

## “Socialism in One Country” Before Stalin, and the Origins of Reactionary “Anti-Imperialism”:

### THE CASE OF TURKEY, 1917-1925

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“All information on the situation in Khiva, in Persia, in Bukhara and in Afghanistan confirm the fact that a Soviet revolution in these countries is going to cause us major difficulties at the present time...Until the situation in the West is stabilized and until our industries and transport systems have improved, a Soviet expansion in the east could prove to be no less dangerous than a war in the West...a potential Soviet revolution in the east is today to our advantage principally as an important element in diplomatic relations with England. From this I conclude that: 1) in the east we should devote ourselves to political and educational work...and at the same time advise all possible caution in actions calculated to require our military support, or which might require it; 2) we have to continue by all possible channels at our disposal to arrive at an understanding with England about the east.”

Leon Trotsky, Secret memo to Lenin, Zinoviev et al. June 1920<sup>[1]</sup>

### PREFATORY NOTE

**The following article had its origin in a “Letter to the Editor”, ca. 2001, to a Trotskyist group, inquiring about a commercial treaty signed by the Soviet Union with Kemalist Turkey in March 1921, a mere two months after 15 leading Turkish Communists were murdered just off the Turkish coast. Those who ordered and those who committed these murders were never identified and are the basis for numerous theories, but everything points to some person or persons in the Kemalist movement, up to the highest levels. What interested me was of course not a murder mystery but the fact that the Soviet Union entered into an alliance with a government that was patently killing and jailing pro-Soviet communist militants, and said and did little or nothing about it. That dynamic was of**

**course familiar to anyone acquainted with post-1945 world history, as in the case of Nasser's Egypt or other "progressive" Third World regimes, but here was the same pattern only four years after the Russian Revolution, i.e. in a period when almost everyone, myself included, thought that the dominance of Soviet national interests over "proletarian internationalism" really emerged into full view only with the triumph of Stalin and "socialism in one country" in 1924.**

**Some years later I began an e-mail correspondence with a Turkish comrade, during which I inquired about the 1921 episode and to what extent it still figured in the historical self-awareness of the Turkish left. In due course I received a remarkable pamphlet answering my initial question, and more. For it emerged that the January 1921 murders and March 1921 treaty were merely one, very dramatic episode in a much longer and more complex process of ebbs and flows of the Soviet-Turkish relationship, and the intimately linked fate of Turkish communists during those shifts.**

**Not long after I first read this pamphlet, the group to which my Turkish correspondent belonged joined the International Communist Current. Not my crowd, of course, but during a two-week stay in Turkey in fall 2009 these same individuals received me with the fullest comradely hospitality and for many hours, and on several occasions, we discussed our agreements and differences.**

**On my last day in Istanbul, the chance discovery of a small bookstore on an obscure side street led me to the second source without which this article could not have been written: Paul Dumont's *Du socialisme ottoman à l'internationalisme anatolien* (1997), 500 pages of detailed history of Turkish communism of a quality (generally,**

**political judgements aside) I would like to have for the major Western countries with which I am more familiar. To pre-empt the embarrassment of having quoted this book perhaps 70 times in the 140-odd footnotes, I can only say that the contents of a book, in French, from an Istanbul publisher, with such material about a communist movement in a country most people (myself included) know little or nothing about, deserve to be better known.**

**I begin with this personal account to ask the reader's forbearance for the perhaps excessive detail with which I have tried to nail down this political history. I felt at times like the Borges character who discovers the "G-H" volume of the encyclopedia of a disappeared civilization in a used bookstore and spends the rest of his life trying to find the other volumes. I knew next to nothing about Turkish history before this encounter and I still know very little. But I went to the lengths I did because if the tale these Turkish comrades have to tell is true, it represents a theoretical bombshell for the international revolutionary movement, such as it is, today.**

**In addition to the forty-odd pages of text, there are fourteen pages of footnotes and a thirteen-page "Core Chronology". I composed the latter, initially for my own benefit, to cut through the blur of unfamiliar names and places and events compressed into a relatively short time span; I append it for the reader who may experience the same confusion reading the text that I did in writing it.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The “anti-imperialist” ideology of the 1960’s and early 1970’s died a hard death by the late 1970’s. Western leftist cheerleaders for “Ho- Ho- Ho Chi Minh” in London, Paris, Berlin and New York fell silent as Vietnam invaded Cambodia, and China invaded Vietnam, and the Soviet Union threatened China. China allied with the U.S. against the Soviets in the new Cold War, and the other “national liberation movements” that had taken power in Algeria, and later in Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau...disappointed.

Today, a vague mood of “anti-imperialism” is back, led by Venezuela’s Chavez and his Latin American allies (Cuba, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Bolivia), more or less (with the exception of Stalinist Cuba) classical bourgeois-nationalist regimes. But Chavez in turn is allied, at least verbally and often practically, with the Iran of the ayatollahs, and Hezbollah, and Hamas, as well as newly-emergent China, which no one any longer dares call “socialist”. The British SWP allies with Islamic fundamentalists in local elections in the UK, and participates in mass demonstrations (during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, summer 2007) chanting “We are all Hezbollah”. Somehow Hezbollah, whose statutes affirm the truth of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, is now part of the “left”; when will it be “We are all Taliban”? Why not, indeed?

Such a climate compels us to turn back to the history of such a profoundly reactionary ideology, deeply anti-working class both in the “advanced” and “underdeveloped” countries, by which any force, no matter how retrograde, that turns a gun against a Western power becomes “progressive” and worthy of “critical” or “military” support, or for the less subtle, simply “support”<sup>[2]</sup>.

### 1921: The Soviet Nation-State Trumps Proletarian Internationalism

We find these anti-working-class origins, not surprisingly, in the defeat of the world insurrectionary wave of 1917-1921, a wave moving from Germany and Russia to ultimately affect dozens of countries. And we can date that defeat from March 1921, highlighted (in the Soviet Union) by the crushing of the Kronstadt rebellion, the Anglo-Soviet trade agreement, the implementation of the “New Economic Policy” (NEP) and, abroad, the defeat of the German “March Action”, almost a year after most leading Bolsheviks had lost any hope, for the near future, of proletarian revolution in the West, on which their initial international strategy had been based.

Less known, in the same conjuncture, are the February-March 1921 friendship and commercial treaties signed by the Soviet Union with newly formed authoritarian development regimes in Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, whereby those regimes’ repression, imprisonment or massacre of their respective communist or left oppositions were brushed over for Soviet national

interests in the post-World War I international order of nation-states<sup>[3]</sup>. The aspirations and programs of the Persian regime of Reza Khan<sup>[4]</sup> (founder of the Pahlavi regime) and the Afghan regime of Emir Amanullah (1919-1929)<sup>[5]</sup> were modeled on the new nationalist government of Turkey's Kemal Pasha<sup>[6]</sup> (Atatürk), still, in 1921, fighting the first "war of national liberation" against a Greece backed by British imperialism. Thus we begin with the little-known (in the West) story of this arguably first "development regime", in which "anti-imperialist" ideology first covered over the crushing of an anti-CAPITALIST worker and peasant movement, and of a left-wing of a newly-formed Communist Party committed to actual proletarian internationalism in wartime, rejecting the Third International's demand for military support of Atatürk<sup>[7]</sup>.

## I. FROM EMPIRE TO NATION-STATE

The emergence of modern Turkey out of the collapse of the centuries-old Ottoman Empire, in the decade prior to 1921, is a geopolitical story with antecedents and aftershocks reaching from Sinkiang province<sup>[8]</sup> in northwest China in the east to Algeria in the west, by way of the Balkans in the north to Yemen in the south<sup>[9]</sup>. From their zenith in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to their senescence in the early 20<sup>th</sup>, the Ottomans had loomed large in the European balance of power, finally disappearing in a few years at the end of World War I along with the three other empires (Hohenzollerns, Habsburgs and Romanovs) from which dozens of new nations and new, murderous nationalisms emerged, many of them still with us. This was for a century the arena of the "great game" between Britain and Russia, now taken over by the contemporary "great game" of U.S. foreign policy along the borders of Russia and China. Turkey and the extended "Turkic region" is a "tectonic plate" on which much of the modern history of Eurasia revolves.

It is too quickly forgotten, or sometimes not grasped at all, that nationalist consciousness is a distinctly modern phenomenon, a bit more than 200 years old, above all outside of the North Atlantic world (Britain, France, Holland, the U.S.) in which it first arose as part of the bourgeois revolution. Pre-modern kingdoms and empires were dynastic, with dynastic marriages moving aristocrats indifferently around the courts of Europe. Bourgeois nationalism, above all with the French Revolution, asserted the "nation" against this transcontinental dynastic elite in the supersession of the old, often supra-territorial structures.

While the Ottoman Empire was clearly dominated by descendants of the ethnic Turkic groups which erupted out of Central Asia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and thereafter to ultimately topple the Christian Byzantine empire, "Turkish" national consciousness as such barely existed prior to the 1870's<sup>[10]</sup>. Whatever else one might say about it, the Ottoman Empire was truly multi-ethnic, a world in which Jews, Armenians, Hungarians, Arabs, Slavs, Greeks, Albanians, Kurds,

Circassians and smaller groups co-existed, as second-class citizens, with the dominant Turks but with some significant local autonomy once they paid their taxes and fulfilled other obligations to the state. Nowhere was this multi-ethnicity more apparent and successful than in the city of Salonika<sup>[11]</sup> (annexed from the Ottomans by Greece in 1912), where such groups, (with a Jewish working-class majority that was largely socialist by 1910), and above all the Europe-oriented Armenians and Jews, introduced a fair amount of modern economic practices and ideologies into the wider empire. (Salonika was perhaps not accidentally the city of Kemal Pasha, founder of the modern Turkish nation state.)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels followed the geopolitics of southeastern Europe, and hence of necessity the Ottomans, from the beginning of their collaboration in the 1840's. For more than thirty years, they were seized with a profound Russo phobia, based on the belief that Tsarist Russia (which already achieved continental projection at the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815) would crush any democratic, not to mention socialist revolution in Europe, and that the ideology of pan-Slavism (also advocated by their anarchist rival Bakunin) would carry most Slavs (with the important exception of the Poles) in the Russian undertow. At times they argued that such a revolution would necessarily consolidate itself through a war on Tsarist Russia. The Holy Alliance of the Russian, Prussian and Austrian monarchs underwrote the continental reactionary "balance of power" from 1815 to 1848, and virtually every European government had its "Russian faction"<sup>[12]</sup> intent on appeasing the Tsar. Russian armies in fact crushed the Polish uprisings of 1831, 1846 and 1863, and the revolution of 1848 in Austria-Hungary.

This understandable (within limits) preoccupation with Russian reaction led Marx and Engels to look to the declining Ottoman Empire as a bulwark against Russian expansion, and to often look askance on many anti-Ottoman rebellions and revolutions in the empire's Balkan possessions after 1848, as they weakened that bulwark. It further led them to something bordering on Slav phobia tinged with German nationalism where most Slavs (again, excepting the Poles) were concerned, disparaging any revolutionary potential of these "peoples without history"<sup>[13]</sup> who would do well to integrate into the German area of influence and civilization. Such a preoccupation only ended in the 1870's when the emergence of the Russian Narodniks, the early translation of Marx's Capital into Russian<sup>[14]</sup> and its impact in the Russian intelligentsia forced Marx to revise his views about the Slavic world, above all after his discovery of the Russian peasant commune<sup>[15]</sup>. (Nevertheless the dubious writings of Marx and Engels on the Slavic world provided a lineage in the European socialist movement for e.g. German social patriotism against the Tsarist menace in World War I.)

For almost 200 years before its final dissolution in 1922, the huge Ottoman Empire, the "sick man of Europe", was a major focus of Western

imperialist penetration of the Balkans, the Near East and North Africa. Britain, France, Habsburg Austria, Tsarist Russia and later Bismarckian Germany jostled for places in the line—the “feast of vultures”—to benefit from Ottoman decline. Although that decline dates from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, Napoleon’s 1798 expedition to Egypt was the signal event in awakening the Ottoman (and more generally Moslem<sup>[16]</sup>) world to the new dangers posed by European world hegemony. After the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815, Balkan crises in particular were the focus of this struggle for imperial advantage. Some of the highlights were:

- Serbian National Uprisings (1804, 1815)
- The Greek War of Independence (1821-1830);
- Serbian Autonomy (1839);
- The Crimean War, pitting Britain, France and the Ottomans against Russia (1853-1856);
- Great Eastern Crisis (Bosnian, Bulgarian Uprisings), Serbo-Turkish War (1875-1878);
- The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78; Bosnia’s annexation by Austria-Hungary;
- The Berlin Conference of 1878, called by Bismarck to adjudicate the ongoing Balkan crisis (and rob Russia of its most recent territorial gains)<sup>[17]</sup>;
- The Bulgarian crisis of the early 1880’s, Serbo-Bulgarian War (1885);
- The Armenian massacres of 1896 and 1908, prefiguring the Armenian genocide of 1915;
- The Turk-Greek War of 1897;
- The 1911-12 war following Italy’s annexation of Libya;
- The two generalized Balkan Wars of 1912-1913

Such were, in succession, some of the eruptions of this lingering fatal illness. This process culminated in the assassination of the Austrian archduke in Bosnia in June 1914, setting off World War I. (In the Balkans, World War I appeared as little more than a generalized extension of the two earlier wars.)<sup>[18]</sup> These Balkan revolts, state creation and Ottoman repression set off domestic political crises in England and France throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>[19]</sup>. The geopolitical convergence of Islam, Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy in this relatively small corner of southeastern Europe created an unusually acute international dimension to this vortex of peoples and states. The supra-territorial character of Ottoman social organization scattered different ethnicities in crazy-quilt fashion. Like the “prison house of nations” (as Lenin called Tsarist Russia), the 1918 collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian empire and the Hohenzollern dynasty gave way to often unstable small new nations, underscoring the precarious and often artificial character of “national identity”

from Central Europe, via the Middle East, to the eastern reaches of Russia and northwest China.

The “Eastern question” (as this long, slow Ottoman decline and Western rivalry over the spoils was called) also overlapped with the Anglo-Russian “Great Game” along the borders of Russia, all the way to Kamchatka. British foreign policy in Asia was built around a deep fear of a Russian invasion of its prize colony India through Afghanistan, making the latter country, along with Persia, the object of intense Anglo-Russian rivalry right through the end of World War II, after which the U.S. took over the British role. Military clashes between tiny British and Russian forces in remote, little-known border areas near the Himalayas on several occasions became the stuff of international crises and war scares<sup>[20]</sup>. Protection of the Suez Canal against any hostile naval power in the eastern Mediterranean, before the additional emergent centrality of oil, was ultimately based on the same preoccupation<sup>[21]</sup>, as was (in part) British backing of anti-Soviet forces in Central Asia after the Russian Revolution. While Russian expansion to the west was (relatively) contained in Europe, Tsarist eastward expansion in Central Asia (the conquests of Bukhara and other old khanates) in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> was viewed by Britain with the same unease. Hence were the internal politics of many small nations or would-be nations, of little significance in themselves, conjugated with the largest Eurasian geopolitical issues.

## II. FROM FOLKLORE STUDIES TO THE AUTHORITARIAN DEVELOPMENT STATE

The emergence of nationalist particularisms out of the decay of Ottoman rule occurred over a matter of decades. Ethnic groups with little self-awareness as such, sometimes with little or no corresponding territorial concentration, and which had co-habited (happily or not) with other such groups, were transformed by this process into rival nationalities, vying to create ethnically-based and territorial nations. And, unfortunately, they came to this awareness and this nationalist agenda “too late” in the world history of capitalism, too late, that is, to constitute viable nations as the western European originators had done<sup>[22]</sup>.

Modern nationalism came to the Turkic world<sup>[23]</sup> through Russia, and the Turkic populations scattered along the southern borders of Russia. Germany by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century had elaborated the first “romantic populist” nationalism in the work, above all, of Herder, which during the Napoleonic Wars was turned against the universal pretensions of French nationalism<sup>[24]</sup>. This nationalism, in contrast to France’s Enlightenment version and its civilizing mission, emphasized the uniqueness of language, folklore, and myth against abstract universalism. Herder was still rooted in 18<sup>th</sup> century cosmopolitanism and located German romantic populism within a European framework, but those who followed him were not so careful, from Fichte’s Speeches to the German



Nation (1813) onward. This German romantic populism spawned replicas in Scandinavia and the Slavic world, where it issued in Pan-Slavism. It was against the pretensions of Russian Slavophilism that, beginning in the 1870's a pan-Turkic or pan-Turanian ideology first appeared<sup>[25]</sup> in the Turkic populations of the southern perimeter of the Tsarist empire, hearkening back to a mythical Ur-Turkic nation in Central Asia ("Turan") and holding out the chimera of a revived pan-Turkic nation to succeed the dying Ottoman Empire. While this "pan-Turanism", even, in some fertile imaginations, attempted a reconstruction of the shamanic cosmology<sup>[26]</sup> of the Turkic peoples prior to their conversion to Islam, and influenced mainly the small educated middle classes, it nonetheless spawned larger real world developments. Kemal Pasha (Ataturk, "Father of the Turks") and the new statist elite pragmatically rejected pan-Ottomanism and pan-Turanism<sup>[27]</sup>, but strongly embraced the new nationalist ideology of the "National Pact" for the reduced Turkish state after 1923 after pan-Ottomanism and pan-Turanism proved to be chimeras<sup>[28]</sup>. Enver Pasha, one of the main figures of the Young Turk attempt (1908-1918) to reform the dying Ottoman state and later a defeated rival of Attatürk, conferred with Radek and Lenin after World War I, urging them to back his dream of a great Turkic nation and finally turning against the Soviet state in an attempt to found it (cf. below).<sup>[29]</sup>

Modest Ottoman reform had focused on the education system, from an awareness, after decades of unique preoccupation with the military, that generalized knowledge was a key to a viable economy and hence armed forces<sup>[30]</sup>. The University of Istanbul, the first university in Turkey, opened in 1900. As early as 1885, foreign capital had financed a railway boom. The telegraph centralized power as nothing before and made possible a centralizing shakeup of both the civil service and the military. The real social base of Ottoman reform was in fact the educated civil service. After 1908, the Young Turks intensified this program, building drains, reorganizing the police and fire brigades, and building public transportation and utilities. They opened education to women. Inspired to some extent by pan-Turkic and pan-Turanian ideas, some Young Turks, after the February Revolution in Russia in 1917, had high hopes of a "great new destiny" in the east.<sup>[31]</sup>

Pan-Turanism had had its first exponent in Ismail Gasprinski (1841-1914), a Crimean Turk, who in 1878 founded the first newspaper in Turkish, Tergüman. (The Crimea was the most capitalistically-developed Turkic zone in Tsarist Russia, with a developed Crimean Tatar middle class, and Kazan was the undisputed cultural capital of Turkic Russia.)<sup>[32]</sup> Another Tatar intellectual, Sihabäddin Märçani (1818-1889) had also articulated the idea of a "Tatar nation", possibly the first ideology for a modern territorial nation in the Turkic world (in contrast to the supra-territorial institutions of the Ottomans). As early as the 1850's, Märçani had had contact in Kazan with Russian and European scholars. His book "was a well-formulated ideology for a Kazan Tatar territorial nation"<sup>[33]</sup>, and the "Young Tatar" movement in the 1890's competed with

Gasprinski in a “Turk or Tatar?” debate, as many Tatars were taken with Herder’s idea of a common language as the basis for a nation.

Gasprinski’s newspaper, on the other hand, had been a response to the Ottoman defeat in the 1877-78 war with Russia, which had ruined forever what was left of the myth of Ottoman invincibility. Gasprinski’s brother-in-law in 1911 founded a journal *Türk Yurdu* (The Turkish Homeland) in Istanbul. Gasprinski’s *Tercüman* argued for the emancipation of women and for technical education along Western lines, reporting on such topics as technological advance in the United States, the modernization of Japan, Balkan wars and women’s rights in the West. His conservatism made him argue against any confrontation with Tsarist Russia, and only a few Turkic intellectuals were moved by membership in a larger “Turkic nation”<sup>[34]</sup>.

Nevertheless, the most important founding theoretician of Turkish nationalism was Ziya Gökalp (1875-1924) who used Herderian and broadly German romantic cultural ideas to create a Pan-Turkic equivalent<sup>[35]</sup> of Pan-Slavism. Gökalp, like many who followed him, also wanted to purge the Turkish language of its abundant Persian and Arabic vocabulary. Though not himself a politician, he elaborated much of what became the program of the Young Turks in power.

French influences had long dominated the emergence of Turkish modernism. As the creaking Ottoman Empire attempted to modernize its military forces during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, French officers and French military doctrines were imported wholesale. The growing educated elite spoke French, and was educated in French. German influences as such only began to have an impact in the last decades before World War I, again through military advisers and joint projects such as the Berlin-Bagdad railway. Gökalp himself knew only French, but absorbed German ideas through the *Année Sociologique*, the journal of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, (himself a neo-Kantian after years of study in Germany) which discussed the work of Herder, Fichte, Hegel, Nietzsche, Tönnies and Treitschke<sup>[36]</sup>. (Another key figure for emerging Turkish nationalism was Mazzini, for his role in Italian national unification 1860-1870<sup>[37]</sup>.) Gökalp looked to Durkheim’s “solidarism” as a “third way” beyond capitalism and socialism. From Comte’s positivist sociology, Gökalp learned that “the inborn mysticism of St. Simon’s school had definitely overthrown the democratic ideal in favor of a new autocracy of scientific leadership”<sup>[38]</sup>, a precursor to the authoritarian statism of the Atatürk period and the Kadro ideology of ex-Communists who theorized the role of a scientific elite in the early 1930’s<sup>[39]</sup>. Durkheim also provided Gökalp with a theoretical justification for the pre-eminence of society over the individual.

Gökalp arrived in Istanbul in 1896 and was immediately received into the Young Turks’ Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) which would dominate politics in the last phase of the Ottoman Empire (1908-1918) and whose very name echoed its positivist technocratic (and Saint-Simonian) program<sup>[40]</sup>, like

that of the Brazilian technocrats of the same period. After World War I, Gökalp was accused of having helped foment the anti-Armenian agitation which had led to the 1915 genocide, a genocide whose existence he moreover denied. Beginning in 1923, after the founding of the Turkish Republic, he became a propagandist for the Kemalist regime, substituting the “nation” for the primacy of “society” he had taken from Durkheim, and used the German sociological counterposition (from Tönnies) of “culture” and “civilization” in his vaunting of Turkish culture. He identified Bolshevism as the “Red Danger”. As a Kemalist ideologue, Gökalp founded museums of Turkish folklore, ethnography, archaeology and libraries, as well as a central institute of statistics. After his death, other linguistic purists did eliminate foreign elements of grammar and syntax from Turkish to the point that “a Turkish youth today has to use a dictionary to understand fully the work of Gökalp”<sup>[41]</sup>, written only decades earlier. (In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, the state encouraged Turkic intellectuals among the Azeris, Crimean Turks, Turkomans, Kinghis, Uzbeks and Kipchuks to build a literary language from their spoken language as a way of weakening pan-Turanian appeals in books imported from Istanbul to Russian Islamic centers. For the Ottoman Turanists, World War I had been an opportunity to free the “northern Turks” from Tsarism.)

The Young Turk period, extending to the end of World War I, wrought some changes in the Ottoman state and society, prefiguring the more thoroughgoing reforms of the Atatürk period after 1923. The rule of the CUP initiated a period of freedom of the press and political association. While Ziya Gökalp shied away from holding active political power, many of the CUP’s reforms up to 1918 grew out of his proposals. Following a conservative counter-attack by the religious establishment in 1909, the CUP pushed through constitutional reforms severely reducing the power of the sultan and the cabinet and increasing those of parliament. Bureaucracy was reduced, tax collection was rationalized and the armed forces were modernized. Public transportation in Istanbul was improved. But all in all the CUP reforms fell far short of their 1908 program, or the necessities of a modern capitalist state. Starting in 1911, the disastrous war in Libya and the two Balkan wars overwhelmed domestic reform, and in 1913, at the conclusion of the Second Balkan War, the Ottoman Empire had lost 83% of its land and 69% of its population in Europe. War had nonetheless brought the CUP to “almost absolute power within the councils of the state”<sup>[42]</sup>. It used this power to accelerate secularization and the modernization of the state apparatus. The tax system was drastically revised. In 1915-16, courts, schools and religious foundations were completely secularized. Under the pressures of war, women’s rights were extended, as in the secularization of the marriage contract, and expanded education for women.

The Ottoman Empire’s entry into World War I on the side of the Central Powers, most strongly advocated by the mercurial figure of Enver Pasha, also brought to the fore the German influence on institutions where it had previously

been overshadowed by the British and the French. General Liman von Sanders took over direct command of the First Army even before the war, with many German officers as advisers in the further modernization and reorganization of the armed forces. Naval reorganization had occurred before 1914, though British involvement, because of a delicate balancing act among the powers. Until August 1914, Britain, France and Germany were all directly involved in the affairs of the Ottoman state, including the Ottoman Public Debt Commission and the Ottoman Bank, the latter two controlled by Britain and France. Enver Pasha and his allies in the CUP, however, in September 1914 pushed through the abolition of the onerous Capitulations<sup>[43]</sup>, taking over control of customs duties previously controlled by the Western powers. German General von Seeckt became chief of the Ottoman general staff, and other top German officers took over other key posts, including departments of Operations, Intelligence, Railroads, Supply, Munitions, Coal and Fortresses in the Ministry of War<sup>[44]</sup>. German strategic concerns also dominated Ottoman military deployment during the war itself.

At the Ottoman surrender in October 1918, Enver Pasha and other top CUP members were forced to flee to Germany, and were condemned to death in absentia in July 1919.

### III. SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND IN TURKEY TO 1925

The Young Turk<sup>[45]</sup> revolution of 1908 was accompanied by a certain working-class ferment. Strikes erupted in Istanbul, Salonika and Smyrna among longshoremen, tobacco and glass workers, public transport and railway workers. Between 1876 to 1908, there had been important strikes in the naval shipyards, at the tobacco monopoly and on the railroads. But, according to one historian of the period<sup>[46]</sup>, ca. 1908 a true working-class or proletarian population, numbering perhaps 200,000, was still emerging from a much larger number of artisans in decline. Such labor organization as existed was very much locally oriented. The kinds of organizations which emerged in the early workers' movement in Europe, such as mutual aid societies and unions, were absent, even as the industrial revolution took hold. The emerging working class was employed in the state armament industry, mining, by foreign firms and other industrial companies.

Socialist ideas entered the Ottoman Empire through the more European-oriented minorities: Armenians, Jews, Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians<sup>[47]</sup>. The Socialist Workers' Federation of Salonika (then a city of 150,000 and a key transportation hub) which maintained a correspondence with the Second International, was the sole mass-based organization in the empire at the time. (After Salonika was annexed by Greece in 1912, it ceased to have a decisive impact on the movement elsewhere in the empire.) Italy's 1911 invasion of

Libya gave rise to a demonstration of 10,000 workers in Salonika, and the Second International condemned Italian imperialism. 20,000 Salonika workers turned out for the May Day demonstration of that year. The Ottoman and Balkan adherents of the Second International had attempted a confederation at a conference in Belgrade in 1910, but the effort was exploded by the two Balkan wars. With few exceptions, such as the Serbian Social Democrats who voted against war credits in September 1914, these Second International parties succumbed to nationalism in both the Balkan wars and in World War I<sup>[48]</sup>.

Jews, Armenians and Greeks, in keeping once again with the multi-ethnic character of Ottoman society, also played important roles in the socialist and later communist groups in Istanbul.

Enver Pasha and other Young Turks discredited by the military debacle approached the Bolsheviks<sup>[49]</sup> in 1919 in the hope of financial and political support against Kemal Pasha, whose military triumphs during the world war had quite eclipsed them. The Bolsheviks initially saw in Enver Pasha as a useful ally in the Sovietization of the Transcaucasia where British-backed military activity against the Russian Revolution continued until 1920, and where he, as a Turk, could appeal more directly to the “Islam-Communist” currents there.<sup>[50]</sup> (cf. below) While the exiled Young Turks pursued these machinations, Kemal Pasha was rallying the military forces in Anatolia which would ultimately ruin the Unionists’ plans.

Kemal Pasha, because of his marginalization from the top CUP leadership in the intense rivalry with Enver Pasha, as well as his commanding role in several Ottoman military victories during World War I (above all Gallipoli), was not discredited in the fashion of Enver Pasha and others (Enver having been the commander during several disastrous defeats). After the Central Powers surrendered in October-November 1918, the Allied armies occupied Istanbul along with Greek troops, the latter being in pursuit of their “Great Idea” of annexing Istanbul and western Turkey and rebuilding the Byzantine Empire lost to Islam in 1453. After Britain and France had divided up the extensive Ottoman territories in the Middle East, they pursued plans to reduce Turkey proper to a small rump state in Anatolia, and to divide the rest into Greek, Italian, French and British spheres of interest. Kemal Pasha rejected such dismemberment<sup>[51]</sup> and rallied nationalist forces in Anatolia for a three-year war that expelled the Greeks and made him into the undisputed leader of the new reduced nation. This Allied and Greek occupation, and the successful Kemalist counter-attack, are the backdrop to the 1919-1922 developments described below<sup>[52]</sup>.

#### IV. MISADVENTURES OF ENVER PASHA

In the immediate postwar years, moreover, there was throughout the collapsing Ottoman Empire a tendency to amalgamate Bolshevism and

Islam<sup>[53]</sup>, further evidenced at the notorious<sup>[54]</sup> Baku Congress of the Toilers of the East in September 1920. Enver Pasha had first contacted the Bolsheviks through Karl Radek in Radek's Berlin prison cell, which doubled as a political salon frequented by members of the German High Command<sup>[55]</sup>, corporatist and AEG Telefunken CEO Walter Rathenau (later an architect of the German-Soviet Treaty of Rapallo in 1922) as well as various German Communists. General von Seeckt, with links to the Freikorps and one of Radek's contacts, had already in the spring of 1919 proposed sending Enver Pasha to Moscow<sup>[56]</sup>. In conversations with Enver Pasha, Radek proposed significant Soviet aid to the burgeoning movement in Anatolia, in exchange for which the CUP would spread Bolshevik propaganda throughout the Moslem world<sup>[57]</sup>. Enver Pasha summarized his agreement with Radek saying that he would embrace socialism, "on the condition that it was adapted to the religious doctrines governing the internal functioning of the Moslem countries"<sup>[58]</sup>.

A second step in the rapprochement between the CUP and the Bolsheviks took place in October-November 1919, in negotiations with the CUP organization Karakol around the figure of Shal'va Eliava. A retired military officer, Baha Sait, went to Baku in late 1919, and in January 1920 signed an agreement for an offensive alliance against European imperialism and to support revolutionary efforts in Moslem countries. As in the agreement with Enver Pasha, these CUP elements would promote revolution where they could in exchange for Soviet arms and money. The Soviets guaranteed the political and ideological independence of the Islamic countries that joined the anti-imperialist struggle, while the Unionists agreed to recognize Soviet power in Turkestan and Dagestan and help establish it in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia<sup>[59]</sup>.

Following this rapprochement, an initial so-called "Turkish Communist Party" was founded in Baku<sup>[60]</sup> at the beginning of 1920. Most of the founders were "notorious Unionists"<sup>[61]</sup> who had fled to Azerbaijan. Through this grouping, the first contacts with the Kemalists in Turkey were also established<sup>[62]</sup>. Nuri Pasha, half-brother of Enver Pasha, was a key figure. In reality, one major objective of the group, in addition to creating a communist party in Turkey, was to infiltrate the local Baku administration (then in the hands of the Musavatist Party)<sup>[63]</sup> either to incorporate Azerbaijan into the new Turkey or even to launch the much-touted pan-Turkic state. But first of all, as Paul Dumont puts it

"the Sovietization of Georgia and Armenia, like that of Azerbaijan, presented the advantage of countering English machinations in the Transcaucasus.... Here, the Unionists of Baku were applying the directives of the Anatolian government: the establishment of a common border with the Bolsheviks constituted, in effect, one of the main ideas of Kemalist strategy in this region."<sup>[64]</sup>

Both the Soviet Union and the Kemalist government saw this Sovietization as key to preventing any encirclement by the British.

In the summer of 1920, the CUPers in the new “Communist Party”<sup>[65]</sup> held further negotiations with the Bolsheviks, obtaining arms and gold for the Kemalist resistance. Enver Pasha, who dreamed of supplanting Mustafa Kemal with a Soviet-backed invasion of Anatolia, argued in August 1920 for the creation of a “Union of Islamic Revolutionary Societies” to fight for the Communists’ anti-imperialist program, in exchange for further Soviet military and financial support. In the course of these negotiations, Enver wrote in a muted letter (not mentioning his larger scheme) to Kemal Pasha that

“In principle, the Russians agree to support revolutionary movements directed against England, even if these movements are not communist...”<sup>[66]</sup>

In a speech at the Baku Congress, Enver Pasha again reiterated that

“...It is not merely a desire for support that pulls us toward the Third International, but also close ties that unite its principles with ours.”<sup>[67]</sup>

A long programmatic statement, *Mesai* (Labor), also written in September 1920, and with the participation of Enver Pasha,

“seems to want to define a specifically Turkish line, taking into account both national and religious realities. National independence is presented as an indispensable step toward internationalism. The teachings of Islam are assimilated to socialism; among other things, the califate is maintained, as well as the sovereignty of the sultan.”<sup>[68]</sup>

These statements seem to indicate both a real commitment to working with the Bolsheviks and an attempt to create a left alternative to Kemal Pasha.

Comintern chairman Grigori Zinoviev, despite his call at the Baku Congress for a “jihad” against the West, was for his part not convinced, and warned that the Congress would need to be circumspect about “the leaders of this movement which not long ago were killing workers and peasants in the interest of a group of imperialist powers... The Congress proposes that they prove by their actions that they are ready to serve the people and erase their previous faults.”<sup>[69]</sup>

Nevertheless, Enver Pasha persisted and in the following months established, with Soviet agreement and financial support, his “Union of Islamic Revolutionary Societies” and its Turkish branch, the “party of popular soviets”.<sup>[70]</sup> Most Communist-oriented groups in Anatolia, moreover, by 1921

were well infiltrated by Unionists<sup>[71]</sup>. In late July 1921, a Greek victory over the Kemalists seemed close at hand, and Enver, with Soviet backing, sensed that his moment had arrived. Mustafa Kemal, however, rallied the Turkish forces and after his victory at Sakarya began the offensive that expelled the Greeks in 1922<sup>[72]</sup>. Once the Soviet government realized it would be dealing with a Kemalist government in Turkey<sup>[73]</sup>, Enver Pasha's pro-communist dalliance was nearing its end. He went to Bukhara initially as a Soviet representative but broke with the Bolsheviks and enlisted the Turkmen Basmachis in his earlier pan-Turanian dream, now fighting against the Red Army, and was killed in battle in 1922<sup>[74]</sup>.

## V. THE MAIN FACTIONS OF EMERGING TURKISH COMMUNISM

### a. Turkish "Spartakists"

A group of Turks in exile in Germany during the war, organized in the Party of Workers and Farmers of Turkey, were won over to Marxism and some of them were in the streets with the Spartakusbund in January 1919. They emerged from the several thousand Ottoman citizens then studying or working in Germany. The intellectual core, with their leaders Ethem Nejat and Sefik Hüsni, returned to Turkey in mid-1919 after publishing one issue of their journal Kurtulus (Liberation) in exile, an issue strikingly remote from the explosive issues of the time. In reality, this group was known as "Spartakists" mainly because they had been in Germany. But the Spartakusbund's influence was overshadowed, in this largely intellectual group, by the French influence of Henri Barbusse's journal Clarté. That latter current saw intellectuals as "spiritual inventors who mark the unfolding of progress", a view wholly embraced by the Kurtulus group.

Back in Turkey, they added the word "socialist" to their name and acquired legal existence. They had pretensions of rivaling the much larger and much more working-class based Turkish Socialist Party (TSP), but in their first phase of existence did not get very far, turning out only a few hundred people at the mass demonstration organized by the TSP on May Day 1921. In reality, their program differed little from that of the TSP<sup>[75]</sup>. They received authorization to resume publication of Kurtulus. Ethem Nejat and Sefik Hüsni were, again, the main editors. Both issued from middle-class backgrounds and had studied abroad, Hüsni being strongly influenced by Jauresian socialism in France. By early 1920, some members rebelled against the elitist bent of the group, and left Istanbul for Kemalist territory. Sefik Hüsni and Ethem Nejat moved toward communism, leaving the leadership to its moderate fraction.

In late 1920, Sefik Hüsni and Sadrettin Celal resumed control, now applying the Comintern line under the influence of the Baku Congress of the Toilers of the East, benefiting from the increasing debacle of the TSP. The



group's new journal was named, not accidentally, *Aydinlik* (Clarity) after Barbusse's journal in France, and an affiliated "Workers' Association of Turkey" had several hundred worker militants. Nevertheless, in 1921, despite the application of the Comintern line of a "united front against the coalesced forces of the bourgeoisie", they failed to match the dynamism of the working-class base of the PST in Istanbul. An Allied intelligence report on left-wing activity in Istanbul did not even mention *Aydinlik*. But its ties to the Comintern caught the attention of the Kemalists, and in spite of the group's November 1922 telegram to the Grand National Assembly congratulating it on the abolition of the sultanate.

We shall return to the career of Sefik Hüsnu and the *Aydinlik* group momentarily, when Hüsnu, with these elitist origins, emerges as the leader of the right wing of the Turkish communist movement under the Turkish Republic, and ultimately becomes a Stalinist.

#### b. The Left Wing of Turkish Communism, 1920-1925<sup>[76]</sup>

More obscure, and little discussed in Western-language literature on Turkish socialism and communism in this period, is a distinct left wing, with its main initial base in Anatolia, whose best known figures were the Bashkir Sharif Manatov and Salih Hacıoglu<sup>[77]</sup>. They emerged in 1920 out of the ferment following the Ottoman surrender, the soviet movement in northeast Anatolia, and a regroupment of disparate forces in the "red bastion" of Eskisehir, in western Anatolia. Hacıoglu in particular was from the beginning opposed to the ideology of "national wars of liberation", but through the 1919-1922 war the Turkish communists mainly followed the Comintern position on the question. Through the 1919-1922 years of struggle, war, repression and prison, and ultimately until its defeat and eradication by 1927, this faction evolved to broadly "left communist" positions. It had far more real depth in the working class and allied groups than the Istanbul-based, elitist *Aydinlik* group, top-heavy with intellectuals, even though the latter had the sponsorship of the Comintern and, with the triumph of Stalinism, ultimately prevailed as the left wing was dispersed and liquidated, often physically. The Turkish left communists even had an ally in a Comintern official, Grigori Safarov. Safarov worked in the Comintern's Eastern office and had already clashed with Lenin on the national question. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1908, had been with Lenin in Switzerland, and returned to Russia on the same train. He was affiliated with the Russian left communists and wrote a book, *The National Question and the Proletariat* (1923). He did everything in his power to support the left wing of the Turkish communists against Hüsnu and the *Aydinlik* group, but was removed from his position as a member of the anti-Stalinist opposition<sup>[78]</sup>.

## VI. Vicissitudes of the Soviet Rapprochement with Kemalist Turkey and the Fortunes of Turkish Communists

Kemal Pasha was clearly a pioneer among leaders of authoritarian development regimes outside the West in many ways, and not least of all in his strategy of frightening the Western powers by mercurial relations with the Soviet Union, as well as in the alternation of his tolerance and repression of internal Communist activity in Turkey itself. What interests us above all is Soviet tolerance of that repression when it suited Soviet foreign policy to do so.

Mustafa Kemal's original mission in Anatolia naturally had a class dimension as well as a nationalist one:

“...the reason Mustafa Kemal went to Samsun, which has become the beginning of everything in the mythology of national liberation, was because British imperialism wanted to send an Ottoman commander there...(this)...was due to the fact that, following the suppression of the soviet movement in the cities of Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayburt and Sivas at the hands of the Ottoman army, they wanted the region to be examined and they wanted precautions to be taken against similar possible events in the future if necessary. The soviet movement, centered in the city of Erzincan, was a development from the revolutionary propaganda made by Russian soldiers in the region, and while the Russian army was retreating after the revolution, the Armenian, Kurdish and Turkish laborers in the region, moving beyond sharp national divisions, came together. This movement was crushed by the Ottoman Army in January 1918.”<sup>[79]</sup>

The Turkish working class, though small, and with its ties to rural labor, was definitely a force to be reckoned with in the political calculations of contending parties in the post-World War social climate.

Worker ferment also emerged in the western zones under Allied occupation, above all Istanbul. In 1920-21, the Turkish Socialist Party, with a real working-class base and affiliated with the Second International, took a militant turn in occupied Istanbul with the threat of a general strike (January 1921). Another strike was threatened at the gas works in April, followed by a May Day demonstration of unprecedented size. Largely unsuccessful struggles against foreign companies followed. The Socialist Party went into decline through these stalemates, but a militant tramway strike erupted in January 1922. The SP threw itself into the struggle in order to regain momentum, but the strike ended in a disaster for the workers. New worker organizations arose to fill the void.

Mustafa Kemal's movement was a reconfiguration of the old military and CUP elite into a new proto-state, (known until the 1923 declaration of the Turkish Republic as the Grand National Assembly):

“The Kemalist movement was led by previously mid- to high-ranked members of the military and political bureaucratic bourgeoisie...the ruling cadres of the movement either came from the Ottoman Army or from the (CUP)...”<sup>[80]</sup>

Mustafa Suphi, a key figure in the very early history of the Turkish CP, arrived in Baku (Azerbaijan) in May 1920, with full backing of the Comintern. His assignment was a delicate one. The ex-Unionists who had founded the self-styled “Turkish Communist Party” a few months earlier were on one hand suspected of being more Islamic socialists than communists, but on the other hand, they still maintained powerful connections with CUP figures in the Turkish bureaucracy and military and could be of great use as contacts with the Kemalist movement<sup>[81]</sup>. Suphi thus reconstituted the group as the “Baku section” of the Turkish CP, and expelled some of the more dubious figures. He dispatched an envoy to Mustafa Kemal in July asking the Ankara government 1) if the Turkish Bolsheviks would be allowed to create a legal organization in Anatolia; 2) what changes might be made in the current Bolshevik program to make it applicable in Anatolia; and 3) what were the views of the Grand National Assembly on the application of the Bolshevik program? The envoy was also instructed to tell the Ankara government that the Baku organization would provide it, for the time being, with 50 cannons, 70 machine guns and 17,000 rifles.<sup>[82]</sup> It amounted to an offer to exchange these arms for legal toleration of Bolshevik activity in Anatolia.

An initial conference of Turkish communists had taken place in Moscow in July 1918 and had revealed serious factional disagreements; Mustafa Suphi hoped to heal these differences and qualify the party for membership in the Third International, which held its Second Congress in July 1920<sup>[83]</sup>. The founding congress of the party, superseding the organization created in the spring, took place in Baku in September, immediately after the (above-mentioned) Congress of the Toilers of the East. 74 delegates participated, in contrast to the 20-odd delegates two years earlier. Following in the spirit of the just-concluded international Congress, many of these delegates, in the view of Dumont, “saw in communism nothing but an extremist variant of the teachings of Islam” whereas perhaps ten had any real Marxist background<sup>[84]</sup>. The Unionists were eliminated from the central committee. In discussions at the congress, a majority of delegates argued for maintaining Islamic traditions and vigorously opposed the party's program for secularizing the state administration and judiciary. There was approval for the abolition of the caliphate, but all other anti-religious measures were soft-pedaled. The congress also approved the

decisions taken by the Comintern's Second Congress on support for national liberation movements which included bourgeois elements. The delegates' "Appeal to the Workers in Turkey" argued for a series of political and social measures<sup>[85]</sup> but not for a radical social transformation.

Contacts and concertation between the Kemalists and the Soviet government had, up to the turn of Turkish fortunes at Sakarya, hardly been without its frictions. The Soviet backing of Enver Pasha had not helped. A further major sticking point had been Armenia, where the Bolsheviks had committed themselves to the right of self-determination<sup>[86]</sup>, and where Kemal Pasha wanted three provinces for Turkey previously lost to Tsarist Russia. Kemalists to that end had pushed beyond the pre-1914 Turkish borders with the apparent goal of annexation. Chicherin (then in charge of Soviet foreign policy) and the Soviet government were suspicious of a secret agreement between Kemal and the Allies enabling Britain to open a new anti-Soviet front<sup>[87]</sup>. On one hand, in a speech in Baku in November 1920

"Stalin extolled the third anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution and lauded the friendship between Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey, declaring that the Turkish revolutionary movement, although bourgeois in character, was resisting the Entente imperialists and creating such ferment in the Caucasus and the Near East as was unimaginable three years earlier."<sup>[88]</sup>

But Chicherin warned of a possible armed conflict with Turkey if Kemal pushed too far<sup>[89]</sup>, and both the Soviets and the Armenians suspected that Kemal wanted all the territory awarded to the Ottoman Empire at the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and might possibly "have been encouraged by representatives of the Entente powers to press beyond Kars in the hope of driving the Red Army out of Azerbaijan"<sup>[90]</sup>. After the collapse of General Wrangel's White army in the Crimea in November 1920, and the subsequent transfer of thousands of Red Army soldiers to the Caucasus, the Kemalists calmed down, stopped referring to Brest-Litovsk, and focused on annexing parts of Armenia.

Mustafa Kemal, himself obviously no communist, had his own reasons to be dubious of the Soviet-Turkish entente. At the time of the arrival of Mustafa Suphi's envoy seeking legal recognition of the Turkish CP, moreover,

"the hypothesis of a possible Bolshevization of Anatolia... was in no way particularly extravagant"<sup>[91]</sup>.

Pro-Soviet sentiment in the nationalist milieu was at a high pitch, and Kemal himself had issued a manifesto calling on Muslims to form a bloc with the Communists against the Western powers. Another important Kemalist leader,

Kazim Karabekir, commander of the Army of the East, imagined the possibility of “acclimatizing Bolshevik theories to Anatolia” once certain modifications were made<sup>[92]</sup>.

Significant Soviet aid in the form of gold shipments began to arrive in August 1920; more would follow in December. The vindictive Allied peace treaty of Sèvres (among other things depriving Turkey of the three disputed Armenian provinces that would cause the serious problems discussed above) was imposed on the surviving Ottoman government in Istanbul on Aug. 10, and four days later Mustafa Kemal addressed the (rebel) Grand National Assembly in Ankara on the similarities between the communitarian spirit of Islam and Bolshevism<sup>[93]</sup>, a speech aimed, once again, at winning the trust of the Bolsheviks while frightening the West. At this juncture, Kemal had to walk a very fine line between offending the Soviets and allowing the Baku-based Turkish CP to operate in Turkey itself, as the party delegate had requested in July. Kemal used the occasion of the rout of the Red Army in Poland in August 1920 to harden his attitude toward communist activity in Anatolia and to steal the populist rhetoric of a left-opposition group, the People’s Party (cf. below) that seemed to be outflanking his government in parliament. With the Soviet government distracted elsewhere, Mustafa Kemal in September replied to Suphi that

“we should abstain from untimely and useless initiatives, as these could become a factor of disunity and in that way bring about the failure of the national struggle for independence”<sup>[94]</sup>.

At the same time, to avoid pushing Suphi and the CP into clandestine activity, Kemal reiterated that he and they were pursuing the same objective (national liberation) and asked the Baku organization to send an accredited representative to Ankara “so that the Turkish communist organization and the national power could collaborate fully”<sup>[95]</sup>.

This was, once again, complicated by the situation in Armenia, as indicated. Nonetheless, at the beginning of November 1920, Suphi replied to Kemal’s letter announcing that the accredited mission was preparing to leave for Ankara, adding that

“his party was committed to fully supporting the national government and would do nothing to weaken or divide the fighting forces”<sup>[96]</sup>.

In early December, Mustafa Suphi and twenty comrades left Baku for Turkey, apparently convinced by Kemal’s letter that they were welcome there<sup>[97]</sup>, and arrived in Kars on December 28, where they received an official welcome from Kazim Karabekir, despite the latter’s suspicions about their intentions. The

timing could hardly have been worse, since at that very moment Kemalist forces were engaged in violent confrontation with the armed bands of Cerkes Edhem (cf. below), a former supporter of the Grand National Assembly who had turned against Kemal in the hope of rallying “extremist” elements against him in the name of “Bolshevism”, and who thereby showed the latter’s potential for sowing disunity<sup>[98]</sup>. At this juncture, the government had decided that the Communists should return to Russia. Kazim Karabekir ordered the governor of Erzurum, Hamit bey, to whip up a press campaign and “appropriate demonstrations” against Mustafa Suphi and his comrades to dissuade them from remaining in Turkey. In this way, Karabekir (and presumably Kemal Pasha) hoped that this negative reception would appear to be due to the recklessness of the communist group and not directed against the Soviet Union. On January 22, an angry crowd in Erzurum prevented Suphi and his comrades from leaving the train station, and they returned toward the coast, everywhere encountering crowds shouting anti-communist insults and hurling rocks. Six days later, on January 28, they finally arrived in Trabzon where they immediately accepted the offer of a motorboat to depart. They were overtaken by another boat, murdered, and thrown into the sea.<sup>[99]</sup>

Activities of the Turkish Communist Party were not entirely paralyzed by these murders. But they were part of a larger crackdown on the left by the Kemalists. In December, measures had already been intensified against “extremists” and by January 1921, according to Paul Dumont, “most left-wing organizations in Anatolia had disappeared”<sup>[100]</sup>. The Trabzon murders had merely been the culmination of a wave of repression<sup>[101]</sup>. A few days later (Feb. 1, 1921) the “People’s Communist Party of Turkey” (cf. below) was forced to disband and its leaders charged with spying for a “foreign power” and sentenced to long years in prison.

Paul Dumont is eloquent on the Soviet reaction:

“The repressive measures of January 1921 were noted in Moscow without the slightest murmur. Only much later did Pravda mention the “crimes” perpetrated in 1920 and 1921 by the Ankara government. At the time, quite to the contrary, the emphasis was on the progress of Turko-Russian friendship.”<sup>[102]</sup>

In this climate, Turkish negotiators arrived in Moscow on Feb. 17, 1921. The Armenian question was still a central source of tension. A military confrontation also seemed possible in Georgia, where both Red Army and Turkish troops were present, the latter in provinces lost to Russia in 1878. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bekir Sami, was making anti-communist speeches in the capitals of Europe.

In order to retain the alliance with the Kemalist regime, the Soviet government signed a “treaty of friendship and fraternity” with Turkey on March 16, 1921. Turkish retained the three provinces occupied in 1920, and other concessions.<sup>[103]</sup> The Kemalists agreed to crack down on groups in Turkey attempt to propagate pan-Turanism in Russia, and the Soviet government agreed not to back activities aimed at the Kemalist government in Turkey. Nevertheless, mistrust reigned on both sides and many questions of implementation dragged on into 1922. But the Kemalists’ repression of all communist groups in Anatolia never intruded<sup>[104]</sup>.

After the repression of 1920-21, the ebbs and flows of an organized left independent of Mustafa Kemal paralleled the ebbs and flows of the Turkish-Soviet relationship. On May Day 1921, there were in fact massive worker demonstrations in Istanbul. In December 1921-January 1922 M.V. Frunze, commander-in-chief of Soviet forces in the Ukraine, made an extended visit to Ankara that was a high-water mark in relations. Some of the Communists who had received long sentences had already been amnestied in September 1921, and in March 1922, several of them were authorized to reconstitute the “People’s Communist Party of Turkey”. The Soviet ambassador kept Kemal Pasha well apprised of their activities.<sup>[105]</sup>

A pamphlet of the Turkish CP in February 1922, a month before the party returned to legal status, pulled no punches:

“The purely bourgeois and despotic group (the Kemalists-LG)...has already begun to try to block the danger it fears the most: the young communists secretly organizing in the country...The Kemalist movement started throwing them into its dungeons at the first opportunity.”<sup>[106]</sup>

But the pamphlet did not stop there:

*“But the point that matters to us is that all the acts of betrayal and murder were committed while in a close alliance with Russia...While representatives in Russia declared that Anatolia was communist in their long articles in the Moscow newspaper, a horde of police and soldiers chased the real communists in Anatolia.”*<sup>[107]</sup>

Relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey, despite the re-legalization, went downhill from there, however; in April 1922 the Cheka accused the Turkish embassy in Moscow of espionage and Kemal Pasha recalled his ambassador. Worse still, from the Soviet viewpoint, Kemal refused to condemn the Basmachi revolt led by Enver Pasha. With the final crushing of the invading Greek troops in September 1922, the chill became manifest<sup>[108]</sup>.

Further repression of communist groups intensified in October 1922. The Ottoman sultan, who had not yet formally handed power in Istanbul over to the

Kemalists, banned several worker organizations. However, thousands of worker militants did attend congresses in the Curukova region, with an important presence of the communist left. Then, during the negotiations for the Treaty of Lausanne (November 1922-July 1923) which formally recognized the Kemalist victory in Turkey and scrapped the punitive Treaty of Sèvres, Kemalist-Communist relations warmed yet again. By early 1923, various communist groups were at liberty to have a public existence and publications. The Soviet press blew hot and cold (as shall be documented below) praising the alliance with Turkey while attacking the Turkish rapprochement with the Allies. But once the Allies had conceded control over the Straits to Kemal Pasha, the Kemalists unleashed a police operation against communist militants in Istanbul. This time, Pravda ran a headline “White Terror in Turkey”. Be that as it may, numbers of workers struck on May Day 1923, above all in Istanbul. Further strikes involving 30,000 workers occurred in a July-November 1923 strike wave (cf. below).

## VII. OTHER CURRENTS OF THE TURKISH LEFT, 1918-1925

In addition to the “Spartakist” group and the Turkish communist left described above, which became the two main factions of the Turkish CP, it is necessary to parse out the different currents and organizations on the scene in these decisive years, some of whom muddled the clarity of the CP.

Outright repression such as the murder of Mustafa Suphi and fourteen other communists in January 1921 was only one dimension (albeit the most brutal) of the difficulties that confronted militants in Turkey under the Kemalist regime. Mustafa Kemal also was masterful in mixing co-optation and repression, as illustrated in the fates of other currents in the years leading up to the creation of the Republic (October 1923) and thereafter.

### a. The Green Army

One manifestation of the power of Islam in the immediate postwar political conjuncture was the creation of the “Green Army” ca. May 1920<sup>[109]</sup>. Various Muslim groups in the former Russian empire used green, the color of Islam. Some of these militias fought in the Transcaucasia and participated in the capture of Baku in September 1918. The Kemalists used the rumors of such a “Green Army” to quell suspicions about its secularism in Turkish public opinion, suspicions fanned by the Sultanate in Istanbul. The actual Green Army saw as its task the struggle against reactionary Islamic opponents of the Kemalists.<sup>[110]</sup> The Green Army’s pan-Asianist, possibly pan-Turanist call was “Asia for the Asians”. At the Second Congress of the Comintern in July 1920, Lenin had denounced pan-Asianism as serving the interests of “Turkish and Japanese imperialism” When the above-mentioned Cerkes Edhem emerged as a



strongman of the Green Army, with 3,000 fighting men under him, showing the potential to become a rival to Mustafa Kemal, a break with the nationalists occurred, and Kemal attempt to dissolve the organization. In October 1920, the law on associations was amended to give the government the right to ban organizations it deemed dangerous to state security.

Matters were complicated by the influence of the Bashkirian Bolshevik, Sharif Manatov, on the Green Army. Manatov was undoubtedly one of the most interesting figures on the left-wing of the emerging communist movement. He was giving lectures in Eskehir, a center of radical agitation, and much of the Green Army press coming out of Eskehir was showing “through various theological subtleties, that the precepts of Bolshevism were identical to those of Islam”<sup>[111]</sup> A Comintern influence on the Green Army meant that outright repression of its militants, at this delicate juncture for Mustafa Kemal, could create problems with the Soviet Union. Kemal’s solution was to create, in late October, an “official” Communist Party sponsored by the state. Having integrated some Green Army militants (including Cerkes Edhem) into the official party and moved its press to Ankara, Kemal then dissolved the Green Army. A number of Edhem’s irregulars were integrated into the Kemalist army. Edhem, catching the drift of events, tried to provoke a resistance, which proved futile. The government issued an edict prohibiting the recruitment of irregular forces by anyone, for whatever reason. Completely outflanked, Edhem’s troops disbanded or were crushed as part of the general repression of early January 1921, and Edhem fled. The Kemalist government then integrated the publishing operations of the former Green Army into the official state press<sup>[112]</sup>. On January 8, as part of the wave of repression of December 1920-January 1921, Kemal violently denounced Edhem and the “propagators of communism” before the Grand National Assembly.

#### b. The People’s Party

The People’s Party (Halk firkasi) was another means by which Green Army militants could adapt themselves to Kemalist institutions, even though some of its members refused such integration. In the summer of 1920, it made up more than one-fourth of the deputies in the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, the largest opposition to the Kemalists. It took over wholesale the Green Army’s mix of Bolshevism, Islam and Pan-Asianism. Few people at this juncture had any clear idea of what Bolshevism meant, beyond popular resistance to the Allies. Cheik Servet, a major party spokesman, argued in the wake of the Baku Congress that the task was allying with the Bolsheviks for a jihad against the West. For Servet, Bolshevism’s principles were those of Islam, namely “charity and generosity”<sup>[113]</sup>.

The People’s Party was powerful enough in the Grand National Assembly to defeat a Kemalist candidate for the powerful post of Minister of the

Interior (in charge of political surveillance) and elect one its members, Nazim Bey. Mustafa Kemal was not pleased, and forced his resignation.

Then, in early September, the People's Party presented a program of somewhat radical measures that would clearly lead to a divisive debate in the assembly. These included an assertion of popular sovereignty, specified intellectual and manual workers as the real source of power, and affirmed the "sacred precepts of Islam", above all fraternity, as the means for struggle against the vices of the West. It argued for democratic assemblies at every level of public life, a struggle against alcoholism and criminality, free and mandatory public education, land distribution and the easing of tax burdens.<sup>[114]</sup>

Kemal Pasha met this threat by lifting much of the People's Party program into his own, in less provocative language. Outflanked, the People's Party acquiesced and Kemal's program, instead of theirs, went to the constitutional commission. The new constitutional law of Jan. 20, 1921 affirmed fidelity to the person of the sultan-caliph, to Islam and to the institutions of the Ottoman monarchy.

### c. The "official" Turkish Communist Party

Created as a grab-bag to defuse the Bolshevik influenced elements of the Green Army, the official Turkish Communist Party was founded in late October, 1920, as a prop to Kemalist power. All communist groups were ordered by the Ministry of the Interior to cease activity or join the new party. For the government, the official TCP was the only form of Bolshevism appropriate for Turkey since, in contrast to Russia, all strata of Turkish society were subjugated to the oppression of Western imperialism<sup>[115]</sup>. To avoid the confusion of workers' and soldiers' soviets, Kemal ordered Ali Fuad Pasha, Kemalist commander of the Western front, to become a member of the party's central committee, so that the party would be "in the hands of the highest commanders of the army"<sup>[116]</sup>. The arrival, also in October, of an important Soviet mission in Ankara was the occasion for a wave of pro-communist articles in the nationalist press, as a gesture to the Soviet Union<sup>[117]</sup>. Much of the new party's program strangely echoed the People's Party program co-opted by Mustafa Kemal. The party statutes stated that those arguing for the suppression of property were "supporters of imperialism and capitalism", reasserted the identity of communist principles with Islam, and the party's complete independence from Moscow. Nevertheless, the party's newspaper was suppressed by the government in January 1921 in the general crackdown on all left organizations, and the party, with no public presence, faded away.

## VIII. THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNIST PARTY: THE NATIONAL QUESTION POINT-BLANK

The serious Turkish communist party which survived, and emerged from, these ideological shifts and dubious fellow-travelers such as the Islamo-Communists ultimately polarized between the right wing, Sefik Hüsnü's Aydinlik group and the left wing, the Anatolian current represented by Sharif Manatov and Salih Hacıoglu, and, following Manatov's expulsion from Turkey, Hacıoglu.

The People's Communist Party (Türkiye halk ıstırakıyyun fırkası) was created in the summer of 1920, possibly in contact with Mustafa Suphi's organization in Baku<sup>[118]</sup>. It emerged from a network of propaganda groups in Istanbul, Eskisehir and the ports of the Black Sea, as well as militants of the Green Army who had gone underground rather than be co-opted. It included, as indicated, Manatov<sup>[119]</sup> and Hacıoglu<sup>[120]</sup>, the latter, destined to be the left's spokesman right up to its liquidation in Turkey and in Russia. The party program was strikingly similar to that of the Green Army, with the important exception of an assertion of the separation of religion and state. On July 14, 1920, a proclamation published in Eskisehir announced "to the peasants and workers" of Anatolia the creation of a Turkish Communist Party affiliated with the Third International. The party militants even managed to organize demonstrations against forced conscription in Eskisehir. Financing for a party press and other activities arrived in October with the Soviet mission in Ankara.

Mustafa Kemal quickly attacked this clandestine party through the "official" Communist Party and expelled Manatov from Turkey in October 1920. Most militants of the clandestine party refused to bend and launched their counter-attack in November. Salih Hacıoglu and others from the core group fused with some deputies of the left wing of the People's Party and founded the Türkiye halk ıstırakıyyun fırkası, with Hacıoglu playing a key role. They issued a circular announcing the creation of the new party and insisting that it alone was the real continuity with the now co-opted Green Army, while denouncing the "official" Communist Party<sup>[121]</sup> in the name of the Third International and of Bolshevism. The party statutes and program were nonetheless recognized by the Ministry of the Interior at the end of December 1920 and the party briefly became legal.

It was, to put it mildly (as Paul Dumont underscores<sup>[122]</sup>), a bad time to emerge from clandestinity. As has been shown previously, at the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921 the Kemalist regime was bent on liquidating the Anatolian left. The party nonetheless forged ahead, launched its daily newspaper, Emek (Labor) in mid-January, and created an uproar. The editorial of the first issue argued that the Koran was hostile to private property and to capitalism. It made no concessions to others' attempts to tailor communism to any special Turkish conditions. A major effort, however, during the paper's brief existence, was to reconcile Bolshevism with the Islamic tradition. The paper was banned after it reprinted an article from a Bulgarian communist newspaper attacking the dictatorial nature of Kemalism and predicting civil war in Anatolia. On January

8, as indicated earlier, Mustafa Kemal had made his violently anti-Communist speech.

Salih Hacıoglu was arrested on January 11, and shortly thereafter, Muslim clerics issued a fatwa calling on believers to avoid communist groups. At the end of January, most party leaders were arrested, excepting only three who had parliamentary immunity. The party was dissolved on February 2. In April 1921, even the parliamentary deputies were stripped of immunity, convicted of attempting to overthrow the government, and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor. Less prominent figures received shorter sentences. <sup>[123]</sup>

This heavy repression did not, however, snuff out the activities of communist militants in Anatolia. The new rapprochement between Turkey and the Soviet Union, marked (as indicated previously) by Frunze's visit in December 1921, was preceded by amnesties of many of those arrested, including Salih Hacıoglu <sup>[124]</sup>.

The following is Paul Dumont's interpretation of the situation of Turkish communism at this juncture, in a passage worth quoting at length:

“The dissolution of the People's Communist Party...marks a turning point in the history of the Turkish “left”. For nearly a year, various groups of militants scattered around Anatolia would be forced to slacken their activity. When the PCPT arose again from its ashes in March 1922, it had lost a large part of its vitality and spontaneity. Thereafter we find a doctrinaire movement, cut off from active political life and completely domesticated by the Communist International.

Compared to this cautious and drab left, of the later period, the 1920 left was characterized, overall, by its combativity, its candor in matters of doctrine, and also by its wiliness. Further...we are not talking about one left, but several, which are inextricably interpenetrated. Through the multiplicity of individual positions, we can distinguish, with a little benevolence, three major currents. A nationalist, even ultra-nationalist current, whose main idea seems to have been exploiting communist effervescence to create a Greater Turanian Turkey reaching from Constantiople to Bukhara. A moderate current, represented by Hakki Behic, careful above all to avoid a social upheaval, and an advocate of reforms granted and managed by the state. Finally, there was an “extremist” current, in thrall to the ideas of the October Revolution, but in no way ready to throw overboard the cultural and social traditions of the country.

What strikes us, in these three currents, is the central role they assign to Islam. With their eyes on the West, Ottoman socialists before the First World War cheerfully ignored the Islamic phenomenon. For the Turkish left of 1920, based

in the heart of Anatolia, its eyes fixed on the East, Islam was on the contrary a permanent obsession...

Once the Third International succeeded in integrating the Anatolian communist movement, this concern with justification by Islam disappeared totally from the ideological baggage of the Turkish militants. After 1922, we see a garden-variety Marxism take hold in Turkey, one that was certainly convincing, but somewhat oblivious to the economic, cultural and social realities of the country. This transformation of ideas was accompanied by a change in recruitment. The Green Army, the Populist group, the official Communist Party and the People's Communist Party had been infiltrated by a mass of former members of the Committee for Union and Progress. After the failure, in September 1921, of the putsch planned by Enver Pasha against the government of Mustafa Kemal, these Unionists definitively turned away from the ideas of the left, which had shown themselves to be inoperative in the confrontation with Kemalist nationalism. These "extremists" found themselves left to their own devices, not knowing very well what to do with the doctrine provided by the Comintern, and aware of having missed the train of the revolution."<sup>[125]</sup>

Such, at any rate, is Dumont's learned but ultimately academic view. He is, however, seemingly oblivious to the explicit left-wing opposition coming from Anatolia to Sefik Hüsnu and the Aydinlik group, and the debate that erupted in the party over support to bourgeois national liberation, i.e. the Kemalist movement. The anti-nationalist stance of Salih Hacıoglu and the left-wing base was hardly "drab".

The PCPT was allowed to resume legal existence in spring 1922, but repression tightened again and it was forced to hold its party congress in September in clandestinity, in Ankara<sup>[126]</sup>. The congress voted, in line with the directives of the Third Congress of the Comintern, to support the Kemalist revolution for the time being. It also announced a certain orientation to the Turkish peasantry, the great majority of the population.

Party militants, with the left predominating, did manage to get a significant worker confederation off the ground in Cilicia, in southeastern Turkey. The confederation's congress, attended by the full Central Committee of the PCTP and 40 proletarian delegates, in early October 1922 called for the eight-hour day, a guaranteed minimum wage, paid vacations, and collective bargaining contracts. The congress attacked the anti-worker policies of Kemalist anti-communist Prime Minister Rauf bey, declaring that "the working class, which lost so many sons in the struggle against Western imperialism... would be compelled to no longer offer its support."<sup>[127]</sup>

Be that as it may, on October 11, the contending armies signed the Armistice of Mudanya ending the Turko-Greek war, and a new shift to the right was imminent. In the midst of national celebrations of the military victory, the

PCTP was dissolved by the government, which accused it of treason and of espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union. Sixty-odd party militants, including a number of working-class sympathizers, were arrested in Ankara on October 20, and a few days later further arrests followed throughout Anatolia. The new Cilician confederation was also banned. All in all, 200 people had been arrested. Salih Hacıoglu and a handful of party leaders escaped the dragnet because they were en route to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow.

Once again, for the Soviet government and the Comintern, the importance of the relationship to the Kemalist government trumped solidarity with the political prisoners. The French Communist Party newspaper *l'Humanité* simply ran the headline “Hands Off Turkey”. *Izvestia* and *Pravda* continued to hail Turko-Soviet friendship and fretted about whether the Soviet Union would be included in the Lausanne Conference, where the terms of the peace would be finalized in spring 1923. The Kemalist abolition of the sultanate on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> was widely commented upon in the international communist press, but not the political prisoners.

Only on Nov. 15 did long articles on the repression in Turkey appear on the front pages of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*. In the interim two weeks, the Kemalists had continued various anti-communist harassments. The Soviet embassy in Ankara had been forced to close its commercial outlet and a Soviet courier's diplomatic pouch had been confiscated. In Paul Dumont's estimate, these harassments, combined with the preoccupation over the Lausanne conference, were the pinpricks that brought about the change in tone.<sup>[128]</sup>

A new silence on the repression descended on the international communist press in late November. The Lausanne Conference opened on November 20 with Soviet participation, and the settlement of the status of the Straits loomed large in the offing. On November 22, a major article by Karl Radek in *Pravda* asserted that the Soviet Union would “support the legitimate demands of Turkey” at Lausanne and that critics in the West of the inconsistencies of Soviet policy

“did not understand that, at bottom, our position is absolutely independent of tactical maneuvers or the internal policy of the Turkish government...But in spite of all deviations and zigzags, Soviet Russia is following the great historical road on which the international industrial proletariat can march together with the liberation movements of the peoples of the East in the struggle against international capital.”<sup>[129]</sup>

The Fourth Congress of the Comintern dotted the i's by reaffirming the decisions of the Third Congress, inviting communists of the colonial or semi-colonial world to collaborate with “bourgeois democracy”. Communists, in contrast to what Lenin had said in 1920, might even collaborate with the pan-Islamists<sup>[130]</sup>. This support for the nationalist bourgeoisie in the semi-colonial

and colonial world was reiterated in a speech by Karl Radek. Salih Hacıoğlu sent the following reply to the Comintern delegates:

“... the latest attack and assault, which was directed at the Turkish Communist Party by the national bourgeoisie, which acquired its class consciousness thanks to the financial and political aid from the Soviet government...”<sup>[131]</sup>

would neither beat the Turkish communists into submission nor stop the social revolution.

With the end of military hostilities and the reunification of the country, the focus of communist activity shifted from Anatolia to Istanbul,

“with its countless artisanal shops, food industries, tanneries, tobacco processing plants, its textile industries, soap manufacture, naval shipyards and its port and railway installations, the most important ‘proletarian’ agglomeration in the Near East.”<sup>[132]</sup>

Following the Anatolian crackdown of October 1922, Sefik Hüsnü’s group in Istanbul was the only legal left-wing organization in the new Turkey. The sultan, in the last days of Ottoman power, had indeed carried out similar arrests in Istanbul, forcing a number of militants to flee abroad. But tensions between the Allies and the Kemalist regime during the Lausanne negotiations provoked yet another shift in Turkish-Soviet relations. Following the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, Hüsnü, with a base in Istanbul, and Salih Hacıoğlu, back from Russia and representing Anatolia, faced each other as the two key figures of Turkish communism. As a disciplined Comintern party, its task was to continue supporting the Kemalist regime while at the same time preparing for the coming proletarian revolution, a support which Hacıoğlu and his base rejected. Hüsnü’s journal *Aydinlik* (whose “Spartakist” origins have already been discussed) became the party’s theoretical expression in Istanbul. Hüsnü and his followers applied the new Third International tactic of “conquering the masses” and sought a mass organization to “enter”, but they were excluded from the only real worker-based organization in Istanbul, the General Workers’ Union of Sakir Rasim, a seasoned union militant. Rasim and his militant followers had real success in a campaign against foreign enterprises, to the approval of the Kemalists and the Turkish employers, while leaving the *Aydinlik* group on the margins.

The Hüsnü faction of the TCP, however, got its chance when the “official” Communist Party announced a nationwide economic congress in Smyrna, to convene in February 1923. The congress was to group peasants and farm hands, business people, workers, industrialists and artisans to draw up ambitious

economic reforms for the new regime. Huge local energies went into drawing up proposals and programs. Sefik Hüsnü drew up a program for a workers commission that called for, among other things, the eight-hour day, an absolute ban on child labor, three days' leave per month for women, sixteen weeks' maternity leave, a weekly rest period, abolition of all legal limits on the right to strike and to association, a health care system and even "factory committees" for communication between workers and bosses<sup>[133]</sup>. A further text with a program for the entire Turkish economy, appearing in *Aydinlik*, called for the modernization of Turkish agriculture and a series of measures improving the situation of the Anatolian peasantry, as well as dealing with other sectors. This document was notable by its recognition of the necessity of accepting, for the interim, the inevitability of dealing with foreign capital. *Aydinlik*, echoing its elitist Clarté origins discussed earlier, was in effect calling for the creation of a state-sponsored creation of a Turkish capitalist class:

"...the State should favor the creation of cooperatives aimed at serving the internal market and take charge of all foreign commerce...most urgent was the nationalization of the railway companies or at least partial nationalization through the purchase of shares...and finally the creation of a real public service dedicated to opening up Anatolia."<sup>[134]</sup>

The congress began in mid-February 1923, lasting ten days. The Soviet ambassador as well as the ambassador from Azerbaijan arrived on the same train as Mustafa Kemal and caused a sensation by their presence on the congress's tribunal of honor. "Anti-imperialism", during the negotiations at Lausanne, was the order of the day. The authorities had taken care to choose "worker" delegates (187 total, many of them having no working-class credentials) with an eye to sidelining potential subversives. The congress was divided into four working groups: agriculture, commerce, industry and labor. The more circumspect General Union of Workers from Istanbul presented a more moderate program than Hüsnü's, more oriented to petitioning the employers for benevolence. Despite hostility from the commerce and industry sections, which introduced their amendments, the worker delegation managed to get its program forwarded to the government. The ability of the small worker minority present to expedite its platform against serious hostility inspired Sefik Hüsnü congratulate the Turkish worker delegation on its maturity and its ability to make itself heard by the other social classes present<sup>[135]</sup>. Hüsnü and the Socialist Party of Workers and Farm Laborers, with the war over and a significant impact at the national conference, thought their moment, after the chill of the fall arrests, had arrived.

Once again, Hüsnü and the *Aydinlik* group made their calculations without anticipating the pendulum swing of Turko-Soviet relations. They failed to reckon with the fact that after their triumph at Lausanne, the Kemalists no



longer needed the Soviet alliance. Some propaganda volleys had been exchanged during the Lausanne peace talks, over real or apparent Turkish concessions to the Allies. Then, the masks came off. Kemalist “health inspectors” raided the offices of Hüsni’s party and proceeded to arrest Salih Hacıoğlu. On March 17, an ad hoc tribunal launched the trial of the militants arrested the previous October, as well as Salih Hacıoğlu and a number of radical workers. During the Lausanne détente, the Russians had tried to obtain the freedom of those arrested through official channels. Suddenly Hüsni’s group, reeling from the newest shock, and having itself presented candidates in the December 1919 elections, could only manage to issue a minimum program to ferret out the “progressives” among those running. Hüsni merely urged supporters to vote for the Kemalists, barring the way to “reaction”. The Soviet and Turkish newspapers exchanged propaganda volleys. On April 21, a new wave of harassment and then arrests followed, this time netting Sefik Hüsni and other party leaders. Aralov, the ambassador in Ankara, was asked to take a leave, and several employees of the Soviet consul in Istanbul were expelled from Turkey.

Now the international communist press rose to the occasion, with Pravda headlining “White Terror in Turkey” in May. But mere weeks later, those arrested during the “white terror” were acquitted and released at the end of May. Those arrested in October 1922, charged under a law prescribing the death penalty, were condemned to three months imprisonment plus a fine.

Numbed by these experiences, Sefik Hüsni and his militants were unable to take up the challenge of mass work (which had never been their strong suit) when the climate between Russia and Turkey improved again, following their release. Instead, it was the opportunist, moderate General Union of Workers that was able to take advantage of the strike wave in the summer of 1923. The signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923 gave the signal. A wave of nationalism and even xenophobia, based on the long humiliations of the past, made foreign companies the targets of predilection. Moslem workers demanded the firing of Christian blue and white collar workers, and the expulsion of European managers. Greek and Armenian emigration intensified. The intensity of anti-foreigner feeling among the strikers and the resulting militancy at foreign companies made it possible for Kemalist officials to publicly sympathize. In some locales, Turkish workers turned against the non-Turkish and non-Moslem minorities. A wave of measures followed in October enforcing Turkish as the sole public language, not only in commerce and industry, but in everything from advertising to the sub-titles of films. Foreign companies were required in October 1923 to employ only Turkish Moslems. The General Union of Workers, which had earlier already tried its hand at nationalism and xenophobia, rode the wave, even as they cultivated ties with the British Labor Party and the Second International. At the proclamation of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923,

Sefik Hüsnu's group, unable to go against the nationalist and xenophobic mood of many strikers and never as strongly rooted in the working class as the Anatolian faction, was again an isolated sect.

On March 3, 1924, the caliphate was abolished and education in Turkey was fully secularized. In the wake of the strike wave, 1924 proved to be a good year for expansion of unions. Sefik Hüsnu's journal *Aydinlik* expanded its base in the Istanbul intelligentsia. On Nov. 26, 1923, during the railway strike, Sakir Rasim and the General Union of the Workers of Istanbul had convoked a congress with 250 delegates representing 19,000 workers. The organization was renamed the General Union of the Workers of Turkey. A figure close to the Kemalists and a member of their People's Party, was chosen as vice-president, and made overtures to the government and anti-communist statements. The Kemalist government remained suspicious of the Union's ties to the Second International, and ordered it to disband on Dec. 18. Well-placed friends of the Union's Kemalist vice-president, however, issued a counter-order, and its fate remained in the balance until May. In January, 1924, there had also been a push for a new labor law, as had been promised the previous year at the economic conference. Sakir Rasim, the Union leader, attempted to get traction with a letter of Feb. 2 from Kemal promising such a new law. The deadlock dragged on, during which Sefik Hüsnu had a rapprochement with Rasim. After another large May Day rally, in mid-May a court finally ordered the Union to cease its activities. Workers, however, responded during the summer of 1924 with spontaneous actions at foreign companies. A tramway strike erupted in July. The police were called, several strikers were wounded, and 30 people were arrested. A postal strike followed, answered by a lockout, and was defeated by the use of scabs. Worker agitation spread to Anatolia, first of all with railway strikes, including in Eskisehir, from which so much anti-Kemalist politics had emerged. The government responded by bringing in French, Greek and Bulgarian (Christian) strikebreakers.

In September 1924, the dissolved Union was reborn under the name "Association for Worker Relief", attempting to appear as a Kemalist organization. But Rasim and Hüsnu had other ideas. Socialists and Communists worked together to infiltrate and control the organization. Hüsnu himself joined as an agitator. The same sectors as in 1923 mobilized around the same demands, and, as in the previous year, defeat followed defeat.

In February 1925 a vast Kurdish revolt broke out in eastern Turkey led by one Chaikh Said. On March 4, the Grand National Assembly voted full powers to the government and a state of emergency was declared. In this climate, the worker militants retreated.

The Kurdish revolt pushed the Kemalists back toward a rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Turkey's international position looked serious, with a possible military threat from Iran and tension with Britain over Mosul. The Soviet Union and Turkey once again needed each other.

Once again, the dialectic of rapprochement with the Soviet government, coupled with internal repression, marked a new swing of the pendulum, and Hüsni's journal *Aydinlik* was suppressed in February 1925. The final issues had been evolving in a more and more openly pro-Soviet direction. In May 1924 Hüsni had expressed disappointment with the "bourgeois" Republic, even as he continued to urge support for Kemal against the "imperialists". He criticized the liberal economic tendencies in the regime and called for more statist policies. He was in effect evolving a theory of a state capitalist "stage" for Turkey<sup>[136]</sup>. After the mid-1924 suppression of the tobacco monopoly, controlled by foreign capital, Hüsni called for more state monopolies. Statist measures were supported in *Aydinlik* in industry, foreign trade, communications, and the tertiary sector. Articles on agriculture called for "expropriation of large properties" and free distribution of land to the poor peasants.

At the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in 1924, Hüsni and *Aydinlik* were attacked by the Ukrainian Manuilsky and accused of class collaboration, even though the Turks had only been rigorously applying the Comintern line of support for bourgeois national liberation against imperialism. Manuilsky was simply making an example of the Turks for the benefit of all the parties of the colonial and semi-colonial world. Sefik Hüsni in reply argued that Turkey was only at the beginning of its national liberation. The critique did push Hüsni and the party militants to pay more attention to the worker milieu.

In January 1925, the Turkish Communist Party held a clandestine Third Congress in Hüsni's house in Istanbul, with a large contingent of Comintern officials again present. Salih Hacıoglu, freshly out of prison, attended, but was now in a distinct minority against the *Aydinlik* faction, fully in control with Stalinist backing. The Congress undertook an assessment of the charges made the previous year by Manuilsky, and Sefik Hüsni, while retained as secretary general, had to make his self-criticism. The new central committee was identical to the editorial board of *Aydinlik*. The party's agitational journal was revived, and closer ties to the Union for Worker Relief were planned. The left later blasted the right-wing leadership:

"The ruling group of the Central Committee means nothing other than the editorial board of...*Aydinlik*... This board consists of sectarian writers who have no connection to the proletarian masses... This newspaper tells the workers to increase the national accumulation of capital..."<sup>[137]</sup>

In mid-May, in the ongoing repression following the Kurdish revolt, forty party members were arrested. Hüsni had taken precautions—the left hinted that he was forewarned by friends in the regime-- and fled to Germany. The above-ground organization in Istanbul was crushed, with virtually all members in hiding or in exile. The trials begin in mid-August, after the Kurdish revolt had been put down. Sefik Hüsni and others who had gone

into exile got 15-year sentences at hard labor in absentia. From that time on, the party, with 500-600 members at most, had to remain underground.

The left took a rather different view of the whole affair:

*“The class basis of this central committee became obvious after the government closed down Aydinlik...Of course all the other members of the Central Committee found the magical time to take refuge in the houses of their royal relatives in Constantinople and Germany. Perhaps they had been warned by someone from the government before the arrests.”*<sup>[138]</sup>

Salih Hacıoglu in November 1925 made a last appeal at the Eastern office of the Comintern to have the Aydinlik group demoted from party leadership, but Stalin was now fully in control and Hacıoglu got nowhere. By this time, the left wing of the party was dispersed, in prison, in exile and increasingly in the camps in the Soviet Union:

“For every critical remark made, our worker comrades are exiled to the far corners of the USSR. There our worker comrades are not left with any choice other than starvation, freezing to death or committing suicide. For this reason we declare that the royal hands of the current members of the Central Committee are red with the blood of our comrades who died or committed suicide.”<sup>[139]</sup>

With Salih Hacıoglu’s removal from the party’s Central Committee (1926) and his expulsion from the party itself (1928), and finally his arrest and deportation to the camps (1929), culminating this process of dispersion and disappearance of many lesser known figures, the Turkish communist left’s real historical existence came to an end. It has been worthwhile telling their story as a remarkable example of a current which, at the earliest possible moment, saw the reality of “anti-imperialism” in the Soviet government’s rapprochement with bourgeois regimes (above all, Turkey and Persia) while communist militants in those countries were shot and imprisoned, in the Turkish case with Soviet arms and money. Today’s “anti-imperialist” cheerleaders would do well to understand the anti-working class thrust of their own ideology and see capitalism in the “advanced” as in the “developing” world as a seamless whole, posing the same tasks for those who would truly go beyond it, and not merely reorganize it. This was true in Turkey in the early 1920’s and all the more true in Venezuela, Bolivia, Iran and Afghanistan today. It was the great merit of the Turkish communist left of the earlier period to reject “critical support” for national liberation in order to embrace internationalism, and we can best pull their story out of the history books and into living reality by doing the same.

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## APPENDIX: CORE CHRONOLOGY

While assembling the material for this article (October-November 2009)

I myself found the complexity of the narrative and the simultaneity of interrelated events hard to keep straight. To remedy this for the reader, I append this more or less straightforward chronology.

- 1876 to 1908: occasional important strikes in the Ottoman naval shipyards, at the tobacco monopoly and on the railroads.
- Pan-Turanism has its first exponent in Ismael Gasprinski (1841-1914), a Crimean Turk, who in 1878 founded the first newspaper in Turkish, Tergüman.
- Tatar intellectual, Sihabäddin Märçani (1818-1889) also articulated the idea of a “Tatar nation”, possibly the first ideology for a modern territorial nation in the Turkic world (in contrast to the supra-territorial institutions of the Ottomans)
- The most important founding theoretician of Turkish nationalism , Ziya Gökalp (1875-1924) used Herderian and broadly German romantic cultural ideas to create a Pan-Turkic equivalent of Pan-Slavism.
- 1908 Young Turks (Committee for Union and Progress-CUP) seize power.
- 1909 Conservative counter-attack on Young Turks by the religious establishment
- 1909 In response, the CUP pushes through constitutional reforms severely reducing the power of the sultan and the cabinet, increasing those of parliament, reducing bureaucracy, rationalizing tax collection and modernizing the armed forces .
- 1910 Ottoman and Balkan adherents of the Second International attempt confederation at a conference in Belgrade.
- 1911 Gasprinski’s brother-in-law founds a journal, Türk Yurdu (Turkish Homeland)
- 1911-1912: Ottoman Empire’s war with Italy following Italian annexation of Libya
- 1911: Italy’s invasion of Libya sparks demonstration of 10,000 workers in Salonica; the Second International condemns Italian imperialism. 20,000 Salonica workers turn out for 1911 May Day demonstration
- 1912-1913: Two generalized Balkan Wars ; Greece annexes Salonica; Ottoman Empire loses 69% of its population and 83% of its territory in Europe
- pre-1914: Naval reorganization under British auspices
- 1914: German General Liman von Sanders takes over direct command of the Ottoman First Army
- September 1914-Ottoman Empire joins WW I on side of Central Powers
- September 1914: Serbian Social Democrats vote against war credits

- September 1914: Enver Pasha and his allies in the CUP push through the abolition of the Capitulations, taking over control of customs duties previously controlled by the Western powers.
- 1914: German General von Seeckt becomes chief of Ottoman general staff, other top German officers take over other key posts, including departments of Operations, Intelligence, Railroads, Supply, Munitions, Coal and Fortresses in the Ministry of War.
- 1915: Armenian genocide; over 1 million people killed
- 1915-16: courts, schools and religious foundations completely secularized.
- 1915: Kemal Pasha commander of Ottoman forces at Gallipoli
- February 1917: Revolution in Russia creates bourgeois provisional government
- November 1917: Bolshevik Revolution
- January 1918: Ottoman army suppresses the soviet movement in the northeast Anatolian cities of Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayburt and Sivas. Soviets are multi-national and inspired in part by radicalized Russian Army troops following Russian Revolution.
- July 1918-Initial conference of Turkish communists in Moscow
- September 1918: capture of Baku
- October 1918: Ottoman surrender. Enver Pasha and other top CUP members forced to flee to Germany, (condemned to death in absentia in July 1919)
- October-November 1918: Allied armies occupy Istanbul ,with Greek troops
- Nov 1918: Germany, Austria-Hungary surrender; revolution erupts
- January 1919: Group of Turks in exile in Germany during the war, in the streets with the Spartakusbund; won over to Marxism and organize in the Party of Workers and Farmers of Turkey (PWFT).
- Mid-1919: Intellectual core of PWFT, with their leaders Ethem Nejat and Sefik Hüsnü, return to Turkey ; received authorization to resume publication of their journal Kurtulus.
- 1919: Enver Pasha and other Young Turks in exile approach the Bolsheviks in 1919 in hope of financial and political support against Kemal Pasha
- March 1919: Enver Pasha first contacts the Bolsheviks through Karl Radek in Radek's Berlin prison cell,
- Spring 1919: General von Seeckt, with links to the Freikorps and one of Radek's contacts, proposes sending Enver Pasha to Moscow.
- March 1919 Mustafa Kemal goes to Samsun because of social agitation there at urging of Ottoman government and the British occupational forces; mythical beginning of nationalist revolt
- October-November 1919: Second step in rapprochement between the CUP and the Bolsheviks, in negotiations with the CUP organization Karakol around the figure of Shal'va Eliava. Retired military officer, Baha Sait, goes to Baku in late 1919, and in January 1920 signs an agreement for an offensive alliance against European imperialism and support to revolutionary efforts in Moslem countries.

- 1919-1922: Turko-Greek War; Greece backed by Allies. Elements constituting the Turkish Communist Party (founded September 1920) support the “war of national liberation”.
- Early 1920: initial so-called “Turkish Communist Party” founded in Baku at the beginning of 1920; mostly CUP figures
- May 1920: Mustafa Suphi, key figure in the very early history of the Turkish CP, arrives in Baku (Azerbaijan) with full backing of Comintern.
- May 1920: creation of the “Green Army”
- June 1920. Sharif Manatov writes the General Statutes of the Turkish Communist Party which calls for soviets, the abolition of private property, and nationalizations.
- Summer 1920. CUPers in new “Communist Party” hold further negotiations with Bolsheviks, obtaining arms and gold for the Kemalist resistance.
- Summer 1920: Mustafa Suphi reconstitutes Baku group as the “Baku section” of the Turkish CP, expelled some more dubious figures.
- Summer 1920: People’s Communist Party of Turkey (PCPT)(Türkiye halk istirakiyyun firkasi) created in Anatolia, possibly in contact with Mustafa Suphi’s organization in Baku.
- Summer 1920: Sharif Manatov gives lectures in Eskehir, which emerges as a center of radical agitation.
- July 1920: Mustafa Suphi dispatches envoy to Mustafa Kemal asking Ankara government if Turkish Bolsheviks can create a legal organization in Anatolia
- Summer 1920: Cerkes Edhem emerges as a strongman of the Green Army, with 3,000 fighting men, shows the potential to become a rival to Mustafa Kemal. Edhem breaks with Kemalists, and Kemal attempts to dissolve the organization.
- July 14, 1920. Proclamation in Eskisehir announces “to the peasants and workers” of Anatolia the creation of a Turkish Communist Party affiliated with the Third International. Party militants organize demonstrations against forced conscription in Eskisehir. The Manatov-influenced newspaper Seyyare-I Yeni Dünya, published in Eskisehir, in the summer launches the slogan “Workers of the World Unite!”. In a speech to the Grand National Assembly, “Attatürk said that “this organ alone had broken its promise to follow instructions to support his revolutionary movement”.
- July 1920: Second Congress of Third International. Lenin denounce a pan-Asianism as serving the interests of “Turkish and Japanese imperialism”
- Summer 1920: People’s Party (Halk firkasi) another means by which Green Army militants could adapt themselves to Kemalist institutions, makes up more than one-fourth of the deputies in the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, largest opposition to the Kemalists.
- August 1920: Enver Pasha, dreaming of supplanting Mustafa Kemal with a Soviet-backed invasion of Anatolia, argues for the creation of a “Union of Islamic Revolutionary Societies” to fight for the Communists’ anti-imperialist program, in exchange for further Soviet military and financial support.



- August 1920: Significant Soviet aid in the form of gold shipments begins to arrive in Anatolia; more follows in December
- August 10, 1920: Vindictive Allied peace treaty of Sèvres (among other things depriving Turkey of three disputed Armenian provinces, imposed on the surviving Ottoman government in Istanbul
- August 14, 1920: Mustafa Kemal addresses the (rebel) Grand National Assembly in Ankara on the similarities between the communitarian spirit of Islam and Bolshevism,
- August 1920: Kemal uses occasion of rout of Red Army in Poland to harden his attitude toward communist activity in Anatolia and steal the populist rhetoric of the People's Party (cf. below).
- August 1920: People's Party powerful enough in Grand National Assembly to defeat a Kemalist candidate for powerful post of Minister of the Interior (in charge of political surveillance) and elects one its members, Nazim Bey. Mustafa Kemal not pleased, forces Nazim Bey's resignation.
- September 1920: Baku Congress of the Toilers of the East. Comintern chairman Grigori Zinoviev, calls for "jihad" against the West,
- Cheik Servet, a major Islamic-Communist, argues in the wake of the Baku Congress that immediate task is allying with the Bolsheviks for a jihad against the West. For Servet, Bolshevism's principles are those of Islam, namely "charity and generosity"
- September 1920: Founding congress of the Turkish Communist Party, party, superseding the organization created in the spring, takes place in Baku immediately after Congress of the Toilers of the East. Salih Hacıoglu in minority opposing national wars of liberation.
- September 1920: Mustafa Kemal replies ambiguously to Mustafa Suphi's request for legal recognition of Communist activity in Anatolia.. Salih Hacıoglu and Sharif Manatov warn Mustafa Suphi of the dangers awaiting Turkish CP members returning to Turkey.
- Early September 1920:., People's Party presents a program of somewhat radical measures with potential for divisive debate in Grand National Assembly. Kemal Pasha meets this threat by lifting much of People's Party program into his own. Outflanked, People's Party acquiesces and Kemal's program, not theirs, goes to the constitutional commission.
- October 1920, the law on associations was amended to give the government the right to ban organizations it deemed dangerous to state security.
- October 1920:., Arrival of important Soviet mission in Ankara the occasion for wave of pro-communist articles in the nationalist press, as gesture to the Soviet Union
- October 1920: Creation in late October, an "official" Communist Party sponsored by the state. Having integrated some Green Army militants (including Cerkes Edhem) into official party and moved its press to Ankara, Kemal then dissolves the Green Army. A number of Edhem's irregulars integrated into the

Kemalist army. Edhem tries to provoke resistance, which proves futile. Government issues an edict prohibiting the recruitment of irregular forces by anyone. . Outflanked, Edhem's troops disbanded or were crushed as part of the general repression of early January 1921, and Edhem fled. The Kemalist government then integrated the publishing operations of the former Green Army into the official state press

-October 1920: Mustafa Kemal attacks new clandestine Communist Party through "official" Communist Party; expels Sharif Manatov. To avoid confusion of workers' and soldiers' soviets, Kemal orders Ali Fuad Pasha, Kemalist commander of Western front, to become member of the official CP's central committee.

-Fall 1920: Major sticking point between Turkey and the Soviet Union is Armenia, where Bolsheviks commit themselves to right of self-determination; where Kemal Pasha wants three provinces for Turkey previously lost to Tsarist Russia. Kemalist forces push beyond pre-1914 Turkish borders with apparent goal of annexation. Chicherin (then in charge of Soviet foreign policy) and Soviet government suspicious of secret agreement between Kemal and Allies enabling Britain to open new anti-Soviet front

November 1920: In speech in Baku, Stalin lauds Soviet-Turkish relationship.

November 1920: Mustafa Suphi replies to Kemal's letter announcing that accredited CP mission was leaving for Ankara, pledges not to divide nationalist fighting forces.

-November 1920: Most militants of clandestine party refuse order to liquidate and join "official" CP; launch counter-attack in November. Salih and others from core group fuse with some deputies of left wing of the People's Party and found the *Türkiye halk ıstirakiyyun firkasi*. They issue circular announcing the creation of new party, while denouncing "official" Communist Party in name of Third International and Bolshevism.

-November 1920: Collapse of Wrangel's White army in the Crimea . Subsequent transfer of thousands of Red Army soldiers to the Caucasus. Kemalists calm down and focus on annexing parts of Armenia.

-December 1920: Statutes and program of new Communist Party recognized by Ministry of the Interior at the end of December 1920; party briefly becomes legal.

-Late 1920: Sefik Hüsnü and Sadrettin Celal resume control of Turkish CP, applying the Comintern line under influence of Baku Congress of the Toilers of the East, and benefiting from the increasing debacle of the Turkish Socialist Party. In 1920-21, the Turkish Socialist Party, with real working-class base and affiliated with Second International, took militant turn in occupied Istanbul with threat of a general strike (January 1921). Another strike was threatened at the gas works in April, followed by May Day demonstration of unprecedented size.

-Early December 1920: Mustafa Suphi and twenty comrades leave Baku for Turkey, apparently convinced by Kemal's letter that they were welcome . In

Kars, they receive an official welcome from Kazim Karabekir, Kemalist commander of the Eastern front. At this juncture, government had decided that the Communists should return to Russia. Kazim Karabekir orders the governor of Erzurum, Hamit bey, to whip up press campaign and “appropriate demonstrations” against Mustafa Suphi and his comrades to dissuade them from remaining in Turkey.

-January 8, 1921: As part of wave of repression of December 1920-January 1921, Kemal violently denounces Edhem and the “propagators of communism” before the Grand National Assembly. CP paper banned after it reprints an article from Bulgarian communist newspaper attacking dictatorial nature of Kemalism and predicting civil war in Anatolia.

Salih arrested on January 11; shortly thereafter, Muslim clerics issue a fatwa calling on believers to avoid communist groups. CP nonetheless forges ahead, launches daily newspaper, Emek (Labor) in mid-January. Newspaper suppressed by the government in general crackdown on all left organizations; party, with no public presence, fades away

-January 1921: Outflanked, Edhem’s troops disbanded or crushed as part of the general repression; Edhem flees. Kemalist government then integrates publishing operations of former Green Army into official state press.

-January 20, 1921: New constitutional law affirms fidelity to the person of the sultan-caliph, to Islam and to institutions of Ottoman monarchy.

-January 22, 1921: Angry crowd in Erzurum prevents Mustafa Suphi and his comrades from leaving the train station, and they return toward the coast, everywhere encountering crowds shouting anti-communist insults and hurling rocks.

-Late January 1921: Most CP party leaders arrested, charged with “spying for a foreign power”, excepting three who had parliamentary immunity.

Party dissolved on February 2. Leaders received lengthy prison sentences.

-January 28, 1921: Suphi and 14 CPers arrive in Trabzon where they immediately depart by boat. They are overtaken by another boat, murdered, and thrown into the sea. (Yahya, the local ferryman who suggested the motorboat, was arrested for the murders. In detention, he threatened to “talk”, and was murdered in turn. Theories abound on who was behind the killings.)

-January-February 1921. Anti-communist repression in Turkey draws no comment in Moscow. Emphasis is on progress of Turko-Russian friendship”.

-February 1921: Dissolution of People’s Communist Party

-February 17, 1921: Turkish negotiators arrive in Moscow. Armenian question still a central source of tension. Military confrontation also seems possible in Georgia, where both Red Army and Turkish troops are present. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bekir Sami, makes anti-communist speeches in capitals of Europe.

-March 1921: In the Soviet Union, Kronstadt rebellion, Anglo-Soviet trade agreement, the implementation of the “New Economic Policy” (NEP), in

Germany, defeat of the “March Action”, underscoring isolation of Russian Revolution.

-March 16, 1921: In order to retain alliance with Kemalist regime, the Soviet government signs a “treaty of friendship and fraternity” with Turkey, same day as Anglo-Soviet trade agreement signed in Moscow. The Kemalist government agrees to crack down on pan-Turanian agitation aimed at Russia, and the Soviet government agrees not to promote anti-Kemalist agitation in Turkey.

-April 1921: Communist parliamentary deputies stripped of immunity, convicted of attempting to overthrow government, sentenced to 15 years hard labor. Less prominent figures receive shorter sentences.

the mass demonstration organized by the TSP on May Day 1921

-May 1921. First mention of January murders of Mustafa Suphi et al. appear in the Soviet press.

-June-July 1921 Third Congress of the Comintern. One Turkish Communist calls for purging the party of all undesirable elements, including the “provocateurs” working for the Ankara government, the followers of Enver Pasha and the pan-Turanists of the Green Army.

-In late July 1921, Greek victory over the Kemalists seems close at hand; Enver Pasha prepares invasion of Turkey with Soviet money and arms.

-September 1921 Kemal’s victory at Sakarya turns tides against Greeks; Greek Communist anti-war agitation accounts for tens of thousands of Greek desertions. Enver Pasha breaks with Soviets and begins to organize anti-Soviet Basmachi rebellion.

-Sept. 29, 1921 Grand National Assembly votes to amnesty the communists arrested in the previous January, in a new rapprochement with the Soviet Union motivated by need for money and arms. At this juncture, Kemalist government decides to wipe slate clean on Soviet support for Enver Pasha, to provide aid to victims of the famine in Russia, and to sign, on Oct. 13, the Treaty of Kars which put an end to border disputes in the east. Kemalist regime pardons Communists convicted in early 1921 repression, including Salih Hacıoğlu, as part of rapprochement.

-December 1921-January 1922 M.V. Frunze, commander-in-chief of Soviet forces in the Ukraine, makes extended visit to Ankara, a high-water mark in relations.

-January 1922 Important tramway strike in Istanbul

-March 1922 Several of released communists authorized to reconstitute the “People’s Communist Party of Turkey”.

-April 1922 the Cheka accuses the Turkish embassy in Moscow of espionage; Kemal Pasha recalls his ambassador. Kemal also refuses to condemn the Basmachi revolt led by Enver Pasha.

-Summer 1922 – Communist Party militants manage to get a significant worker confederation off the ground in Cilicia, in southeastern Turkey.

-September 1922 Final crushing of the invading Greek troops; chill in Turko-Soviet relations becomes manifest

-Late August-early September 1922: Communist Party congress in Ankara is banned, takes place in clandestinity

-August 1922: Enver Pasha, leading Turkoman Basmachi guerrillas, killed in battle with Red Army.

-October 1922: Cilicia confederation's congress, attended by full Central Committee of the Communist Party and 40 proletarian delegates, calls for eight-hour day, guaranteed minimum wage, paid vacations, collective bargaining contracts. Further repression of communist groups intensifies

-October 11, 1922 The contending armies sign the Armistice of Mudanya ending the Turko-Greek war, In the midst of national celebrations of the military victory, PCTP dissolved by the government, which accuses it of treason and of espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union. Sixty-odd party militants, including a number of working-class sympathizers, arrested in Ankara on October 20, and a few days later further arrests follow throughout Anatolia. The new Cilician confederation was also banned. All in all, 200 people are arrested. Once again, for the Soviet government and the Comintern, the importance of the relationship to the Kemalist government trumps solidarity with the political prisoners. The French Communist Party newspaper *l'Humanité* simply runs the headline "Hands Off Turkey". *Izvestia* and *Pravda* continue to hail Turko-Soviet friendship and fret about whether the Soviet Union will be included in the Lausanne Conference.

-Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1922 Kemalist government abolishes the Ottoman sultanate.

-November 1922: Following the Anatolian crackdown of October, Sefik Hüsni's Socialist Party of Workers and Farm Laborers is the only legal left-wing organization in the new Turkey. But tensions between Allies and the Kemalist regime during the Lausanne negotiations provoke yet another shift in Turkish-Soviet relations. After the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, Hüsni, with a base in Istanbul, and Salih Hacıoğlu, back from Russia and representing Anatolia, emerge as the two key figures of Turkish communism. Hüsni's journal *Aydinlik* (with its "Spartakist" origins) became the party's theoretical expression. Hüsni and his followers apply new Third International tactic of "conquering the masses" and seek a mass organization to "enter". They are excluded from the only real worker-based organization in Istanbul, the General Workers' Union of Sakir Rasim. Rasim and his militant followers have real success in a campaign against foreign enterprises, to the approval of the Kemalists and the Turkish employers, while leaving the *Aydinlik* group on the margins.

-Nov. 15, 1922. Long articles on the repression in Turkey finally appear on the front pages of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*. In the interim two weeks, the Kemalists had continued various anti-communist harassments. The Soviet embassy in Ankara

is forced to close its commercial outlet and a Soviet courier's diplomatic pouch is confiscated.

-Late November 1922; A new silence on the repression in the international communist press resumes. The Lausanne Conference opens on November 20 with Soviet participation, and the settlement of the status of the Straits looms large in the offing.

-November 22, 1922. A major article by Karl Radek in Pravda asserts that the Soviet Union will "support the legitimate demands of Turkey" at Lausanne. The Fourth Congress of the Comintern dots the i's by reaffirming the decisions of the Third Congress, inviting communists of the colonial or semi-colonial world to collaborate with "bourgeois democracy". Communists, in contrast to what Lenin had said in 1920, might even collaborate with pan-Islamists. At Fourth Congress, Salih Hacıoglu critiques wars of national liberation for TCP left; is defeated.

- December 1922. The communists get their chance to end isolation when the "official" Communist Party announces nationwide economic congress in Smyrna, to convene in February 1923. The congress invites peasants and farm laborers, business people, workers, industrialists and artisans to propose economic reforms for the new regime. Sefik Hüsnü draws up a program for a workers commission calling for the eight-hour day, an absolute ban on child labor, three days' leave per month for women, sixteen weeks' maternity leave, a weekly rest period, abolition of all legal limits on the right to strike and to association, a health care system and "factory committees" for communication between workers and bosses. A further text in Aydinlik calls for modernization of Turkish agriculture and a series of measures improving the situation of the Anatolian peasantry. This document recognizes the necessity, for the interim, of dealing with foreign capital. Aydinlik is in effect calling for the creation of a state-sponsored creation of a Turkish capitalist class.

-Early 1923- Various communist groups at liberty to have public existence and publications. With the end of military hostilities and the reunification of the country, focus of communist activity shifts from Anatolia to Istanbul.

-November 1922-July 1923:. Negotiations for the Treaty of Lausanne which formally recognizes the Kemalist victory in Turkey and scraps the punitive Treaty of Sèvres of 1920. Kemalist-Communist relations warm yet again. Soviet press blows hot and cold, praising the alliance with Turkey while attacking the Turkish rapprochement with the Allies. .

-February 1923: National 10-day economic congress. Soviet ambassador arrives on the same train as Mustafa Kemal and causes sensation by his presence on congress's tribunal of honor. The authorities choose "worker" delegates (187 total, many of them having no working-class credentials) with an eye to sidelining potential subversives. The more circumspect General Union of Workers from Istanbul presents a more moderate program than Hüsnü's, oriented to petitioning the employers for benevolence. Despite hostility, worker

delegation manages to get its program forwarded to the government. Sefik Hüsnü congratulates the Turkish worker delegation on its maturity and its ability to make itself heard. Hüsnü and the Socialist Party of Workers and Farm Laborers, with the war over and a significant impact at the national conference, think their moment, after the chill of the fall arrests, has arrived.

-March 1923: Unfortunately for Hüsnü, a new pendulum swing of Turko-Soviet relations takes place. After their triumph at Lausanne, the Kemalists no longer need the Soviet alliance. Once the Allies concede control over the Straits to Kemal Pasha, the Kemalists unleash a police operation against communist militants in Istanbul. Kemalist “health inspectors” raid the offices of Hüsnü’s party and proceed to arrest Salih Hacıoğlu.

-March 17, 1923: Ad hoc tribunal launches trial of the militants arrested the previous October, as well as of Salih Hacıoğlu and a number of radical workers.

-March 1923: Sefik Hüsnü urges supporters to vote for the Kemalists in upcoming national elections, barring the way to “reaction”.

-April 21, 1923: A new wave of harassment and then arrests of communists, this time netting Sefik Hüsnü and other party leaders. Aralov, the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, is asked to take a leave, and several employees of the Soviet consul in Istanbul are expelled from Turkey.

-May Day 1923, Renewed strikes, above all in Istanbul.

-May 1923: Pravda headlines “White Terror in Turkey” about April arrests. But mere weeks later, those arrested are acquitted and released at the end of May.

Those arrested in October 1922, charged under a law potentially prescribing the death penalty, are condemned to three months imprisonment plus a

fine. Numbed by these experiences, Sefik Hüsnü and his militants are unable to throw themselves back into mass work when the climate between Russia and Turkey improves again, following their release.

-July 24, 1923: The signing of the Treaty of Lausanne is the signal for a strike wave that lasts until November. The opportunist, moderate General Union of Workers is able to take advantage. A wave of nationalism and even xenophobia, based on the long humiliations of the past, makes foreign companies targets of predilection. Moslem workers demand the firing of Christian blue and white collar workers, and the expulsion of European managers. Greek and Armenian emigration intensifies. The intensity of anti-foreigner feeling among the strikers and the resulting militancy at foreign companies makes it possible for Kemalist officials to publicly sympathize.

-October 1923: A wave of measures enforce Turkish as the sole public language, not only in commerce and industry, but in everything from advertising to the sub-titles of films. Foreign companies are required to employ only Turkish Moslems. The General Union of Workers, which had earlier already tried its hand at nationalism and xenophobia, rides the wave, even as they cultivate ties with the British Labor Party and the Second International.

- October 29, 1923. Proclamation of the Turkish Republic. Sefik Hüsnü's group is again an isolated sect.
- November 18, 1923: Railway strike completely paralyzes the railway network of European Turkey.
- Nov. 26 1923: During railway strike, Sakir Rasim and the General Union of Workers of Istanbul convoke a congress with 250 delegates representing 19,000 workers. Organization renamed the General Union of the Workers of Turkey. Despite having an anti-communist figure close to the Kemalists as vice-president, the union is ordered to disband on Dec. 18, 1923. Government suspicious of union's ties to Second International.
- January 1924-Well-placed friends of General Union of Workers of Turkey issue a counter-order to the order to dissolve. Push for a new labor law, as promised the previous year at the economic conference. Sakir Rasim makes public letter of Feb. 2 from Kemal Pasha promising new labor law.
- March 3, 1924: the caliphate is abolished. Kemalists introduce economic reforms and completely secularize education.
- May Day 1924: Big worker demonstrations.
- May 1924: Hüsnü in Aydinlik expresses disappointment with Republic, characterized as "bourgeois", but continues support for Kemal against the "imperialists". Hüsnü calls for statist policies. After mid-1924 suppression of the foreign tobacco monopoly, Hüsnü calls for state monopolies, statist measures in industry, foreign trade, communications, the tertiary sector, expropriation of large properties, free distribution of land to the poor peasants.
- Mid-May 1924: Court orders Union to cease its activities. In response, summer 1924 sees spontaneous actions at foreign companies. Tramway strike in July. Police are called, several are wounded, 30 are arrested. Postal strike, lockout. Scabs break the strike. Agitation spreads to Anatolia. Railway strikes erupt, including in Eskisehir. Government brings in Christian strikebreakers (French, Greek, Bulgarian).
- June-July 1924: Fifth Congress of Comintern. Hüsnü's Aydinlik faction attacked polemically by Manuilsky for "class collaboration". Hüsnü argues in reply that Turkey is only at the beginning of national liberation. The critique pushes Hüsnü et al. to pay more attention to worker milieu.
- September 24, 1924: Union reborn under the name "Association for Workers Improvement", with appearances of a Kemalist organization. Socialists and Communists work together to infiltrate and control organization. Resumption of agitation, but defeat follows defeat.
- January 1925: Secret 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of CP. Salih Hacıoğlu attends, freshly out of prison.
- February 1925: Vast Kurdish revolt in eastern Turkey led by Chaikh Said. The revolt pushes the Kemalists back toward the Soviet Union. Turkey also faces possible military threat from Iran and tension arises with Britain over Mosul. Turkey and the Soviet Union need each other again.



-Mar 4, 1925: Grand National Assembly votes full powers to government; state of emergency declared. Worker organizations retreat.

-Mid-May 1925: 40 Turkish CPers arrested. Hüsnü in Germany. Trials begin in mid-August. Hüsnü et al. get 15 years hard labor in absentia. From that time on, party must go clandestine. Party has 500-600 members at time of crackdown.

Nov. 17, 1925: Salih Hacıoğlu denounces Aydinlik faction of TCP before Comintern Eastern desk; threatens to oppose Comintern and USSR.

Later expelled from TCP Central Committee (1926), from the party itself (1928) and finally sent to the camps in the Soviet Union (1929), where he died in 1934.

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<sup>[1]</sup> From Jan M. Meijer (org.), *The Trotsky Papers, 1917-1922*, 2 vols., London, The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1964, 1971, vol. II, pag. 209.

<sup>[2]</sup> Thereby reminding us of Kenneth Rexroth's quip (in his *Autobiographical Novel*) that Leninism had a genius for coining terms such as "critical support", "democratic centralism", or "revolutionary trade unionism" whereby the noun always won out over the adjective.

<sup>[3]</sup> These agreements, according to E.H. Carr, were "a further stage in the process by which relations between Moscow and the outside world were placed predominantly on a governmental basis." Cf. *The Bolshevik Revolution*, vol. 3, (1954) p. 290.

<sup>[4]</sup> On the sacrifice of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Gilan to Soviet-Persian relations, cf. Chaqueri, C. *The Soviet Socialist Republic of Iran, 1920-1921*. Pittsburgh, 1995.

<sup>[5]</sup> On Attatürk's influence in on an authoritarian modernizing regime in Afghanistan, cf. L. Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919-1929* (1973). Jemal Pasha, a Young Turk who had taken refuge in Germany after 1918, became an adviser to King Amanullah (Carr, op. cit. p. 290)

<sup>[6]</sup> Note to the unadvised reader (like myself prior to undertaking this study): the title "Pasha" in Turkish merely means "commander", following the family name. Thus Mustafa Kemal becomes Kemal Pasha. Later the term "Attatürk", "Father of the Turks" was coined; thus in the following the names Mustafa Kemal, Kemal Pasha and Attatürk all designate the same individual.

<sup>[7]</sup> Cf. the pamphlet of the International Communist Current, "Left Wing of the Turkish Communist Party, 1920-1927" for the details of this little-known and highly significant story.

<sup>[8]</sup> -At the time of the 1911 revolution in China, Herder-inspired Turkic nationalism theorized by the Crimean Tatar Ismael Bey Gasprinski (cf. below) reached northwest China through Turkic traders and merchants. Cf. James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads. A History of Xinjiang*. Columbia UP, 2007, pp. 171-174.

<sup>[9]</sup> Cf. for an overview of the Turkic linguistic and cultural area cf. Catagatay, E. et al eds. *The Turkic Speaking Peoples*. 2006.

<sup>[10]</sup> Some early Turkish romantics such as Ahmed Midhad (1844-1912) were already attempting to create a more vernacular Turkish literary language in the 1860's . Catagatay, op. cit. p. 239.

[11] Cf. M. Mazower. *Salonica. City of Ghosts. Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950*. New York 2004. An excellent historical view of the Salonica working class before World War II is in A. Stinas, *Memoires* (Paris 1990). Excerpts in English are available at <http://www.geocities.com/antagonism1/stinas/index.html>.

[12] Marx even wrote a series of articles arguing that the British prime minister Palmerston was virtually a paid Russian agent. Cf. Rabehl, B. ed. *Karl Marx. Geschichte der Geheimdiplomatie*. 1972.

[13] Cf. Rozdolksi, R. *Engels and the "nonhistoric" peoples : the national question in the Revolution of 1848*. Glasgow : Critique Books, 1986.

[14] The Russian translation of vol. I in 1874 was the first translation of the book anywhere.

[15] Cf. Shanin, T. *The Late Marx and the Russian Road*. 1993. Also Rubel, M. *Marx-Engels: Die russische Kommune*. 1972.

[16] The Ottoman world was not merely an empire but also, for 500 years, the seat of the caliphate, "direct successors of the prophet Mohammed", until Attatürk's abolition of the caliphate in 1924. For those centuries Ottoman power shaped Islam as had the Arab caliphates before it, and concealed the shift of power to the West from Moslems everywhere; hence the shock of Napoleon's military superiority.

[17] -It was in December 1876, prior to the conference, brokered by Bismarck, that he declared to parliament that the Balkans were "not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier". In the revised (1878) revision of the Treaty of San Stefano, the only remaining Ottoman holdings in the Balkans were Macedonia and Albania. Misha Glenny (*The Balkans. Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*. 1999, p. 156) called the Macedonian question "the unyielding philosopher's stone of Balkan nationalism".

[18] Cf. Misha Glenny. *Ibid*.

[19] Cf. R.W. Seton-Watson. *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*. 1935; 1972 reprint.

[20] Cf. the books of Peter Hopkirk, in particular *The Great Game*. 1992. Also Karl Meyer/S. Blair Brysac *The Tournament of Shadows*. 1999.

[21] Cf. Brian Cooper Busch, *Britain, India and the Arabs, 1914-1921*. 1971.

[22] Consider for example that France, one of the classic nation states effectively unified by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, still in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, still had to struggle to impose French as a national language in many regions of the country, and to impose French national identity on diverse provincial groups (cf. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen, 1870-1914: the Modernization of Rural France* (1976). Germany and Italy, which both completed their national unification in 1870, featured regional dialects well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of them still the first language of daily life today; Spain, also a creation of the "first wave" of national unification, in the late 1970's had to recognize wide regional political and linguistic autonomy for diverse groups. Given these realities, Marx and Engels' pre-1870's blindness to the "peoples without history", where most Slavs and particularly south Slavs is concerned, is almost comprehensible. They certainly never had to think about nation-state formation of the peoples of Chechnya or the Khanata of Bukhara.

[23] Cf. Catagay, E. et al. op. cit. *The Young Turks, who gathered in exile in Paris, were preceded by the Young Ottomans, with a somewhat similar agenda, based on their reading of Montesquieu, Rousseau, Smith and Ricardo*. Cf. in Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (2002 ed.), p. 173.

[24] On the passage of German romantic populism to the colonial and later Third World, cf. Bassam Tibi, *Arab Nationalism* (1980) for a classic case.

[25] "Pan-Slavism was the father of Pan-Turanism". Cf. Hans Kohn. *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology*. New York 1960, p. 259.

[26] One such work in this debate was M.F. Kopruluzade, *Influence du chamanisme turco-mongole sur les ordres mystiques musulmans*, Istanbul 1929.

<sup>[27]</sup> In the Turko-Soviet friendship and commercial treaty of March 1921, the Kemalist government agreed to crack down on pan-Turanian agitation aimed at Russia, and the Soviet government agreed not to promote anti-Kemalist agitation in Turkey.

<sup>[28]</sup> Pan-Islamism also haunted the Western governments in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, fearing a general Muslim revolt against the West. After the Bolshevik Revolution, these fears were augmented by the specter of a Bolshevik-Muslim alliance. Cf. Paul Dumont, *Du socialisme ottoman à l'internationalisme anatolien*. Istanbul 1997, p. 225.

<sup>[29]</sup> Cf. Uriel Heyd. *Foundations of Turkish Nationalism. The Life and Teachings of Ziya Goekalp* (1950); C.W. Hostler, *Turkism and the Soviets* (1957); virtually all the writings of Alexandre Bennigsen, and especially *Sultan Galiev: Le pere de la revolution tiers-mondiste* (1986). On Enver Pasha's misadventures after leaving Turkey in 1918, cf. Hopkirk, *Setting the East Ablaze*, Ch. 11.

<sup>[30]</sup> A French writer, Edmond Demolins, had published in 1897 a book entitled *A quoi tient la superiorite des Anglo-Saxons? (What Is the Basis of Anglo-Saxon Superiority?)*. The book, emphasizing the education of individualism as the key, had a significant impact in both the Turkish and Arab world (Lewis, *op. cit.* pp. 303-304)

<sup>[31]</sup> *Ibid.* p. 238.

<sup>[32]</sup> This primacy of the Tatars, for the Turkic populations of Russia, was also noted by A. Bennigsen, in *Sultan Galiev: le pere de la revolution tiers-mondiste* (1986), p. 16ff. By 1900, Tatars even dominated the fur trade in New York City, and had a 20% literacy rate, higher than the rate in European Russia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But after 1878, "from the Bosphorus to the borders of China, Moslems...realized that without a profound modification of society, the whole of the Moslem world was condemned." (p. 26) Until 1905, according to Bennigsen (p. 33), this Tatar ferment remained pro-Tsar, but this was shaken by the Japanese military victory over Russia. By 1906, an Islamic left had appeared. Sufi brotherhoods also became part of this ferment, through the colonial world, reviving the idea of holy war. Russian Muslims were the first to discuss Marxism, before the Ottoman Turks, the Iranians or the Arabs (p. 40). A group in the oil capital Baku (Azerbaijan) affiliated with the Russian Social Democrats (RSDLP), the first and only time the Bolsheviks authorized a group that was both national and confessional. The Pan-Turkic nationalists in Russia saw Marxism above all as a theory of organization. Yusuf Alecura (1876-1933) was another Tatar nationalist figure who was educated in Europe and who started a Tatar newspaper published from 1906 to 1917. After the rise of Atatürk, Alecura became more prominent than ever and dominated the first Congress of the Turkish Historical Society in 1932. *Cagatay op. cit.* p. 238.

Another key Tatar nationalist intellectual was Abdureshid Meddi, a theoretician of the Young Tatars. In his speeches, writes G. Williams (*op. cit.* pp. 319-320) "we hear for the first time, language that defines the Crimea not as a province of the Russian Empire, a segment of the Dar al-Islam or adjunct of a larger Turkic homeland, but as the patrimony of the Crimean Tatar nation. In a speech given in 1910...Meddi uses allegories of blood mixed with soil that evokes the language of classic German nationalism."

<sup>[33]</sup> E. Cagatay et al. eds. *Op. cit.* p. 235.

<sup>[34]</sup> G. Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 2001. p. 312.

<sup>[35]</sup> According to Heyd, the Turkish national renaissance of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century "sprang from the researches of European Turkologists who showed the Turks that they belonged to a great nation with a cultural tradition that went back centuries before Islam" (*op. cit.* p. 105) The French writers Lamartine and Loti also praised Turkish culture. The mediator of German cultural nationalism was Hüsenzade Ali, from the Caucasus, who encountered both socialism and pan-Slavism at the University of St. Petersburg in the 1890's. After the Turk-Greek war of 1897, Ali went to Baku and attempted to unite Sunnis and Shiites in a

closer union with Turkey. He later became, like Gökalp, a member of the C.U.P., which itself had copied the model of the Russian secret societies.

<sup>[36]</sup> Heyd, *op. cit.* p. 165.

<sup>[37]</sup> Mazzini was also a figure of import in the Balkans, where the Italian unification process had been followed closely by various nationalists, and where Serbia fancied itself in the role of a “Balkan Piedmont” in an eventual Balkan unification.

<sup>[38]</sup> Heyd, p. 168. For Heyd, there is little doubt “that Gökalp’s conception of society, the elite and the Leader prepared the way for Attatürk” (p. 140). Gökalp was also an admirer of the German mercantilist Friedrich List. Under Gökalp’s influence, People’s Houses were established in every Turkish town for the study of local folklore. “The appreciation of Treitschke by Durkheim seems in every way applicable to Gökalp” (p. 163).

<sup>[39]</sup> In Turkey as in a number of other developing countries in the interwar period (e.g. Brazil, Argentina) ex-Communists played important role in building the development state. In Turkey this was best exemplified by the Kadro (from cadre) group of the early 1930’s. Vedat Nedim Tör, a former secretary general of the party, became a theoretician movement in the early 1930’s. Other key figures had originally been part of the Aydinlik (Clarity) group ca. 1919, directly modeled on Henri Barbusse’s—another future Stalinophile—French journal *Clarte*. As one historian of the Turkish CP put it: “Their central idea remained that the elite in Turkey must awaken to its historic role as the revolutionary force in society and “overcome the inertia of the masses”. Cf. George S. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey*, (1969). p. 146, and his later book *The Communists and the Kadro Movement* (2002), showing that all the key figures of that movement came from the Aydinlik group.

<sup>[40]</sup> “Later cataclysms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have obscured the contemporary impact of the Young Turk revolution. Yet its importance is comparable with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989. The speed with which the sultan’s power crumbled astonished the great powers, and took the revolutionaries themselves unawares.” (Glenny, *op. cit.* p. 216). These later cataclysms have also obscured the 1917-1921 events in Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan as the source of “anti-imperialist” alliances with the national bourgeoisie.

<sup>[41]</sup> *Ibid.* p. 120.

<sup>[42]</sup> Shaw, S. and Shaw, E.K. *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Vol. II. 1977. P. 300.

<sup>[43]</sup> The Capitulations were grants of partial Ottoman state sovereignty to Western powers during the centuries of Ottoman decline, giving Britain and France (first of all) control of different aspects of finance, fiscal policy and the customs house.

<sup>[44]</sup> Shaw and Shaw, *op. cit.* p. 313.

<sup>[45]</sup> The term “Young Turks” is here used interchangeably with their formal name, the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP).

<sup>[46]</sup> Cf. P. Dumont, *op. cit.* pp. 15 ff. All quotes from Dumont, an essential source for this article, are my translations. Dumont’s book is second only to the ICC pamphlet as a guide to this story. The book, for all its wealth of detail, nonetheless misses the left wing of the Turkish communists and gives excessive weight to the right wing of Sefik Hüsnü and the Aydinlik group.

<sup>[47]</sup> *Ibid.* p. 35.

<sup>[48]</sup> Cf. the issue of *Revolutionary History*, Vol. 8, No. 3. The Balkan Socialist Tradition and the Balkan Federation, 1871-1915

<sup>[49]</sup> Enver Pasha’s credentials, in addition to being the commander in some disastrous military defeats in the World War, also included involvement in the massacres of Armenians. Grigori Zinoviev became his main Bolshevik sponsor (Carr, *op. cit.* p. 265)

<sup>[50]</sup> On Enver Pasha in the years 1919-1922, cf. Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *Reforme et Revolution chez les Musulmans de l'Empire Russe* (1981), pp. 263-266. More generally on Islamo-Communism, cf. A. Bennigsen, op. cit.

<sup>[51]</sup> A huge national mythology surrounds the rise of Mustafa Kemal, embalmed in the large Attatürk ("Father of the Turks") mausoleum in Ankara. After his military victories as Ottoman commander in World War I came his May 1919 move to Samsun, where he began to mobilize resistance to the Allied and Greek occupation.

<sup>[52]</sup> Readers unfamiliar with this period in Ottoman and Turkish history should keep in mind that until the Kemalist nationalists turned the tide against the Greek invasion in fall 1921, the Ottoman Empire (finally abolished in 1922) was still the internationally-recognized government and with its capital in Istanbul. Mustafa Kemal turned the small town of Ankara in the center of Anatolia into the new capital in December 1919 in order to deflate the prestige of Istanbul in the new Republic. The Grand National Assembly moved there in April 1920. Hence references in this text to Kemal's government should be understood as meaning the as-yet unrecognized breakaway nationalist revolt against the Allies, the Greeks and the punitive Treaty of Sèvres (1920)—more punitive to the Ottomans than the Versailles Treaty was to Germany-- that the Kemalist revolt undid.

<sup>[53]</sup> One manifestation of the power of Islam in the immediate postwar political conjuncture was the creation of the "Green Army" ca. May 1920. Various Muslim groups in the former Russian empire used green, the color of Islam. Some of these militias fought in the Transcaucasus and participated in the capture of Baku in September 1918. The Kemalists used the rumors of such a "Green Army" to quell suspicions about its secularism in Turkish public opinion, suspicions fanned by the Sultanate in Istanbul. The actual Green Army saw as its task the struggle against reactionary Islamic opponents of the Kemalists. (Dumont, op. cit. p. 349). The Green Army's pan-Asianist, possibly pan-Turanist call was "Asia for the Asians". At the Second Congress of the Comintern in July 1920, Lenin denounced pan-Asianism as serving the interests of "Turkish and Japanese imperialism" (ibid. p. 351). When Cerkes Edhem emerged as a strongman of the Green Army and showed potential of becoming a rival to Mustafa Kemal, a break with the nationalists occurred in 1920, and Kemal attempt to dissolve the organization. In October 1920, the law on associations was amended to give the government the right to ban organizations it deemed dangerous to state security. (ibid. p. 355)

<sup>[54]</sup> "Notorious" because of the presence of many Muslim delegates who today would rate as little more than Islamic fundamentalists, who responded in particular to Grigori Zinoviev's call for a "jihad" against the West. The Baku Conference was attended by 235 Turks, 192 "Persians and Parsees:", 8 Chinese, 8 Kurds, 157 Armenians and 100 Georgians (Carr, op. cit. p. 260).

<sup>[55]</sup> This included Col. Max Bauer, chief of staff of Ludendorff, and later military adviser to Chiang kai-chek.

<sup>[56]</sup> V. Vourkoutiotis, *Making Common Cause: German-Soviet Relations 1919-1922* (2007), p. 36.

<sup>[57]</sup> Dumont, op. cit. . 139.

<sup>[58]</sup> Ibid. p. 140.

<sup>[59]</sup> Ibid. p. 141.

<sup>[60]</sup> The Turkish CP thus began as an exile party. Baku, the oil-rich capital of Azerbaijan, underwent a tumultuous Sovietization involving a myriad of ethnic groups in the significant working class (including many Moslem workers from other Turkic regions of the Tsarist empire). The city had had a rich history of working-class activity well before 1917. Before World War I, strikes in Baku were longer, more frequent and more successful than in any Russian city. Cf. Ronald Suny, *The Baku Commune, 1917-1918* (1972), p. 47. Baku was not accidentally a center of Soviet revolutionary strategy. The Azeri language could be

understood by Istanbul Turks, Persians in Tabriz, Kurds, the Turkic peoples of the Transcaucasus, Georgians and Armenians. Azerbaijin was, as Paul Dumont put it, “one of the main revolutionary crossroads of the Near East”, a “Mecca of anti-imperialist struggle”. (Dumont, p. 286)

<sup>[61]</sup> Ibid. p. 142. These founders included Halil Pasha, uncle of Enver Pasha, an Ottoman officer in World War I; he had been ordered by Mustafa Kemal in August 1919 to make contact with the Bolsheviks for the nationalist movement. Salih Zeki, former Ottoman bureaucrat, had organized a massacre of Armenians in his district in 1916. Dr. Fuad Sabit had been dispatched by Mustafa Kemal to Azerbaijan in July 1919, where he made contact with the Bolsheviks as well. Their creation of a “Turkish Communist Party” in Baku was intended to ingratiate them with the Russians.

<sup>[62]</sup> In addition to the exiled founders of the CP in Baku, there were numerous socialist and communist groupings active in the Ottoman Empire after the Allied occupation of November 1918. There were also important strikes in Istanbul, such as the tramway strike of May 1920 organized by the (Second International) Turkish Socialist Party. The TSP at that time had 5000 members. Earlier strikes in 1920 had swelled party membership, such as those at the naval shipyards of the Golden Horn. May 1, 1921 saw the biggest May Day demonstration in Istanbul history. French intelligence services were also anguished by the appearance of Russian agitators. In February 1919 they uncovered a propaganda group in Istanbul using the name “Turkish Communist Party”, made up of Russian émigrés, Jews, some Moslems and some Greeks. (This information is gleaned by Dumont, op. cit. pp. 197-226.) Other radicalized elements appeared in exile in Germany, some developing ties to the Spartakusbund at the end of the war (ibid. p. 231) and were in the streets with them in January 1919. A number of them perished in the murder of the 15 communists off Trabzon in January 1921.

<sup>[63]</sup> The Red Army entered Baku only in April 1920, putting an end to the annexationist dreams of the Unionists.

<sup>[64]</sup> Ibid. p. 143, footnote 1. Attatürk had noticed the defeat of the 1919 Hungarian Revolution of Bela Kun and how the absence of a common border with the Soviet Union had been a major factor in its isolation.

<sup>[65]</sup> The main figure of the first phase of the Turkish CP was Mustafa Suphi (1883-1921). After studies in Paris, he had worked in the opposition to the CUP in Turkey and was imprisoned. He escaped to Russia, where he entered into contact with the Bolsheviks. After the revolution, he became the key figure in contact with the Turkish interior and worked under Stalin’s Commissariat of Nationalities. He represented Turkey at the founding Congress of the Third International in March 1919. He arrived in Baku in May 1920 and undertook the reorganization of the exile party founded earlier that year. He returned to Turkey at the end of 1920 to request legalization of the TCP from Mustafa Kemal. He and his entourage were greeted by anti-communist demonstrations organized by the nationalists of the eastern provinces, and he and fourteen other communists were murdered at the end of January 1921. Ibid. p. 143 footnote 3.

According to the ICC (p. 5) Mustapha Suphi had also been influenced by the Islamo-Communism of Sultan Galiev, an influence he never entirely shed.

<sup>[66]</sup> Ibid. p. 145. Dumont interprets this letter as an attempt to assure Kemal that this collaboration would not pull him to the left.

<sup>[67]</sup> Ibid. p. 147. Both the Bolsheviks and the Muslim revolutionaries at Baku played a careful verbal game of not “dotting the i’s” about their true divergent perspectives, for the purpose of the momentary alliance. (ibid. p. 299)

<sup>[68]</sup> Ibid. p. 149.

<sup>[69]</sup> Ibid. p. 151.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid. p. 157.

[72] Both the ICC pamphlet and Dumont make the important point that Greek Communist agitation against the war was an important factor in the Kemalist victories. Dumont writes, basing himself on a Soviet source (p. 392, footnote 2) “The Greek Communists rose up against the war in Asia Minor starting in mid-1920. It seems that they, by their active anti-militarist propaganda, significantly contributed to the undoing of the troops sent to Anatolia. Starting at the end of 1920, desertions in the Hellenic army multiplied and there is every evidence that a certain number of mutinies took place in the barracks around Smyrna. According to N. Dimitratos, the delegate of the Greek Communist Party at the Third Congress of the Comintern, more than 100,000 “workers and peasants” had deserted during the first two years of the war. This figure may seem a bit Homeric, but it nonetheless gives a certain idea of the extent of the phenomenon.”

[73] The Soviet government wanted close ties with Mustafa Kemal in their battle against British intervention, which in late 1919 was still backing anti-Soviet forces in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The Soviets also hoped that such an alliance would strengthen their appeal to the Turkic populations within Russia. Chicherin, at that time in charge of Soviet foreign relations, made a direct appeal to the “workers and peasants of Turkey” in September 1919, just as Mustafa Kemal was imposing himself as the leader of the nationalist movement, to continue the struggle against the Greek invaders. Kemal, for his part, was already using the prospect of a Soviet alliance to alarm the Western powers, while clearly demarcating himself from communism. At the same time he realized that Soviet military aid was essential to his survival. The tradeoff was Kemal’s assistance in the Sovietization of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Ibid. pp. 169-170.

[74] H. Carrere d’Encausse, op. cit. *ibid.*

[75] The program featured the 8-hour day, a legal minimum wage, abolition of child labor, the creation of village cooperatives, the nationalization of public transport, mines, forests, etc, Ibid. p. 325.

[76] I am indebted for what I know about this left wing to Turkish comrades who sent me their pamphlet *Left-Wing of the Turkish Communist Party*, prior to their adhesion to the International Communist Current (ICC). The pamphlet is not on line but is available from the ICC. E-mail communication and subsequent conversations with these comrades have been invaluable in writing this article. The pamphlet is hereafter referred to as “ICC pamphlet”.

[77] Sharif Manatov was the son of an imam of Bashkir, in the southern Urals. According to Dumont, he began his political career as a militant on the far right of the Bashkir assembly. Manatov had come to Constantinople in 1913. “In 1914, his anti-war position forced him to emigrate to Switzerland where he met and became a friend of Lenin. (after 1917)...he went back to Bashkiria...and was even elected as chairman of the Bashkir Soviet”...He was initially part of the Bashkir national liberation movement” but when its leader went over to the Whites, Manatov broke with the movement and was imprisoned. (ICC pamphlet). He went over to the Bolsheviks and in 1918 Stalin (Commissar for Nationalities) made him vice-chairman of the Central Muslim Commissariat. He worked into the Bashkir nationalist movement and was sent to Baku to the Musawat government there. By April 1920 he was in Ankara as Bashkir representative at the government of the Grand National Assembly. He then became one of the most active Bolshevik propagandists in Anatolia, and quickly built an impressive network of militants. In Ankara he began giving lectures on the ideas of the October Revolution. Through his influence on the workers and notables of Eskisehir, that city became the main bastion of Anatolian communist ferment (Dumont , pp. 374-375). George Harris describes him as “the first voice on Turkish soil to proclaim that Lenin ‘had invented a

doctrine that differs from Marxism'. He apparently attempted to convert Attatürk to Bolshevism. In June 1920, he wrote the General Statutes of the Turkish Communist Party which called for soviets, the abolition of private property, and nationalizations. (Harris, *op. cit.* pp. 70-72).

After his expulsion from Turkey in fall 1920, he returned to the Soviet Union and was later murdered (ICC pamphlet). Salih Hacıoğlu, born in 1880, was a veterinarian. In World War I, he served as a military veterinarian on several fronts and was revolted by the experience. He made his way to Ankara and encountered Manatov and his seminars. He and Manatov took over the local organization of the Turkish Socialist Party in Eskisehir and launched the short-lived newspaper *Emek*. After the repression of the People's Communist Party in January 1921, he was one of the figures condemned to 15 years at hard labor. (He was however amnestied by the end of the year.) Both he and Manatov, in the previous fall, had warned Mustafa Suphi of the dangers awaiting Turkish CP members (ICC pamphlet).

<sup>[78]</sup> ICC pamphlet, pp. 15, 22. Safarov heard the plea of Salih Hacıoğlu in November 1925 to depose the right-wing *Aydinlik* leadership of the Turkish party. Safarov's role, over and against the Soviet press and various Comintern Congress resolutions on support for bourgeois revolutions in the semi-colonial and colonial world, shows that in spite of the Soviet treaties with Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, the Comintern did not speak with one voice. Safarov later went to Germany and worked with the Communist opposition group the *Leninbund*, then returned to Russia and was subsequently shot.

<sup>[79]</sup> ICC pamphlet, p. 3.

<sup>[80]</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>[81]</sup> The Kemalist representative in Moscow, for his part, was under strict instructions to seek weaponry and munitions from the Soviet government, but to do everything in his power to prevent an intervention of the Red Army in regions disputed with the Turkish nationalists.

<sup>[82]</sup> Dumont, *op. cit.* p. 276.

<sup>[83]</sup> The Second Congress, after serious debate, ratified the idea of supporting bourgeois nationalist "anti-imperialist" struggles. Attending the conference from the colonial and semi-colonial world were delegates from Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bukhara, India, Turkey, Persia, China and Korea. (Carr. *op. cit.* p. 251)

<sup>[84]</sup> Dumont, *op. cit.* p. 272. The ICC pamphlet is much more hard-hitting: "The majority of the congress, just like the majority who participated in the People's Congress of the East, had not managed to break from nationalist ideology, and some of them had feelings toward Westerners that were arguably quite racist." (p. 9)

<sup>[85]</sup> The programmatic points of the "Appeal" included recognition of the right to strike, universal suffrage, replacement of the standing army by popular militias, fiscal reform, mandatory and free primary education, distribution of land to poor peasants and improvement in the conditions of workers. (*op. cit.* p. 275)

<sup>[86]</sup> Lenin had already attacked Tsarist Russia's occupation of the three eastern Turkish provinces (Kars, Ardahan and Batum) before the 1917 revolution.

<sup>[87]</sup> Cf. T.E. O'Connor. *Diplomacy and Revolution*. G.V. Chicherin and Soviet Foreign Affairs, 1918-1930 (1988). Chicherin considered Turkey to be "crucial" to Anglo-Soviet relations (p. 121) and later conceived of a defensive alliance of the Soviet Union with Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan (p. 142). Chicherin in June 1920 in a diplomatic note had called for a plebiscite for Kurdistan, Lazistan, the area of Batum, eastern Thrace and various Turco-Arab locales, many of them areas coveted by the Kemalists. But the following day, Kemal was informed of a large shipment of Soviet weapons and munitions (Dumont p. 293)

<sup>[88]</sup> R. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*. Vol. IV. Berkeley 1996, p. 343. Stalin also communicated to Kemal, through the newly-established leader of the Turkish CP in Baku,



Mustafa Suphi, that the Soviet government “considered the movement of nationalist resistance in Anatolia to be a model for all peoples of the East...”. Suphi added to Stalin’s message the assurance that the party would “avoid any initiative of an extremist character” while the war against the Greek forces continued. (Dumont, op. cit. p. 181)

<sup>[89]</sup> On Nov. 7, 1920, “Chicherin instructed that the Turks should be cautioned that future military aid was dependent on their acceptance of a Soviet-mediated armistice with Armenia and on their commitment to eject any Entente force that might attempt to occupy Batum. Stalin, then still in Baku, was given the authority to suspend the shipments, if necessary.” Ibid. p. 344.

<sup>[90]</sup> Ibid. p. 347.

<sup>[91]</sup> Dumont, op. cit. p. 176. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that communist militants in Turkey in the period under consideration (1917-1925) numbered no more than 20,000 (ICC pamphlet)

<sup>[92]</sup> Ibid. Karabekir, commander of the Army of the East, in August 1920 suggested to Kemal Pasha putting some Turkish Communists in “honorific posts” to appease them (ibid. P. 276). In his view, the communist movement should be neutralized because “an uncontrolled agitation could only benefit the British, who would not hesitate to exploit the anti-communist sentiments of forces faithful to the Caliph.” (ibid.)

<sup>[93]</sup> Ibid. p. 177.

<sup>[94]</sup> Ibid. p. 277.

<sup>[95]</sup> Ibid. p. 278.

<sup>[96]</sup> Ibid. In October, Kemal had tried to foment an “official Communist Party” to co-opt ferment to the left, but the serious militants remained underground.

<sup>[97]</sup> Salih Hacıoğlu, the left spokesman, had warned Suphi at the party’s founding congress in Baku of the dangers of returning to Turkey.

<sup>[98]</sup> Ibid. p. 279.

<sup>[99]</sup> Paul Dumont, for his part, does not think that Karabekir or Hamit bey organized the murders. Telegrams between them specified that no violence should befall the group. Yahya, the local ferryman who suggested the motorboat, and with a local reputation for ferocity, has often been suspected, if only to relieve Suphi of the funds he was carrying to finance communist activity in Anatolia. But doubt is cast on the idea that he acted on his own because, after he was arrested and murdered in turn, he had threatened to “spill the beans”. Whose beans? Dumont suggests as possibilities the Unionists for whom he worked in Trabzon, some local notables, or an agent of the Ankara government. Kazim Karabekir accused the Unionists of being behind it. But nothing ever went beyond conjecture. Ibid. p. 282.

<sup>[100]</sup> Ibid. p. 183.

<sup>[101]</sup> As E.H. Carr (op. cit. p. 301) dryly puts it: “For the first, though not for the last time, it was demonstrated that governments could deal drastically with their national Communist Parties without forfeiting the goodwill of the Soviet government.” The treaty preamble, signed on the same day as the Anglo-Soviet trade agreement was signed in London, mentioned “solidarity in the struggle against imperialism”. For Turkey as for the Soviet Union, it meant “the exclusion of foreign interlopers from Transcaucasia and from the shores of the Black Sea... These advantages outweighed for both parties any differences about the treatment of Turkish communists” (Carr. op. cit. p. 303).

<sup>[102]</sup> Ibid. P. 185. Dumont continues in a footnote to this passage: “The first article hostile to the Ankara government we found in this newspaper was on Oct. 26, 1922... Fifteen days earlier, Turkey had signed the armistice of Mudanya with the Allies. Thereafter, the Bolsheviks would multiply attacks against the Kemalist government. The first mention of the murders of Mustafa Suphi and his comrades appeared in Soviet newspapers in May 1921 (Carr op. cit. p. 304). An article about Suphi is another Soviet publication in July 1921 by the

Islamic Communist Sultan Galiev scarcely mentions the circumstances of Suphi's death. (Dumont, p. 283) Chicherin had raised the matter with the Turkish delegation negotiating the friendship and commercial treaty in February, but the latter professed innocence of involvement by the Kemalist government. The ambassador argued that the arrests of communists in the December-January crackdown had resulted from their own "tactical errors", because they had attempted to prematurely launch a "social revolution in Anatolia (ibid.).

<sup>[103]</sup> The treaty also settled the disputes over the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). O'Connor op. cit. p. 142.

<sup>[104]</sup> The Third Congress of the Communist International, which met in June-July 1921, issued a call to support the Kemalists. in general alignment with the new strategy of "conquering the masses". G.S. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey* (1969), p. 102. In a letter from the Comintern Executive Commission secretary, the ambassador Aralov, was instructed to "govern" the local communists who they feared would "scare the national intellectual circles with pointless 'left communist' blows." (ICC pamphlet) Aralov did more than "govern". In his memoirs, he reports that in 1922 Nazim Bey, a Communist leader, told him that he was in a position to establish a pro-Bolshevik government in Ankara, if the Soviet government would support him, and that he was supported in this goal by 120 deputies. Aralov claims that he rushed to inform the Kemalist authorities of what was afoot. (Dumont, p. 395)

<sup>[106]</sup> Quoted in ICC pamphlet, p. 12.

<sup>[107]</sup> Ibid.

<sup>[108]</sup> Interestingly, and tellingly, the Comintern executive on one hand issued an appeal at this very moment entitled "Workers, oppose a new war in the East!", thereby overturning the "anti-imperialist" support for Kemalist Turkey of the previous three years. They foresaw the Turkish working class returning to struggle against the "caste government" in Ankara. On the other hand, Radek for his part called on Turkish workers to continue to support the "legitimate demands" of the national liberation movement. "You must understand that the time has not yet come for the final struggle and you will for a long time have to act in concert with the bourgeois elements...". P. Dumont, op. cit. p. 195, quoting the Comintern's International Correspondence of Sept. 30, 1922. Radek went so far as to assert that the arrests of Turkish communists were ordered by the "conservative faction" of the Kemalist movement, and absolved Attatürk from blame. G.S Harris, *The Kadro Movement*, p. 55.

<sup>[109]</sup> According to G.S. Harris, some "more or less conservative politicians in Anatolia were drawn to this rough-hewn Islamic Communism in the spring of 1920". Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement*, (2002), p. 45.

<sup>[110]</sup> Ibid. p. 349.

<sup>[111]</sup> Ibid. p. 354. In fact, the declarations emanating from Eskehir in the summer of 1920 were more radical than the program adopted at the founding congress of the Turkish Communist Party in Baku in the following September. The Eskehir group stated that the national liberation movement was "in the hands of the bourgeoisie", It pointed to the prominence of former CUP (Young Turk) members in the Kemalist regime and said that is supported neither the Ottoman government in Istanbul nor the Kemalists in Ankara. It denounced conscription, religion and the family. (ICC pamphlet, p. 8)

<sup>[112]</sup> This account of the dismantling of the Green Army and its absorption by state organs is from Dumont, pp. 354-358.

<sup>[113]</sup> Ibid. p. 360.

<sup>[114]</sup> Ibid. p. 362.

<sup>[115]</sup> Ibid. p. 369.

<sup>[116]</sup> Ibid.

<sup>[117]</sup> G.S. Harris, on the other hand, identifies October 1920 as the moment at which the communist presence in Anatolia became truly worrisome to the bourgeois-dominated Grand National Assembly. Kemal had “based his whole movement on the existing bourgeois elite”. In that month the Minister of Economics presented a report on the practical difficulties of cooperation with the Soviet Union. In the debate following that report, most deputies’ attitudes turned to suspicion of Soviet motives. On the following day, Attatürk announced the creation of the “official” TCP. (G.S. Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement*, 2002, pp. 27-34.

<sup>[118]</sup> *Ibid.* p. 374.

<sup>[119]</sup> Sharif Manatov was the son of an imam of Bashkir, in the southern Urals. According to Dumont, he began his political career as a militant on the far right of the Bashkir assembly. Manatov had come to Constantinople in 1913. “In 1914, his anti-war position forced him to emigrate to Switzerland where he met and became a friend of Lenin. (after 1917)...he went back to Bashkiria...and was even elected as chairman of the Bashkir Soviet”...He was initially part of the Bashkir national liberation movement” but when its leader went over to the Whites, Manatov broke with the movement and was imprisoned. (ICC pamphlet). He went over to the Bolsheviks and in 1918 Stalin (Commissar for Nationalities) made him vice-chairman of the Central Muslim Commissariat. He worked into the Bashkir nationalist movement and was sent to Baku to the Musawat government there. By April 1920 he was in Ankara as Bashkir representative at the government of the Grand National Assembly. He then became one of the most active Bolshevik propagandists in Anatolia, and quickly built an impressive network of militants. In Ankara he began giving lectures on the ideas of the October Revolution. Through his influence on the workers and notables of Eskisehir, that city became the main bastion of Anatolian communist ferment (Dumont , pp. 374-375). George Harris describes him as “the first voice on Turkish soil to proclaim that Lenin ‘had invented a doctrine that differs from Marxism’. He apparently attempted to convert Attatürk to Bolshevism. In June 1920, he wrote the General Statutes of the Turkish Communist Party which called for soviets, the abolition of private property, and nationalizations. (Harris, *op. cit.* pp. 70-72).

After his expulsion from Turkey in fall 1920, he returned to the Soviet Union and was later murdered (ICC pamphlet)

<sup>[120]</sup> Salih Hacıoğlu, born in 1880, was a veterinarian. In World War I, he served as a military veterinarian on several fronts and was revolted by the experience. He made his way to Ankara and encountered Manatov and his seminars. He and Manatov took over the local organization of the Turkish Socialist Party in Eskisehir and launched the short-lived newspaper *Emek*. After the repression of the People’s Communist Party in January 1921, he was one of the figures condemned to 15 years at hard labor. (He was however amnestied at the end of the year.) Both he and Manatov, in the previous fall, had warned Mustafa Suphi of the dangers awaiting Turkish CP members (ICC pamphlet).

<sup>[121]</sup> The Manatov-influenced newspaper *Seyyare-i Yeni Dünya*, published in Eskisehir, had in the summer launched the slogan “Workers of the World Unite!”. In a speech to the Grand National Assembly, “Attatürk said that “this organ alone had broken its promise to follow instructions to support his revolutionary movement”. In G. Harris. *The Communists and the Kadro Movement* (2002), p. 27.

<sup>[122]</sup> Dumont, *op. cit.* p. 379.

<sup>[123]</sup> This account is, yet again, drawn from Dumont, p. 380-381. On Sept. 29, 1921, however, two weeks after the military victory at Sakarya which turned the tide of the war against the Greeks, the Grand National Assembly voted to amnesty the communists arrested in the previous January, in a new rapprochement with the Soviet Union motivated by a need for money and arms. In this juncture, the Kemalist government decided to wipe the slate clean on

Soviet support for Enver Pasha (for whom the victory at Sakarya had been the swan song), to provide aid to victims of the famine in Russia, and to sign, on Oct. 13, the Treaty of Kars which put an end to border disputes in the east. (Dumont, p. 384).

<sup>[124]</sup> Dumont interprets this amnesty as a gesture toward the Soviet government at a time when the Kemalists were badly in need of arms and funds to continue the campaign against the Greeks after the victory at Sakarya (ibid. p. 383) A new crisis emerged in mid-1922. “The relations between the government and the Anatolian communist movement would, of course, follow a strictly parallel evolution. When, on one hand, when it was necessary to cultivate the Soviets, the Turkish militants would benefit from a benevolent indifference. When, on the other hand, when peace with the Entente seemed within reach, the Communists would on the contrary have to deal with harassment, reprimands and, finally, with repression. In short, the same scenario as 1920-1921 (ibid. p. 384).

<sup>[125]</sup> In this characterization of the pre- and post-1922 period, Dumont (ibid. p. 384) is talking about the dominance of Sefik Hüsnu and the Aydinlik faction. His portrait seems to totally omit the left wing described in the ICC pamphlet. G.S. Harris (The Kadro Movement, p. 40) also notes three streams in the early Turkish communism, “unlike almost all other Communist movements”. At the Third Congress of the Comintern in June-July 1921, one Turkish Communist had called for purging the PCPT of all undesirable elements, including the “provocateurs” working for the Ankara government, the followers of Enver Pasha and the pan-Turanists of the Green Army. (Dumont, p. 385). Apparently the Balkan parties, led by the Bulgarians, were involved in this rectification, but many local organizations were in no hurry to rid themselves of “heterodox” elements such as the Enverists and members of the “official” Communist Party. This was part of the new strategy of the “conquest of the masses” laid down by the Third Congress.

<sup>[126]</sup> Dumont (ibid. p. 400) seems to acknowledge the presence of the left wing at the clandestine conference, without providing details: “Confronted with the new attitude adopted by the authorities (i.e. repression-LG) shouldn’t the party resolve itself to stop supporting the Kemalist movement? There is every reason to believe the discussion was intense. But Zorine and the other delegates from the Comintern were there to make sure the directives of the International were respected. In spite of the climate of repression which was setting in, the congress decided that the...(party)...would continue to support the actions of the government.” The ICC, again, paints a rather different picture, saying that the Aydinlik faction of Sefik Hüsnu boycotted the congress because of the left’s position against national liberation movements, and that the left dominated the central committee. With the significant presence of Comintern officials, the left failed to get its opposition to national liberation movements ratified. (ICC pamphlet, p. 14) .

<sup>[127]</sup> Ibid. p. 408.

<sup>[128]</sup> Ibid. p. 411. The entire back-and-forth between the arrests and the official Soviet and Comintern attitude is recounted ibid. pp. 408-415.

<sup>[129]</sup> Quoted ibid. pp. 414-415.

<sup>[130]</sup> Ibid. p. 415.

<sup>[131]</sup> ICC pamphlet, p. 16.

<sup>[132]</sup> Dumont, p. 419. The Turkish CP, in addition to its recognition of the role of the agitation of the Greek Communists in determining the outcome of the 1919-1922 war by provoking significant desertions from the Greek armies, also called on communist workers in Allied-occupied Istanbul to fraternize with the British, French and Italian soldiers there. (ICC pamphlet, p. 18)

<sup>[133]</sup> Ibid. p. 430. At times, Hüsnu even went so far as to deny the existence of classes in Turkey, because the entire nation was oppressed by imperialism.

<sup>[134]</sup> Ibid. p. 431. Dumont points out that these anti-foreign ideas were “in the air”, to be found in any number of Turkish newspapers at the time. Hüsni’s program stood out by its call for a fundamental shakeup of Turkey’s socio-economic structures. G.S. Harris documents that Hüsni had already argued as early as 1921 in *Aydinlik* for the “need to support state capitalism” and that “support of the petty bourgeoisie in Turkey’s case was likely to provide a more efficient transition to the eventual classless society.”, Hüsni also “opposed measures that would discourage artisans and small entrepreneurs from investing or modernizing their enterprises”. (Harris, *The Kadro Movement*, p. 53.)

By 1930, various former *Aydinlik* associates had gravitated toward the openly statist Kadro group, which conceived itself as a “think tank” for Kemalism. These included Sevkettin Süreyya Aydenir, already Minister of Education by the late 1920’s, and Vedat Nedin Tör, former Communist Secretary General (Harris, *Origins of Communism*, pp. 142-143.) All the key figures of the Kadro group came from an *Aydinlik* background.

<sup>[135]</sup> Ibid. p. 436.

<sup>[136]</sup> This state capitalism would become fully explicit, once again, in the ideology of the Kadro group in the early 1930’s, formed, as previously indicated, of ex-*Aydinlik* collaborators. Cf. the book of G. Harris on the Kadro group cited earlier.

<sup>[137]</sup> Quoted in ICC pamphlet, p. 20.

<sup>[138]</sup> Quoted from Ibid. “A list of the social class backgrounds of those in the party leadership and those involved with the opposition was added at the end of the declaration; indeed there was not a single person in the Central Committee made up of the ex-*Aydinlik* editorial board who came from the working class.”

<sup>[139]</sup> Quoted in ICC pamphlet, p. 20.