal sürükleniş, en son aşamada, sürüklenen kesimin kendisi için ya da kendisi adına işleyecek olan çağdaş politik güdülerini bilinç üstüne çıkaracaktır."

alienation of the order, if we refer to the interesting definition of İdris Küçükömer, with its whole dimensions in internal world of Turkey¹²⁰

Gevgilili's emphasis on foreign system is crucial, here. As we mentioned before, Küçükömer continuously called attention to the fact that the social development of a country could be achieved successfully only by developing internal social dynamics. But the transfer of foreign moral and material system to Turkey in fact inhibited such an internal development. Therefore, the real relationship between center and periphery could not be deconstructed unless these notions of "the world view, means cultural and socio-political struggle" would not be analyzed.

Three points are evaluated together, it may be concluded that the main differentiation between Mardin and Küçükömer lies in the questions they had before the start of their analyses. Mardin wanted to suggest a model for Turkish politics, possibly taking the 1971 memorandum into consideration. "The essence of the issue was the endeavor of the center to take the periphery under control."¹²¹ His was only a suggestion of a model which could make the evaluation of Turkish politics more possible. The question mark at the end of the title of the article refers actually to this point, too. The center-periphery analysis was therefore a scientific quest; it was a political analysis written by scientific concerns. On the other hand, Küçükömer was motivated by more political concerns on the socio-political obstruction. He evaluated the current political structure as an obstruction before the social development and, by

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 199. "Dış sistemin göndermekte olduğu dünya görüşü, kültür ya da sosyo/politik savaşım araçları, Türkiye'nin iç dünyasında kuşkusuz çetin bir ikilemi ya da İdris Küçükömer'in ilginç tanımlamasıyla düzenin yabancılaşması olgusunu tüm boyutlarıyla yaratacaktır."

¹²¹ Mardin, p. 7. "Konunun özü merkezin çevreyi kontrol altına almak için sarfettiği çabadır."

reacting to this fact, he tried to construct a political strategy. Küçükömer deliberately questioned the existing system.

The apparent difference between Mardin and Küçükömer may also explain the difference of attention in Turkish academies to their analysis in which Mardin's analysis get intense attention whereas Küçükömer's is often ignored.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICS AND PEOPLE

Autonomized and Liberalized Political Field In Turkey

Turkey faced its first long lasting period of multi-party democracy beginning in 1945; however, it cannot be said that this process of democratization presented Turkey with a fully autonomized or liberalized political field. With liberalization is meant the development of new political actors who come from and represent the interests of people directly: liberation from the political control of the bureaucratic cadre or “Unionist” (*İttihatçı*) political culture of Turkey. Autonomization means here in this regard a certain degree of liberalization under the control of governors.

As commonly known, the founded political parties and their predecessors in Turkish politics from the Ottoman to the Republican era represented in fact a cadre or a coalition of bureaucrats of different political perceptions and notables. In the single-party era, this coalition was consolidated in the Republican People’s Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*), although some failed attempts to create a two party system appeared, as in the case of the foundations of the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) or Free Party (*Serbes Fırka*). The Democrat Party was also an outcome of a split in the RPP; so, it continued the legacy of its predecessors. The newly appearing two-party era after 1945 was actually a new period in the conventional Turkish political culture; maybe not as a consolidation in one party, but as a split into two parties, one of which would later seize power for the first time in Republican Turkey. But the main issue here is that the two-party system

or democratization of the political system was not a consequence of a struggle in the name of democracy or political ideologies, but stemmed from the struggle between two groups in the governing cadre of the country. “Therefore,” as Bayram Kaçmazoğlu cites, “the history of Turkish democracy was not constituted as a gain of people’s movements depending on social base and social classes but fall out in between the framework of the perceptions of governors and the limits they allow.”¹²² The era after 1945 was only a new face for the old struggle in Turkish politics.

The continuation of the conventional Turkish political culture was only one face of the emerging character of Turkish democracy after 1945. Twenty-four parties were founded between 1945 and 1950 which were either closed by the state or by its founders because of the disinterest of the people. Most of those parties had Islamic inclinations. Also, there was visible pressure in universities and also in social life against leftist intellectuals. Many parties, labor unions, associations and reviews were prohibited by the state.¹²³ No uncontrolled or uncontrollable political tendency was allowed during the period.

Though this character of the political establishment throughout Turkish history, it is still possible to talk about some degree of autonomy for political reaction. This was an outcome of the “two”-party system. First of all, this “two” meant that people could make a choice by which they could show their reaction against former political decisions. As Kemal Karpat asserts, the changes in the political system together with the changes in economic and social life “effected the

¹²² Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *Demokrat Parti Dönemi Toplumsal Tartışmaları* (İstanbul: Birey yay., 1998), p. 23. “Bu nedenle, Türkiye’nin demokrasi tarihi, toplumsal tabandan gelen halk hareketleri ve toplumsal sınıfların bir kazanımı olarak değil, yöneticilerin algılama biçimleri ve izin verdikleri sınırlar çerçevesinde oluşmuştur.”

¹²³ *ibid.*, pp. 25-28.

mentality and attitudes which in turn brought the peasants, the most ignored class in Turkey, into politics.”¹²⁴ The success of the DP in the elections of 1950 was to a certain degree a reaction against the bureaucratic oppression of the RPP. Second, the emergence of the people’s preference put pressure on the policies of the parties. New strategies had to be developed in order to attract votes from various social strata. The RPP was to be especially observed on this point. From 1945, the party changed its strategic decisions on policies in economics, religion or land reform which would lead the party to be condemned as betraying the Kemalist revolutions.¹²⁵

Another example of change in the party was visible at the end of the 1950s when a “rejuvenation” in the RPP was experienced which made it possible for them to take some steps towards a new political opposition and policies based on “democratic and civil rights, especially workers, and a pluralist parliamentary system guaranteeing the rights of political minorities.”¹²⁶ While this process can be read as a changing atmosphere on relationship between politics and the people, we must also pay attention to the newly growing cadres and intellectuals, one of whom was Doğan Avcıoğlu.¹²⁷

The 1960s, however, gave various social strata the opportunity of a more and almost fully liberalized political realm. The endeavors of the single-party era to hinder autonomized political actors turned after 1945 into efforts to hinder liberalized

¹²⁴ Kemal Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi – Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Temeller*. (İstanbul: Afa Yayınları, 1996), p. 276. “Gerek parti gelişmeleri gerekse ekonomik ve sosyal değişiklikler, zihniyet ve davranışlara tesir ederek Türkiye’nin en çok ihmale uğramış sınıfı olan köylüleri politikanın içine soktu.”

¹²⁵ Emin Alper, *An Indigenious Social Democracy: The Democratic Left Thought in Turkish Politics 1972-1975* (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, unpublished master thesis, 2003), p. 11.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 15.

¹²⁷ Hikmet Özdemir, *Doğan Avcıoğlu* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınları, 2000), p. 15.

ones. This led to the prohibition of certain political parties, associations, and trade unions etc., (among them Nation Party (*Millet Partisi*), Socialist Party of Turkey, Union of Worker Syndicates), which were condemned as being communist or religiously oriented. The 1960s was a fruitful decade for the emergence of liberalized political actors who would seek touch points with the people. Therefore, these characteristics of the decade led the political realm to widen to radical points (under the concepts of “left” and “right”) rather than to be consolidated in “center.”¹²⁸

The first big step of this political liberalization era in the 1960s was the foundation of the Worker’s Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*). The WPT appeared first as a political attempt of the worker’s unions, but it actually did not prepare a political program which would reflect the interest of the workers or other social classes. The party had simply no ideological, strategic or even a particular political orientation or program. The founders of the party applied to the known socialist intellectuals of the era. These intellectuals, like Mehmet Ali Aybar, abdicated to found another socialist party after they heard about the foundation of the WPT. So, they prepared a constitution and program for the WPT. Later, with the penetration of those intellectuals into the governing cadre of the party, the WPT took on a more ideological, namely socialist, character.¹²⁹ With the WPT organization, the

¹²⁸ The political standpoints of “left”, “right” and “center” were to be constructed and learned throughout the decade. Therefore, it is hard to deliver a definition of these conceptualizations in the 1960s. Rather, we can talk about a catastrophe. This contradictory and controversial appearance of left-right and center is most clearly visible in the discourse of “Left of the center” which from one side was used by the RPP members with an emphasis on “center” to estrange the party in the eyes of people from radical politics and in fact from socialism; and from other side was used by the Justice Party members with an emphasis on “left” to condemn the RPP as being communist with the expression of “the left of the center is the way to Moscow” (Ortanın solu Moskova yoludur). See Yunus Emre, *The Genesis of the Left of the Center in Turkey: 1965-1967*. (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi: unpublished master thesis, 2007), pp. 56-59, 90.

¹²⁹ Sadun Aren, *TİP Olayı: 1961-1971* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1993), p. 33.

most interesting thing that stood out was the duality of workers and intellectuals which was reflected in the constitution. According to the constitution of the party, the party assembly would be constituted half and half by each group.¹³⁰ This emphasis on worker members shows us actually that the intellectual wing of the WPT wanted people to come into politics directly, although the main initiative in the party seems to have been to control intellectuals. At all events, the approach of the WPT was certainly different from that of the social engineering facilities of previous decades.

Another party as an outcome of the political liberalization process was the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*) which was founded towards the end of the period in January 1970.¹³¹ As Kurtuluş Kayalı emphasizes, the foundation of the NOP has a meaning in the increasing civilian character regarding the civil-military duality of the Turkish political culture. It appeared as a reaction to non-civilianization, not only in the Turkish political culture but also in the JP itself.¹³² The NOP and later parties following the NOP in later decades are represented as favorers of Anatolian middle/petty dealers, which can be seen also in its essential triggers as a reaction to the JP's policy to cooperate with big industrialists.¹³³ In

¹³⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar intended also to allocate more seats to members from workers but they later gave over it because they did not want to let the party to be perceived as communist due to the connotations of "worker."

¹³¹ Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, *Türkiye'de Modernleşme Din ve Parti Politikası "MSP Örnek Olayı"* (İstanbul: Alan Yayınları, 1985), p. 99.

¹³² Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Ordu ve Siyaset 27 Mayıs-12 Mart* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), p. 162-178. Kurtuluş Kayalı qualifies the political liberalization not as an ongoing process but emphasizes that it appears according to the reflexes of military-bureaucracy, intellectual strata and people. Therefore, the parties and especially the Justice Party and RPP took positions according to those reflexes and their abilities to come to power. Therefore, the military intervention in politics is experienced with continuously but with different measures. The cases of March 12 and May 27 can be read from this perspective as a concentration of military reflexes in society when the civilianization as a threat to the interest of bureaucratic-military cadre comes to a critical point. All in all, we may perceive political liberalization in Turkey in a relative way to previous decades and in certain political controls of constitutional forces.

¹³³ Sarıbay, *Türkiye'de Modernleşme Din ve Parti Politikası "MSP Örnek Olayı"*, p. 98-105.

addition to economic relationships of the party, we must also add the superstructural reactionary character of Islamism. The NOP was the first party that had the chance to deliver a politics of Islamism and to construct a political tradition, namely “the National View” (*Milli Görüş*). These two main characterizations of the NOP suggest that the party itself engendered a rapprochement with the people in economic (favoring the small capital against big industrialists) and then cultural/ideological phases (emphasis on Islam rather than secularism); and therefore, it represented itself as a liberalized political party from the conventional “unionist” Turkish political culture which monopolized political activities in the hands of the governing elites stemming from bureaucratic cadres and the stratum of notables.¹³⁴

Regarding the above-mentioned points, it may be concluded in the suggestion that political liberalization could be achieved only through the development of ways by which the people’s political preferences could be canalized in actual politics. But we must take into consideration that we may not claim that the existence of autonomized political figures led directly to strategies oriented to the people’s opinion. Two points have to be emphasized: The indirect role of the people’s opinion should be accepted for the autonomization of political culture if we remember the positions and changes in policies of the DP/JP and the RPP from 1945 on. Through people-oriented politics alterations in the political structure of the power of the relationship between intellectuals, bureaucracy, power and the people must occur. Second, even the politics of the political liberalization era emerges not directly from the people; but

¹³⁴ The liberal/independent character of the NOP from the “unionism” is a *relative* determining to the positions of the JP and the RPP. Therefore, we have to keep in mind that there is also comments on the NOP tradition which evaluates it as (not main but) another arm of the DP-JP tradition. See Hakan Arslanbenzer, “İslamcılığı Sömüren Siyaset,” *Yeni Şafak* (04.07.2006).

the people's opinion inevitably influenced the agenda of politics, even after the military interventions: To produce a new politics of populism, definitions of the people, and strategies to approach to people became *de rigueur* for all political actors.

The change in the character of the relationship between politics and the people was reflected in the newly appearing intellectuals in Turkey. First of all, the political liberalization and autonomization of intellectuals from power were outcomes of the same process. In a new era where intellectuals were no longer oriented by governors directly,¹³⁵ intellectuals would seek new political strategies by which they could seize power. Regarding these quests for political strategy and the changing character of the relationship between the people and politics, it may be concluded that the intellectuals were at the edge of a turning point where they either would prefer to construct their strategy on a through power-oriented politics by which the main aim would to seize power on a pragmatic level where the actual social relationships and therefore the role of people would be ignored. This strategy in fact corresponds to neo-Kemalism, or the intellectuals would prefer to read the changing patterns of the relationship between politics and the people carefully and so deliver their strategy on a through the people-oriented politics which would reinforce political liberalization as well.

¹³⁵ We may remember the differences between the reviews of *Kadro* and *Yön* that the former tried to produce a theoretical background for the power whereas the latter tried to produce political strategy to seize power.

Strategy through Power: Doğan Avcıoğlu and Anti-parliamentarism

Gökhan Atılğan determines five different political strategies for seizing power were been discussed and fixed in the reviews of *Yön* and *Devrim*, consequently for Doğan Avcıoğlu. These strategies differed from parliamentarist to anti-parliamentarist ones based, on the conjuncture of the day.¹³⁶ This rapid change in such a short time should not be surprising for the reason that the 1960s was a decade of a quest for political orientation among the Turkish left. The political hopes and disappointments were reflected in the minds and thoughts of the intellectuals. More or less, the changes in thought can be followed through the works of such intellectuals as Mehmet Ali Aybar, Doğan Avcıoğlu or İdris Küçükömer. But we may add that they, most of the intellectuals of the era, were able to put together their thoughts as a coherent approach by the end of the decade.¹³⁷ Avcıoğlu also ended up at a final decision both on political thought and a strategy which was based mainly on anti-parliamentarism.

Regarding Turkish history, four factors led Doğan Avcıoğlu to a decision on anti-parliamentarism: The first of them depends more on his historical evaluations of Turkish history in which he interpreted the Republican era as a conflict between progressivist, nationalist and revolutionist vital forces and reactionary notables. The

¹³⁶ Gökhan Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar: Yön-Devrim Hareketi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Sosyal Tarih Araştırma Vakfı, 2002), pp. 159-253.

¹³⁷ Some dates of publications of certain intellectuals' essential books may give us some idea: *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama* (İdris Küçükömer): 1969; *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* (Doğan Avcıoğlu): 1968; *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm* (Mehmet Ali Aybar); *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları* (Behice Boran); *Türkiye Sosyalizmi ve Sosyalizm* (Muzaffer Erdost): 1969, etc.

single-party era was to a certain extent a coalition between these forces. Especially in the 1930s, with the appearance of the etatist policies, wrote Avcioğlu, the revolutionary nationalist cadre was able to show its efforts. After the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1938, however, there appeared a corruption in the policies of the RPP and this corruption together with the victory of the DP in the 1950 led the reactionarists in Turkish society to revise the endeavors of the revolutionary nationalist cadre.

The second factor is related more Avcioğlu's experiences in the actual politics after the 27 May 1960. The developments after the 27 May and the disappointment of Avcioğlu by the revolutionary cadre of 27 May, the RPP and especially İsmet İnönü, his endeavors to accommodate the RPP and the WPT in an anti-imperialist coalition and also his struggle in the WPT to seize power through his colleagues in the party should be discussed. Regarding those events in the decade Avcioğlu changed his strategic approach several times from his optimistic standpoint of parliamentarism (about the 1960 constitution, the people and the revolutionary cadre of 27 May) to his pessimist standpoint about anti-parliamentarism at the end of the decade.¹³⁸

The other two factors are more related to Avcioğlu's educational experiences and the factors by which the intellectuals in the 1950s and 1960s were influenced. Avcioğlu spent some of his years of the 1950s in France for educational purposes. Those years constituted also a catastrophic and unstable atmosphere for France in

¹³⁸ As we remember often, the first review Avcioğlu published was *Yön* reflecting the quest of intellectuals for a political "orientation" in the era. *Yön* was published until the June of 1967 and thereafter Avcioğlu and his friends started to publish *Devrim* (The Revolution). This change in the names of the reviews shows us also the change in political strategies, from a more conciliatory name (which accepts all the suggestions to develop a coherent thought) to a more fixed name which excludes other strategies to seize power.

terms of parliamentary democracy together with the question on Algeria which led France to shift from the fourth to the fifth Republic founded by Charles De Gaulle in 1958. The main idea behind the foundation of the fifth Republic was to constitute a strong government which would hinder the political instability and inefficiency. One of the main supporters of the strong government idea was Pierre Mendes France, by whom Doğan Avcıoğlu was influenced mostly. Therefore, the political atmosphere and his interests in French political ideas together with the French Revolution of the 1789 and the philosophers in this age played a certain role in Avcıoğlu's thought on anti-parliamentarism.¹³⁹

Last, the impact of the Third World socialism on the Turkish intellectuals, who tried to combine socialism with nationalism and ideas on independence. However, the experiences of the Arab Ba'th Parties were also examples of cooperation between the intellectual cadres and military to seize power.¹⁴⁰ Actually, the experiences of cooperation between the civilian and military cadres in the Arab countries were fed by the idea of "incremental revolution," in which the role of the army was critical due to the lack of a developed working class. These ideas on incremental revolution and the role of the army in non-industrialized countries were the consequence of the discussions in the Soviet Russia, in the Third International (Comintern) between Trotskyist and Stalinist wings. Incremental revolution was a Stalinist idea, and as Ergun Aydınöğlu suggests this approach influenced prominent

¹³⁹ Hikmet Özdemir, *Doğan Avcıoğlu: Bir Jön Türk'ün Ardından*. (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2000), p. 13. See also Elçin Macar, "Doğan Avcıoğlu" in *Kemalizm*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p. 164-166.

¹⁴⁰ Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. 91-95.

Turkish communist figures before the 1950s.¹⁴¹ This influence is visible especially in the tradition of the Communist Party of Turkey, which played a critical role at the end of the 1960s with the idea of Nationalist Democratic Revolution (*Milli Demokratik Devrim – MDD*). Though it can not be said that those ideas stemming from Stalinism influenced Avcıoğlu's approach directly, because as is apparent in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, he never tried to build a direct link with Soviet communism, but it is clear that Avcıoğlu and other intellectuals like Avcıoğlu were influenced by those ideas indirectly and especially by observing the experiences of the Arab socialist parties.

Avcıoğlu's perspective on the Republican era reflected itself as a conflict between the single-party era and the process starting after 1945 when the concepts of the DP were on the agenda, even between 1945 and 1950 when the RPP was in power. Actually, the single-party era can be divided into two periods: One starts with the proclamation of the Republic and continues until 1931 when the policies of etatism were applied strictly. This period was an obligatory consequence of the coalition between the nationalist cadre and reactionary notables because these social groups had cooperated during the Independence War. Therefore, a balance between different interests had to be constructed. At the İzmir Economy Congress of 1923, the borders of this balance were drawn so that a state controlled liberal policy would be implemented.¹⁴² The second period was between 1931 and 1945, when etatist policies were implemented strictly by an insurance of the settlement of pro-liberal policies and intellectuals, also thanks to the experience of the Free Party, which

¹⁴¹ Ergun Aydınoglu, *Türkiye Solu (1960-1980)* (İstanbul: Verso Kitap, 2007), pp. 61-71.

¹⁴² Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 165-169.

showed the governing cadre that Turkey was not ready for a two party system due to its inner conflicts on economy and culture. In this second period, the required legal adjustments for a structural change in Turkey could not be achieved; however, it appeared still as a relative progressivism in regard to socialism as a strategy towards development.

The multi-party era after 1945 started with concessions to reactionary social strata and continued with the victory of the DP in 1950, which represented them in the parliament.¹⁴³ The DP government later implemented repressing adjustments which were constrained the ample scope of the opposition, which was mainly the RPP. Actually, the DP came to resemble the RPP of the single-party era with its repressive adjustments on the one hand, and from the other, it constructed some sort of a strong government model, which Doğan Avcıoğlu would prefer for the revolutionary nationalist cadre, “vital forces”. Two conclusions may be made from the historical evaluation of Avcıoğlu: Legal adjustments for structural changes in society can be made only through a strong government, and this strong government should be formed evidently by revolutionary nationalist cadre or “vital forces.”

Another point must be emphasized here which is the second factor mentioned above: This is what Doğan Avcıoğlu called as “gimcrackery democracy” (*cici demokrasi*) referring to the tension between the JP and the RPP in the 1960s. As Kurtuluş Kayalı points out, a quest for balance was on the agenda of Turkish politics continuously. It reflected itself as a tension between the civilianization and the bureaucratization of politics which was visible in the process, like after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk or the 27 May era. The people that gained an extra affinity

¹⁴³ Ibid, pp. 247-255.

after 1945 with the autonomization of politics came to a point where they could shake the established balance on behalf of bureaucratic-military cadre, which was evaluated by Avcıoğlu as a reactionary reflex. In the 1960s, these tactics on balance became more dependent on the development of the process of elections. In regard to the positioning of the parties according to the day and each other's places in the political realm, the parties and especially the RPP and the JP preferred to try to become closer to the people or to depend on military-bureaucratic reflexes.¹⁴⁴

In order to understand the anti-parliamentarism of Doğan Avcıoğlu, attention must be given to the RPP's preferences. Avcıoğlu did not expect the DP, which he qualified as reactionary, to lead the development steps in Turkey. But the RPP, in which he took also an intellectual role at the end of the 1950s and just after the coup d'état of 1960 as a senate member representing the party, constructed a front by which the progressive cadre had gathered and also were gathering still in the 1960s; so, the RPP was a fortress which had to be saved.

The point that must be made here is that the RPP tried to become more populist starting from 1945. It tried to change its bureaucratic policies, which just ignored the social role of the people and implemented top-to-down policies as social engineering to more a new defined populism in which new policies through the people had to be developed. These newly developed policies from 1945 to the 1960s were part of the balance game between the people and the bureaucracy. But the changing character of the RPP was evaluated by Avcıoğlu as concession to or a backward step towards reactionarism. Avcıoğlu left his hopes from İsmet İnönü which he formerly had evaluated as a wise man who could gather the vital forces

¹⁴⁴ See Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Ordu ve Siyaset 27 Mayıs-12 Mart*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları., 2005).

together and give them the consciousness of progressivism which the revolutionary cadre of 27 May lacked.¹⁴⁵

In the second half of the 1960s, Avcıoğlu started to view parliamentarism as an opportunity for a short time by which he wanted to construct a front of anti-parliamentarism based on leftist intellectuals and civil and political institutions, especially on the RPP and the WPT. Anti-imperialism meant that the socialist emphasis of leftist intellectuals should be left until the real independence of Turkey could be achieved. Avcıoğlu wrote:

The strict tie between the nationalist struggle and socialism is apparent, and we think that there is no socialist thinker who would claim the opposite. The discussions are gathered more on the question of the leadership of this nationalist struggle. There are many thinkers who claim that the nationalist struggle can only succeed if it will be realized by the leadership of the socialist forces, and otherwise, it will fall again on the lap of the imperialism. Surely, this is the most ideal solution. However, it is also far from corresponding to the facts always. In our age, the nationalist struggle can also succeed with the leadership of non-socialist forces and tend towards socialism, regarding the effects of the changing world balance of power and increasing political weight of the masses.¹⁴⁶

After an inter-fractional debate in the party, however, the WPT, which actually supported the attempts at an anti-imperialist front at the beginning declared that it will follow a program with an emphasis on socialism. The RPP feared to being called socialist if it would be in the anti-imperialist front in an era where the “left of the

¹⁴⁵ An article of Avcıoğlu in December of 1962 gives his full disappointment on İsmet İnönü after exclusion of some RPP members from the party. Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Ümitsizlik”, *Yön* No. 52 (12 December 1962).

¹⁴⁶ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Sınıf Mücadelesi, Sosyalizm ve Milliyetçilik”. *Yön*, no. 182 (23 September 1966). “*Milliyetçi mücadele ile Sosyalizm arasındaki bu çok sıkı bağ açıktır ve günümüzde, bunun aksini iddia eden Sosyalist düşünür, sanırız ki, yoktur. Tartışmalar, daha çok bu milliyetçi mücadelenin öncülüğü noktasında toplanmaktadır. Milliyetçi mücadelenin ancak Sosyalist güçlerin öncülüğünde yürütüldüğü takdirde başarıya ulaşabileceğini, aksi halde yeniden emperyalizmin kucağına düşebileceğini ileri süren birçok düşünür vardır. Şüphesiz bu, en ideal çözüm yoludur. Fakat gerçeklere her zaman uygun düşmekten uzaktır. Çağımızda, değişen dünya kuvvetdengesinin ve kütlelerin artan politik ağırlığının etkisi ile, milliyetçi mücadele, Sosyalist olmayan güçlerin liderliğinde de başarıya ulaşabilmekte ve Sosyalizme yönelebilmektedir.*”

center” discussions where criticized by the JP. From another point of view, there was a big conflict between the WTP and the *Yön* movement in which Mehmet Ali Aybar, the head of the WTP, qualified Avcıoğlu and his friend the leftist wing of the bureaucratic-militarist republican cadre. In this critique, we may see that Aybar wanted to develop a different politics from the “unionism” of the previous decades so that he could come close to people directly; he wanted them to represent themselves in the party. Also, the tension between the *Yön* movement and the WTP in the early days of the party is important in that a different workers party, namely that efforts were made to found the Employees Party (*Çalışanlar Partisi*), as opposed to the WTP.¹⁴⁷

All in all, it may concluded that the endeavors of Avcıoğlu reflected as a pragmatism in which he tried to construct a strategy to seize power in a more direct and possible way. Regarding his historical evaluation of Turkey, however, the process he experienced in the 1960s proved to him that parliamentarism was not an opportunity for implementing a political agenda.

“From Juntaism to the Defense of Civil Society”: İdris Küçükömer

Küçükömer’s thoughts at the beginning of the 1960s must be recalled if we talk about anti-parliamentarism. Küçükömer was an intellectual who was in search of non-parliamentarist political alternatives just after the 27 May coup d’etat not only with his articles in *Yön* review, but also with his collaboration or the rumors of collaboration with Talat Aydemir, who led two failed coup d’etats in 1962 and

¹⁴⁷ Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tarihi v.1* (İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1988), p. 192.

1963.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, it would be beneficial to touch on his shift from the juntaism of the early 1960s to the defence of civil society in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*. This exploration will also clarify some points on the differences between Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer.

In his articles in *Yön*, his evaluations of the social problems in Turkey are stated clearly: The main issue in Turkey was the structure and unless the structure was not changed by vital forces, nobody could expect anything from parliamentary democracy. The governors of the political system in Turkey were mostly conservative-reactionary ones (and most of the RPP members belong also to this stratum), who not only constructed the system to maintain their interests but also hindered the people from asking their own questions. So, structural change was first and foremost required to uncover the questions, the essential problems of people. Even liberal politicians could not afford a political struggle in the parliament towards progressivism because that they were not actually liberal in true sense.¹⁴⁹ All in all, a parliamentary democratic movement had no opportunity in Turkey to make certain changes towards development, which made “the vital forces” the only progressive cadre in Turkey.

Two points here have been clarified: First of all, by conservative forces Küçükömer meant the notable people (union of *ağas* and *eşraf*) in society. All the social roles were taken under control by those strata on behalf of their privileges and

¹⁴⁸ For the failed *coup d'états* of Talat Aydemir, see Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye: 1945-1980* (İstanbul: Hil Yayın, 1996), pp. 176-185. Asaf Savaş Akat mentions the relationship between Küçükömer and Aydemir. See Ahmet Davutoğlu (et al.), *İdris Küçükömer Anısına: Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum Arayışları* (İstanbul: Dünya Yerel Yönetim ve Demokrasi Akademisi, 2000), p. 95.

¹⁴⁹ We here see again that Küçükömer predicates the definition of liberal in the western history and judges Turkish liberals based on the fundamentals of liberalism in its western meaning. See İdris Küçükömer, *Cuntacılıktan Sivil Toplumculuğa* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1994), pp. 27-33.

interests. People could not undertake a counter-strike role against these notables and create an action of change, mainly because of their ignorance and traditional adherence to custom. In other words, the main social conflict was experienced *on the axis* of notables vs. people, nonetheless *between* notables vs. vital forces. The removal of people from the struggle agenda made the conflict already a non-parliamentarian one, even if a parliamentarian system worked. Therefore, the intervention of the vital forces was required to break the vicious cycle which appeared as a consequence of reactionaries in Turkey.

A second point on which needs attention is Küçükömer's definite decision on anti-parliamentarism relative to Avcıoğlu's skeptical standpoint. A methodological difference existed between two intellectuals, which we was explored in the third chapter. Küçükömer evaluated his arguments based on the roles of different social strata in social structure. That is to say, if the RPP structurally belonged to the conservative stratum, we can not expect from the party a progressive attempt to implement progressive steps in parliamentary system. He also gave some attention to the liberal character of the JP by which he cites that the JP had not an essentially liberal character in respect to its original versions in the West. If the JP could play a liberal role which corresponded to a relative progressivism in society in respect to reactionary strata, the parliamentary system could contribute to social development. It may concluded that Küçükömer gave priority to theory and judged the social-political practice based on the theory he accepted, whereas Doğan Avcıoğlu watched periodical alterations in the character of Turkish politics and the relationship between civilianization and bureaucratization, and tried to evaluate those developments based on a pragmatic judgment. When there appeared no other way to reach the goals he determined in parliamentary system, he finally decided on anti-parliamentarism.

Küçükömer's shift to a civil socialist understanding which evaluated parliamentary system as a possibility with the political activism in civil society to make a change in social structure was experienced through the development of a definition of 'relative role' of political parties. Previously, he had described the primary social conflict between notables and vital forces; however, he later realized the relative role of the DP to the RPP in the development of the means and relations of productions, which were based mainly on the effects and role of the people in elections. He defined this relative role with the conceptualization of to *represent* and to *depend on* in which the RPP represented the militarist-bureaucratic, secularist-westernist cadre whereas the DP only depended on the people not represented them.

This meant still a distance between the DP and the people but that the DP observed the relationship between the ideological standpoint of the people and the relations of productions, refiguring its politics in respect to them.¹⁵⁰ Küçükömer's shift to a more Marxist methodology in which he looked for social roles developing and hindering the productions relations had an effect on his shift from juntaism to the defense of civil society. Previously, he had explored the social-political structure and individual and economic characters of so-called liberal and conservative strata; now, he based his approach on a distinction between reactionary and progressive in respect to the development of the means and relations of production. This consequently led him to explore the different role of republican and democrat traditions in Turkish politics in which the democrat tradition (from the Freedom and Entente Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*) to the DP in the 1950s) appeared to have a developing role in respect to the republican tradition (from the Union and Progress Party (*İttihat*

¹⁵⁰ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2001), pp. 71-73

ve Terakki Fırkası) to the RPP). That this relative role indicated politics through the role of people in elections brought the parliamentary system onto the agenda of İdris Küçükömer.

Perspectives on Turkish Democracy

The Turkish intellectual is in every season passionately in love with another unknown. He was *ıslahatçı* in the midst of the previous century; then, he became *ihtilalci*; later, *inkılâpçı*. And the history has cheered the victory of a new hero since May 27: Revolutionist. Now, we are in a prison composed of two cells; one of them is for revolutionists, the other for reactionarists.¹⁵¹

Two main factors may be determined behind the defense of anti-parliamentarist ideas: First is the evaluation of the democratization process in Turkey as a reactionary step in Turkish modernization. This view actually does not tolerate the penetration of the people into politics and indeed suggests that the people have to stay away from politics until a mature ground for democracy has been developed by progressive or vital forces.

As Küçükömer claims in his early articles, the main issue is structural (*bünyesel*) which was why Turkey needed urgent structural (super- and substructural)

¹⁵¹ Cemil Meriç, *Mağaradakiler*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1997), p. 111. “*Türk aydını her mevsim bir başka meçhulün sevdalıdır. Geçen asrın ortalarında ıslahatçıdır, sonra ihtilalci olur, sonra inkılâpçı. Ve tarih 27 Mayıs’tan bu yana yeni bir kahramanın zaferine alkış tutar: Devrimci. Artık iki hücreli bir mahpesteyiz; hücrenin biri devrimcilerin, öteki gericilerin.*” Three words in the translation are left with their original Turkish because it is hard to translate them exactly regarding to their conditions in the ages they were used. Actually, *ıslahatçı* and *inkılâpçı* are some-like reformist and *ihtilalci* and *devrimci* are for revolutionist. But each of those terms indeed have a more sophisticated definition according to their context. The three words are left in the original Turkish so as to avoid this possible confusion due to translation and we only translated *devrimci* as revolutionist because *devrimci* was the most common term referring to revolutionists in the 1960s which was also indicated by Meriç in the passage. From another point of view, the resemblance of those terms point out the continuation of political strategy of Turkish intellectuals from its genesis to the 1960s.

adjustments by a strong government.¹⁵² This standpoint corresponded to the discourse of “for people despite people” (*halk için halka rağmen*), accomplishing to which the elites of a society can make top-down decisions for the well-being of people though the people may oppose those adjustments. The conflict between reactionary and progressive standpoints appears here as two poles of social life. Then, we may talk here of two different mentalities of people and bureaucratic elites or intellectuals, the former carrying out a reactionary, the latter a progressive mentality.¹⁵³ Based on these different mentalities, Avcıoğlu would suggest that democracy only feeds the conflictual social condition due to the lack of a proper consciousness of people in the elections and he consequently supported anti-parliamentarist strategies. Whereas Küçükömer, now in his later articles, would emphasize the role of people through democracy in the economic and social development of Turkey: Democracy would satisfy an ideological integration between nation and state,¹⁵⁴ which in turn would develop the means and relations of production in Turkey thanks to the relative progressive role of the Democrat Party in regard to the Republican People’s Party. Actually, Küçükömer did not claim that people’s politics through elections was based on a very revolutionary dynamics towards a proper development in Turkey. But the politics delivered through elections

¹⁵² İdris Küçükömer, *Cuntacılıktan Sivil Topluma* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1994), pp. 27-33.

¹⁵³ As Niyazi Berkes suggests the clash between two mentalities was described between East and West or Christian and Islamic world which all in fact corresponded to a clash between “two cultures of systems of civilization”. And the starting point of this conflict is even essential in the work of Berkes which is actually the National Independence War. See Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003), p. 526.

¹⁵⁴ According to Nuray Mert, the main problem about the state was not its structural being but its structural relationship with the nation. So, the essential issue for Küçükömer was to overcome the disconnected and even contradictory relationship between state and nation or the social strata corresponding to state and nation. See Nuray Mert, “İdris Küçükömer ve ‘Düzenin Yabancılaşması’” in *Doğu Batı* (May-June-July 2000), pp. 70-72.

would have a developing effect in social dynamics because of the mutual relationship between the substructural and superstructural components of social life.

The second factor behind the anti-parliamentarist ideas is strictly bound to the methodological premises of both Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer, which were discussed in the Chapter Two. That Avcıoğlu did not give attention to the development criteria of the means and relations of productions and that he put the main significance on superstructural components, means he inclined in a more pragmatist way in which structural adjustments would be imposed on society.¹⁵⁵ The pragmatism of Avcıoğlu corresponded here to his willingness to achieve social development in a fast and consequently imposing strategy even if the people might be in an alienated position to those “revolutionary” adjustments. This was what the people encountered throughout the Turkish modernization and especially in the early Republican era. If attention is given to Küçükömer, however, it is seen that he most importantly considered the reciprocal relationship between economic and cultural/ideological components by accepting the final determinacy of economic relationships, which lead him to a more democratic political strategy which actually was the only way to satisfy the mutual development of sub- and superstructure. The social development depends here mainly on the development of the means and relations of productions in regard to their engagement in the cultural/ideological existence of people.

¹⁵⁵ Here, we must not forget that the essential difference appears in their suggestion of external (Avcıoğlu) and internal (Küçükömer) intervention to the system. External intervention meant a top-down revolution by the imposition of revolutionary adjustment to the system regardless of the social dynamics which actually or were perceived as being obstructive and exploitive. Internal intervention meant to develop the social dynamics which would bring back a harmonized and peculiar progress for the country.

The ideas on democracy in the Turkish context were most prominently determined by the relationship between the people and the governing cadre of Republican Turkey. Therefore, first the approaches of Avcıoğlu and Küçükömer on the relationship between mainly three different strata in Turkey will be discussed. These strata may be differentiated basically according to their roles in the relations of productions or governing of the country. So, the people then corresponded to the peasants who constituted almost 80% of the inhabitants of Anatolia and also workers in the cities who had only corresponded to a small percentage of the population before the 1950s.¹⁵⁶ The bureaucrats had no actual role in the production process, but controlled the main governing vehicle. As Kemal Karpat wrote:

The majority of the intelligentsia, indoctrinated with the nationalist secularist ideas, remained in the few big cities, dependent on government jobs and ignorant of the nature of the happenings in the countryside. They approved the reforms needed to bring about modernization and, at the same time, ignored their economic and social aspects. Through lack of contacts, they came to view peasants as inherently opposed to change and reform, regardless of the fact that in reality the villagers were carrying the economic burden of reforms without enjoying or understanding their practical benefits.¹⁵⁷

The notables, on the other hand, were the owners of the main means of productions, and had sort of say in the governing process. It was mentioned earlier that in the early days of the Republic there was a coalition between notables and bureaucrats,

¹⁵⁶ See Yahya S. Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisadi Tarihi* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2002), p. 112. In 1927, only 8.9% of population worked in industry and 10.2% in the service sector. This proportions did not changed much until 1950s and 1960s when a more visible urbanization started with a change in economic policies. Actually, we may remember here Meltem Ahıska's suggestions that the policy of the single party era was mainly to keep the people away from political and economic decision making mechanisms; so, they actually did not tried to modernize or urbanize the people, but tried to maintain the gap between ruling and ruled strata by using classifications of western-eastern, modern-reactionary etc. See, Meltem Ahıska, "Türkiye'de Çevresiz Merkez ve 'Garbiyatçılık'" in *Toplum ve Bilim*, (105) 2006, pp. 11-29.

¹⁵⁷ Kemal H. Karpat, "Recent Political Developments in Turkey and their Social Background." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, v.38 no. 3 (July 1962), p. 310.

but this situation was only temporary and the role of notables changed indeed according to their possibility to use the advantage of establishing alliances with other social strata. Therefore, the people and the bureaucrats appeared as two poles of a social structure, whereas the notables had a more balance and power between them.

Avcıoğlu and the Experience of Turkish Democracy

The Double Mentality of Turkey

The description of the relationship between people and the governing cadre by Doğan Avcıoğlu reveals that the social conflict experienced in the country was indeed between the vital forces (nationalist progressivist bureaucrats and intellectuals) and the notables. The people, the actual majority of society, were not accepted as a political front because of their subordinate character to prominent strata. They were perceived mostly as a crowd which had to be led on the right path. Regarding the actual politics, the people were under the yoke of the notables (the union of the *eşraf* and *ağa*) because of the ongoing feudal structures. These feudal structures kept the ignorant intellectual level of the people at its lowest degree and that they were not enlightened. People simply followed the interests of their notables.

¹⁵⁸ Regarding this condition, there appears three social segments with three mentalities: First, the progressive segment of society or the nationalist bureaucrats and intellectuals (vital forces); second, the notables who played a reactionary role for

¹⁵⁸ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*.

their own privileged status; and last, the ignorant people or the real owners of labor, namely the peasants and workers who made the essential production.

Though a subordination relationship was described here between the notables and the people, it can be claimed that this subordination was actually inherited from the relationship between palace and subjects (*reaya*) in the Ottoman period. Historically, we can show it with the decentralization process of the Ottoman state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the notables and regional forces gained power over the central power, which was the palace. The periphery took over the authority of the center over the people. Though Mahmut the Second tried to hinder this decentralization, it came into an inevitable stage regarding the global development of world economics, as Doğan Avcıoğlu agreed. Consequently, there appeared a struggle between the palace and notables which led the notables to take up a position in the opposition wing. It must be kept also in mind that the governing abilities of the sultan passed to the growing Ottoman bureaucrats while the notables were increasing their authority in the country. However, despite this opposing character of the notables, they built a coalition with the bureaucrats and intellectuals of the Union and Progress Party in the Independence War and this coalition continued in the early Republican era with a temporary disregard for the struggle between bureaucrats and notables. Nonetheless, the conflict between the bureaucratic cadre and the notables came out after 1945 in a more apparent way.

All things considered together, it may be said that two of those three strata, the people and the notables, are evaluated by Avcıoğlu as supporters of reactionary, non-progressive ideas. The responsibility of progressivism was then carried out by bureaucratic-intellectual cadre, the vital forces. So, there appeared actually two

different mentalities, reactionarism (notables were directly, people were indirectly reactionary) and progressivism.

The history of the vital forces started with Namık Kemal as an example of a nationalist, patriotic intellectual bureaucrat. Before Namık Kemal, it is not possible to speak of a well-constituted intellectual stratum. The bureaucracy had taken over the basic powers of the sultan and was busy with the degenerate modernization of the Tanzimat process. So, the republican bureaucrats were actually the followers of intellectual-bureaucrats opposing to the bureaucratic cadre of the Tanzimat period. Namık Kemal, whereas, suggested the most essential ways of populism and developmentalism by pointing on the notions of homeland and nation. But this patriotism, as Avcıoğlu stated, could only reach and create an enthusiasm in the intellectual stratum; the people remained unaware of these developments at the center of the empire.¹⁵⁹ So, the separateness between people and the governors as a heritage of the Ottoman social structure could not be overcome in the early modernization process of Turkey and the system continued even in the new relations between the newly reconstructed social strata.

Consequently, the uncompromising togetherness of these strata led the country to a continuation of a subordination structure in a new form and the people were perceived always as ignorant and unreliable, which is very apparent in the novels of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, and especially in *Yaban*. In the novel we see that how an intellectual, Ahmet Celal, felt alienated from the people in the countryside and criticized their conformist and non-revolutionary attitudes during the Independence war. Yakup Kadri was simply indicating the lack of a revolutionary

¹⁵⁹ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, pp. 115-116.

consciousness among the peasants.¹⁶⁰ From a very close point of view of Yakup Kadri, Avcıoğlu suggested that the people had to be won over to the nationalist and progressive front of the vital forces, but they could not be relied until the day they separated themselves from the yoke of the notables. This point corresponded to an enlightenment of the people, which constituted the populism (*halkçılık*) of Doğan Avcıoğlu:

In our country, it is easy to come into power even by opposing to the will of the people, but it is very difficult to develop the country by opposing people. A government which does not achieve the support of the people, can not exceed the borders of despotism. (...) Today, there is a gulf between the people and revolutionary forces who wish the happiness of the people, too. (...) The people still support the exploiting cadre instead of populist intellectuals! In such a situation, the main goal of revolutionary forces should be to dissolve this irrational and illogical controversy and to gain the people.¹⁶¹

In this early article, it is seen how Avcıoğlu differentiates between the strategies while and before seizing power. The mental separateness between the westernized intellectuals and the reactionary people is not an obstacle for political strategies to seize power, but an obstacle to make structural adjustments. So, if the actual power gathered in the hands of the westernized or enlightened intellectuals even the people would accept their development policies. The westernization process, therefore, meant the westernization of the people's mentality by the westernized mentality of the intellectuals.

¹⁶⁰ See Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000). If we consider that Yakup Kadri himself was a republican intellectual, it would be very essential to see how the bureaucratic and intellectual cadre had positioned himself to people.

¹⁶¹ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Cepheler Beliriyor" *Yön* No.44 (17 October 1962) in *Atatürkçülük, Milliyetçilik, Sosyalizm* (İstanbul: İleri Yayınları, 2006), pp. 162-165. "Memleketimizde halka rağmen iktidara gelmek çok kolay, fakat halka rağmen memleketi ileri götürmek çok zor. Halkı kazanmayan bir iktidar, zorbalıktan başka bir şey yapamaz. (...) Bugün de halk kütleleri ile halkın mutluluğunu isteyen devrimci kuvvetler arasında bir uçurum vardır. (...) Halk halen sömürücü kadroyu, halkçı aydınlara tercih etmektedir! Bu durumda devrimci kuvvetlerin hareket noktası, akla ve mantığa aykırı düşen bu tezadı kaldırmak ve halkı kazanmak olmalıdır."

The Consequences of Turkish Democracy

Regarding this double mentality approach, Avcıoğlu's evaluation of the experience of Turkish democracy is significant. With democratization process, we actually mean the process after 1946 when Turkey passed to a multi-party system. But indeed, the experience of the early Republican era with the efforts to create an opposing party, such as the Progressive Republican Party or the Free Party, is also a component of the evaluations on Turkish democracy, because the basic relations between social strata played the key roles in the functioning of the democratic processes regarding the conjuncture of the day, both in Turkey and in the world.

Actually, Avcıoğlu had two different angles for evaluating democracy. These two angles were closely related to the self-expression of people's will: First, democracy had a revolutionary character. The bureaucratic pressure of the single-party era which increased during the Second World War especially and created widespread social displeasure was one of the main internal triggers of the foundation of the multi-party system. Therefore, the self-expression of people's will through elections was a revolutionary step in order to get rid of the obstructing pressures on people and reach the westernization goals. This revolutionary character also had some affects on political parties and primarily on the RPP in that they had to change their policies and practices regarding the will of the workers and masses.¹⁶²

The second point is closely related to the evaluation of people as being ignorant and bound to "social groups related to land and capital." The multi-party era

¹⁶² Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni*, p. 254.

saw these groups in the Republican era for the first time seizing the power in their own hands though their limited authority in the early days of the Republican Turkey. “In a social structure based still on pre-capitalist social order’s left over, the general ballot (...) strengthened the sovereign powers rather than defraying it.” The power of the general ballot was so affective that not only the rise of the above-mentioned social groups were visible in the DP, but also the RPP had to make some changes in its policies to deal with the new political developments, as in the case of the land reform law.¹⁶³ After 1950, the nationalist-revolutionist cadre started to develop opposing policies. Therefore, according to Avcıoğlu, democracy developed in Turkey based on a controversial revolutionary logic and in this controversy, and strategically, its reactionary character dominated its revolutionary character. Consequently, the vital forces legitimized the coup d’etat of 27 May on grounds that the DP had tried to appease the nationalist-revolutionary cadres and brought the degenerate Tanzimat westernization back to the country.¹⁶⁴ All of those reactionary attempts were based on the trust in general ballot.

The consolidation of Avcıoğlu’s thoughts on democracy appeared towards the end of the 1960s when the policies of the RPP and the WPT were reshaped according to the conjuncture of the day. As mentioned before, Avcıoğlu preserved five different strategies on seizing power in his articles in *Yön* and *Devrim*. Those strategies changed according to the abilities of the political parties and the positions of vital forces in a parliamentary system. Especially, in his first and third periods, he took an

¹⁶³ Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye* (İstanbul: Hil Yayın, 1996), p. 24.

¹⁶⁴ Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye’nin Düzeni*, pp. 247-255.

optimistic approach to democracy and hope of political parties. In the first period, he predicted that the coup d'état of the 27 May would be completed with structural adjustments of bureaucrats and intellectuals through the democratic process. However, he accepted that the plans of the bureaucrats in State Planning Organization could not be materialized because of the lack of support from political agents, and especially from the RPP and İsmet İnönü. In the third period, the hope to build an anti-imperialist front failed because of the reluctance of political parties to work together due to differences in policies and strategies. Especially, in the first period right after the 27 May, Avcıoğlu pointed out a lack of consciousness in nationalist and revolutionary cadres in making structural adjustments.¹⁶⁵

Second, there was an ideological and strategic cleavage between Avcıoğlu and the WTP. The WTP was oriented towards depending on and accepting the role of the working class in revolution, but Avcıoğlu indicated the role of the vital forces. This was a phase of the famous conflict between the National Democratic Revolution and the Socialist Revolution. Avcıoğlu therefore tried to make an alliance with the older communists, like Mihri Belli, who supported and initiated a National Democratic Revolution before a Socialist Revolution though there was an essential difference between them in the perception of the role and aims of socialism.¹⁶⁶ Their struggle within the party failed against the prominent leaders of the WTP (Aybar, Boran, Aren), who criticized the approach of *Yön* as a continuation of the coercive

¹⁶⁵ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "İnanç Buhranı" *Yön*, no. 11 (20 February 1962) in *Atatürkçülük, Milliyetçilik, Sosyalizm*.

¹⁶⁶ Barış Ünlü, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Mehmet Ali Aybar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), pp. 218-221.

character of the bureaucratic despotism.¹⁶⁷ Regarding the conjuncture of the 1960s with the election results, it may be said that Avcioğlu lost his hopes for democracy because he saw that a bridge could not be constructed between enlightened vital forces and the people because of the false policies of political parties. Therefore, the responsibility for realizing the structural adjustments to create a progressive ground for development can only be achieved through the vital forces and their anti-parliamentary actions.

Küçükömer and the Experience of Turkish Democracy

The mentality issue in Turkey

In *Düzenin Yabancılaşması*, an evaluation of social classification similar to Avcioğlu's is seen. There are three main social strata in Turkey: the bureaucrats, the notables and the people. But the key difference here is that the conflict of the bureaucrats versus the notables-people in *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* in Küçükömer's approach turned into a conflict of the bureaucrats-notables versus the people. Avcioğlu's description of conflict mainly depended on a dichotomy between progressivism and reactionarism. Therefore, the mental differences of the social strata were observable easily according to the struggle for power. But the conflict described by Küçükömer was based rather on the role of social strata in the production process. Therefore, it can not be concluded here directly in a mental discrimination between strata. In other words, the conceptualizations of the

¹⁶⁷ Gökhan Atılğan, *Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar: Yön-Devrim Hareketi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Sosyal Tarih Araştırma Vakfı, 2002), p. 223.

westernist-secularist and the easternist-Islamist corresponded to a more complex relationship between cultural and economic social structures.

Regarding the social confrontation in Turkey, Küçükömer suggested that one of the essential points in Turkish history was the coalition of bureaucrats and notables right after the Independence War. The primary reason behind the coalition was that the bureaucratic cadre needed the support of the notables. It was because the governing cadre had always experienced what Küçükömer calls as “bureaucratic loneliness.”¹⁶⁸ If they did not cooperate with the social stratum possessing the means of production, they would soon lose their ability to govern or simply the power. In the long run, the bureaucratic cadre had to create its own sources of capital in order to remain free of another social stratum. This happened in the early Republican era. In Yakup Kadri’s novel, *Ankara*, a veteran fought in the Independence War tries to increase his prosperity through tenders and his relationships in the government. The main character of the novel, Selma, accuses him of forgetting the basic aims of the Republic and later divorces him. This situation described by Yakup Kadri was not only typical for early Republican era, but was a legacy from the Union and Progress Party order, who benefiting from war conditions tried to create a national bourgeois class.¹⁶⁹ Lastly, the foundation of OYAK (The Organization for Military Solidarity) was the last attempt at creating a source of capital in the 1960s.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*, p. 88. “Bureaucratic loneliness” played also a critical role in the last century of the Ottoman state in which the bureaucrats tried to cooperate with foreign forces which led the empire to dissolve. Therefore, we may say that this conceptualization has an essential place in the thought of Küçükömer which determined the basic policies in the Turkish political and social life. Also see Ahmet Davutoğlu (et al.), *İdris Küçükömer Anısına: Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum Arayışları* (İstanbul: Dünya Yerel Yönetim ve Demokrasi Akademisi, 2000), pp. 64-68.

¹⁶⁹ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Ankara* (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliyet Matbaası, 1934).

¹⁷⁰ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*, p. 115.

The bureaucratic cadre was established by two main wings. According to Küçükömer, the first wing was a continuation of the Union and Progress Party, whereas the second wing was a continuation of the Freedom and Entente Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*). We may differentiate those two traditions by their strategies of development: the former preferred the National Economy doctrine based on the views of German economist Friedrich List. The latter supported more liberal doctrines stemming from the views of Prens Sabahaddin. Though those two wings acted together in the early Republican era, there was always a struggle between them. Therefore, when the second wing decided to act as a separate party, they had to found a coalition with notables and also *depend on* the easternist-Islamist people.¹⁷¹ Consequently, the conflict and struggle for power between the bureaucracy and the notables rose to the surface. But the role of people remained passive in this struggle, actually they were abstained from social confrontation. They were used only as a discursive power by the opposing parties. Therefore, it may be noted here that the social confrontation in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması* was determined according to the will of the political power.

Above, when discussing the methodology, it was stated that Küçükömer evaluated a proper socio-economic development as an organic development of the structural dynamics of society. The relationship between sub- and superstructure introduced a common mental structure and network of production relations for the whole country rather than for a single social stratum. Therefore, Küçükömer focused on the

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 72.

relationship between substructural and superstructural processes rather than on the mentality of single groups, which corresponds actually to the approach of Avcıoğlu.

The intellectuals of Turkish modernization from the Tanzimat period on were inclined to make a differentiation between material and moral culture, which meant that these two categories could be developed independently from each other. The main aim was then to import the constitutional and organizational structure of western countries by maintaining the moral culture of the country. In the late Ottoman period, this suggestion was brought forward almost by all Islamist, Turkist, and westernist intellectuals. In the UPP era, Ziya Gökalp developed a theory on the differentiation between culture and civilization which was actually a revision of the differentiation between moral and material culture. All of these views were approaches on how Turkey should be westernized. So, according to Gökalp, Turkey should take its position in western civilization by developing its material components, but should protect its native culture.

Last, in the Republican era, the path on which Turkey pass was described by Mustafa Kemal as reaching the level of the contemporary civilization (*muasır medeniyet seviyesine ulaşmak*) which meant, clearly, westernization. In this new era, Gökalp, who died in 1924 was ignored by Republican elites and westernization even in moral culture was sought. So, the collateral existence of western civilization and Turkish culture was perceived as conflicting and, as Meltem Ahıska suggests, this conflict was used by the Republican elites to keep people away from daily politics based on the mentality difference between westernism and easternism.

The significant point here is that the Turkish modernization or westernization was never or hardly evaluated together with the aims of economic development. Most critically, the notions of sub- and superstructure were never in the agenda until

1960s. This was maybe a consequence of the lack of socialist or other ideological parties due to the restrictions in political life. But in the 1960s, Turkish intellectuals found the chance to explore the relationship between the sub- and the superstructure. The endeavors to work on the Ottoman social order were also an attempt of these endeavors.

Küçükömer's significance here is that he tried to build up an approach which would consider not only these new methodological criteria but also the classical theme of discussion which was the difference between eastern and western societies. His critique on the program of the WTP is crucial in which he suggest that it is a mistake to overemphasize only substructural or superstructural processes.¹⁷² Due to its own historical dynamics, the ideological and economic relationships in the country have to be explored mutually which would also clarify the political history and role of social strata in the country.

The Consequences of Turkish Democracy

If we take into consideration above section, we may define two points for the contribution of democracy to Turkish politics: First of them is that people find the chance to declare their will even within restricted possibilities. So, people will gain also an affect on daily politics if it is reconsidered that people were excluded from politics, according to the schema of Küçükömer. Here the notions of "representing" and "depending" had only secondary significance. Through democracy, we may talk of a relative autonomy of the people because of the systemic obligations of political

¹⁷² Küçükömer, "TİP'in Programı Değişmelidir," *Ant* (19 November 1968) in *Cuntacılıktan Sivil Topluma*, pp. 155-159.

parties to take into consideration the people's reactions to their policies. The opposing party would try the people's reactions as an opportunity to seize power. The bureaucratic elites would revisit their loneliness in order to reconstruct it according to the conjuncture of the day. The bureaucratic loneliness was another face of the bureaucratic shyness of the people. The bureaucrats wanted to protect the revolutions. "From whom, did they want to protect the revolutions?" asks Küçükömer. The answer was the people.¹⁷³ But when the conjuncture changed, they had to alter their positions according to the new criterions of the game. Therefore, Küçükömer suggested that democracy even in its restricted arena enabled the people to enter into politics and declare their will to make a difference in the system.

A second point is the interrelationship between sub- and superstructural components in the social development of Turkey. The notables had the ability to resolve the gulf between the people and the bureaucrats because of their dependence on the people that correlated to the relations of production and the people's ideology. Therefore, instead of the bureaucratic westernization by cultural revolutions that had enabled imperialism to penetrate Turkey, the DP made it relatively possible to develop the social internal dynamics of Turkey. This relatively progressive role of the DP was what Küçükömer wanted to warn the socialist intellectuals about. If we take also into account why Küçükömer was enthusiastic about the foundation of the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*, which is perceived as the first political party of political Islam in Turkey) this relatively progressive role would have been

¹⁷³ Küçükömer, *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*, p. 88.

more clear in harmonizing sub- and superstructural social components and also state and nation.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ For Küçükömer's thoughts on the NOP, see İdris Küçükömer, *İdris Küçükömer'le Türkiye Üstüne Tartışmalar* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1994), pp. 91-111.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY
AND İDRİS KÜÇÜKÖMER

This chapter will examine the speeches delivered in the third congress of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) in order to clarify the thoughts of İdris Küçükömer, which were expressed before and after this congress. The congress is important to our topic, because first of all, the date the congress was realized 9-12 November, 1968, corresponding directly to a period for which it is argued that the thoughts of intellectuals who had specific weight in the 1960s until the military intervention of 12 March 1971 appeared. As suggested above, the 1960s was an era of intellectual seeking for a deliberate clarification in theory regarding political practice. The intellectuals in this era became acquainted with new ideas and also with a new political atmosphere in which even their marginal political ideas were tolerated to some degree. Throughout the 1960s they furthered specific discussions on how a most appropriate political strategy could be developed. However, the late 1960s were the years in which their political views reached some degree of clarification. They were able to argue a more certain political way which would take them also towards a split between different political factions.

Küçükömer's *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama* published in 1969, is an example of how an intellectual crystallized both his theoretical knowledge regarding a concrete historical and geographical context, which corresponded then Turkey, and his political strategy deriving from this theoretical clarification. Though it is clear that Küçükömer continued his studies on Turkey until his death in 1987 and

broadened his interest areas regarding the new questions that appeared in his mind, which then argues that there never was an absolute certainty in his thought. But, even if this statement is true, it does not mean that he had confusion in his mind throughout his life, and especially after the mid-1960s; rather he composed even “a third way”¹⁷⁵ in the WPT, which had a certain weight between the two poles of the other political factions in the third congress, namely between Mehmet Ali Aybar and the signatories of the “fivefold proposal” (*beşli önerge*). This means that Küçükömer, who was a member of the Scientific Committee of the WTP, had certain and concrete answers to political conflicts and events appearing in a certain period in his political life.

Another importance of the congress was, as will be seen in this chapter, is that it encompassed the basic intellectual atmosphere of the era. Each speech illustrate how the developing discussions on themes like the social structure of Ottoman society and Turkey, the relationship between people and the party, the political strategy which ought to be carried out in order to seize power in a parliamentary politics were handled. Also, international political developments, like the war in Vietnam and the military intervention of the USSR in Czechoslovakia, played a role in the eventual split in the party and composed certain reasons behind the argumentation of speeches in regard to the disagreement between party members. Especially, the influence of these political and intellectual developments in the era on the theoretical approaches of the party members will be the main issue here because, as will be seen below, Küçükömer’s main thesis by criticizing the speeches of Mehmet Ali Aybar and the signatories of the fivefold proposal was that these

¹⁷⁵ The phrase of “the third way” is attributed to Küçükömer and his companions by the *Ant* review. See Doğan Özgüden. “Üçüncü Yol,” *Ant*, no. 99 (19 November 1968).

development had not been reflected in the party program. This meant that the effects of these developments in theory were not interpreted with their practical consequences. According to him, unless the discontinuity between theory and practice could be abrogated through the party program, the disagreement between both sides could not be eliminated.

Towards the Third Congress

We cannot ignore the fact that certain political events which determined the agenda of the following years appeared in 1967.

Mehmet Ali Aybar¹⁷⁶

The first intra-party debate was experienced on the eve and after the second congress. Until this time the WPT had tried to constitute a roof organization under which all the socialist tendencies in Turkey could be represented. As Sadun Aren writes, many different views were visible before 1965. Even, the critics of *Yön* review did not agitate the WTP against the so-called socialist intellectuals participating in this review. It seems that the initiation to form a second labor party under the name of Employees Party (*Çalışanlar Partisi*) by Avcıoğlu and his friends did not annoy the party. But after the elections in 1965 by which the WTP won 14 members of parliament and one senator, this opposition started to crystallized.¹⁷⁷ Here, the main discussion was about the revolutionary strategy the party would follow. The party leadership, represented mainly by Mehmet Ali Aybar and Behice Boran, favored an approach based on Socialist Revolution, which suggested

¹⁷⁶ Mehmet Ali Aybar. *Tip Tarihi* v.3 (İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1988), p. 105.

¹⁷⁷ Sadun aren, *TİP Olayı: 1961-1971* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1993), p. 218

participation in the constitutional system and created links between the intellectuals and people and mainly the working class. As Mehmet Ali Aybar wrote, the 53rd Article of the party constitution, which suggested that half of the employees in the party on all levels should be elected from the members of the working class, was formed in order to prevent any intellectual dictatorship over the working members of the party.¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, the National Democratic Revolution strategy represented by mainly Mihri Belli claimed that the structural conditions in Turkey were not ready for a socialist revolution and therefore a front composed of progressive social strata should seize governmental power by a intervention into society from the top-down.¹⁷⁹

This challenge to the party leadership by the opposition crystallized itself in the second congress in Malatya in which the group, led by Aybar and Boran succeeded in maintaining its role in the party and banished the opposition faction from the party. So, the party fixed upon maintaining its struggle in the constitutional regime, which was also emphasized in the decisions of the second congress.¹⁸⁰

Following the second congress, there was a though discussion in Turkey on whether the constitution is open to socialism or not. In May 1967, the president, Cevdet Sunay, gave a speech accordingly to the Liberty and Constitution Feast in which he declared the constitution did not allow radical political movements based

¹⁷⁸ Aybar, *Tip tarihi* v.1, p. 216.

¹⁷⁹ For the revolutionary forces and counter-revolutionary forces in Belli's scheme see Belli, Mihri. *Yazılar 1965-1970*, Ankara Sevinç Matbaası, 1970, p. 260. Although the proletariat and peasant are called here as revolutionary forces, we see in following pages that they have actually a secondary role under the hegemony of military and civil intellectual stratum. They (proletariat and peasants) are important in the maintenance of the revolution after the revolution has been realized by the main revolutionary forces.

¹⁸⁰ For the resolution of the second congress see Aren, p. 276.

on class, namely socialism. The primary addressee of this discussion was the WTP because the only party which tried to support a socialist regime within the borders of the constitutional system was the WTP. In this atmosphere, the pressures of the other parties increased, too. From one side, the Justice Party accused the WTP of being a subordinate agent of the USSR; from another, the RPP declared its policy of “left of the center”, which indeed led the WTP to seem a marginal party opposed to the mainstream parties in Turkey. In this context, Aybar and his friends tried to convince the public that the 1961 constitution with its libertarian aspect allowed policy based on socialism and also that the WTP suggested an independent political strategy from both of the blocs of the Cold War era.¹⁸¹ This point shows us how the WTP leadership tried to struggle against, from one side, anti-parliamentarian and, from the other side, parliamentary forces by developing a revolutionary strategy based on constitutional regime.

It must be mentioned here some international political developments which influenced, were cited, or discussed in the third congress of the WTP. The first issue was the incrementally increasing anti-imperialist emphasis of the party members. From its foundation on, the WTP never abstained from declaring its anti-imperialist or more clearly anti-American standpoint, which was reflected also in the party program prepared in the early 1960s.¹⁸² In the first half of the 1960s, the main issue discussed regarding American imperialism was the question of the economic independence of Turkey. In the second half of the decade, however, the question of

¹⁸¹ See “Anayasa Cephesi Faşist Diktaya Direniyor,” *Ant*, no. 6 (7 February 1967); Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Anayasa asıl bugünkü kapkaç düzenine karşıdır,” *Ant*, no. 23 (6 June 1967).

¹⁸² *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı* (İstanbul: Ersa Matbaacılık, 1964), p. 163.

the military activities of the USA also came onto the agenda. As Sadun Aren writes, referring to one of Mehmet Ali Aybar's speeches:

The attitude of the WTP against the USA toughened and reached to its peak by the end of the 1967. The chairman of the party, Mehmet Ali Aybar, declared the following statement in a speech in a meeting in İstanbul on 12 November 1967: "Our second War of Independence has started. America will return back where it is coming from. The passive resistance campaign will be hastened. (...)

In this quotation, it is seen that even some campaigns against NATO and American imperialism were initiated.¹⁸³ However, two important developments in international politics had impacts on this emphasis on anti-imperialism.

The first development was the Vietnam War as one of the military imperialist intervention of the USA. Although the war began in 1959, the relevance of the WTP to this issue was more with the participation of Mehmet Ali Aybar in the membership of the Russell Tribunal or International War Crimes Tribunal in 1966. Actually, Aybar was one of the judges of this body.¹⁸⁴ If we take into consideration the acquaintance of Aybar with international leftist figures (like Lellio Basso, one of the founders of the Party of Italian Socialist Union of Proletarians; with Basso's initiatives, the WTP was invited also to the Conference of the Progressive Parties in the Mediterranean to which Sadun Aren participated.)¹⁸⁵ and his observations in Vietnam as a consequence of tribunal's visit to this country, it can be said that the party gained new prospects in terms of international politics and anti-imperialism.

¹⁸³ Sadun Aren, *TİP Olayı: 1961-1971*, pp. 114-115. "TİP'in Amerika'ya karşı tutumu gittikçe sertleşerek, doruk noktasına 1967 yılının sonlarında erişmiştir. Parti genel başkanı Aybar 12 Kasım 1967'de İstanbul'da düzenlenmiş olan bir toplantıda yaptığı konuşmada şöyle demiştir: "İkinci Milli kurtuluş mücadelesi başlamıştır. Düşman Amerika'dır. Amerika geldiği yoldan gidecektir. Pasif direnme kampanyasına hız verilecektir (...)." For the speech of Mehmet Ali Aybar see Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm Seçmeler 1945-1967* (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1967), p. 605.

¹⁸⁴ Aybar, *TİP tarihi* v 2, pp. 131-145.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 169-170.

Aybar admitted that the call for a second War of Independence had been initiated with motivation which was fed by American crimes in Vietnam.¹⁸⁶

A second international development was the Six-Day or Arab-Israeli War in the Middle East in 1967. This war was perceived by the WTP leadership as not only a war between Israel and Arabic countries based on a religious cause, but also a struggle for expanding the aims of American imperialism to the whole Middle East, including Turkey. The Middle East would be a center for all of the international political, economic and military activities of the USA. The party leadership believed that the USA was trying to use Turkey as a patrol for their own aims and therefore tried to drive the WTP out of Turkish politics.¹⁸⁷ So, it may be said that this war and its consequences or evaluation in both the international and national arenas constituted one of the motivations leading the WTP to act more on an anti-imperialist policy.

If the Cold War atmosphere the world experienced after the Second World War is taken into consideration, it may be said that the anti-imperialist prospect of the WTP corresponded to a resistance against one of the blocs of a bipolar international system. In order to understand the discussion theme in the third congress, however, focus must be given also to the other bloc which was led by the USSR. The WTP always kept its distance from the Soviet bloc. The independence of Turkey from all foreign pressures had been the main motivation of the party; the party chairman Mehmet Ali Aybar tried to develop a unique political strategy for the WTP regarding the structural context of Turkey. As mentioned above, the 53rd article

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 81.

¹⁸⁷ See Fethi Naci, "Ortadoğu ve Biz," *Ant*, no. 24 (13 June 1967), p. 7; Doğan Özgüden. "Türkiye için zor günler," *Ant*, no. 25 (20 June 1967), p. 3; and Aybar, *Tip Tarihi* v.2, p. 114.

of the party constitution was also a reflection of this desire to break away from Leninist and Stalinist strategies foreseen for the socialist/communist parties all over the world.¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, neither Aybar nor the other members of the party leadership developed an open opposition to the acts of the Soviet regime. Even, a policy of rapprochement between Turkey and the USSR was encouraged. Sadun Aren, for example, welcomed Süleyman Demirel's visit to the USSR as a positive development for Turkish economic and foreign policy.¹⁸⁹

Nevertheless, the Soviet military penetration of Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968 constituted a turning point for the WTP's and especially Aybar's evaluation of the USSR. The party chairman declared immediately that the WTP advocated the full independence of Turkey in all areas, which would mean that Turkey should not be a part of any international blocs. According to Aybar, the problems of a country should be solved within the country by the active participation of the people to politics by various ways. Therefore, this arbitrary act of the Soviet Union could not be accepted.¹⁹⁰ He even compared the Soviet penetration into Czechoslovakia to the American occupation in Vietnam and added that he saw no difference between them.

In this atmosphere, Aybar introduced his formulation of "socialism unique for Turkey" (*Türkiye'ye özgü sosyalizm*), with which he tried to clarify that their (he meant himself and the party, as the chairman of the WTP) understanding of socialism depended pre-eminently on the independence of Turkey from all of the international blocs. This approach was also against any top-down determination of the socialist

¹⁸⁸ Aybar, *Tip Tarihi* v.3, p. 52.

¹⁸⁹ Sadun Aren, "İktisadi Görünüş ve Moskova Seyahati." *Ant*, no. 41 (10 October 1967), p. 7.

¹⁹⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Bütün Bloklara Hayır." *Ant*, no.87 (27 August 1967), p. 4-5

revolution which had to be carried out with the efforts of the working class. Actually, the endeavor of Aybar to formulate a Turkish socialism based on the peculiarities of Turkish history and social structure had begun before 1968. In November 1967, for instance, he published an article in *Ant* review with the title “The Characteristics of Turkish Socialism.”¹⁹¹ The events appearing in the international arena together with the discussion environment in Turkey on a revolutionary strategy for socialists, and the Ottoman social order, led him to reconsider the socialist theory with its correspondence in political practice although he stated that the primary notions of this understanding of socialism was fed by the party program and constitution.

However, the Soviet penetration in Czechoslovakia was the final point by which the split in the party become more visible. After Aybar’s speech in the provincial congress in Ankara declaring the “socialism peculiar for Turkey”, five prominent members of the WTP, namely Behice Boran, Sadun Aren, Şaban Erik, Nihat Sargın and Minnetullah Haydaroglu, proposed a declaration to the Central Committee of the party, pointing out both the inclination of Aybar towards a “personal government” and also some confusion about the characteristics of socialism created by Aybar. The critical phrase lay in the second article of this fivefold declaration, which was “by accepting the framework of the general principles and laws of progress of socialism,” which was clearly referring to Aybar’s emphasis on the nativity of the socialist strategy.¹⁹² This declaration constituted an essential break-point between Aybar and the signatories, not only on the intellectual

¹⁹¹ See Aybar, “Türkiye Sosyalizminin Özellikleri.” *Ant*, no. 45 (21 November 1967), p. 5.

¹⁹² For the fivefold declaration see Aybar, *Tip Tarihi* v.3, pp. 125-126.

level, but also in personal affairs. This personal conflict dimension of the discussion can also be seen in the speeches of these men.

The Third Congress

The WTP was not a socialist party following the *orthodox* line. It was a party originated from Marxism, but certainly not a Leninist one.

Mehmet Ali Aybar¹⁹³

Two different factions formed spontaneously towards the coming congress of the party. Both of those factions would try to gain the majority of the delegates in order to seize the power in the party. A third faction, however, appeared in the congress represented by İdris Küçükömer. Küçükömer was the seventh person who had given a speech in the congress beside Aybar, as the chairman, and the five signatories of the declaration. Küçükömer's aim was not to support one of the factions struggling for the party leadership. Indeed, it may be concluded by referring to his speech that his thoughts resembled Aybar's approach more than the claims of the five signatories. Nevertheless, he was motivated more to indicate the problem arising from the lack of a renovation in the party program and constitution. So, he was described after the congress as the representative of the third way to which also the unofficial review of the party, the *Ant*, gave support.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 286 “*TİP ortodoks çizgide olan bir sosyalist parti değildi. Marksizmden hareket eden, ama kesinlikle Leninist olmayan bir partiydi.*”

¹⁹⁴ See Doğan Özgüden “Üçüncü yol.” *Ant*, no. 99 (22 November 1968); “TİP’te Program Değişikliği ve Çetin Altan’ın İhracı.” *Ant*, no. 100 (29 November 1968), p. 5; “TİP Olağanüstü Kongresine Taban Sahip Çıkmalıdır.” *Ant*, no. 102 (10 December 1968), p. 7.

Now we can turn to speeches made in the congress. First, Mehmet Ali Aybar came onto the stage and made the opening with a speech of 20 minutes long. Then, the signatories of the fivefold proposal began to speak with a time limit of 10 minutes each. After them, Küçükömer appeared by making an evaluation of the all of the speeches made before him. Later, Aybar came to the stage to answer all the questions and accusations made at him. At last, Çetin Altan as the president of the congress ended the meeting.

The speeches that dealt closely with the events summarized above. However, two issues had an essential role in terms of the split between the factions. The first of them were the characteristics of socialism which were emphasized with a specific concern in the fivefold proposal. Another issue related to this was the role of and the relationship between primary and secondary conflict as a discussion on the validity of the orthodox Marxist conceptualization in the context of Turkish history. These two issues make it seem as if the main discussion base of the congress was theoretical rather than pointing out the practical or personal disagreements or misunderstandings. The main discussion was held primarily between Mehmet Ali Aybar, and Sadun Aren and Behice Boran, and we may add İdris Küçükömer's approach to them as a re-evaluation of their explanations. At this point, the speeches of the other four signatories of the fivefold proposal had a secondary importance in that they mostly focused on the intra-party relationships, the backstage activities among party members to win the majority in the congress, etc., as opposed to the theoretical standpoints of the four. Here an example may be given from the speech of Şaban Erik clarifying his standpoint in this discussion. Here are the opening words of his speech:

My friends, this question arose from the fact of the inclination of the friend (Mehmet Ali Aybar) towards a personal government; and as a consequence of some events following some of his speeches which do not conform to but actually contradict with the characteristics of the party. This is the only question, and nothing but that. (...) Recently, the party chairman friend put forward intrinsically a slogan of libertarian socialism (...). He started to attribute this view, he put forward, to the party structure. No one has the right to speak about or decide on the characteristics and basic principles of the party on his own accord.¹⁹⁵

Here we see clearly that the split between factions were evaluated by Şaban Erik merely as a consequence of personal affair rather than as a theoretical disagreement in an essential historical era of Turkish socialism.

The Characteristics of Socialism and the Role of the Primary and Secondary conflict

First of all, I want to emphasize again one point which has been mentioned here repeatedly. It has been said that we should not lose time with theoretical arguments. My friends, theory is extremely important. If we mean by theoretical argument some questions immaterial to the action, then it is naturally unnecessary. But theory concerned with, shedding light on, action is extremely important. Therefore, this discussion is on no account theoretical. This discussion is about the question of whether the WTP is a socialist party or not.

Sadun Aren¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Şaban Erik, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda Şaban Erik'in Konuşması*. "Arkadaşlar, bu mesele arkadaşın parti içinde kişisel yönetime eğilim göstermesi ve bunun sonucunda yaptığı birtakım konuşmalarla partinin özyapısına uymayan, partinin özyapısıyla çatışan birtakım durumlar ortaya çıkmasındandır. Mesele budur, bunun ötesinde başka bir şey yoktur. (...) Başkan arkadaş son günlerden kendiliğinden bir hürriyetçi sosyalizm sloganı attı ortaya (...). Ortaya attığı görüşü, partinin yapısına mal etmeye başladı. Partinin yapısına, temel ilkelerine ilişkin meselelerde kendi başına söz söylemek ve karar vermek hakkı kimsenin olamaz."

¹⁹⁶ Sadun Aren, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda Sadun Aren'in Konuşması*. "Evvvela burada çok söylendiği için tekrar üzerinde durmak istiyorum. Teorik münakaşalarla vakit geçirmeyelim denildi. Arkadaşlar, teori son derece önemli. Teorik münakaşadan kasıt, eylemle hiç alakası olmayan bazı meseleler tartışılırsa o tabii lüzumsuzdur. Ama eylemle alakalı, eyleme ışık tutan teori son derece önemlidir. Onun için bu tartışma katiyen teorik filan değildir. Bu tartışma, TİP'in sosyalist bir parti mi, yoksa böyle olmayan bir parti mi meselesi."

The main question on the characteristics of socialism was how many different understanding of socialism did or may have existed regarding the Marxist literature and experiences cumulated until that day? By attributing the term of socialism to the party, did they mean to accept all the prerequisites foreseen in the literature and socialists' experiences arising from foreign intellectuals and political activists or simply the founding fathers of the Marxist, let's say, ideology or politics? Or did there exist a peculiar understanding of socialism regarding the social and historical context of a certain country, profiting also from its orthodox doctrine?

The question had not a single answer based on the difference between theoretical and practical emphases put on the question. Here, we may say that a difference appears between Aybar's and Boran's approaches in which Aybar focuses on more the peculiarity of a national context which in turn would necessitate making modifications in the theory. As mentioned above, the 53rd article of the party constitution was foreseen as a measure against the sovereignty of Leninist doctrines in the Turkish case. Nevertheless, Boran insisted upon the oneness of socialism, therefore its application could not be separated or reconsidered from its theory. The disagreement was not about whether an alternative theory should be developed or not. Actually, both of them agreed that socialist theory was one and unique. The question was whether it could be revised according to the social and historical context of a certain country.

The Question of Science

Before looking at the responses of the intellectuals to these questions, a discussion on the nature of science in general should be held. As Behice Boran said, "[the] question

on science is closely related to question of whether there is only one socialism or there are various socialisms.”¹⁹⁷ This is key point on which the main inclinations of above mentioned figures were based. Actually, as is visible in the speeches, there seems to have been a consensus on the scientific understandings of each figure. The main argument here was that the methodology of science had an evolving characteristic. Therefore, one could not claim an absolute and final methodology for scientific research and politics deriving from this methodology.

One of the main discussions on scientific methodology happened during the meeting of the central administrative council, which lasted two days (16/17 October 1968). In this meeting, Mehmet Ali Aybar made a long speech to answer the accusations directed at him. He summarizes these accusations in eight points. The first and second points were as follows: “1) Aybar is against science; 2) Aybar is against books, and especially scientific socialist books.”¹⁹⁸ The term “books” here corresponds mostly to general theoretical approaches as a production of an intellectual’s mind. Simply, the question was what was the relationship between theory and practice regarding the characteristics of science and socialism. In his speech for the members of the central administrative council Aybar suggested that no one can speak of an absolute scientific methodology if the development of science from, for instance, Newton to Einstein was evaluated. No one could claim that science with its all aspects and arms was completed, rather, with new discoveries it renewed itself. Therefore scientific theories or books contending theoretical

¹⁹⁷ Behice Boran. *Türkiye İşçi Partisi’nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda Behice Boran’ın Konuşması*. “(B)ilimsellik meselesiyle de, sosyalizm tektir, sosyalizm çeşitlidir meselesi birbirine bağlıdır.”

¹⁹⁸ Aybar, *Tip Tarihi* v.3, p. 144 “1) Aybar bilime karşıdır, 2) Kitaba karşıdır. Özellikle bilimsel sosyalist nitelikte kitaplara karşıdır.”

knowledge could not be treated as if they were frozen or absolute. According to him, “books” contained only general knowledge or methodology for evaluating the reality and they became old at the moment they were born. Marxism or scientific socialism could not be perceived as an exception to this rule. We may talk about a Marxist logic or say that the scientific methodology of socialism was discovered, but this does not mean that socialism will not develop itself.¹⁹⁹

During the congress, Sadun Aren replied the questions which were indicated by Aybar in his pre-congress speeches. Sadun Aren cites that:

Once, Mr. Aybar manifested in his mentioned speeches his suspicions on the question of the scientific characteristic of socialism. He already manifests his suspicions on the question of the certainty of the social sciences. And he specified his suspicions on the certainty and accuracy of scientific socialism by recommending some books opposing those [characteristics of socialism]. My friends, reading books, reading all sorts of books is something good. If I would be a university teacher, I would recommend my students read all sorts of books. But (...) a party means a piece, not the whole state. A group defending a certain idea. This group has a theory, a thought. Books, suspicious to those [theory, idea], can not be recommended. Can not be recommended. People free of all those suspicions compose a party.²⁰⁰

In these statements, we see that the main objection of Aren was as follows: Aybar’s endeavors to develop a fresh understanding of science for party members were indeed harmful to the structural being of the party. These endeavors could create an empty space for suspicions among party members which in turn could only avail for weakness in the party activities rather than create a more proper and logical base for

¹⁹⁹ Mehmet Ali Aybar. *Aybar’ın Türkiye İşçi Partisi Üçüncü Büyük Kongresi Açış Konuşması*.

²⁰⁰ Sadun Aren, ibid. “Bir kere Sayın Aybar bahis konusu konuşmalarında sosyalizmin bilimselliği meselesinde şüpheler izhar etmiştir. Zaten sosyal bilimlerin kesinliği konusunda şüpheler izhar etmiştir. Ve bilimsel sosyalizmin kesinliği, doğruluğu hakkındaki şüphelerini, buna karşı olan kitapların okunmasını tavsiye ederek belirtmiştir. Arkadaşlar, kitap okumak, her türlü kitap okumak iyidir. Eğer ben bir üniversite hocası olsam, talebelerime her türlü kitabı okumalarını tavsiye ederim. Fakat (...) parti demek, bir parça demek, bütün bir devlet değil. Belli bir fikrin savunucusu olan bir grup. Bu grubun bir teorisi var, düşüncesi var. Bundan şüphe edici, eden, ettirici kitaplar tavsiye edilemez. Tavsiye edilemez. Bu şüphelerden arınmış insanlar bu partiye gelir.”

them. One can evaluate this appeal as well advised especially if we take into consideration the context of the theoretical discussions not only among party members, but also between party and non-parliamentarian socialists or leftist in Turkey. If we remember that the party was just on the eve of general elections in 1969, we must add that Aren may have been concerned about a strong party politics which would be present to the public.

We must be careful here to not ignore the main point of his objection: He was indeed (if we may make some speculation on his intentions behind these statements) not appealing the argumentations of Aybar on the characteristics of science. It appears a controversial situation, for example, between his (Aren's) evaluation of university and party. Should we say that he was against the developing characteristic of science or simply a discussion on this question? The answer should be no. He only tried to make a differentiation between an ambiguous discussion and the necessity of a defined standpoint for action. If we focus here on Behice Boran's statements, this point will be clarified.

Behice Boran actually accepted most of Aybar's arguments about the developing characteristic of scientific analysis or the ambiguity on the absolute accuracy of the social sciences, etc. But she added the following point:

But in order to put our politics into operation, we will say beside all those notations of ambition that we must indicate these or those as scientific facts according to our current level of scientific knowledge, by venturing a change in our knowledge or even the possibility of incorrectness of some of it; otherwise, we cannot swing into action.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Behice Boran, *ibid.* "Ama eyleme geçebilmek için, bir harekette bulunabilmek için bu ihtiras kayıtlarını koyduktan sonra diyeceğiz ki; bugünkü bilgimiz seviyesinde ilerde bu bilgimizin değişeceğini ve hatta bir kısmını doğru olmayacağı ihtimalini de gözönüne alarak bugünkü bilgimiz seviyesinde şunlar şunlar bilimsel hakikatlerdir demek mecburiyetindeyiz yoksa başka türlü bir faaliyete geçemeyiz."

So, it appears that Aren's and Boran's positions on science were actually situational. However, we must add a crucial indication of Boran on science, which in fact constituted the main disagreement between Aybar and Boran. At this point, Boran said that the main idea behind science was the cause-effect relationship. Therefore, even science in general appears as evolutionary knowledge. Its aspect could not be regarded based on cause and effect relationships.²⁰² Boran evaluated here Aybar's critiques on an absolute, frozen theory by emphasizing the multiplicity of socialism in practice, that he was rejecting this general premise of science, which indeed led him to a non-scientific and consequently non-socialist standpoint.

This main motivation behind the disagreement was emphasized in the speech of İdris Küçükömer. If we focus on his statements about the question of science and objections to Boran mainly, the position of Aybar in this discussion will be clarified, too. Küçükömer said, by directly opposing Boran's approach, that Boran's emphasis on cause and effect relationship belonged actually to Newtonian physics, which had been replaced by Einstein with the calculation of probabilities. This law of physics was in fact also valid for the function of the social sciences.²⁰³ In one of his later articles, he would examine the notion of the absolute state of nature and he concluded this article with following statements:

The main characteristic of the natural law or state of nature idea is its stagnancy. This stagnancy has been tried to be universalized; nevertheless, the relativity of the universe and social stagnancy do not overlap after the death of Newtonian model of absolute.

In conclusion, we do not assume an absolute state of nature which can be defined by reason.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer'in Konuşması*.

²⁰⁴ İdris Küçükömer, "Giriş (Temel Varsayımlar)," in *Sivil Toplum Yazıları* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1994), pp. 11-25.

Here, it is apparent that Küçükömer tried to avoid an absolute determinist approach which had appeared in the cause and effect argumentation of Boran, in order to observe the organic and unique (as opposed to universal) mobility and development (as opposed to stagnancy) of a certain society.

In his second speech at the end of the congress, Aybar replied to Boran's arguments by referring to Küçükömer's approach. He cited mainly the disappearance of the determinism doctrine of nineteenth and twentieth centuries by the studies of Werner Karl Heisenberg on quantum mechanism and the principle of uncertainty. Therefore, the socialist theory, as a scientific theory, could not be excluded from those new perspectives on science, though socialism had presented until the day the most perfect scientific methodology.²⁰⁵

Question on the Uniqueness of Socialism

The discussions on the characteristics of science appeared among the members of the WTP primarily to question the uniqueness of socialism. If we continue with the last statements of Aybar, he maintained his speech with the following conclusion: "(...) Turkey will surely reach socialism; nevertheless, it is impossible to solve the question of when Turkey will reach socialism, if we persist on scientific methodology."²⁰⁶ In his statements, Aybar actually tried to emphasize the necessity of a unique revolutionary strategy based on the historical and structural context of

²⁰⁵ Aybar, *ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda Aybar'ın 5'lere Cevap Konuşması*. "Türkiye mutlaka sosyalizme gidecektir denilmekle birlikte, Türkiye ne zaman sosyalizme gidecektir sorusunu kesinlikle çözmek mümkün değildir bilimsel kalmak şartıyla."

Turkey. If we take into account the invalidity of orthodox Marxist determinism as a foresight for the shift from capitalism to socialism, we must comment that the conditions determined by this determinism could change also from a country to another which at last would necessitate observing the unique characteristics of a certain society. And this was primarily related to the social conflicts experienced between certain social classes or strata. As Aybar pointed out, “the conflicts of different countries are never the same and analogous.”²⁰⁷ Even the conflicts of most developed western societies were different.

But if we may make a differentiation between developed and underdeveloped countries, we can understand Aybar’s approach more clearly because the different characteristics of conflicts were not only a matter of difference in the two or more primary conflicts, but it was also a difference in the relationship between primary and secondary conflicts. We must remember that the intellectuals in the 1960s were also discussing whether Turkey had shifted to the capitalist mode of production. As Aybar stated, “Turkey is not a country experienced all the stages of capitalism and ready to shift into socialism.”²⁰⁸ This would, then, necessitate making a differentiation between capitalist and non-capitalist societies as a matter of political strategy, which indeed had appeared also in the 1917 revolution in Russia. But, as mentioned above, Aybar was strictly rejecting the political method of Lenin in the Russian Revolution. So, a third way against the original texts of Marx and the suggestions and experience of Lenin needed to be developed. Actually, Aybar tried

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

to develop a new perspective for the conflict relationships for Ottoman and Turkish society successively. Now we can examine these remarks point by point.

He evaluated that Ottoman society had been governed for centuries by a class of bureaucrats. But this governing class did not possess the means of productions absolutely. Although, this constituted a controversial situation for the Marxist scheme of power relationships, he tried to clarify it by pointing out that the possession of the means of productions was necessary only for disposition of certain decision-making processes over society. This bureaucratic class retained the authority to make those decisions although it had not the means of production in its hands. So, we talk about an “autocratic, centralist and monopolist” class. These class characteristics shifted step by step into the hands of the Union and Progress Party and the Republican Peoples’ Party. He finally added that there had also appeared some people with these bureaucratic characteristics who indeed aimed to lead Turkey to socialism like the members of the *Kadro* review and also many socialist intellectuals in the 1960s who foresaw the making of a coalition with the bureaucrats in order to achieve socialism. Aybar rejected their standpoints because he insisted on his argumentation that this “autocratic, centralist and monopolist” characteristic conflicted with the libertarian principles of socialism in nature. Socialism should be carried out upon the shoulders of the working people who had to become free from all those pressures of governing strata.²⁰⁹

If the working people were evaluated as the main motor behind the establishment of socialism in Turkey, then this social aspect or conditions of people have to be considered, too. Mainly, the main motivation behind the peoples’

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

intervention into politics lay in the secondary conflict rather than the primary. As Aybar repeatedly stated, the success of the Democrat Party in the 1950 election was a consequence of the superstructural reaction to the autocratic policies of the RPP on the people.²¹⁰ This means that it was a reaction against the RPP's attitudes towards the people rather than a reaction as a consequence of the development of a certain mode of production.

Therefore, Aybar insisted that the first duty of Turkish socialist was to understand the relationship between the primary and secondary conflicts in Turkey. Turkey was composed of people who had diverse religious sects and languages which led them to seek different aspirations; the vast majority of the people lived in villages; however, one third of them had no land at all; even the working class had still serious ties with their villages. But on the other hand, Turkish society had also historical institutions like *Ahi* brotherhood for social solidarity, etc. By considering all those cultural aspects together, Aybar ended with following argumentation: Although the primary conflict was perceived as the ultimate determinant of social development, it must be said that the primary and secondary conflicts had mutual power to determine each other. He added that there were even certain historical moments in which the superstructure did not change although the economic base shifts to the following stage. A primary conflict could turn the future into a secondary conflict, too.²¹¹ Last but not least, he emphasized the distinction between conflicts and their images. In Aybar's words:

²¹⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar. *Aybar'ın Türkiye İşçi Partisi Üçüncü Büyük Kongresi Açış Konuşması*.

²¹¹ Another emphasize of Aybar on culture as a superstructural entity was that culture cannot be perceived solely as a reflection of the base. But on the contrary, it may also involve some universal values from which socialism can also benefit: *"In times when socialism was constructed, people put forth some theories. A movement under the name of proletkult or proletarian culture has been created.*

Second, (...) there are also images of the conflicts. Conflicts, images. There is a contradiction between conflicts and images. And also there are the law of action-reaction and law of conflicts with other (social) units. And also their conflicts and secondary conflicts within and between themselves. (It is impossible to say, thus,) with two formulas that the primary conflict determines the superstructure and so on if we consider the complexity of the situation.²¹²

Regarding these remarks, it may be concluded that his perception of the uniqueness of socialism for a certain country was an attempt to develop a more precise political strategy based on the conditions and possibilities of Turkey and Turkish socialists. Those conditions and possibilities can be clarified only by studying the relationship between base and superstructure or political/economic decision-making channels and culture.

In order to understand the opposition of the fivefold declaration to Aybar, we may start with quoting following statements by Sadun Aren:

One of the primary principles of socialism is making the working people conscious and organizing them. (...) And this doctrine, namely the scientific socialism has taught us that the working people may comprehend only its class consciousness, in other words its economic consciousness. They can (only) understand that they are economically a different class. They cannot comprehend the socialist consciousness which has to be injected to them from outside.²¹³

This culture was a movement starting with the culture of workers, labor class; and aiming to destroy all previous cultures. My friends, the culture of working classes will appear doubtless. But it is also necessary to embrace all the cultures of humanity before the proletarian one.” See Mehmet Ali Aybar, Türkiye İşçi Partisi’nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda Aybar’ın 5’lere Cevap Konuşması.

²¹² Ibid. “İkincisi, (...)çelişilerin bir de görüntüleri var. Çelişiler görüntüler. Görüntülerle çelişiler arasında çelişi var. Ve giderek diğer birimlerle etki-tepki kanunları ve çelişi kanunları var. Onların da temel çelişileri, onların da tali çelişileri kendi içlerinde ve aralarında, ve onların da görüntüleri var. İş bu kadar mudil olunca, öyle iki tane formülle, efendim işte temel çelişi üst yapıyı belirler, üst yapı falan filan...”

²¹³ Aren, ibid. “Sosyalizmin temel ilkelerinden biri, emekçi halkı bilinçlendirmek ve örgütlemektir. (...) Ve gene bu öğretti, yani bilimsel sosyalizmin bize öğrettiği şudur: Emekçi halk ancak sınıf bilincine varabilir, yani ekonomik bilincine varabilir. Ekonomik olarak ayrı bir sınıf olduğunu anlayabilir. Sosyalist bilince varamaz, birisinin ona dışarıdan şırına etmesi lazımdır.”

Although, these statements seem to discuss the difference between comprehending a socialist consciousness and a class-in-itself consciousness, we can already see here that, according to Aren, the realization of the consciousness was definitely experienced in the economic base. It was a struggle, for Aren, to unite the conflict on the economic base with a political consciousness. A second point here is the question of the relationship between socialists and the people. This was a question also discussed in Aybar's speech. However, as Aybar mainly emphasized the diversifications in Turkish society and consequently the uniqueness of Turkish society compared to other societies, he was mainly suggesting to emphasize also the cultural elements and their mutual relationships with the economic base. So, the answers given to the question on the social diversifications and their involvement in the socialist strategy determined the theoretical split between Aybar and the opposing intellectuals.

Regarding the above mentioned points, Aren continued in his speech by pointing out that the diversifications which were mentioned in Aybar's opening speech could be encountered in all countries, even in capitalist societies.²¹⁴ Behice Boran also acknowledged this point and added that an emphasis on diversifications could lead the socialist intellectuals to ignore the collective characteristics of a country upon which the socialist strategy should be based.²¹⁵ They both were implying the argument that the socialist theory established hitherto had not ignored the concerns of Aybar, who claimed that those concerns constituted the uniqueness of Turkish society compared to others.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Behice Boran, *ibid.*

Consequently, Aren and Boran denied Aybar's evaluation of the relationship between base and superstructure or primary and secondary conflicts. If the cultural diversification did not play an exceptional role in the determination of social structure, then it must be said that the main developing social motor should be lie on the economic level. Actually, if we consider here primarily Boran, her standpoint was consistent with his evaluations on the Ottoman social order. As we mentioned in the second chapter, she perceived it mainly as part of the orthodox Marxist historical line, which had shifted from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production even if there were some superstructural differences.²¹⁶ The difference between Aybar and Boran appeared with their evaluations on the role of the superstructure and consequently the role of the secondary conflict. As Boran would say in later years:

(...) Aybar claimed that people are mainly complaining about being treated contemptuously rather than of exploitation and poverty; and so, he wanted "contempt" to be the main issue (of the party propaganda). I and some other friends opposed him. I said that even contempt was a class fact, rose from the class conflict between exploiting and exploited, dominant and oppressed; and if were going to handle with this issue, we had to handle with it in a context of class (conflict).²¹⁷

The main intellectual motivations behind the split between two factions thus were based on mainly on a theoretical differentiation on the role of secondary conflict. As Aybar keep an autonomous and even gradually independent role to secondary conflict or superstructural elements, he saw that the libertarian aspect of socialism should be emphasized regarding the unique political culture of Turkish society.

²¹⁶ See Behice Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları* (İstanbul: Gün Yayınları, 1968), pp. 2–16.

²¹⁷ Uğur Mumcu, *Bir Uzun Yürüyüş*. (İstanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1995), p. 59. "(...) Aybar halkın sömürü ve yoksulluktan çok, horlanmadan şikayetçi olduğunu söyleyerek, "horlanma" konusunun baş tema yapılmasını istedi. Ben ve diğer bazı arkadaşlar karşı çıktık. Horlanmanın da sınıfsal bir olgu olduğunu, sömüren-sömürülen, egemen ve ezilen sınıfsal çelişki ve ilişkisinden doğduğunu söyledim ve bu konu işlenecekse, bu sınıfsal bağlam içerisinde işlenmesi gerektiğini belirttim."

However, Boran and her companions rejected this standpoint because they did not attribute such uniqueness to Turkish society because they did not believe that the superstructural elements had such an overwhelming significance.

The differentiation regarding the characteristics of a certain society was also visible in their attitudes towards the invasion of the Czechoslovakia by the USSR in 1968. Although the party, especially Aybar and Boran, objected to this invasion, it appears that there was even a critical difference in their objection. According to Boran, Aybar was simply motivated by anti-sovietism whereas she was simply criticizing a governmental method which had also been criticized by the USSR in previous years.²¹⁸ Aren also evaluated the Soviet invasion as a necessity of the Cold War context, and consequently of a socialist politics. He added that the invasion could not be judged according to moral principles which could put onto agenda only if we can talk about world socialism.²¹⁹ Actually, we may claim that all those belated confessions on their attitudes in 1968 were a reflection of the immaturity of their political views in those years. Aybar, indeed, tried to establish a political and intellectual base unique for the WTP, which caused in this immature atmosphere clashes with other personalities. Aybar's endeavors seem to have been personal initiatives, however this did not mean that they could be perceived as non-Marxist ones. The theoretical dilemma was clearer than the deadlock among the party members which arose on certain events like the Soviet invasion. The real reasons for this deadlock seems to have become more evident in time, but their clues can be seen still in their disagreement on intellectual level.

²¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 64-65. In following lines, we see that Behice Boran also affirms the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

²¹⁹ Sadun Aren, *Puslu Camın Arkasında* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2006), pp. 159-162.

Küçükömer's Stance at the Congress

As mentioned above, Küçükömer constituted a third faction in the congress beside the groups of Aybar and Aren-Boran. However, we have to make a clear distinction here to show on which points Küçükömer differs himself from the other factions. As will be seen in following pages, Küçükömer's standpoint was actually very close to that of Aybar's one. Both Küçükömer and Aybar had appreciated reciprocally their speeches in certain points, but there is still a definite differentiation between them which led at last to constitute Küçükömer to appear as a different faction compared to that of Aybar.

On the question of science, we have seen previously that Küçükömer also criticized Boran for following the notions of classical physics. He mainly claimed that "there is also no definite cause and effect relationship in the social sciences (...). Conditions and consequences exchange their places. In fact, the dialectic necessitates this."²²⁰ Maybe, while he was pointing out his views, he did not cite the name of Heisenberg, as Aybar did it; but we know that Küçükömer was very interested in the physics of Heisenberg as Osman A. Arolat mentions it. He continued by remembering that Küçükömer wished Arolat and his friends to distribute copies of one of Heisenberg's article among the party delegates, so that they would have read the article before Küçükömer started his speech in the congress.²²¹ We see here that

²²⁰ İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer'in Konuşması*. "Sosyal bilimlerde de (...) öyle kati sebep-sonuç ilişkisi yoktur. Koşullar sonuçlarla yer değiştirmektedir. Zaten diyalektik bunu gerektiriyor."

²²¹ Arolat, Osman A., "Yerleşik Doğrularımızı Yıkan Hoca, Küçükömer," *Biyografi 1 (1961-1971 Dönemi)*, Bağlam 2001, 42.

Aybar and Küçükömer were converging in their perception of the characteristics of science.

Second, we have to deal with Küçükömer's evaluation of the primary and secondary conflicts. In his speech, Küçükömer declared that the primary conflict of Turkey was the question on independence (or the conflict between Turkey and imperialist countries), like the primary conflicts of many other under-developed countries. However, it was not sufficient for him to determine only the appearance of the primary conflict. His emphasis was that in order to solve the question of independence, the war against imperialism should be based on a socialist strategy. The national independence and socialist strategy could not be separated from each other. According to him, the main failures of Nasır's policy in Egypt and the so-called socialist movement in Algeria were their lack of following a socialist strategy or adopting socialist policies in their re-establishment of state and society.²²²

The object of his statements on this issue were mainly the so-called socialist in Turkey who aimed an up-to-down national democratic revolution as a revolutionary front composed of military and civil intellectuals. In their standpoint, the bureaucratic stratum had played and would play key point in the progressive steps in Turkey, so that they had to be gained in to the socialist camp to make possible a revolutionary strategy. Therefore, we see in the following lines that Küçükömer tried to make a short analysis on the bureaucratic stratum. Unfortunately, he was unable to finish his analysis because of the interruptions of the President of Congress Court, Çetin Altan.²²³ However, he was able still to show that the

²²² İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer'in Konuşması*.

²²³ In the documents, we see clearly that Çetin Altan interrupts when Küçükömer intends to call out to military officers who may have attended to the Congress. (See Küçükömer'in konuşması)

bureaucratic stratum had an inclination towards becoming a class. In his conceptualization, the notions of class were determined still according to the ownership of the means of production. Therefore, in the previous decades and century, the bureaucrats in Turkey could not be evaluated as a class; although Aybar pointed out that they had the ability to control them. According to Küçükömer, the people among the bureaucratic stratum who tried to become a class were the military officers. (In *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*, he would deal with this issue by bringing up the question of OYAK on the stage.) But the most important point in this issue was that the montage industry in the ownership of the military officers was directly dependent on foreign companies or countries, as a contradiction to the independence of Turkey. This was why the military could not be depended on to follow a socialist strategy.²²⁴

Here we can return to the relationship between the primary and secondary conflicts. Actually, Küçükömer believed that both groups in the congress did not understand “the importance of the superstructural institutions.” He said in an article right after the Congress, “Mr. Aren did not take the importance of the superstructural conflicts seriously; and Mr. Aybar made a fantasy out of them.”²²⁵ We can

Also, Osman A. Arolat remembers this day but he also adds that Küçükömer’s main concern was to warn the party members and military officers against a possible establishment of military junta in 1969. (see Arolat, *ibid.*) Even, the *Ant* review protested Çetin Altan’s attitude in and after the congress (We must remember that Altan was one of *Ant*’s ex-columnists.) by marking a cross on his photo at the cover of the issue just after the Congress, with phrases of “Me... Me... Me... Me...”. The review also pointed out that although some demands to prolong the time limit for Küçükömer’s speech had been submitted to the Congress Court, “Çetin Altan did not even put them to vote, arbitrarily (...).” See “Üçüncü Kurultay TİP için yeni bir dönem açtı”, *Ant*, n. 99 (19 Kasım 1968), , p. 4-6.

²²⁴ İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi’nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer’in Konuşması*.

²²⁵ Küçükömer, “Tip Programı Değişmelidir”. *Ant* (19 November 1968) , p. 7. “Sayın Aren üstyapı çelişkilerini hafife almış; Sayın Aybar ise bunun fantezisini yapmıştır.” This article can be evaluated as a re-edition of Küçükömer’s speech in the third Congress. But, it can be seen that the article includes the points (and especially, the question on OYAK) which were not allowed to be

understand why he objected to Aren's (or Boran's) standpoint. It was a consequence of the differentiation between their evaluations on the characteristics of science and socialism. But why he objected also to Aybar's perception although he mentioned in his congress speech that "[T]he importance of the superstructural institutions are great. The innovation brought into these discussions by the Party Chairman (Aybar) is this point."²²⁶ is unclear. Although Küçükömer believed in the importance of the secondary conflict, as Aybar did, he evaluated its function differently. Aybar still made a differentiation between the primary and secondary conflict as separate processes, as Boran and Aren did. The importance for Aybar lay more in the argumentation that the roles of primary and secondary conflicts could be reversed according to the historical and social structure of certain countries. But Küçükömer tried to emphasize more their reciprocal functions on each other. For him, the progressive social motor of a country lay still in the primary conflict or substructural process; however, the role or characteristics of the primary conflict could not be understood unless the characteristics of the secondary conflict were not indicated. As he said,

The resolution of the secondary conflicts is out of question. The secondary conflicts will guide us in practice during the movement for the resolution of the primary conflict. These secondary conflicts are important in explaining who our enemies are, which friend we will employ. These secondary conflicts will help us in action for the resolution of the primary conflict. Therefore, those people who deal with philosophy says the socialist revolution is realized in Russia rather than in England. Why? Why? Although the primary

analyzed well because of the time limit. And it shows us also clearly the link between Küçükömer's thoughts spelled out in the Congress and written down in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*.

²²⁶ İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer'in Konuşması*. "(Ü)st yapı kurumlarının önemi büyüktür. Sayın Gn. Başkanın bu tartışmalara getirdiği yenilik bu noktadadır."

conflict was more evident in England, the secondary conflicts which have to exert their authority on it were stronger in Russia.²²⁷

We can compare here also the above mentioned conflict-image differentiation of Aybar with Küçükömer's standpoint. As will be remembered, Aybar mainly intended to emphasize the contradiction between conflicts and images of those conflicts in practice. We may say that he, thus, wanted to open a discussion on the characteristics of conflicts and consequently redefine them regarding their images. But, we see that Küçükömer did not intend to make a clear redefinition of conflicts. However, by pointing out the difference of conflicts and images he tried to make a differentiation between levels of conflicts. In other words, the apparent conflict between Islamist and secularist social strata led to ignoring the main conflict in the economic base, which was promoted mainly by the bureaucracy in their efforts to establish an economic class in touch with imperialist countries.²²⁸ Therefore, the actual politics of the socialists should be redefining this image as a secondary conflict in respect to the real conflict on economic basis and by the guidance of this secondary conflict (or image) to uncover the primary conflict. This was why Küçükömer insistently dealt with the differentiation between primary and secondary conflicts in *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılama*.

²²⁷ Ibid. "Tali çelişkilerin çözümü söz konusu değildir. Tali çelişkiler temel çelişkinin çözülmesinde eylemde, harekette bize yol gösterecektir. Bu tali çelişkiler düşmanımızın kim olduğunu, yanımıza hangi dostumuzu alacağımızı anlatmak bakımından önemlidir. Eylemin içindedir ki bu tali çelişkiler temel çelişkinin çözümünde bize yardım edecektir. Onun içindir ki bu felsefeyle uğraşanlar derler ki sosyalist ihtilal, İngiltere yerine Rusya'da olmuştur. Neden? Neden? Temel çelişkiyi İngiltere'de daha belirli olduğu halde, ona ağırlığını koyacak tali çelişkiler Rusya'da olduğu kadar kuvvetli değildir."

²²⁸ İdris Küçükömer, *İdris Küçükömer'in Üçüncü TİP Kurultayındaki Konuşmasının Özetidir*, 11 Kasım 1968.

Last, we must mention the practical suggestion of Küçükömer for the resolution of the conflicts experienced in the WTP. Actually, he pointed out that such conflicts were beneficial for the party, that those different views among party members constituted the party democracy; and also that those conflicts would lead the party to develop, which indeed, however, necessitated discovering the “objective conditions of the conflicts.” He said that the real problem lay in the fact that the party program and constitution had become old and did not comprehend the late discussions (like the discussions on the socialist strategy) which had appeared in recent years, which consequently led that the current discussions in the party could not be based on a deliberate intellectual document.²²⁹ Both Aren and Boran claimed that Aybar had gone beyond the party principles defined in the program and constitution whereas Aybar objected to these claims that his thoughts were compatible with them.

Both of those groups, therefore, accepted the competence of the program and constitution for the party; they had no extra demand for revision. This point, consequently, led them to claim that the socialist strategy was well defined within the borders of those documents. Actually, this claim contradicted Aybar’s standpoint; namely, although he could demand a revision in the program and constitution, he preferred to say that his innovations were compatible with them. Therefore, we may heed Küçükömer’s suggestions on certain points: First, he was the only speaker in the congress who pointed out a developing process for Turkish socialists by getting involved step by step with new political and theoretical discussion areas. Second, he indicated the need to put preference on discussions on socialist thought rather than act on given political standpoints and the need to produce answers for the questions

²²⁹ İdris Küçükömer, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi’nin 9-12 Kasım 1968 Günlerinde Yapılan 3. Genel Kurulunda İdris Küçükömer’in Konuşması*.

of the day. His later work *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma* can also be perceived as an endeavor to accomplish those goals.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Turkey shifted into a new atmosphere starting from the 1950s in terms of its modernization history. This new atmosphere can be described as a reevaluation of the modernization history and strategies for modernization and economic development. These events were a consequence of alterations in both national and also world-wide politics. Therefore, the intellectual responses to this atmosphere had also a determining character for the following years and even for today's social structure and politics.

Doğan Avcıoğlu and İdris Küçükömer were two essential intellectuals for this intellectual climate. However, their significances differed in their essentiality for Turkey in the 1960s and today. In other words, Doğan Avcıoğlu seems to constitute a centric personality and analysis for the political atmosphere in the 1960s. However, his influence and role in the Turkish thought world seems to be limited to the conditions drawn by the 1960s, especially. However, Küçükömer's analysis benefited both from the atmosphere of the 1960s and also had a forward-looking aspect.

If we focus on Avcıoğlu's analysis, we see pragmatic aims which were based on a power seizing understanding. In the discussion on the Ottoman social order, he tried to convince other intellectuals to not lose themselves in theoretical debates because there was a lack of theoretical knowledge. Rather than losing time with inadequate discussions, he suggested building an anti-imperialist front to act urgently. The intellectuals could compromise on an intermediary concept like "pre-capitalism"

despite insisting on conceptualizations of feudalism or the Asiatic Mode of Production. However, his analysis was also based a feudalism-like conceptualization which held that Turkey did not differ from European countries in terms of mode of production. The differences between the West and Turkey were a consequence of the external intervention of imperialism into Turkish society. At this point, we see that his pragmatic solution to intervene in the social structure externally by the act of “vital forces” and to make social adjustments in order to complete the revolutionist reforms in Turkey.

Regarding the above-mentioned points, we see that there was a close link between his evaluation of the Ottoman social order and his analysis of the Turkish modernization. While focusing on the Turkish modernization, he mainly tried to analyze and emphasize the role of the nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals who could construct the “vital forces” and satisfy the appropriate external social adjustments. Therefore, this role of the nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals determined Avcıoğlu’s perspectives on the relationship between politics and people and consequently Turkish democracy. Avcıoğlu asserted that a real and functional Turkish democracy could not appear and had not appeared in Turkey because the nationalist-revolutionist intellectuals could not realize the appropriate revolutions for the political and economic development of Turkey. The existing “gimcrackery” democracy only served the interests of the reactionarist, exploiting and comprador social strata.

In regard to the above-mentioned statements, we may conclude that Avcıoğlu’s analysis was actually a revision of Kemalist policies since the proclamation of the Republican Turkey in which the Kemalist cadre was perceived as nationalist-revolutionist as opposed to the reactionarist social strata and the people

who were under their subordination of them. If we explicate the comments of Taha Parla on the speeches of Mustafa Kemal in *The Official Resources of the Political Culture in Turkey* (Türkiye’de Siyasal Kültürün Resmi Kaynakları) we see that Kemalism was strictly bound with the discontinuity between nation and the leading cadre, distrust in democratic processes and the differentiation between revolutionism and reactionarism. Avcıoğlu harmonized these points with the socialist atmosphere of the 1960s. But if we take into consideration that socialism meant for Avcıoğlu only a model for economic development, we may say that Avcıoğlu neither constructed a critical approach to the conventional political system of Turkey nor did his analysis included a future prospect for following centuries after the 1960s. If we consider that Avcıoğlu worked only on his historical works like *The History of National Independence* (Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi) and *The History of Turks* (Türklerin Tarihi) we may say that he did not set a new analysis on his thoughts in the 1960s. Actually, these works on history served only to fix his main ideas.

All those points indicate that Avcıoğlu mainly gave priority to power seizure as a political strategy rather than emphasizing the policies of social development. The idea of power seizure is actually the prerequisite of such social development policies. Therefore, the politics of Avcıoğlu can be perceived as temporal or momentary.

On the other hand, İdris Küçükömer gave special attention to the methodological and scientific investigation of Turkey. He described the Ottoman social order referring to the Asiatic Mode of Production, but he also tried to vernacularize the framework of the theory with the historical conditions of Turkey. His analysis was brought to a point where he suggested that the dissolution of the Ottoman social order mainly

depended on the internal factors; thus, the social dynamics of Turkey should be developed in order to catch an economic and political advancement.

Second, he tried to analyze why the social dynamics of Turkey could not be developed. He concluded that the conventional political structure of Turkey, which was actually based on a “secondary” conflict between Islamist-easternist front and westernist-secularist bureaucratic cadre, constituted an obstructive role before the “primary” conflict which was experienced between the local notables and the people who were composed of mainly peasants and small craftsmen. Especially, in the twentieth century the secondary conflict was a conflict between two bureaucratic cadres, one representing the bureaucracy and other depending on the Islamist-easternist public in the political system.

This aspect caused the people to be excluded from the political system. But Turkish democracy, he asserted, had a relative progressive aspect even in this secondary conflict in which the reactions of the people could be reflected on the political system. Consequently, the second bureaucratic group, who depended on the people in the secondary conflict by making a coalition with the local notables, had a relative progressive effect for the development of social dynamics because they could construct links with the social strata who were contributing to the relations of productions.

Regarding all those points we may conclude that Küçükömer tried to indicate a political strategy in which the secondary conflict would dissolve and the primary conflict would come on the agenda of the Turkish politics. Consequently, political actors representing the people, not depending on them, could insert a political strategy which would satisfy the economic development of Turkey. However, the developments in the political system depended on more politico-cultural processes in

society. The subordination of the people to the other strata in the social hierarchy indicated a problematic in the social mentality. There appeared inevitably two different mentalities, one enlightened/progressive and the other reactionary. This inhibited the construction of a civil society, as a means of intervention in the political system in the name of the people. If we focus on further works of Küçükömer after 1960s, we will see that he tried to solve this problematic by questioning different aspects of Turkish society from biology to Islam. As a comparison to Doğan Avcıoğlu, we may say that Küçükömer gave priority to socio-political investigation of Turkey rather than power seizure.

All in all, it can be said that Küçükömer did not give priority to power seizure as Doğan Avcıoğlu did, but tried to indicate the long-term structural changes from the bottom to deal with the problematic political system. It must be said that in Küçükömer's approach there are lots of questions rather than answers. Doğan Avcıoğlu was directly oriented towards finding answers, Küçükömer seems to have interested more in formulating new questions. As Kurtuluş Kayalı points out, he shifted slightly from economic to cultural issues that are also some of the main concerns of Turkish society today.

Therefore, regarding the issues which reappear on the agenda of both daily politics and also more structurally problems of Turkish society, we may comment that Küçükömer's approach to social problems seems to have been more inspiring because his analysis indicated a more structurally deepening problem composed by the daily politics of Turkey. Although Turkey experienced an essential change of topic in socio-political discussions from the 1960s to 2000s on, the main social problems Küçükömer indicated continues. Especially with the 1990s, Küçükömer was remembered for his emphasis on lack of civil society in Turkey, as Kurtuluş

Kayalı asserts.²³⁰ A second remembrance of Küçükömer was experienced in the process of parliamentary elections after the failed presidential elections in May 2007. By this process, many authors from Murat Belge, Nuray Mert, Emre Aköz to Özdemir İnce brought Küçükömer's reevaluation of the conceptualizations of left and right. But the differentiation between secondary and primary conflicts was never or was hardly mentioned in their articles. Therefore, even if the inspiration of Küçükömer is very fruitful for today's Turkey, this aspect of him will last unless the links between different points in his approach are not ignored.

²³⁰ Kurtuluş Kayalı, "Sol'da İdris Küçükömer Tartışmaları," in *Sol*, ed. Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekingil (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007).

APPENDIX A

The left-right table of İdris Küçükömer.

LEFT SIDE	RIGHT SIDE
(Parties) depending on the easternist-Islamist public front getting out from the union of janissaries- <i>ulema</i> -craftsmen:	(Parties) representing westernist-secular bureaucratic tradition:
THE PRINCE SABAHATTIN WING OF THE YOUNG TURKS	TERAKKİ VE İTTİHAT WING OF THE YOUNG TURKS
HÜRRİYET VE İTİLAFA	İTTİHAT VE TERAKKİ (First society, then party)
SECOND GROUP (In Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti in the first Grand Parliament)	FIRST GROUP (In Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti in the first Grand Parliament)
TERAKKİPERVER FIRKA SERBEST FIRKA DEMOKRAT PARTİ ADALET PARTİSİ	C.H. FIRKASI (PARTİSİ) CHP-MBK (Milli Birlik Komitesi) CHP (The left of the center)
?	?

The original table is in the *Düzenin Yabancılaşması: Batılaşma*. (İstanbul Bağlam Yayınları: 2001, p. 72)

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