

AS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF NEW YORK TIMES:  
A NARRATION OF THE 1960 TURKISH COUP

by

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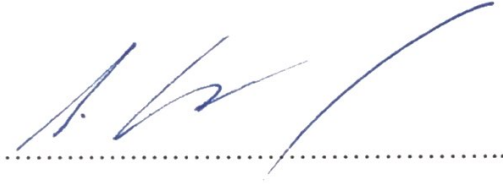
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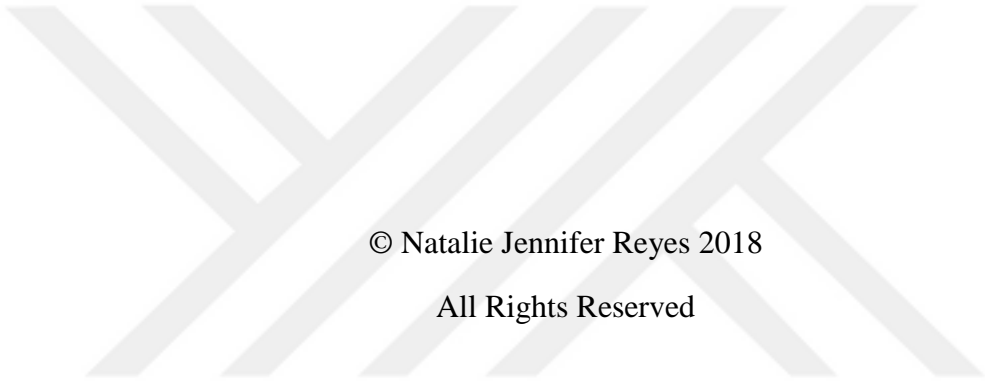
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## ABSTRACT

### AS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF NEW YORK TIMES: A NARRATION OF THE 1960 TURKISH COUP

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M.A. Thesis, January 2018

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Selçuk Akşin Somel

Keywords: American media, Foreign coverage, 1960 Turkish coup, Turkish-American relations, Cold War media

Following recent political events in Turkey, many have questioned the objectivity or nonpartisanship of American reporting on foreign, specifically Turkish, political events. With this question lying at the heart of our research, this thesis examines the New York Times' representation of Turkish politics over a two-year period, capturing the year before and after the 27 May 1960 military coup. Before delving into the analysis, we review the more comprehensive question of American media's foreign coverage, specifically within the Cold War context, to understand how our research fits within this field. Employing a total of 114 articles, we divide the analysis into two chapters: the pre-coup period (May 1959 to 26 May 1960) and the post-coup period (27 May 1960 to September 1961). Within these two chapters, we identify themes in Turkish-American relations and characterizations of political actors, events, and issues to compare them with historical sources. After careful analysis of the articles' content, we argue that the subjectivity displayed in the NYT is predominantly deliberate and motivated by the desires to maintain a Turkish alliance and to promote a positive image of the U.S. military.

## ÖZET

NEW YORK TIMES GÖZÜNDEN:  
1960 DARBESİ'NİN BİR ANLATIMI

NATALIE JENNIFER REYES

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Anahtar Sözcükler: Amerikan medyası, Dış haberler, 1960 ihtilali, Türk-Amerikan ilişkileri, Soğuk Savaş medyası

Yakın zamanda Türkiye'deki siyasi olayları takiben, birçok kişi tarafından, Amerikan medyasının diğer ülkelerdeki, özellikle de Türkiye'deki, siyasi olayları aktarmadaki tarafsızlığı sorgulanmaktadır. Araştırmanın kalbinde bu soruyu barındırarak, bu tez, 27 Mayıs Askeri Darbesinin öncesi ve sonrası dönemleri içine alan 2 yıllık bir zaman dilimi çerçevesinde, New York Times (NYT) gazetesinin Türk siyasetine ilişkin gerçekleştirdiği aktarımları ele almaktadır. Analize başlamadan önce, çalışmamızın bu alanla uyumluluğunun bir tahlili olarak, soruyu daha kapsamlı bir çerçevede, Amerikan medyasının ülke dışı haberciliği üzerine, özellikle de Soğuk Savaş dönemi üzerinden ele aldık. Toplamda 114 makale kullanarak çalışmamızı Mayıs 1959'dan 26 Mayıs 1960'a kadar olan darbe öncesi periyod ve 27 Mayıs 1960'dan 1961 Eylül'üne kadar olan darbe sonrası periyod olarak iki bölüme ayırdık. Bu iki bölümde, tarihsel kaynaklarla mukayeselerine imkan sağlamak üzere, Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerinin motiflerini, olayların, meselelerin ve siyasi aktörlerinin karakteristiklerini tanımlamaktayız. Makale içeriklerinin detaylı analizi neticesinde NYT gazetesinde ortaya konan taraflılığın, bir Türk ittifakının sürdürülmesi ve Birleşik Devletler ordusu için olumlu bir imaj oluşturmak arzusu ile etraflıca düşünülmüş ve desteklenmiş olduğu kanısına varmaktayız.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Motivation

“No matter what one does, one remains tied to one’s own perspective on the world, in many ways which are counter-intuitive,” says Dutch communication scholar, Jaap van Ginneken, noting his pre-determined judgments of the world, as a Westerner who used to cover non-Western news. When objectivity is highlighted as a guiding principle in journalistic professionalism, the greatest disservice to this ideal is the refusal to spotlight the inherent mental representations that we all carry around with us. Communities and individuals around the world have called attention to this disservice more and more as the primacy of Euro-American media refuses to wane. In an era dominated by Euro-American narratives of the world, the modern reader internalizes Euro-American implicit value judgments of peoples and nations while adopting the political issues and moral questions that this “civilization” defines. Paradoxically, even international struggles to counter these exported representations will be communicated within Euro-American frameworks, e.g. the constructed East (Oriental) and West (Occidental) divide, thus demonstrating the extent to which these perspectives have been internalized. With these frameworks’ embedded connotations and histories hanging in the background, Euro-American news organizations have been the subject of criticism regarding bias and misrepresentation of international events.

This discussion of objectivity in “Western” coverage emerged in the summer of 2016 within Turkish and Middle Eastern journalistic and think tank circles following the July 15<sup>th</sup> coup attempt in Turkey. Amid grappling with the after-effects of political and social chaos, anger arose at the narrative that began circulating in American and European news media. The topics that were particularly focused on were: greater weight in reporting given to the president’s political response than to the events themselves; irresponsible

misreporting as events unfolded (e.g. an MSNBC tweet alleging that the president was seeking asylum in another country); and prejudiced terms to indicate support or disapproval of political actors (e.g. New York Times' reference to sections of the Turkish public as "sheep"). Some Turkish journalists went so far as to label these Euro-American journalists and pieces as Orientalist and hypocritical, expressing the shared belief that Westerners' biases prevented them from understanding Turkish society and politics, and consequently their inability to responsibly cover events within Turkey.

This specific event and its overlying issue raises questions we have yet to answer: specifically, what does it mean to misrepresent a nation's people and its affairs, how do we define this phenomenon, and how can we address this in the foreign desk? To examine these questions, we situated them in a specific context and delved into this tug-of-war to assign meaning to international events.

## **1.2 Research Scope**

The question of bias in Euro-American print media in their reporting of international politics has been discussed and researched in recent decades, yet this field continues to remain an underdeveloped branch within media studies. Witnessing the debates around this question in Turkey, we decided to conduct our research in the specific context of Turkish politics and explore the history of media representations of a similar previous event. I raised the question regarding the objectivity or fairness of "Western" media coverage and applied it within the exceptional context of the 27 May 1960 military coup in Turkey. As it would have been a large undertaking to address all "Western" media, I specifically focused on American media through the *New York Times*' coverage of Turkish political events from May 1959 to September 1961.

Taking on the assessment of subjectivity or bias was a tricky matter as it conveyed the assumption that objectivity could be satisfactorily defined and that there was an objective frame of reference. In recent decades, communications scholars have suggested alternative terms to be stated as guiding journalistic principles (e.g. fairness, accuracy, completeness); however, as these principles were equally difficult to define and measure, we decided to maintain historical continuity and use the term "objectivity." In the particular branch of international reporting, we have defined objectivity as the discussion of local events according to various voices representative of the national political

spectrum. We continue our exploration of the underlying factors that create subjective international reporting in Chapter Two.

In order to analyze the objectivity according to our definition, we needed to determine the different perspectives that made up the Turkish political spectrum during this period and the aspects that they focused on. Using secondary books that revisit this period, we created a Historical Context of the issues and actors that would allow readers to gain an understanding of the Turkish frame of reference to the 1960 coup. As the issue and perceptions of constitutionality lay at the heart of this matter, we devoted special attention to it by beginning our summary with the creation of the 1921 Constitution and ending with the transition to the 1961 Constituion.

Without reviewing the international backdrop and American-Turkish relations during this period, we cannot understand the significance of the 1960 Turkish coup d’etat for the U.S. and how it translates into the *NYT* representation. As the Turkish political events did not occur within a vacuum, it is equally important to understand the realist considerations with which the U.S looked at Turkey. The end of World War II had given way to the dawn of a hegemonic competition between the U.S. and Soviet Union. Believing the fall of Turkey would lead to Soviet expansion into the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East led the U.S. to pursue a defense relationship with Turkey. The importance of a strategic American-Turkish alliance arose with the emergence of this binary ideological war with the Soviet Union. In essence, the significance of a Turkish alliance was in proportion to its proximity toward the designated enemy and its willingness to align with American foreign policies. The 1960 military coup d’etat establishes the cloak of a military guardianship in the country and a sense of permanence in its loyalty to preserving an American alliance. We continue our exploration of the international backdrop and American-Turkish relations during this period in Chapter Two.

For this study, we selected the *New York Times* (*NYT*) due to its historically exalted position in the American media landscape as an authoritative source of information.<sup>1</sup> The late American journalist, Robert C. Notson, once stated, “As nearly,” as a newspaper should be, [the *NYT*] is a history of one day in the world’s events,” thus exemplifying the

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas O. Berry, *Foreign Policy and the Press: An Analysis of the New York Times’ Coverage of US Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1990), doi:0313274193.

organization's high esteem in the American moral imagination. With its prominence in setting "high standards of objectivity" and its extensive coverage of global affairs,<sup>2</sup> it serves as the American fountain of most trusted reports on international politics. Consequently, the *NYT* remains one of the most researched American newspapers, which provided us with many studies spanning several decades from which we could draw comparisons to our own research.

Due to the difficulty of trying to determine and assign a meaningful event or period that led to the May 1960 coup, we have chosen to begin with May 1959 as the starting point. As a one-year precursor, it gives us sufficient time to identify trends of Turkish coverage and compare them to the post-coup context. We have assigned September 1961 as the conclusion of the analysis period to coincide with the end of the political trials of the deposed government leaders.

To get a full look at the accuracy of *NYT* representation on aspects that the Turkish spectrum focused on, we reviewed articles over the two-year period, May 1959 to September 1961. The selection for these articles was based on domestic Turkish politics and international events in which Turkey's role was highlighted. The articles were analyzed in chronological order so as to detect trends and developments in representations of various topics. We noted the usage of weighted words, phrases, and statements in the related *New York Times (NYT)* articles to understand the underlying perspectives and concerns with regard to Turkey. We then analyzed and compared the *NYT* representation of actors and events with that of historical sources to comment on the similarities, differences, emphases, and omissions. Upon the conclusion of the analysis, we tried to determine whether American media represented a certain political/social current in Turkey or if they represented an external/outsider's perspective. The analysis has been divided into two chapters (Three and Four), with Chapter Three covering the period from May 1959 to 26 May 1960, and Chapter Four covering the period from 27 May 1960 to September 1961. The content from Three was based on a total of 53 articles and was categorized under three main topics: 1) Turkish-American relations, 2) press freedom, and 3) party politics and public reactions. The content from Four was based on a total of

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<sup>2</sup> H. Sahin, "Turkish Politics in New York Times: A Comparative Content Analysis," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (December 1, 1973): 685–89, doi:10.1177/107769907305000409.

61 articles and was categorized under five main topics: 1) the coup, 2) the junta's role, 3) Yassıada trials, 4) constitution-building, and 5) economic development.

### 1.3 Historical Context

Delving into the background of the 1960 military coup, it would be constructive to take a glance at the emergent political groups and constitutional trends during the War of Liberation and Turkey's early Republican period to understand the internal conflicts surrounding the questions of national sovereignty and democracy. The different interpretations of these fundamental ideas that existed in the 1950s had origins in the National Liberation Movement and political practices that developed as the budding Ankara government was trying to consolidate a nation that was on precarious footing.

The 1921 Constitution was created, under the exceptional circumstances of the War of Liberation, as a temporary document to meet the nascent Ankara government's need to solidify its legitimacy. During this period, the Ankara government was engaged in a legitimacy clash over national representation and decision-making with the Ottoman government in Istanbul. The idea that sovereignty belonged to the people, while emerging in different localities during the War of Liberation, was first laid down in this document and was the key to providing Ankara its legitimacy.

The constitution delineated that through this popular will, the Grand National Assembly (*Büyük Millet Meclisi*, BMM) had been founded, thus identifying the popular will and parliament's will as one and the same. The conflation of executive and legislative powers within the BMM expressed the supremacy of the parliamentary will (i.e. the popular will) by insuring that no institution or branch could supersede its authority. This declaration was an open challenge regarding external representation of the nation, or in other words, voicing that they alone could speak for the future of Anatolia with the Entente powers. The British occupation of Istanbul provided the perfect opportunity for Ankara to directly confront the Istanbul government for domestic support by strengthening Ankara's assertion that Istanbul had become a mouthpiece for imperialist enemies. In addition to appealing to anti-imperialist sentiments, the Ankara government made efforts to emphasize their Islamic character and their desire to preserve the sultanate and caliphate.

To suppress local rebellion against their legitimacy in Anatolia, Ankara established two measures: the High Treason Law (*Hiyanet-i Vataniye Kanunu*) and the

Independence Tribunals (*Istiklal Mahkemeleri*). This law established that any seditious activities committed against the BMM would be punishable by death and founded these tribunals specifically to deal with these cases. While many of the elements laid down in this period were undemocratic, they ensured internal security, provided the means for quick and effective decision-making, and ultimately established Ankara's authority over Anatolia. Through these revolutionary circumstances, the concept of democracy emerges and becomes defined as the exercise of popular will [only] through the parliament.

After the formal foundation of the Turkish Republic, the 1924 Constitution was created to detail the structure of the new state apparatus, essentially, providing an extension of the 1921 Constitution. This constitution crystallized several principles that were previously expressed in 1921 such as the supremacy of the legislative branch, concentration of powers in the TBMM, and the exercise of popular will through parliamentary will. There was one conspicuous weakness set forth in the 1924 system that would serve as a contributing factor in the development of the 1960 coup d'état – endowing the TBMM with the jurisdiction to determine a law's constitutionality. Due to the inherent partisanship of a national assembly, this issue introduced an ideological and political element to the controversy of deciding upon unconstitutional government actions. While fitting in with the political philosophy of the period, the lack of an external institution, namely a constitutional court, with this authority would ultimately leave the door open on questions of constitutional misconduct in the future.

The process of one man's power consolidation and emergence of a one-party state laid down another fundamental issue and question over the ambiguity between state and party ideology. Throughout the War of Liberation, Mustafa Kemal, an army commander who had first gained a reputation in the Gallipoli campaign, grew in influence as a military tactician and a statesman in the revolutionary government. Before the war formally came to an end, Mustafa Kemal had begun consolidating his political power through a variety of means and preparing for a postwar administration<sup>3</sup>. He prematurely dissolved the assembly and held new elections including only candidates that he had personally vetted, more or less, forming a partisan parliament. This second TBMM, in session from 1923 to 1927, was not as representative as the prior assembly since it was composed of non-objective deputies with a sense of gratitude and indebtedness toward Mustafa Kemal.

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<sup>3</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

Upon this parliament's first meeting, the deputies decided to reconstitute themselves as (*Cumhuriyet*) *Halk Partisi* [The (Republican) People's Party, hereinafter referred to as CHP) and arose as the only political party before the republic's birth. Through these maneuvers, postwar Turkey emerged with both a political party and national assembly under the authority of Mustafa Kemal. There was a strong sense of apprehension among the other Liberation War celebrities against Mustafa Kemal's dominance of the political scene, which led to the formation of the budding republic's first opposition party, *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (the Progressive Republican Party), by the same aforementioned contemporaries (e.g. Kazım Karabekir, Rauf Orbay, etc.). This multi-party period was brought to an abrupt end in 1925 after a Kurdish rebellion erupted in southeast Turkey. The rebellion gave TBMM the justification to pass a Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*), empowering the government to ban any organizations or publications that it saw as inflammatory to public order, and to reinstate two Independence Tribunals from the Liberation period. While the rebellion was only a regional issue, these instruments were implemented nationally to decisively silence criticism of the CHP government. The most significant result of this was that, TCF, the only opposition party was shut down, leaving the country without any legal opposition group until 1945. With such a notable absence during the formation of Turkey's state apparatus and political processes, it is unsurprising that state and CHP political ideology slowly consubstantiated into one.

While maintaining the semblance of a democratic government was an integral component of the early Turkish regime's identity and development plan, as we could observe from the previous account, it would be unmistakable to define this regime as authoritarian in its suppression of political participation and expression. This introduces a conundrum in Turkish democracy as TBMM no longer represents the popular will, but restricts their voices from being heard in the political system. Within the governing organization of CHP, party discipline was later tightened to the extent that there was even no room for discussion as meetings became the forum in which the cabinet announced and explained its decisions. This indicates the extent of restrictions on political participation – with no opposition group to vote for or join, the only forum to effect political change was CHP, and yet that too was created into one of rank-and-file.

In the formative years of the Turkish Republic, civil liberties were restricted to fulfill political elites' vision of a 'modern' nation. Beginning in 1926, Mustafa Kemal and

his government embarked on an extensive program of social and political reforms, which were met with great resentment throughout the country. With the Law on the Maintenance of Order still in place, any resistance shown to these policies were met with arrest or execution by the Independence Tribunals. In addition to the suppression of expressed discontent, the Kemalist regime controlled social and cultural institutions by encouraging its supporters and shutting down critics. As the topic will be of importance to us later, it is important to highlight that the government especially mobilized both the press and educational institutions to spread the Kemalist message. Upon Atatürk's appeal, a Swedish professor of pedagogy was invited to examine (*Istanbul*) *Darülfünun* ('University') and provide recommendations for a reform of the university. In 1933, embarking on this reform, the government reconstituted the *Darülfünun* into the University of Istanbul and dismissed nearly two-thirds of the professors on the basis that they had been unable to adapt to the new system.<sup>4</sup> Zürcher noted that only the strongest Kemalist supporters were given the opportunity to remain. In regard to freedom of the press, there were severe restrictions after the 1931 press law authorized the state shut down any newspaper that criticized any national policies. While these measures made the government deeply unpopular, Kemal and his supporters saw them as a part of the strengthening of the state and development of the political system. Like scholar Yeşim Arat states it, the Kemalist regime "repressed those qualities [e.g. liberalism, democracy, and secularism] in the name of those very qualities themselves."

The global economic depression of the 1930s, maintenance of a major land army during World War II, and the previous decades of social engineering provided the right context for the seeds of opposition that finally culminated in 1945. Throughout the early Republican years, various revolts that occurred (e.g. *Menemen olayları*) served as the only outlet for the common people to express their discontent with reforms targeted at their lifestyles. The republican elites nonetheless marched onward molding the Turkish man in the "modern" European image. The global conditions of the 1930s and 40s slowly gnawed away at CHP's political currency among the general populace, with İnönü's government becoming increasingly unpopular. After 1946, however, the common people

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<sup>4</sup> Fatma Nevra Seggie and Veysel Gökbek, "Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'de Akademik Özgürlük," *SETA Vakfı*, no. 98 (2014), [http://www.academia.edu/7494113/Geçmişten\\_Günümüze\\_Türkiye\\_de\\_Akademik\\_Özgürlük](http://www.academia.edu/7494113/Geçmişten_Günümüze_Türkiye_de_Akademik_Özgürlük); Durmuş Günay, "Üniversitenin Neliği, Akademik Özgürlük ve Üniversite Özerkliği," *International Congress on Higher Education*, 2004, [http://www.academia.edu/411214/Üniversitenin\\_Neliği\\_Akademik\\_Özgürlük\\_Ve\\_Üniversite\\_Özerkliği](http://www.academia.edu/411214/Üniversitenin_Neliği_Akademik_Özgürlük_Ve_Üniversite_Özerkliği).



found an opposition group that they could rally around. It was the wedge that arose between the government and landowners / businessmen that slowly kindled a fire of resistance and ultimately culminated in formal withdrawal from CHP. The spark was a land redistribution proposal in 1945, leading to the first open and outright criticism of the government. After several public criticisms and calls for democratization of CHP were left un-responded, Adnan Menderes and other notables finally decided to form the *Demokrat Parti* (DP). The establishment of local DP branches shone a bright light, showcasing the extent of the common people's discontent with CHP and the enthusiasm with which they embraced DP. While the party platforms differed minimally, DP's presentation of itself as the new political wave ready to truly represent the popular will marked it as the clear winner. This combination of this political message and rigged elections in 1946 gnawed away at CHP's strength, as we can note by their loss (i.e. 39.8%) in the 1950 election. The common people responded with jubilee after finally gaining the opportunity to express their support for a political organization in a free election for the first time in Turkish republican history.

Menderes' government, as the first truly democratic government in Republican history, had the responsibility of deconstructing the one-party state tradition and distinguishing CHP from the state apparatus, especially the military. Due to the nature of the republic's foundation, the military and Liberation War commanders held great prestige and thus political currency, lending them an undue advantage in attaining influential positions and a looming shadow over politics. Naturally, political rivals, specifically Menderes and DP in this case, were ill at ease with this relationship and its potential significance. Deconstruction of this overall tradition was a particularly delicate issue to undertake as the loyalty of members from state institutions and influential institutions with public platforms (e.g. universities and press) remained loyal to CHP (Pelt, M., 2012). The DP government, in efforts to erect new cadres in these institutions and weaken CHP's political strength and resources, executed several motions that garnered resentment among CHP supporters and intelligentsia. Examples of such actions included mandating the retirement of judges after 25 years, authorizing the government to expel government officials, and appropriating CHP assets with the justification that they were, in actuality, state assets (Pelt). Although initially running on a platform of democracy, it cannot be denied that Menderes and the DP government grew increasingly authoritarian over their decade of rule. Many scholars point to 1953 as the starting point

in which the DP government began enacting a series of legal restrictions against the press and opposition. These restrictions resulted in the fining of journalists and outlets because of their work, closures of newspapers and opposition parties (e.g. Nation Party - *Millet Partisi*), the regular imprisonment of journalists, as well as the arrests of high-profile individuals (e.g. CHP Secretary General and President İnönü's son-in-law). Through these actions, Menderes managed to unite all of the opposition against him by the late 1950s. To play the devil's advocate, however, one can see how the DP government engaged in the same authoritarian policies as those committed by CHP in the one-party era and with the same justification (i.e. of claiming to fulfill democracy and representing the populace). Although criticism of an undemocratic DP initially rang hollow in the ears of the people originating from the party that was so intertwined with their authoritarian past, CHP slowly came to represent a bulwark against the DP regime.

While Menderes' era had been one filled with tension, some historians describe the Kayseri Incident in April 1960 as the turning point or first incident in a series that would eventually climax with the 27 May coup d'état.<sup>5</sup> We will discuss the sequence of notable events from April to May 1960, more specifically: 2 April (the Kayseri Incident), 18 April (Motion for CHP Investigation), 27 April (Investigation Committee Authorization Law), 28 April (Demonstrations and Martial Law), 1 May (Declaration of Curfew), 21 May (March to Presidential Palace), and 25 May (Commencement of Investigations). CHP Chairperson and former President İsmet İnönü set out on a national tour with other CHP members in early 1959. On 2 April, as İnönü was heading to Kayseri, a central Anatolian city, his train was blocked from continuing on its path by soldiers who were under alleged orders from the capital. However, İnönü, as an esteemed military hero, was able to persuade the soldiers to give them free passage. The use of military in stifling political opposition, especially against someone as highly regarded as İnönü, was later cited as a motivating factor by General Cemal Gürsel in his memorandum to the DP government. Although not listed in the afore-mentioned series, 17 April is critical in providing the context for the 18 April event. On this day, İnönü is noted as telling former officers that championing the Turkish ideals was now left in their hands. Unsurprisingly, on 18 April, DP presented a bill in TBMM to investigate the illegal activities of CHP and the press on the basis that both were subverting the state and society 'by encouraging all kinds of destructive activities'. On 27 April, before the TBMM's vote on the bill that was

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<sup>5</sup> Walter F. Weiker, *1960 Türk İhtilali*, 3rd ed. (Istanbul, Turkey: Cem Yayınevi, 1967).

presented on the 18<sup>th</sup>, İnönü made a speech accusing Menderes and DP leaders of extrajudicial and extra-constitutional actions to illegitimately maintain their power. While simply reiterating common accusations, the TBMM was forced to adjourn after an uproar ensued. After returning to session, the DP majority decided to expel İnönü for 12 sessions and strike his speech from the record for ‘insulting the Turkish army and nation’. In addition to this, TBMM approved the motion for the Investigation Committee (*Tahkikat Encümeni / Komisyonu*) to begin its inquest into all CHP and press activities, granting it vast and overreaching authority to do so. This inquest was to be carried out by diehard DP members, clearly a foreboding sign for the opposition, over a period of three months in which the Committee decided to ban all political activities. This motion was met with student demonstrations in Istanbul the following day, on 28 April over the unconstitutionality of the Committee. What made this day indelible on the collective memory of the public was the disproportionate use of police force to stamp out the student protests, in addition to the introduction of military force to suppress a domestic incident. The government reacted to this incident by instituting martial law in both Istanbul and Ankara, which had experienced its own demonstrations. On 1 May, despite questions of legality, the government issued a general declaration of martial law. This led to the symbolic blow on 21 May in which a large crowd of officers and civilians joined a thousand cadets in their march toward the presidential palace. After this demonstration, on 25 May, Menderes announced that the inquest into CHP’s activities had commenced earlier than the projected three-month period and findings of this investigation would soon be reported. Some historians believe that this announcement expedited the coup as the commission was reported to have looked into links between the military and CHP, which would then result in purges.<sup>6</sup> The US Ambassador of that time notes that on 27 May, the day of coup d’etat, the press, intelligentsia, and armed forces all hailed the coup as an accomplishment.

On 27 May 1960, Turkish military issued a public statement emphasizing the non-partisan character of their government takeover, yet their baseless charges in the political trials against DP deputies indicate an alternative story. In their public statement, the military announced that the government would temporarily be in the hands of a National Unity Committee (*Milli Birlik Komitesi; MBK*) headed by General Cemal Gürsel. The

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<sup>6</sup> Mogens Pelt, *Military Invention and a Crisis of Democracy in Turkey: The Menderes Era and Its Demise* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2014).

MBK immediately set out on two actions: sponsorship of an academic-led constitutional commission and a university reform. The next day, a group of law professors that had been tasked with drafting a new constitution issued their own statement in which they legitimized the junta's actions. Following this, 147 faculty members from six different universities were discharged on the stated basis that they prioritized personal interests over those of the nation. According to Weiker, however, they were expelled for their opposition to the regime.<sup>7</sup> In a fashion reminiscent of the early Republican years, the MBK demonstrated consciousness in suppressing the voices of possible opposition in universities.

The basis of the professors' declaration, later becoming the basis of the political trials, was that the DP government had engaged in unconstitutional actions and thus itself became illegal. Despite the iron-handed attitude that the government assumed, there was no constitutional or legal basis for the charges brought up against them, as we will discuss later. The same clauses that allowed the early CHP government to skew the definition of Turkish democracy should have protected the successive government, and yet they did not. When the MBK decided to stand by this interpretation, any questions about the role that the military held in party politics were thrown out the window. Continuing on this thread, the junta then appointed a special tribunal (*Yüksek Adalet Divanı*) to adjudicate over the legal proceedings with the DP deputies, and thus besmirched the principle of an independent judiciary. The famous words of Chairman and Judge Salim Başol best encapsulate this political influence, in which Başol responds to Menderes' objections regarding detention conditions that "the powers who had placed [him] there wished it so" (*'Sizi buraya tıkan güç böyle istiyor'*). The cases presented in the Yassıda trials were a combination of baseless constitutional violation cases and slanderous criminal and corruption cases to vilify and discredit the men's perspectives. For our purposes, we will simply focus on the constitution-related cases and their bases, Article 146 of the penal code. According to the tribunal, DP had committed an offense in "attempting to alter the Turkish constitution by silencing the Turkish parliament," i.e. interfering with the organization of Turkish democracy.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, their supposed offense was the establishment of the extrajudicial investigation committee on CHP's political activities and the press in April 1960. There were two constitutional clauses, however, that [should

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<sup>7</sup> Seggie and Gökbel, "Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'de Akademik Özgürlük."

<sup>8</sup> Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*.

have] negated these charges. First and foremost, a provision existed for the alteration of the constitution and that was a two-thirds majority vote, which the Demokrats had had and executed. Secondly, Article 17, a security measure of sorts, prohibited TBMM members from being held accountable for their votes. Unsurprisingly, these trials ended with 31 life imprisonment, 418 short-term imprisonment, and 15 death sentences.

Regardless of political perspective, early Turkish republican history had persuaded many of the need to modify the weaknesses of the Turkish constitution and overall state structure, yet a struggle ensued over the following year about the best way to address these gaps and delineate a new structure. As previously mentioned, on the day of the coup, MBK encharged a group of five law professors from Istanbul University, hereinafter referred to as the Istanbul Commission, with the creation of a new constitution. Differences of opinion emerged within this commission over whether to pursue a restrictive or open-ended approach. The chairman, Sıddık Sami Onar, and two members had a pessimistic perspective of politicians and thus wished to thoroughly restrict them through the constitution, yet the other two members preferred to provide wriggle room and allow political actors to develop the system through time. The restrictive approach eventually won out, allowing the draft to finally be completed and submitted on 17 October. However, the degree to which the Istanbul Commission weakened the powers of the executive branch received great criticism. During this time, Professor Yavuz Abadan had spearheaded another draft with a separate group of law professors from the University of Ankara. At the Ankara Commission's insistence, the task of finalizing this draft was given to a two-chamber constituent assembly, consisting of the MBK and a representative parliament (*Temsilciler Meclisi*; consisting of members from political parties and different professional groups). A 20-person constitutional committee was then formed under this constituent assembly led by Enver Ziya Karal and Turhan Feyzioğlu to complete most of the work to finalize the new constitution.

After year-long deliberations, the resulting 1961 Constitution marked great differences from the 1924 Constitution. Specifically, we see the re-conceptualization of power and branch structures in the Turkish government as well the creation of a new political tradition and philosophy in regard to the Turkish military. Beginning with the power restructuring, we note the complete accord that existed between all of the authors in the drafting process over the objective to prevent another power monopoly in the TBMM. As previously demonstrated, the national assembly in the previous structure

performed without checks from the other branches, which allowed majority parties to bulldoze opposition and run without restrictions. To counterbalance this, the authors established two critical institutions: 1) a second chamber in the parliament (Senato), which legislation would also have to pass through (as a bicameral system) and 2) an independent constitutional court, which could decide on the constitutionality of legislation. In addition, to protect civil society from the authoritarianism of the national assembly, the 1961 Constitution guaranteed full autonomy to universities, mass media, and the courts as well as a full bill of civil liberties for the public.

While these changes signified a huge move forward in Turkey's democracy, the new constitutional and political tradition of military involvement in domestic politics introduced an undemocratic dimension in which the threat of intervention loomed over civilian administrations. Under the previous constitution, the military had had no role in domestic politics, meaning any actions taken on their behalf would be defined illegal. However, the 1960 coup and the 1961 Constitution laid out a justification for the military's "guardianship" of Turkish democracy and instituted a formal political role for the institution for the first time. The 1960 junta members were ensured lifetime Senatorship and protection from prosecution relating to the coup and aftermath. More significantly, the constitution established a National Security Council (*Milli Guvenlik Kurulu*), which would advise the prime minister and the government on internal and external security.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AMERICAN MEDIA and TURKISH-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

#### 2.1 Musings on Objectivity

Objectivity. Fairness. Accuracy. Transparency. Factuality. Nonpartisanship. These terms have all been floated in the centuries-long discourse surrounding the expectations within journalism since the appearance of modern newspapers in the United States. They nonetheless remain abstractions that cater to public discourse as definitions, implementation methods, and the ethics of their presence constantly change in correspondence with contextual events. According to the American Press Institute, the term “objectivity” began to appear as a guiding principle in journalism in the 1920s after the growing recognition that journalists were representing, often unconscious, bias in their work. Walter Lippman, an American political commentator, began to call for a scientific approach in the field so that the journalist would:

*...remain clear and free of his irrational, his unexamined, his unacknowledged prejudices in observing, understanding, and presenting the news.*<sup>9</sup>

This approach, defined as objectivity, urged journalists to develop a consistent method so that personal and cultural biases would not undermine the accuracy of their work; putting it differently, the proposition was that the method would be objective, not the journalist. To formally define the term, objectivity, as an ideal, guides journalists to separate facts from values and to report only on the facts. In practicality, objectivity is a

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<sup>9</sup> Tom Rosenstiel, “The Lost Meaning of ‘Objectivity,’” *American Press Institute*, 2018, <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/bias-objectivity/lost-meaning-objectivity/>.

set of reporting and editing practices (e.g. note-taking during interviews), and an observable pattern of news writing.<sup>10</sup>

Under the veil of objectivity, the public holds expectations that journalists and news organizations will remain distant from external influence to present inaccurate or false information. However, in an era dominated by distrust of media due to allegations of “fake news,” we note the lack of progress made on ensuring protections from external influence and/or establishing faith in the public regarding news-gathering methods. As this phenomenon is not unique in time, we will explore the different terms used to denote the presentation of misleading content through the consideration or intrusion of external interests. Fallis identifies intent and levels of inaccuracy as the distinguishing marker between misinformation, propaganda, and disinformation. He defines misinformation as the transmission of erroneous information on the basis of being misinformed, meaning that there is no deliberate intent to deceive. Alternatively, propaganda and disinformation are defined by deliberate intent to disseminate inaccurate information. According to the Oxford dictionary, propaganda is defined as the systematic transmission of information or ideas in a tendentious manner to encourage a particular attitude. In other words, propaganda may be based in fact, but it is presented in a way to elicit a desired response. Disinformation, on the other hand, is defined by the transmission of deliberately false information to influence public opinion and is typically sponsored by a government.

American policy analyst, Tom Diaz, distinguishes between the two stating that:

*...disinformation is often not apparent where propaganda generally is to an informed person. An informed person who knows about a given subject can say this is propaganda. In disinformation, there is no way on the external end of it to know, if it is skillfully done, that it is false.*<sup>11</sup>

While the concept of disinformation and propaganda are typically associated with the Soviet and Russian governments, it is important to highlight that disinformation campaigns were also uncovered by the American government in the Cold War (e.g. 1986

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Schudson, “The Objectivity Norm in American Journalism,” *Journalism* 2, no. 2 (2001): 149–70, <http://icproxy2.sabanciuniv.edu:2053/doi/pdf/10.1177/146488490100200201.s>

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Nicholas O’Brien, “Russian Roulette: Disinformation in the U.S. Government and News Media” (St. Bonaventure University, 1989), <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a223697.pdf>.



Reagan-sponsored campaign to convince Qaddafi that he was going to be overthrown or that Libya was going to be attacked).<sup>12</sup>

One unconscious bias that has continued to mark American media and mar its ideal of objectivity has been the omnipresent application of its Eurocentric lens. On this topic, media scholars, Ella Shoat and Robert Stam, state:

*So embedded is Eurocentrism in everyday life, so pervasive, that it often goes unnoticed. The residual traces of centuries of axiomatic European domination inform the general culture, the everyday language, and the media, engendering a fictitious sense of the innate superiority of European-derived cultures and peoples.*<sup>13</sup>

While, ethnocentrism is not isolated to West Europe or North American, the dominance of a Euro-American frame of reference in global media continues to export many implicit slanted value judgments. Edward Said highlighted these slanted representations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by demonstrating how the denotation of “the East” had become overlaid with connotations such as primitive, apathetic, despotic, conservative, irrational, sinister. In contrast, “the West” was always portrayed as dynamic, democratic, progressive, new, enlightened, and open-minded. Van Ginneken states that these cultural world-views color how individuals and societies selectively see and articulate certain “facts” (and ignore others) in education, science, and media.<sup>14</sup> This practice then opens American media to criticisms of subjectivity from Asian, African, and Latin American individuals and societies. In addition to world-views, however, media scholars have also pointed to economic considerations as a motivating factor. News organizations that operate on a global scale will primarily cater to three specific clients: 1) the business world in developed countries, 2) the media in developed countries, and 3) the national administrations of certain developed countries. Unwilling to alienate these groups, organizations will focus their reports on the facets that all relevant audiences would be able to agree upon (and thus ignore those that inspire contention). In this sense, objectivity

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Jaap Van Ginneken, *Understanding Global News: A Critical Introduction* (London, England: SAGE Publications, 1997).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

is not a moral device, but an economically motivated device to ensure customer satisfaction.

## **2.2 U.S. Press and Foreign Coverage**

To contribute to discussions that have arisen over the portrayal of events in Turkey, we must first delve into society's expectations of news media in general and, more specifically, in reference to foreign coverage and how these expectations coincide with de facto dynamics in international reporting. In the past 20<sup>th</sup> century, the news media has undergone significant changes in response to public criticism and perspectives that have developed regarding the media's role in society. From the days of sensationalist "yellow" journalism to award-winning coverage of the Watergate scandal and the failures of American military involvement in the Vietnam War, we have witnessed the media's prestige wax and wane in correspondence to the public's perception of media's objectivity and the overall interests the media are serving. It is important to stop and highlight this critical perception of intersection between partiality / partisanship and an ulterior agenda (i.e. big business, federal government, foreign influence, self-interest) versus the intersection of objectivity and serving public interests. Through this, we should note the public's expectation that news organizations serve a watchdog role in society. Any concerns over this role lead to an erosion of credibility in the public eye and thus a transferred suspicion to all event coverage. The news media must operate very delicately in international reporting as any accusations legitimating rather than questioning American foreign policy lead to the more serious questioning of a news organization's avowed ideals of impartiality and objectivity.

While engaging in a continuous struggle to maintain credibility, the media is forced to work within the constraints of journalistic sources in this field and capturing the domestic audience's attention in coverage of foreign affairs. Whether the public recognizes it or not, there is an inherent dichotomy within their expectations of international reporting because they seek out events and trends that they perceive to be relevant to American interests. Unsurprisingly, news organizations will begin by accepting government officials' identification of American friends and enemies and depicting them accordingly. We can see numerous examples of this through the favorable characterization of countries that are deemed friendly to the US and its interests (e.g. Israel and Great Britain). As Sundar and Rawlins point out, coverage of international affairs tends to conform to U.S. foreign policy because correspondents "rely almost

exclusively on sources sympathetic to or representing the American interest.”<sup>15</sup> The public, like in domestic affairs, expects a critical review of government rhetoric and policies in foreign news, but the symbiotic relationship between journalists and government officials makes it difficult to strike a balance. Of the paradigms that seek to define the power relations between media personnel and political actors, Sundar and Rawlins’ Exchange Model is said to be most representative of practices in international coverage, in which cooperativeness with the administration dominates the foreign desk. To better illustrate how American journalists are driven by government policy, we would like to highlight J.R. Sumser’s study in which he compares the use of language in the news coverage of El Salvador and Nicaragua during the Cold War. These two Central American countries provided the context for an ideal comparison as they both underwent civil wars with communist factions during the same decade. While Nicaragua was governed by the left-wing faction (FSLN/Sandinistas), the Salvadoran military regime was struggling with left-wing guerilla forces (FMLN). As can be imagined under Cold War conditions, the American government supported the Salvadoran government and the right-wing opposition factions against the Nicaraguan government. Sumser found that the press consistently deprecated the Nicaraguan government (Sandinista regime) as a political party that lacked the ability to protect itself whereas it supported the Salvadoran government as a competent nation defending itself against guerilla forces. However, it is important to investigate the factors behind this “lapdog” dynamic in foreign coverage. According to Sumser, the U.S. press was forced to resort to government and other available pro-U.S. sources to produce its stories due to its inadequate newsgathering network in El Salvador. Given the absence of sources, journalists are pressured to rely on the US policy-makers’ interpretation of international events. However, when American journalists reside in other countries, they are better able to investigate events and trends independent of the administration’s version, thus serving their watchdog role of US foreign policy. This situation highlights the broadness and significance of influence that different sources and vantage points have on U.S. media’s ability to fulfill their role.

We must now turn our attention to the constraints that are created by the need to market to domestic audiences. Some of the issues that we witness in foreign coverage are desire for sensationalism, shallow coverage of events, oversimplification to create a

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<sup>15</sup> S Shyam Sundar and Brad L Rawlins, “Watchdog or Lapdog?,” *The Journal of International Communication*, 1997, doi:10.1080/13216597.1997.9751845.

comprehensible narrative, stereotyping of the world, and the aforementioned U.S. interest lens. The publication criteria for foreign coverage are more rigorous than in the case of domestic coverage. To be chosen, first and foremost, the news must be deemed as having an impact on national concerns, which, as we have mentioned before, inherently creates a foundational dichotomy. Equally tied to this dichotomy is the second criterion: in perceiving public disinterest, only sensational events (i.e. the “coups and earthquakes” syndrome) are chosen to captivate domestic readers. Due to such shallow interests in the outside world, the American audience largely ignores foreign events until they have reached crisis proportions. To quote late *New York Times* correspondent, James Reston:

*We are fascinated by events but not by the things that cause the events. We will send 500 correspondents to Vietnam after the war breaks out... meanwhile ignoring the rest of the world, but we will not send five reporters when the danger of war is developing.*

For this reason, international coverage is typically dramatic and current, but naturally lacks the necessary breadth to meaningfully translate foreign affairs. Like Elliott and Golding state, reporters will usually oversimplify events and embed them in a Cold War or East-West perspective. As we can see from this criticism, the media does not assess the conflict in terms of the affected country and people, but instead focuses on how it relates to Americans. Graber posits that “[the foreign desk] does not sensitize Americans to the needs and desires of others nor foster respect of the rights and dignity of all nations.”<sup>16</sup> Because there is a void in descriptions of foreign cultures and concerns, American stereotypes and biases become further reinforced through shallow coverage of sensational events. The current issue of Islamophobia perfectly exemplifies this dynamic – the media only highlights terrorist attacks and authoritarian Islamist governments, thus conflating Muslims simply with negative and violent imagery. When covering unfamiliar countries, the rule of “uncertainty absorption” comes into play. This means that stories are cast into a familiar stereotyped framework that readers can recognize such as the battle against poverty and racism or the ruthlessness of military dictators. This clichéd view of the world serves as the very basis of the portrayal that less developed countries are

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<sup>16</sup> Doris A. Graber, “Foreign Affairs Coverage,” in *Mass Media and American Politics*, 6th ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2002).

incapable of managing their own internal affairs, which supports ideas found in the literature review.

### **2.3 Reflections on the New York Times**

We identified the leadership of the New York Times during this period of study to determine a continuity in the direction of foreign coverage. The position of Managing Editor served as the highest news official until the creation of Executive Editor in 1964. The Managing Editor during this period was Turner Catledge, serving from 1952 to 1964, and then as the 1st Executive Editor from 1964 to 1968, thus precluding any narrative breaks found in the content analysis to be tied to NYT management. Under Catledge's guidance, the NYT expanded its coverage of foreign and national news and changed its writing style in "terms of people and how they lived." Related to this, he encouraged journalists to step up their reporting on specialized subjects (e.g. religion) and to devote more space to biographical material about people in the news and covered politics.

As Sundar and Rawlins point to the significance of sources on news-making, we share a relevant study of New York Times sources from this period. Van Ginneken shares a 1973 study by American writer, Leon Sigal, in which Sigal analyzed a representative sample of domestic and foreign news reports from the previous decade and found that nearly half of the New York Times' sources were American government officials. Over 75% of all identified sources were official ones, with the others representing officials of foreign governments. We should keep this study in mind as we move forward in our analysis of Turkish political news reports. Although not included in the study, Van Ginneken also introduces the aspect of "authorities and experts". In an area marred by ethnocentrism, he points to how the definition of what is news in the "world periphery" (i.e. Latin America, Africa, and Asia) and refraction occurs by experts in the "world centers" (i.e. western Europe and North America).

### **2.4 Literature Review: American Portrayal of Turkish Politics**

As the *New York Times'* portrayal of the 1960 Turkish coup is a highly specific topic, I widened my portal to include American media representation of Turkish politics. Despite the reduction in filters, I was able to uncover only two sources on the topic, attesting to the meagerness of research in this field. The first source was Bieber-Roberts' *American Looks at the Turks: Analysis of Major US Newsmagazines' Coverage*, and the

second was 2) Şahin's *Turkish Politics in New York Times: A Comparative Content Analysis*.

Bieber-Roberts presents a comprehensive analysis of how three US media (*Time*, *Newsweek*, and *US News and World Report*) focus on and promote three major themes to reify and support the actions of military governments in Turkey. He posits that the themes are: (1) emphasizing Turkey's role as a dependable military ally, (2) justification of military coups, and (3) expendability of internal democracy. The US media defends the military regimes 'within the context of national unity' and the pretext that civilian (i.e. democratically elected) governments were unable to deal with the internal and regional instability. Over a 35-year period, U.S. media tried to persuade its readers that democracy in Turkey was not necessarily effective by repetitively focusing on the domestic instability in politics, economy, and terrorism. The military's secular mandate (granted by the founding father) to Westernize the country and the intermittent military regime's ability to maintain stability were constantly lauded. Most significantly, Bieber-Roberts observes the media's relative lack of criticism so long as Turkey remained pro-American.

Examining the three themes, we see the significance of the global context, American expectations placed on Turkey to further foreign policy objectives in the region, and how this interplay affected media representations of domestic Turkish politics. If we turn our eyes to the first theme, Bieber-Roberts highlights the significant role Turkey was expected to play in the containment of the Soviet Union. Media reports indicate American officials' 'single-minded interest' in Turkey's regional role and their representation of the parliament's interference in what they described as the "greater good." Virtues of Turkish military were embedded within many of the reports, which created associations between Turkish forces and (internal and global) democracy for readers. The uniformity of reporting indicated that the newsmagazines had adopted the official US position on Turkey, which promoted the picture of a strong military ally securing stability in the Near Eastern region. On the second theme, Bieber-Roberts notes that American justification of the Turkish military putsches serves as a subject in many news reports. The media would highlight the civilian administration's inability to cope with the country's political and economic instability, thus compelling a military intervention to 'rein in' the country. In these justifications, only the elites' perspectives were featured, creating a lacuna in the views of Turkish masses. Specifically looking at the 1960 coup, the author noted that groundwork had been laid through criticism of Menderes' prioritization of "ambitious"

development goals over Turkish personal liberties. After several oppressive actions caught the American media's eye, the military overthrew the DP regime because Turkey had reached near economic collapse. In this narrative, Bieber-Roberts identifies four supporting news frames: 1) citizen support for the coup; 2) personification of the military; 3) personalization of the coup leader General Gürsel; and 4) regime support for democracy. Delving into the third theme, Bieber-Roberts underscores the ironic position the US media held of criticizing the democratically elected Turkish administrations when its institution developed within a democratic tradition. To build the credibility of junta regimes, the media always described their motivations as national unity and "fraternity." The inconsistency expressed in coverage of civilian leaders created the impression that the elected administrations were consistently incompetent and consequently unstable. Representations of civilian leaders corresponded with military-defined narratives and conditions, with many media reports pitting civilian political leaders against one another (e.g. Menderes versus İnönü in the 1950s).

Upon conclusion of the author's analysis, she identified several themes regarding featured perspectives and the lack of media analysis in certain areas. To give voice to the media's preferred meanings, accounts were written from the perspective of the military regimes and dedicated sparse attention to perspectives from civilian leaders. The newsmagazines reinforce the theme of domestic instability and the necessitation for military intervention, but there is no attempt to answer why the elected governments were unable to solve issues or why the military impatiently intervened.

Şahin compares content of Turkish political news published in *New York Times* from two four-year periods, specifically that of 1951-4 and 1965-8. Applying Osgood's principle of congruity, he states that the change in reporting can be accounted for by the change in relations between the two countries. The intent behind the analysis was to examine whether *New York Times* coverage changed in response to Turkish-American government relations. The two periods were chosen to represent polarity in terms of Turkish-American relations, with 1951-54 expressing a peak in political amity and 1965-68 demonstrating a chapter of friction between the two countries. Within the study, Şahin focused on shifts expressed in the coverage of important political figures and institutions (e.g. *Demokrat Parti*). According to the principle of congruity as formulated by Charles Osgood, the author predicted that the encoding of Turkish political concepts from 1951-4 would be significantly more favorable than the corresponding political concepts in the

second period. The most important institutions and figures of the Turkish political system were chosen for analysis and comparison: the presidents, ministers, the Grand National Assembly, political parties, and party leaders. In the 1951-54 period, the pro-American Democratic Party and its figures all yield favorable scores with the opposition parties (i.e. Republican People's Party/*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* and Nation Party/*Millet Partisi*) receiving unfavorable scores. The exception to this was that İnönü, former president and opposition leader, evaluated rather favorably as well. In contrast, the 1965-68 period yielded unfavorable scores for anti-NATO Labor (*Emek*) Party, the Inonu government (with which President Johnson quarreled over Cyprus), and Inonu's CHP. President Cemal Gursel and Cevdet Sunday were evaluated favorably with pro-American Suleyman Demirel, Justice (*Adalet*) Party, and Demirel's government receiving moderate scores. Şahin concludes that the *New York Times*' assessment of foreign political figures and institutions correlate with changes in American foreign policy and suggests that news sources with lower standards of objectivity would demonstrate this principle in a magnified manner.

## **2.5 The Nature of a Turkish - American Alliance**

### **2.51 Situating within the Cold War**

As the existence and nature of a Turkish-American alliance could not be understood without understanding the international Cold War context and the U.S.'s role in it, we must take a few steps back to examine this era. As the British empire's global hegemonic power waned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a competition slowly arose between the United States and the Soviet Union to assume this hegemonic mantle in 1945. This competition, lasting several decades, was waged on political and economic, but, most importantly, ideological fronts in which teleological understandings of the nation's role in the world were used to mobilize the public. The combination of traditional beliefs in American exceptionalism and destiny as well as newborn confidence in its emerging power and influence following World War II led to the country's revision of its previously isolationist policies.



*America's evident power and influence, tied to the pervasive influence of belief in the country's 'Manifest Destiny' to export its democratic way of life, led many [ ] to believe that it was morally wrong for the country to stay out of world affairs.<sup>17</sup>*

As Sharp aptly points out, the invocation of morality began to buttress the perspective that the U.S. transcend its borders to support and promote its way of life.

The international system became divided into a rigid ideological binary of American “freedom” versus Soviet “totalitarianism.” No longer seen simply as a political ideology, communism, became represented as an “essentially *Russian* ideology that disguised Soviet national expansionary tactics.” Nations were seen essentially as being either communist or “free” (in other words, adhering to liberalism – capitalism and democracy), allying either with the U.S.-led Western Bloc or the Soviet-led Eastern Bloc. The Western Bloc was composed of the “First World”, the highly developed capitalist nations (i.e. Western Europe and North America) and satellites from the Third World. The Eastern Bloc was composed of the “Second World”, the semi-developed and underdeveloped communist nations (i.e. Eastern Europe and Central Asia), and its own satellites from the Third World. The “Third World” consisted of the economically developing nations and were considered as the fighting ground between the two Blocs. When countries from the Third World refused to align with either Bloc, American media would express suspicion that they secretly adhered to one system or the other.<sup>18</sup> This refusal to accept nonalignment often pushed Third World nations into satellite relationships that they may have otherwise never considered (e.g. the Arab nations) and thus propelled the Cold War.

## **2.52 A Security Alliance**

The *Demokrat Parti* emerged in 1946 within an apprehensive Turkish climate over the looming threat of Soviet Union aggression in Turkish waters. The Cold War had not yet begun, but the bipolar state of the international system between the United States and the Soviet Union was slowly materializing at this point. Seeking an alliance to combat and keep the Soviet threat at bay, the Turkish governments identified their security interests with those of the United States. At this time, the key characteristic of American

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<sup>17</sup> Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War: Reader's Digest and American Identity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

foreign policy that we would see dominate the next few decades was slowly crystallizing: opposition to the spread of communism and its (Soviet) influence. Containing the expansion of this ideology and the Soviet Union's sphere of influence prevailed as the preferred policy throughout several administrations. In the name of this "humanitarian" mission to protect the global system, American governments sought to preserve stability through extension of economic and military assistance, to undermine hostile government through clandestine activities, and to blockade movements that constituted a threat to American and "international" interests. These interests were always prioritized over democratic values, which we can see through the economic, military, and political support of various totalitarian regimes and military coups in "friendly" countries.

Due to mutual security interests in containing the Soviet Union, Turkey and the U.S. maintained a meaningful alliance in which Turkey served as a liberal stronghold on the southern flank of the U.S.S.R and its allies. Unsurprisingly, the nature of their alliance made it so that military contacts between the countries became the most significant component.<sup>19</sup> After Turkey's joining of NATO, the American-sponsored collective defense pact, in 1952, U.S. military advisors became heavily involved in the Turkish military structure by educating, equipping, and organizing the forces under the American model as well as coordinating their national defense plans. This involvement, in conjunction with the provision of American weapons to Turkish armed forces, was an influential factor in creating Turkey's military dependence on the U.S.<sup>20</sup> Under such an uneven relationship, Turkey was generally eager to support overall American Cold War strategy, which we note through the country's entry into Middle Eastern relations despite its initial reluctance to do so. After suggestions by the U.S., Turkey formed the Baghdad Pact (later known as CENTO, the Central Treaty Organization), a Middle Eastern defense organization against Soviet incursions into the region, in 1955 and made serious attempts to recruit regional countries into the pact. However, the momentum of the Baghdad Pact was severely damaged after Pact leader Great Britain's invasion of the Suez Canal. Britain was condemned for this action and forced to withdraw by the international community, thus wounding its leadership and influence in the area. In American eyes, this crisis left a gap in the region, which they feared would be filled by the Soviet government. To avert

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<sup>19</sup> Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance* (New York, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

such a threat, President Eisenhower announced the Eisenhower Doctrine, which signified its new commitment to taking the lead in the Near East. The doctrine offered to give economic and military aid to any Middle Eastern country that requested it *and* the promise to military protect these countries in cases of aggression or subversion.

One year prior to the coup, the US made an agreement with Turkey stating that the American government would take appropriate actions (including the use of armed forces) to assist Turkey “in case of aggression” against the Mediterranean country. While highlighting the ties between the two nations, we should also zoom in and note that the young Turkish military officers who executed the coup in 1960 were a product of these American benefits and contacts. Thus, it is unsurprisingly, when on 27 May 1960, they publicly reinforced their government’s prior international commitments and ensured that they did not endanger such a beneficial alliance. Besides gaining aid that was vital for economic development, these provisions supported a strong army and a fruitful environment to improve their material conditions. Consequently, this led the Turkish junta to become more dependent on the US than the previous governments, and thus evermore open to its influence.

While the benefits of the relationship have been demonstrated, there were fears among the Turkish public that the government was granting too many concessions to the United States, which led to serious sources of frustration on the Turkish side. We will examine the three greatest sources of frustration during this time: firstly, the nature of U-2 flights from the Incirlik airbase; secondly, the use of Incirlik for non-NATO purposes; and lastly, the punishment of American military crimes on Turkish soil. In 1956, Turkey granted permission for the U.S. government to operate “scientific” meteorological U-2 flights from the Incirlik airbase. However, unbeknownst to the Turkish government, the Americans were secretly conducting a program to gain reconnaissance about Soviet activities and technologies from these flights. The military nature of these flights was exposed after the Soviets shot down one of these planes in May 1960 and discovered the aircraft’s espionage technology with images of its military bases. This crisis heightened the tension between the U.S.S.R. and Turkey, leading the issue of American activities in Incirlik and its consequences to become highly contested in Turkey. Just a few years prior to this, in the Lebanese crisis of 1958, the U.S. dispatched army troops in Germany to Incirlik to join Lebanese troops under invitation of the Lebanese president. However, the American authorities neither consulted with nor notified Turkish officials of this action

prior to the fact, leading to heavy criticism by Turkish opposition (CHP). Later, in the late 1960s, the opposition began pointing to this event as an example that the U.S. used the military base as it willed and thus could endanger Turkey's relations with neighboring states. The last situation rang historical bells, as it was very reminiscent of capitulations that had been granted under Ottoman times to Christian nations regarding exemption from local prosecution. There was a serious incident in November 1959 that captured national attention in which an American Lieutenant Colonel drove into a unit of the Presidential Guard, killing one and seriously injuring others. Due to imprecise definitions in a bilateral agreement regarding prosecution, the Lieutenant Colonel was tried by American authorities and was simply fined 1,200 USD (approximately \$10,025 today). After national outrage over this light prosecution, the Turkish media decided to protest by publicizing all misconduct by U.S. personnel on Turkish soil.

## CHAPTER THREE

### NEW YORK TIMES' PRE-COUP COVERAGE OF TURKEY

#### 3.1 Turkish-American Relations

In this period, from May 1959 to June 1960, the strategic benefits the U.S. and Turkey gained from their alliance perpetuated their relations despite strong grievances on both sides. There were two high-profile legal cases involving American personnel that captivated audiences on both sides, leading to strong feelings of resentment and abandonment with respective governments. On the Turkish side, there was a definite line between balancing the public's feeling of capitulating to the United States and the economic and military benefits their country gained from this NATO alliance. Firstly, we will examine a black-market trial against American officers accused of using military postal service to smuggle in currency and goods. Secondly, we will glance at a case involving an American officer who had driven into a crowd of soldiers in the capital. Lastly, we will analyze how the *NYT* covers the reception of high-level American officials in Turkey.

#### 3.11 Black Market Case

In 1959, a black-market currency operations case in Turkey involving American servicemen captivated American and Turkish reading audiences. In August 1959, four U.S. officers went on trial before a Turkish criminal court for sending dollar checks to a Swiss bank and importing precious items for sale through the NATO postal bag. To monetize and put the situation into context, the Turkish court accused the men of smuggling an estimated million dollars (approximately \$8.4 million today)<sup>21</sup>. Throughout

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<sup>21</sup> Nuran Yıldız, "Demokrat Parti İktidarı (1950-1960) ve Basın," *A.Ü.SBF Dergisi*, 1997, <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/42/476/5543.pdf>.

the case's coverage in the *NYT*, we witness that actions surrounding the American personnel are described with uncertain terms, so as to give the allegations room for error. According to an article released on 10 September, the habit of American soldiers illegally selling currency and goods from the post exchange to locals had been common knowledge for some time.<sup>22</sup> The soldiers had been using these gains to increase their standard of living, but higher-ranking officers' efforts to address this matter had allegedly been hampered. Despite this clear long-term knowledge, the first article from 19 August introduces the case with uncertain words like "*accused*" and "*allegations*" and the soldiers' rejections of the claims.<sup>23</sup> Even in the concluding article of this series from February 1960, the journalist tries to inject doubt regarding the currency rings as (s)he states that one sergeant is "*on trial for alleged black-market deals.*"<sup>24</sup> The reader is never presented any evidence demonstrating that there is no truth to the matter, but the words of uncertainty remain nonetheless.

Unlike the case of the American charges, the servicemen's accusations of Turkish police mistreatment were treated with greater weight and biased terms. In the introductory article from 19 August, a second and more highlighted topic emerged: the servicemen's contentions that they had been beaten by the Turkish police. A double standard in how the *NYT* approaches the two topics can immediately be detected. While the trial of the servicemen was introduced, the audience was left with more raised questions than answers. However, although no substantial information is given to the accusations of mistreatment, one sergeant's complaint that "*...they beat [him] like a dog*" is given full quotation. In the following article on 3 September, the *NYT* claims that the servicemen's charges of police mistreatment had drawn international attention.<sup>25</sup> Any critical reader would find it ironic that there was greater alarm over police maltreatment and none over military corruption and abuse of power in the domestic space of an allied country. In fact, as mentioned previously, there are no comments on the trial or presentation of evidence whatsoever. This thread continues throughout the series of articles, only offering updates on the defendants' bail decisions and sentences. In the two subsequent articles of 10

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<sup>22</sup> Richard P. Hunt, "TURKISH ARRESTS REDUCE G.I. DEALS: Black Market Cases Bring Drop in Illegal Sales of Dollars by Troops," *The New York Times*, September 10, 1959.

<sup>23</sup> "4 U.S. SERVICEMEN ON TRIAL IN TURKEY," *The New York Times*, August 19, 1959.

<sup>24</sup> "G.I. in Turkey Faces Jail as Appeal Fails," *The New York Times*, February 3, 1960.

<sup>25</sup> "TURKS BAN COVERAGE OF AMERICANS' TRIAL," *The New York Times*, September 2, 1959.

September and 1 October, we see conflicting statements regarding the American investigations of Turkish police abuse.<sup>26</sup> The former article shared that two Air Force doctors could not establish any evidence of abuse from their examinations, but three policemen were charged nonetheless. However, in an unexplained change, the latter article reported that one military physician had noted evidence of beating and demanded additional investigations in efforts “to prevent damage to the prestige of the United States and to correct the whole situation in Turkey.” The concern expressed for the well-being of American citizens, and, more emotion-triggering, soldiers is self-explanatory. However, there is no reason for media coverage to be turned into a zero-sum game; in other words, media can express concern for compatriots and still communicate the feelings of a nation, especially an allied nation, over a transgression that occurred within their own borders. The *NYT* never expresses the Turkish nation’s resentment that Uslu describes had been bubbling at the time against American military personnel. The initial reports of 10 September are never addressed again in subsequent articles, simply leaving us puzzled in this ambiguity. On 28 October, two sergeants were freed on bail with only one remaining behind bars.<sup>27</sup> In reference to their accusations of police brutality in attempts to force confessions, one man claimed that this incident had been the “roughest” time of his 18 years and two wars of service. In contrast to these comments, on February 1960, the reader learns that one of the U.S. sergeants on trial had also previously been involved and convicted in a manslaughter case for killing a child with an automobile. Focusing on the experience of these sergeants comes across as insensitive against the background of their crimes. All in all, the *NYT* leaves the audience with a bitter taste of Turkey and the alliance the U.S. led with the country without ever discussing Turkey’s increasing acrimony toward American soldiers.

Throughout this affair, there was an overwhelming focus on how the U.S. is affected and no indication whatsoever of public sentiments and discourse within Turkey. This thread, in particular, is a case in point of Graber’s statement from Chapter 2 that “[the foreign desk] does not sensitize Americans to the ‘needs and desires of other’ nor foster ‘respect of the rights and dignity of all nations.’” Excluding the trial updates, the *NYT* represents and reflects on the consequences of this situation as follows: 1) a change in money-purchasing habits of Americans, and 2) low morale among servicemen in Turkey.

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<sup>26</sup> “U.S. OFFICER PROTEST IN IZMIR CASE SEEN,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 1959.

<sup>27</sup> “2 G.I.’S IN TURKEY ARE FREED ON BAIL,” *The New York Times*, 1959.

We do not wish to state that the stated consequences are untrue, but there is no discussion as to how this case reflects poorly upon the behavior of American military or its effects on the Turkish nation. The first topic is reported on 10 September and published verbatim a month later, which we can only assume is for emphasis. After the criminal case brought against the sergeants, finance officers from the U.S. reported that they were selling up to 30 times more currency than they had two months prior. This indicated an enormous switch from selling dollars on the black market for a higher amount of Turkish lira to the less profitable and legal exchange set by the Turkish government. In the same article, we see the emergence of a discussion among Americans regarding US efforts for personnel to comply with Turkish law. As Uslu notes, “*American personnel felt that Turkish law was irrational and unfairly applied to them.*” We see the continuation of this discussion in the following topic and article. On 23 November, the *NYT* focused on the drop in morale of servicemen in Izmir after the “*furor on jailings.*”<sup>28</sup> The sentencing of two American sergeants in Turkey had led to a serious surge in applications for transfers. Officers felt that they were being let down for reasons of foreign policy and had expressed concerns at the sentences imposed. The journalist related the anecdote of one airman who received a sentence of 11 months and three years of banishment near the Soviet border for selling \$45 worth of goods from the post exchange. Through the inclusion of this precise case, we understand there is criticism of the degree of the punishment relative to the crime, which they obviously see as insignificant, and the acceptability of banishment as a form of punishment. This will be seen in direct contrast to the *NYT*’s unwillingness to directly comment on the same topic in a Turkish journalist’s trial, as we will see later in this chapter. All in all, the article tries to stir feelings of sympathy and objection over the treatment of American officers with zero efforts to discuss changed Turkish perceptions of American soldiers and the general American alliance.

### **3.12 Vehicular Manslaughter Case**

On 6 November 1959, following the conclusion of the black-market trials, we encounter another high-profile case in which a U.S. Army officer was taken into custody for driving into a group of Turkish soldiers outside the Turkish Presidential Palace. According to the only article published on the subject, Lieutenant Colonel Morrison was

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<sup>28</sup> “LOW MORALE CITED AT BASE IN TURKEY: High U.S. Officers Shifted From NATO Unit at Izmir After Furor on Jailings,” *The New York Times*, November 23, 1959.



“accused” of driving his car into a group of 60 Turkish soldiers, injuring eleven and causing two to lose their right legs.<sup>29</sup> While a minor point, the use of the word “accusation” falls flat when Morrison had been caught in the act, but it demonstrates another example of the *NYT*’s extension of doubt to American-related incidents. While in custody, he said he had been blinded by the headlights of another car. Because the officer was off-duty, he would be expected to face trial before a Turkish court. The article ended with the unrelated mention of police brutality charges from the black-market case, as if to remind the public of Turkish offenses in the midst of this American-inspired dark cloud.

According to Nasuh Uslu, this case had captured the attention of the Turkish public and was followed intensely throughout 1959 and 1960, yet the *NYT* only dedicated one introductory article to the entire affair. As mentioned in the article, Morrison was initially considered to be off-duty and thus subject to trial before a Turkish court. However, because the determination of “duty” ultimately lay with the American commander, it was later stated that he had, in fact, been on-duty at the time of the accident, which meant that he would be facing his trial under American authorities. After killing one and injuring eleven, Morrison’s fine of \$1,200 (equivalent to \$9,584 in today’s terms) was seen as inadequate for the Turkish public. This case contributed to anti-American sentiment in the 1960s, as it reminded many of the capitulations granted under the Ottoman Empire. Like Uslu shares, “[it] was believed that U.S. personnel were abusing their rights under the present arrangement at the expense of Turkish citizens.” For an incident of this severity at such critical timing, the brevity and overall lack of coverage is astonishing.

### **3.13 Reception of Americans**

According to the political context that American diplomats arrived in, the length and tone of *NYT* articles changed. There were three major occurrences in which the President and representatives met in Istanbul. The first event was a survey of military aid, coinciding with the deliberations of the black-market case. Following the negative atmosphere surrounding the military cases, “Ike”, President Eisenhower’s visit was met with flowery language to demonstrate his local popularity and to effect overall positive feelings for the American-Turkish alliance. The last event was a Turkish-hosted NATO

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<sup>29</sup> “TURKS HOLD U.S. OFFICER: Colonel Is Accused of Driving Car into 60 Soldiers,” *The New York Times*, November 6, 1959.

conference that coincided with urban instability over protests of DP's investigation committee, thus leading to a discussion of Menderes' inability to attend to international commitments and Turkey's domestic discontent.

In the midst of the black-market trial, on 11 October, there was a suspicious visit by an American representative to Turkey.<sup>30</sup> Lankford, member of Armed Services Committee, started a survey of military aid to Turkey and toured the Turkish army units using U.S. military equipment on the Bulgarian frontier. While the visit could have been coincidental, the timing indicates a light threat and reminder to the DP government.

In December 1959, the *NYT* superficially followed President Eisenhower's visit to the DP government in Ankara, producing two very romantic articles of the Turkish-American alliance. After two very controversial cases involving both countries, these optimistic articles came at a crucial point. Both articles, which differed greatly in approach, strove to describe, in flowery metaphors, the enthusiastic welcome extended to "Ike" and the positive perspective of the countries' relations. The first article, published on 3 December, read like a paternalistic ethnographic account of the journalist's interview with the villagers about their feelings on Eisenhower and overall changes in the country.<sup>31</sup> These men continuously espoused their "love for Ike," whom they described as a "good friend of Turkey" and the source of the positive changes in their lifestyles (i.e. in standards of living). While they discuss austerity in the country and cite their inability to purchase Turkish coffee, they also describe their newfound ability to buy imported modern goods and how it has contributed to their esteem growth in their own and families' eyes. The use of villagers as interview subjects is understandable in the context of effecting positive feelings in the American-Turkish relations as this group benefitted to a greater extent from international aid than urban individuals did. It is simultaneously and undeniably ironic when the *NYT* negatively portrays this same group of people in a later section, as we will examine in detail. The second article, released on 7 December, focused on the exchange between Presidents Bayar and Eisenhower over the strategic benefits of their

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<sup>30</sup> "TURKISH BASES VISITED: U.S. Congressman Checking on Use of American Aid," *The New York Times*, October 11, 1959.

<sup>31</sup> Richard P. Hunt, "Farmers in Turkey 'Like Ike'; Going to Anara to Cheer Him," *The New York Times*, December 3, 1959.

relationship.<sup>32</sup> As previously stated, flowery language was used to allegedly reaffirm the strong friendship and cooperation between the two governments, as we can see:

*...demonstrated anew the desires to continue this fruitful cooperation.*

In essence, the men reaffirmed their interests in the alliance: economic aid to develop the Turkish nation, stability, and thus continued faith in the free world. Bayar stressed the importance of securing a sufficient raising of the living standard of the Turkish people to adequately assume their responsibilities in the area, while Eisenhower expressed confidence that the US would continue to support its ally. In this article, we see a simplistic and Orientalist reinforcement of the East-West distinction as follows:

*...it is not possible to divide the many problems at present, separating East and West into separate compartments...*

In the midst of the Presidents' discussion over exercising a détente policy, the raised concept of a separate East and West is nonsensical when the two are clearly involved in the same ideological struggle. Although striving to paint a positive image, the *NYT* offers more openly paternalistic and simplistic commentary on the Turkish nation in the intersection of Turkey and the United States in these articles.

In May 1960, a NATO conference in Istanbul, Turkey, and Premier Menderes' absence become the vehicle for Turkish domestic politics to spill into the international realm. Dubbed as 'the most important international meeting ever held in modern Turkey,' the 1960 NATO conference would be unable to miss the host country's lack of attendance. Turkish politics had reached such great intensity (i.e martial law after large-scale protests) that Menderes had been unable to serve his international commitments, which led to heavy questions as President Eisenhower suggested the need for greater cohesion as an insurance against (Soviet) aggression.<sup>33</sup>

### **3.2 Covering the Press**

As previously described in the historical background, the DP government instituted a series of legal restrictions in 1954 against the press and became increasingly authoritarian in its suppression of press freedom. These restrictions resulted in the closures of

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<sup>32</sup> "U. S.-Turkish Communique," *The New York Times*, December 7, 1959.

<sup>33</sup> Richard P. Hunt, "EISENHOWER URGES A STRONGER NATO AS PARLEY OPENS," *The New York Times*, May 2, 1960.

newspapers and the regular imprisonment of journalists. To demonstrate the scope of this issue, there were 2,300 lawsuits opened between 1950 to 1960, resulting in the imprisonment of 867 journalists.<sup>34</sup> This situation had grasped the attention of the international community by May 1959 with the infamous legal case against a prominent U.S.-educated newspaper publisher, Ahmet Emin Yalman. As the situation progressed, it slowly began to give space to critical voices toward the administration for its persecution, but never took a critical approach itself. These articles demonstrate a condonation of the DP government's behavior due to its strategic alliance, but nevertheless allowed critical voices to express the liberal values of the "Free World." We will examine the introduction of this topic in the *NYT*, the exceptional case against a government organ, the overwhelming focus on A.E. Yalman, international criticism on the matter, and the insight provided through local voices.

The issue of press infringement is introduced in a very telling manner with an international accentuation of issues in the Turkish press sector. The International Press Institute (IPI), an association of journalists from non-Communist countries, highlighted the arrests of 800 Turkish journalists over the previous four years (i.e. beginning in 1954).<sup>35</sup> There are two important themes that emerge from the very beginning: first, the emphasis of a Free World association (and the implied constant contrast to the Communist Bloc), and, second, the presentation of Turkish cases in this sector without commentary regarding the DP government's role in the matter. The *NYT* journalist voices the IPI spokesman's statement that there are "grave infringements of press freedom [occurring] in Turkey," yet (s)he does not make any critical analysis or judgments regarding the situation or the obvious source of the issue – the DP government. All in all, the article is incredibly terse, offering neither proper analysis for the readers nor a context for comprehensibility.

According to the *NYT*'s coverage, the entirety of press legal cases was filed on behalf of the DP government with the exception of one filed by a CHP deputy covered in late May 1959. The *Zafer* newspaper, a DP organ, was given a one-month suspension and its editor, Cenap Yakar, a ten-month sentence for offending an opposition MP.<sup>36</sup> As this

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<sup>34</sup> Pelt, *Military Invention and a Crisis of Democracy in Turkey: The Menderes Era and Its Demise*.

<sup>35</sup> "PRESS UNIT MAY BAR TURKISH NEWSMEN," *The New York Times*, May 25, 1959.

<sup>36</sup> "TURKISH PAPER CLOSED: Government Organ Accused of Insult to Opposition," *The New York Times*, May 28, 1959.

article is the first and last of its kind, it raises the question as to whether the focus of a government organ was intended to be a strategic response to the IPI's charge of infringements in press freedom just a few days prior. Unfortunately, due to the limited scope of our period, we cannot ascertain whether this is the case or not. In addition, if we compare the wording of this article's introductory sentence to others', we immediately note one difference - the omission of the directly offended party:

*The newspaper Zafer... was ordered closed today and an editor was jailed for offending the country's tough press laws.*

Instead, we see that the 'country's tough press laws' have been offended, and not the Opposition MP or Opposition as a whole. We cannot be certain if this adds support to the validity of the previously raised question or if the wording simply indicates something about the journalist's and/or *NYT*'s perspective. Returning to the article content, we see the introduction of Ülkü Arman, an editor from opposition newspaper, *Ulus*, being given an additional term. The inclusion of both a government organ and an opposition newspaper offers us another opportunity to compare the *NYT*'s approach to the two sides.

*... [UA's] article 'insulting the moral personality' of Democratic deputies.*

versus

*... [CY's] article ...[was] deemed insulting to an Opposition member of Parliament.*

Placing both sentences side by side, we can see that greater weight is given to the count against DP than to opposition. C. Yakar's count is made light of with a perceived insult whereas U. Arman's count is stated as an outright insult to the victims' 'moral personality.'

In the coverage of the press case against newspaper publisher, Ahmet Emin Yalman, the *NYT* creates a sympathetic image of Yalman without reflecting that into a defensive position of his case. The articles that focused on the specifics of the case spanned approximately one year, beginning in May 1959 and ending in April 1960. The *NYT* vaguely introduced the case against independent newspaper, *Vatan*'s, publisher and managing editors for publishing an article "insulting the Government's integrity."<sup>37</sup> The article neither discloses the exact nature of the charges and the law with which the men were tried nor presents the case's significance for Turkey or American readers. As the

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<sup>37</sup> "Turks JAIL 3 NEWSMEN: Publisher, Editor and Writer Get Prison and Banishment," *The New York Times*, May 30, 1959.

articles were published in 1958, it is unlikely that *NYT* would not have access to the facts regarding the case. Due to Yalman's reputation and connections to the United States, the case began to gain international attention, leading to appeals against the DP government. As the articles continue, we see how this motivation pushed the *NYT* to concentrate on Yalman and capitalize on his name. In July 1959, the charges against the *Vatan* newsmen are finally delineated for readers: they have been held guilty under a Turkish press law for printing a series of articles by American journalist and publisher, Eugene Pulliam.<sup>38</sup> The content of the articles was described as criticizing political and economic conditions in Turkey and specifically the Turkish Premier, Menderes. The *NYT* continues to demonstrate neutrality regarding Turkey's press laws and its prosecution of journalists. There is no defense of Yalman, yet the second article begins to humanize him by introducing the dimension of his old age (72-years-old). The case's trail picks up again in March 1960 as Yalman is expected to enter jail to begin his sentence.<sup>39</sup> No new details are given regarding the crime, but the *NYT* dedicates space for Pulliam's serious accusation in his 1968 articles that the Turkish Premier was leading 'his country to the brink of disaster.' This inclusion may have been intended to balance the positive and sympathetic portrayal of Yalman's biography in the same article. We see the evidence of democratic threads in his biography such as taking on critical positions against autocratic (Ottoman Sultan of 1919) and imperialist forces (British occupation forces), holding a friendship with the Turkish Republican founder, and seeking / maintain Western ties (more specifically, an Ivy League education). Even more tellingly, Yalman's initial support for DP in 1945 and later break with in 1954 after its limitations on freedoms indicates his lack of partisanship and true support of Turkish democracy. There is a continuation in the age thread through what seems to be a maneuver to pull on the readers' heartstrings as he is noted to write a "farewell" to his readers, hinting that he may not outlive his sentence. The case concludes in April 1960 when Yalman is released due to his advanced age and heart disease.<sup>40</sup> In its attempt to maintain neutrality, the *NYT* ends on the emphasis that the published articles were "sharply" critical of the Government, as if that were to justify this year-long ordeal. In contrast to the comments made on

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<sup>38</sup> "TURKS SENTENCE EDITOR: Yalman Penalized for Printing Articles by U.S. Writer," *The New York Times*, July 30, 1959.

<sup>39</sup> Jay Walz, "EDITOR, 72, GOES TO JAIL IN TURKEY: He Is Fifth to Be Imprisoned for Reprinting American's Criticism of Premier," *The New York Times*, March 7, 1960.

<sup>40</sup> "Turkey Frees Ill Journalist," *The New York Times*, April 15, 1960.

American-related topics, the approach taken to the Yalman case is overwhelmingly mild and timid.

### 3.21 International Criticism

Throughout the international criticism, a paternalistic attitude is taken toward Turkey, but *NYT* journalists try to justify Turkish press law and government. Opinion articles would express more openly critical attitudes toward the press issue. Despite the mild approach to the issue, we can see the effect it had on the Turkish government through the strict tracking of the A. Yalman case and the constant responses by high-ranking officials.

In June 1959, Yalman's alma mater Columbia University protested the conviction of fellow alumnus, Ahmet Yalman, to the Turkish government.<sup>41</sup> Rather than express criticism against the government's act, Columbia alumni highlight their disappointment and their higher expectations of Turkey's democratic practices. The tone was perhaps a tactical decision, but it also expresses perceptions of Turkey and what it meant to be a 'free world' ally. An opinion article was published a month later, in which it discussed the recent legal cases against Turkish press and chastised the DP government for its behavior. We see a continuation in tone, admonitory without openly criticizing. The writer, interestingly enough, does not even criticize the Turkish press law, the instrument through which the government has been so heavy-handedly targeting the media. (S)he justifies it, as we see in the following quote:

*It is true that some of the things that have appeared in the Turkish press are far from constructive. Turkey's press law is designed to meet the danger of irresponsibility.*

From the small sample that we have examined, there seems to be no indication of supporting statements that the Turkish press was 'unconstructive' in their reporting, whatever that would mean. This statement demonstrates the general willingness to excuse an ally's purview, especially when they can exercise it to their benefit (e.g. media blackout on the black-market case). Unwittingly perhaps, the writer makes a condescending comment that demonstrates the underlying belief that there is a difference between the standards of both countries:

*By our standards, Turkey has gone too far in stamping out opposition.*

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<sup>41</sup> "JOURNALISM ALUMNI PROTEST TO TURKEY," *The New York Times*, June 20, 1959.

This theme of differences in standards between American and Turkish societies is constantly expressed in both the pre- and post-coup periods, indicating that this was the general American perspective of the time.

After a several-month hiatus, another brief article emerges in December after Yalman's sentence motivates an appeal by the International Press Institute (IPI). IPI called on the free world's newspapers to expose the grave threat to press freedom in Turkey from increasing persecution through courts. Through the summary, the reader finally learns that AEY will be jailed for simply reprinting extracts from Pulliam's article with favorable comments. The attention devoted to Yalman's case finally prompted the DP administration to comment on the general status of press 'freedom' in Turkey. On 25 January 1960, Press Minister Haluk Şaman was compelled to make a declaration in response to charges from other countries (e.g. Britain, West Germany, and France) that supported IPI's contention that suppression could not be regarded as a purely internal problem in any democratic nation.<sup>42</sup> This is the first expression of allies' worries over the current administration and its inability to provide domestic stability. Şaman declared that Turkey enjoyed complete freedom of the press and, in fact, scoffed at the charged journalists' posing as champions and victims of press freedom. He then criticized the newsmen for attacking the dignities of individuals, slander, and contempt.

In March 1960, one last opinion article is published, reflecting a more open criticism of the government's oppressive attitude.<sup>43</sup> It begins with the normal Cold War rhetoric of respecting Turkey for its stand against Communism and its struggle to become a modern democracy. The writer notes his sense of disturb over the increasingly oppressive application of a 1954 press law, imposing jail terms and fines for "*inaccurate and tendentious news*," having a prejudicial effect on the national interest, as determined by the public prosecutor representing the government. In the writer's words, it "*leaves all doors open for government oppression of the opposition*." Criticism is directed at Premier Menders rather than Bayar and other DP ministers, yet still offers him the justification "*due to lack of experience, his Government might make mistakes*." As in the previous opinion article, the writer chides that free press must still be responsible – (s)he does not allow the Turkish press to run scot-free as if they have committed misconduct of some

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<sup>42</sup> "TURKEY SAYS PRESS HAS FULL FREEDOM," *The New York Times*, January 25, 1960.

<sup>43</sup> "Turkey and a Free Press," *The New York Times*, March 9, 1960.



sort. AEY, however, is presented as a hero, “one of the most liberal, constructive, and at the same time anti-Communist voices.” The writer makes the prejudiced comment that Turks had no democratic traditions or practices prior to Atatürk.

### **3.22 Local Turkish Voices**

The inclusion of domestic ruling and opposition figures in this discussion offer the greatest insight into how these press cases are related to constitutional weaknesses. We gain a brief glance into the conversation of defining Turkish democracy through the words of Press Attaché, Nacı Serez, and Vatan publisher, Ahmet Emin Yalman.<sup>44</sup> In March 1960, the *NYT* offers Serez, who represents the ruling DP’s perspective, an opportunity to present a rebuttal to an opinion article that expressed disturb over events in Turkey. While Serez fixates on Yalman’s violation of national laws, he offers the first statement regarding the Turkish definition of democracy:

*...laws passed by the representatives of the people in the National Assembly...*

This definition gives the ruling party, DP in this instance, the basis on which to attack opposition for allegedly acting against the Turkish people. As DP members see continuity between themselves and Atatürk, Serez makes it a point to create a wedge in the association described between Yalman and Atatürk by sharing evidence that indicates fundamental differences of opinion between the two men. A short time after, in April 1960, Yalman sent a letter to London paper, *The Observer*, sharing his analysis of the domestic situation.<sup>45</sup> In it, we come upon the most significant point in this entire thread, regarding the Constitution’s role in the matter:

*Don’t forget that our Constitution is meant for a single party, not containing any element of check and balance.*

This is the only statement that directly addresses the systemic issue of single-party administration, its lack of limits, and thus its overall influence on society. Yalman concludes with his recommendations for moderation and tolerance to acquire a “normal” political life in Turkey.

### **3.3 Party Politics and Public Reactions**

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<sup>44</sup> Nacı Serez, “Letter to the Times: The Press in Turkey,” *The New York Times*, March 14, 1960.

<sup>45</sup> “IMPRISONED EDITOR SCORES TURKISH LAW,” *The New York Times*, April 10, 1960.

### 3.31 Election Date

Rumors emerged in March 1960 among the opposition that DP would call for early national elections to capitalize on the economic success of the time, which the *NYT* used as an entry to discuss the DP – CHP rivalry.<sup>46</sup> Due to the rumors that the Premier and his administration refused to quell, the opposition feared that the Bayar-Menderes government would exploit both their 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and the current crest of prosperity in Turkey. The crest was the product of the stabilization program and international loans from 1958, leading to stimulated buying and selling in the Turkish market. While the administration's four-year term technically ended in November 1961, under the Constitution, the ruling party had the authority to change the election period under certain conditions. Rather than discuss the controversy of a system that allows snap elections, the *NYT* quickly likens the system to that of Great Britain's. Voters elect deputies to the TBMM, with the majority party electing the President, who then chose the Premier. At this point, the *NYT* issues an interesting comment on political representation:

*The President and Premier indirectly represent the will of the majority.*

However accurate, this statement is in contrast with the constitutional understanding and public rhetoric that the majority party (and thus the President and Premier) represented the will of Turkish nation, as a whole. If elections were held, the presidential candidates would unquestionably be Bayar and İnönü, Atatürk's peers and later archrivals. Speculation continues surrounding possible election periods. Ruling out election times during the harvest season, the journalist makes disparaging remarks about Turkish farmers:

*Even politics cannot take the peasant's mind off his crops.*

### 3.32 Investigation Commission

If the reader remembers from the historical context, one major instigator in the chain of events was the establishment of the DP-led Investigation Commission (Tahkikat Encümeni/Komisyonu) on 19 April. Likewise, in the *NYT* narrative, this event marks the beginning of a trend in which an overtly skeptical and critical approach is taken toward DP. This trend is apparent in the coverage of DP's inflammatory conduct, doubt expressed

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<sup>46</sup> Jay Walz, "DATE OF ELECTION DEBATED BY TURKS: Foes of Menderes' Regime Foresee an Early Vote to Capitalize on Prosperity," *The New York Times*, March 11, 1960.

over DP charges about the opposition, and introduction of an “*increasingly bitter trend of Turkish politics in recent years.*”<sup>47</sup> Before even introducing the commission, the writer underscores the misconduct of a DP deputy in which he drew a revolver in the National Assembly. This act, although truly newsworthy, does not trump the significance of the Investigation Commission in Turkish politics. As the reader is given context for a debate in the parliament, we see quotation marks and phrases to raise doubt in DP statements. To provide examples, we see quotations around the “*destructive and illegal activities*” of CHP and DP hopes of a “*calming effect*” from the suspension of party politics. In addition, we see this new concept of ‘increasingly violent and bitter trend of Turkish politics in recent years,’ which we had never seen cited or described before. All in all, the reader is given a new lens in which to examine Turkish politics with, and it is one that is negatively biased against the Democrats.

Another topic that was introduced for the first time was the issue of army involvement in domestic politics. Both DP and CHP accused one another of illegally involving the military in political affairs to intimidate the other with its usage. There is no article dedicated to the Kayseri event alone, but the usage of troops to bar İnönü’s way in central Anatolia was referenced as the basis of CHP’s accusations against DP. İnönü’s ominous quote to the deputies, “[*if*] you go on like this, even I shall not be able to save you,” alongside his unmentioned position as a military and revolutionary hero become the basis of the DP’s accusation.

A critical topic that was also raised and highlighted for the first time was the CHP’s charges of illegal and unconstitutional behavior against DP. The article granted space to an entire section (entitled Unconstitutionally Charged) of İnönü’s and CHP’s charges that the proposed measures were unconstitutional. Their refusal to accept them led to the aforementioned accusation of CHP’s army involvement and attempt to use revolutionary (i.e. illegal) methods to regain power.

To provide a comparison for the NYT’s representation, we combed through the Washington Post’s historical archives to examine how they addressed the Kayseri Incident and the DP-sponsored Investigation Commission. We found two articles that publicized the announcement in the Turkish parliament of an investigating committee.

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<sup>47</sup> “CURBS IN TURKEY FOLLOW CLASHES: Suspension of Party Politics Is Outgrowth of Strife - Press Again Restricted,” *The New York Times*, April 19, 1960.

Unexpectedly, the Washington Post broke the story of the formation of an inquiry into the opposition ten days before, on 9 April.<sup>48</sup> Like the *NYT*, the Washington Post did not dedicate an article to the Kayseri Incident alone but included it within the narrative of the Commission. However, like the *NYT*, the first article uses quotation marks to express skepticism regarding DP claims against CHP and the press, as evidenced by the following example:

*The Democratic Party communique also accused the press of issuing false and distorted reports with “destructive aims”...*

The article from 19 April is headlined as a “black out” in Turkish politics, immediately triggering negative imagery.<sup>49</sup> It is extremely brief, providing neither background nor analysis to make sense of this Commission. The Post shares the DP’s ban on party politics and relevant publications without alienates the reader from the party and leads them to sympathize with the opposition party.

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<sup>48</sup> “Turkish Party Begins Probe of Oppositon,” *The Washington Post*, April 8, 1960.

<sup>49</sup> “Ruling Party Blacks Out Turk Politics,” *The Washington Post*, April 19, 1960.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NEW YORK TIMES' POST-COUP COVERAGE OF TURKEY

#### 4.1 Occurrence of the Coup

We experienced some vacillation over where to place the coup's coverage and finally decided to place it in the fourth chapter, as it marks the beginning of a different Turkish narrative in the *NYT*. Trends that slowly emerged towards the end of the pre-coup coverage are expressed more emphatically in the revisionist summary of the DP regime that begins with the May 28<sup>th</sup> article. In the critical analysis of the previous government, there is a one-man focus on Adnan Menderes as the sole cause of the government's downfall. The economic programs in Turkey under Menderes are labelled as austerity measures for the first time, in direct contrast to its former applause of Turkey's developing economy. While there is an acknowledgment of his deeds for the country, it appears to be an effort to quell any questions regarding the U.S.'s support of 'such' an administration.

The May 28th article reads as a tirade of criticisms against the deposed Premier Menderes, who is highlighted as the culprit behind the crisis. The *NYT* creates the narrative of an autocratic Menderes who acted unilaterally in a series of triggering incidents. His intolerance of criticism is first introduced through friends' accounts who "*found him cantankerous and unwilling to allow criticism or advice*" and is then funneled into descriptions of his government style.<sup>50</sup> We see this exemplified in his expulsion of a Cabinet minister who tried to discuss his decisions and the suspension of political activity – a decision "taken at his bidding." These anecdotes create the impression that Menderes

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<sup>50</sup> "REVOLT IN TURKEY LONG SIMMERING: Menderes' Curt Intolerance of Criticism of Regime Built Up Rebellion," *The New York Times*, May 28, 1960, <http://proquest.umi.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/pqdweb?did=105437888&Fmt=7&clientId=20174&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

acted without the support of his ministers, allowing the previously noted DP oppressive attitude to be attributed solely to him. In congruence with this negative portrayal, the writer creates an association between Menderes' emphasis on infrastructure development (as evidenced by his slogan of "ports before coffee") with the Nazi sentiment of "guns before butter." Just like in other matters, Menderes is stated to have rejected advice and embarked on overly ambitious developed projects (e.g. highways, dams, and factories) with international monies. His emphasis on such rapid development is stated to have caused a chronic shortage of everyday necessities such as the characteristic component of Turkish hospitality, coffee. A distinction is made between the austerity program under his regime and the wartime-like conditions of the Turkish economy during World War II, in which Turkish coffee was still accessible. While painting this image of Menderes, the *NYT* airs rumors that cannot be corroborated as we can see in the following example:

*There are reports, which cannot be confirmed but are widely believed in diplomatic circles in Turkey, that when Mr. Menderes received word of election setbacks or other events that displeased he smashed furniture and hurled inkstands through windows.*

The usage of this particular 'rumor' points to a relationship with U.S. Embassy sources as a very similar anecdote is regaled in a memorandum by American diplomats in the same period.<sup>51</sup> Throughout this litany, the reader never encounters an answer to the question of why these criticisms are being aired for the first time after a decade of Menderes administration.

Themes discussed by Bieber-Roberts regarding Turkey's dependability as an ally, justification of military coups, and expendability of internal democracy begin unfolding from this point onward. The Turkish military's role as a major political actor becomes solidified through the retrospective narrative of events prior to the coup. We see the army take on a paternalistic form in the political system in which it admonishes the civilian government before taking action: "[The cadet demonstration and officers' inaction] was the final warning that the army's patience was giving out." In the austere, authoritarian context described, the *NYT* highlights 'violation of the Turkish army's creed that soldiers must not be used in politics' as an important instigating factor. It is unsurprising that there

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<sup>51</sup> Rifat N. Bali, ed., *Turkish in the 1960's and 1970's: Through the Reports of American Diplomats* (Istanbul, Turkey: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, 2010).

would be Turkish opposition to domestic usage of the army, but it is the neutral recognition that the army itself can have a political creed that should be taken into consideration by the central government.

## 4.2 Junta's Role

In the following section, we will examine the junta, the National Unity Committee (*Milli Birlik Komitesi; MBK*), and its representation in the different areas of national politics following the coup. While the prominence of the Yassıada trials and the 1961 constitutional drafting process lead them to have distinct sections of their own, they will inevitably be brought into this section as the junta's role is so tightly interwoven with the decisions it made in these areas. We will highlight the *NYT* narrative of an exceptional Turkish military tied to democratic ideals and its consequent positive leaning toward the junta administration.

Early in the coverage of post-coup events, the *NYT* dedicated an article to distinguishing the young generation of officers as a progressive class affected by their interactions with the “free world;” in other words, the builds the foundation for the narrative of exceptionalism. This Turkish military exceptionalism narrative is expressed in two manners: firstly, the junta is always commended for restoring or working to restore democracy (both nationally and internationally, within the context of the Cold War); and secondly, the junta's undemocratic policies are superficially covered, rarely criticized, and never discussed in comparison to the “dictatorial” Menderes regime's.

The foundational article describing a unique Turkish military class emerged only a few days following the coup on 5 June 1960.<sup>52</sup> In it, the writer, Hanson Baldwin, characterizes two classes within the Turkish military organization – the older, “traditional” generation and the younger generation serving and receiving training abroad – and a cultural clash that arises between the two. When referring to the older generation in the army, the writer applies an overly simplistic, judgmental, and Oriental perspective. To share his contrived demonization of the high-ranking commanders, he states that this generation existed within a “*rigid caste system*” and:

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<sup>52</sup> Hanson W. Baldwin, “Turkey's New Soldiers : Role of Junior Officers in Coup Is Held a Result of Education and Environment,” *The New York Times*, June 5, 1960.

*No junior officers dared to offer suggestions to his superiors, unless he was asked – and he was rarely asked. The top generals and admirals had almost absolute power; they ordered and others obeyed.*

Well, one should not exactly be surprised at such a description of military organization, yet it is almost comical that it be uttered as a criticism. This description resembles and could easily characterize the American military organization with its chain of command, another term to describe the previously mentioned “*caste system*.” There are no excuses for Baldwin, as a military journalist and editor of the *NYT*, not to be familiar with military organization, so he can only be charged with irresponsibility for attempting to push this as a valid argument. Within the same section, he attests to a “*primitive and violent*” application of discipline, yet ceases to follow up with any supporting evidence. He successfully conjures a negative image of the older generation without ever sharing anything concrete except tyrannical tropes already associated with Turkey’s past. In a presumptuous transition to the younger officer, he begins with an essentialist characterization of the asker, the Turkish soldier, or “*the hardy son of the Anatolian hills*,” as “*uncomplaining, obedient, uneducated, primitive, and brave*.” This representation is unquestionably Orientalist in Said’s understanding of the term, as the writer tries to conjure the image of a simple-minded savage. However, after training and serving abroad in Korea, the U.S., and West Germany, “*the junior officers’ horizons were broadened*.” Resentment against the senior officers began when they refused to hear ideas about increasing military effectiveness that the junior class had acquired during experiences abroad. This subtly puts forward the idea that American training was more democratic and made major impressions on the young class. As the MBK that directed the army coup included mainly relatively junior officers, Washington experts express the belief “*that the new regime will likely produce a better military system than the old*.” This article gives us just a small preview of the tie between Turkey’s dependability as a Western (more importantly, military) ally and American media’s willingness to justify the Turkish military coups.

The *NYT* exerted a great deal of effort in building the narrative of a benevolent junta working solely to establish a lasting democratic order. In all political areas, writers never cease to commend General Gürsel and the MBK for restoring or working to restore democracy in Turkey. We see this trend emerge as early as the American recognition of the new Turkish government on May 30<sup>th</sup> when officials express an unfounded faith in



the new regime's motivations and mercifulness.<sup>53</sup> Although the U.S. government conveyed surprise at the coup (and thus the political actors), they testify to the difference between General Gürsel's coup (objectives) and the 1952 Egyptian and 1958 Iraqi coups. It is rather remarkable that they would vouch for actors that they are allegedly unfamiliar with. Greater attention is given to General Gürsel on October 18<sup>th</sup> after he mentions the possibility of running for office in 1961.<sup>54</sup> Hereinafter in Turkish coverage, Gürsel is surrounded in positive imagery that suggests fatherliness, sagacity, and benevolence. To provide a small example, he is first described as a leader with '*genial, fatherly ways.*' In the same article, his arduous belief in establishing a truly democratic regime is highlighted. At the end of December 1960, the *NYT* dedicates an entire article to the 'progress' that Gürsel and his committee have created in Turkey. Before the writer's long list of actions that (s)he applauds, (s)he conveys a similar faith in now President Gursel:

*There can be no doubt of President Gursel's good intentions.*<sup>55</sup>

After a few months of his administration, this expression of faith has greater merit than the previous claim in May, but the steadfast conviction is still puzzling without the context of the Cold War. (S)he then transitions to note the regime's long list of democratic policies: first, and foremost, Turkey's continued loyalty to NATO and CENTO; the abrogation of repressive laws implemented under DP; the release of political prisoners; and the purge of extremists who sought a prolonged dictatorship. While we do not argue the merit of the actions taken, there are many unwritten assumptions and ignored double standards without which precludes an objective discussion. On the anniversary of the "revolution," the MBK headed by Gürsel is credited with preventing a Menderes dictatorship and giving "*the Turks a second chance at democracy.*"<sup>56</sup> On 11 July 1961, the day of the constitutional referendum, Gursel's regime is again commended for guiding the country and not being corrupted by absolute power. While issuing this comment, the writer must have forgotten the lifetime Senate positions that they granted themselves and legalized through the Constitution.

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<sup>53</sup> Dana Adams Schmidt, "U.S. RECOGNIZES TURKISH REGIME : Informal Statement Grants Approval - Capital Pleased by Gursel's Actions," *The New York Times*, May 30, 1960.

<sup>54</sup> Jay Walz, "GURSEL MAY SEEK OFFICE IN TURKEY : Military Chief Plans to Run for President If People 'Want Me,'" *The New York Times*, October 18, 1960.

<sup>55</sup> "Progress in Turkey," *The New York Times*, December 5, 1960.

<sup>56</sup> "TURKEY APPROVES REVISED CHARTER: Celebrations Mark a Year of Gursel's Regime," *The New York Times*, May 27, 1961.

After Gürsel's and MBK's intentions are established, the *NYT* justifies the undemocratic policies implemented by using Red Fear and the precarity of formative periods to indicate the need for order. With one exception, the undemocratic policies are never highlighted as being repressive or illiberal, never criticized, and so superficially covered that readers emerge with more questions than answers. An unwritten double standard on perspectives of democracy arise between MBK and DP as the *NYT* fails to highlight the similarities in their policies. Another significant gap in coverage of the junta's role is a discussion or analysis of the short- and long-term consequences. For example, if we examine an article from 30 June 1960, MBK enacted a law authorizing hold without charge for 30 days of anyone suspected of disturbing the peace or endangering state security.<sup>57</sup> The *NYT* presumes the measure to be an attempt at preventing factional fighting and/or counterrevolution, displaying a sense of understanding for a regime that has yet to reveal its colors. The same article closes with a correspondence from Gürsel to Eisenhower stating that:

*...the main purpose of the change which has taken place in Turkey was to put an end to the dictatorship of a clique steering along a path likely to endanger the supreme interests of the country.*

Whatever these interests are, they are not further delineated, but any possibility of instability in Turkey is sufficiently threatening to American interests. On the anniversary of the coup, the *NYT* superficially mentions some "disillusionments" with the MBK in the greater context of the coup's celebrated anniversary and approval of a revised charter. After briefly describing the junta's forced retirement of 5000 officers and purge of 147 professors, the writer glosses over these unjustified decrees by turning the spotlight to theme of MBK's exceptionalism as democratic guardians. All in all, it was General Gürsel "[who] gave the Turks a second chance at democracy."

### **4.3 Yassıada Trials**

The *NYT*'s treatment of the Yassıada trials, or the political trials of the ousted DP regime, shows sympathy toward and an adoption of the junta's political perspective in Turkey. Effort is shown to display fairness and impartiality in the tribunal by providing character testimonials of judges and disregarding the baseless counts intended to smear the DP defendants. The *NYT* also enters ideological realms by providing space to MBK's

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<sup>57</sup> "TURKS ACT TO CURB FACTIONAL FIGHTING," *The New York Times*, June 29, 1960.

discussions of Atatürk and his descent in the country. This support does not waver until the Committee refuses to drop the death penalties of the convicted DP leaders.

Great effort is spent within the NYT coverage to build the preferred meaning of a fair and impartial tribunal. To build sympathy with the coup and the consequential trials, they *NYT* builds the setting for the criminal investigation of the detained DP deputies by vilifying them with unproven allegations such as common graves of protesters, refrigerated bodies, and corruption. Turning our eyes, we see the approach to the 31-member High Council of Inquiry (*Yüksek Soruşturma Kurulu*) appointed to investigate charges against the former government in July 1960 as being telling in many aspects. The aspect of political appointment (by the Committee) alone should have raised questions as to the fairness of investigations. As an American, the writer should already be familiar with the partisan political controversy that surrounds judge appointments, yet (s)he fails to discuss how this act, especially given the context, points to issues of subjectivity.<sup>58</sup> Before discussing the details, the *NYT* likens the Council to a grand jury in the U.S., which examines evidence and prepares charges. In making this comparison, the Council borrows from the currency associated with an already-established procedure/system. The legal basis on which MBK draws upon has conspicuously remained unclear. With secret proceedings and broad powers to make arrests and seize property, the Council eerily resembles the Investigation Committee formed under DP. The *NYT* does not draw a similarity to the vilified Commission, but their failure to do so shows a difference in attitude. A couple of weeks later, the announcement of MBK's unanimous agreement that ex-President Bayar would be tried for “[committing] by force to annihilate the Constitution and [preventing] the National Assembly from doing its duty” did not receive any reactions.<sup>59</sup> The *NYT* defends the fairness of DP trials, and its turning a blind eye to the involvement of MBK in the process successfully supports this narrative. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, the day before the Yassıada trials, more indications of MBK involvement in the process emerged: questioning by accusers “representing” the 38-member MBK, MBK's ruling that there could be no sentence appeals, and MBK's approval for death penalties to be executed.<sup>60</sup> With so many factors in the process being bound to the Committee,

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<sup>58</sup> “COUNCIL OF INQUIRY NAMED BY TURKEY,” *The New York Times*, June 30, 1960.

<sup>59</sup> “TURKEY WILL TRY BAYAR: Ex-President to Face Charges Punishable by Death,” *The New York Times*, July 12, 1960.

<sup>60</sup> “TURKEY'S EX-CHIEFS GO ON TRIAL TODAY,” *The New York Times*, October 13, 1960.

silence in the matter clearly indicates a strong interest to portray the trials as fair or just. A week later, the *NYT* dedicates an entire article to the presiding judge, Salim Başol, using it as a character testament of sorts for the tribunal.<sup>61</sup> He is described as a normally genial man that demonstrates a solemn approach and rigid discipline to his legal profession:

*...is described by friends as a man who leaves his genial disposition at the doorstep when he departs for work.*

To demonstrate Basol's superlative sense of justice, he is characterized as:

*[a] man of the law, not party politics*

*...if anyone can conduct the trial according to the Turkish motto, 'Adalet Mulkun Temelidir,' then it is Judge Başol*

The *NYT* devotes time to examine a "just" representative of the trials but demonstrates a conspicuous lack of scrutiny with the frivolous counts regarding dogs and illegitimate children as well as lack of analysis regarding death penalties requested from the outset. To introduce a reference point, we took a look at the *Washington Post's* article on the beginning of the Yassıada trials. Their approach was remarkably different as they openly and detailedly reviewed and highlighted the unfair charges and conditions surrounding the accused. For example, while missing in the *NYT* accounts, this article delves into the frivolous charge of Bayar's profiteering from the sale of an Afghan dog and how its hearing monopolized two hours of an afternoon session.<sup>62</sup> On such a minor charge's domination, the journalist notes:

*Apparent motive behind this approach is to blacken Bayar's name first to soften the impact of a probable death sentence...*

He openly recognizes that the fates of the deputies, specifically Bayar in this situation, appear to have been decided in advance. The significance of these trials in convincing the public of DP's guilt is supported through a diplomat's words:

*'If the military fail in this trial, they have failed to justify the revolution and that's why they are doing this.'*

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<sup>61</sup> "Judge for a Regime : Salim Basol," *The New York Times*, October 19, 1960.

<sup>62</sup> Joe Alex Morris Jr., "Ex-Chiefs Face Turkish Court," *The Washington Post*, October 15, 1960.

All in all, the WP demonstrates a more objective representation of this event through its willingness to investigate the surrounding circumstances and motivations.

The *NYT* weaves in the centrality of the representation of Atatürk and his ideology in claiming legitimacy for a government administration. Writers support the MBK's belief that Turkey's democracy surround Atatürk's name and his dream, although they never delve into the exact meaning of this (e.g. principles or significance). Atatürk's "*democratic dream*" remains a vague concept that the junta feels was "*hampered by the previous regime*"<sup>63</sup> and an objective in their own administration. As early as June 4<sup>th</sup>, the narrative of MBK as Atatürk's '*ideological descendants*' emerges when the *NYT* dedicates half of an article to a tribute the MBK held in the Atatürk Mausoleum.<sup>64</sup> After they '*lay a wreath at the tomb of Ataturk*', General Gürsel wrote the following in a golden book for visiting dignitaries:

*Great Father, if you approve of us and acknowledge we are in your path this will be our greatest reward and greatest pride.*

In the same manner, after Judge Başol accepted his appointment by General Gürsel, the *NYT* describe his visit to the memorial of Atatürk, "the founder of the Turkish republic in whose name the army was staged." Although we saw Menderes and DP act in the name of Atatürk, the junta decisively tries to appropriate the symbolism and credibility associated with the cult of Atatürk and his reforms. The *NYT* strongly promotes this narrative in the very beginning, as we can see with these two influential figures.

#### **4.4 Constitution-Building Process**

Governance under the previous Constitution is represented in a facile manner through provision of a selective historical context. To be more precise, the *NYT* presents the junta's historical perspective and narrative of the Constitution, Atatürk and CHP, and Turkish democracy. In December 1960, the *NYT* describes the composition of the Constituent Assembly, the transitional Parliament that would vote on Constitution proposals, as an upper house consisting of the MBK and a lower House of Representative with appointed parties and associations. The writer does not broach the Constituent

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<sup>63</sup> C.L. Sulzberger, "Foreign Affairs: The Stain of Blood in Turkey," *The New York Times*, September 17, 1961.

<sup>64</sup> Jay Walz, "ATROCITIES LAID TO OUSTED TURKS : New Rulers Describe Moves to Hide Students' Bodies," *The New York Times*, June 3, 1960.

Assembly's undemocratic nature in critical terms, but (s)he unexpectedly expresses hope that the new Constitution will create a more democratic institution. We see how this optimism regarding a democratic future headed by the junta is tied to their "revolution" against an autocratic actor and its destruction of "democratic traditions." On October 18, 1960, when Gürsel discloses his consideration in changing how a president is elected, the *NYT* described the system under the previous Constitution and how it led to the political dominance of majority party leaders. However, there is a narrow focus on the Demokrat leaders overpowering the political system through their party's success.<sup>65</sup> On 28 May 1961, the new Constitution, characterized as having defense mechanisms against attempts to establish a future dictatorship, was said to be inspired "*by the ease with which the former Premier had circumvented or flouted the previous constitution.*"<sup>66</sup> Although the *NYT* has previously noted the flaw of the previous system, it simply reiterates MBK arguments on the matter that DP had violated the system. The refusal to include historical precedent (i.e. Atatürk and the CHP administrations) supports this narrative of DP as the sole party to (attempt to) create a dictatorship. In fact, Atatürk's name and his spirit are constantly associated with the terms democracy, justice, and freedom,<sup>67</sup> dispelling any arguments that his administration could be compared to Menderes'.

Similar to the Yassıada trials, the *NYT* turns a blind eye to the legalization of the junta's role in the 1961 Constitutional process and successive political system. In the process of building and voting in the 1961 Constitution, there is a lack of explicit reference to the unfree conditions caused by the MBK. Shortly before the transition from MBK administration to the Constituent Assembly, of which they represented an enormous power, MBK adopted two laws regarding the employment conditions of journalists and the establishment of a public corporation. Despite being met with protests from nine leading newspapers, the *NYT* does not devote more than three sentences to the matter. The vague coverage prevents the reader from learning about this suspiciously precipitous action except the implied need the MBK felt to implement these changes before their passage to a more democratic institution. In preparation for the popular

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<sup>65</sup> Walz, "GURSEL MAY SEEK OFFICE IN TURKEY : Military Chief Plans to Run for President If People 'Want Me.'"

<sup>66</sup> Dana Adams Schmidt, "TURKS AIM TO BAN FUTURE TYRANTS: New Charter Sets Judicial and Legislative Curbs," *The New York Times*, May 28, 1961.

<sup>67</sup> "Turkey's Second Republic," *The New York Times*, January 8, 1961.

referendum on the new Constitution in July 1961, Gürsel broadcasted an appeal for “yes” and presumably advised the other parties to do the same. However, when new Justice Party leader, Ragip Gümüşpala, appears to recommend abstaining or voting ‘no,’ he was officially condemned in a series of declarations and editorials. Despite pushing the narrative of free elections, the *NYT* openly notes that “*everyone is in fact expected to vote ‘yes’*.”<sup>68</sup> After a successful referendum in May 1961, the *NYT* delves into the organization and clauses that exist in the new system. Discussing the new Senate, it incorrectly states that the 23 MBK members would sit with the Senate during the first two years.<sup>69</sup> Whether intent or error, there is no reference, and thus no discussion, of the MBK’s lifetime Senatorship guaranteed by the 1961 Constitution. Regardless of the error, Gürsel and the MBK members are not reproached for refusing to abdicate their power to a fully civilian administration. In addition to this, the *NYT* reveals the existence of a constitutional clause that forbids MBK decisions from being reversed (e.g. retirement of officers), but this is also met quite naturally without comment.

At certain times, the *NYT* expresses an undercurrent of a paternalistic and prejudiced attitude toward the practices of democracy in Turkey. In June 1960, the trend strikingly emerged with a remark about Turkish people “*who had begun to taste political freedom a few years prior and found they liked the taste.*” This comment expressed the writer’s dehumanizing understanding of Turkish people (s)he has, as if an individual would dislike a form of government in which they felt they could voice their will. Later, in two different articles, they distinguish between the Turkish practice of democracy and the Western, “more usual” form of democracy. While not Orientalist, writers indicate the opinion that their form of democracy is the model and measuring stick. In a discussion over the Constituent Assembly’s composition, the writer scoffs at the political representation of workers and industry as smacking of syndicalist and corporatist ideas,<sup>70</sup> and states the future parliament will be a “more usual” form of democracy. If someone had genuine concerns about Turkish democracy in this period, incorporating association members into a House of Representatives would be the last point on the list after the endless MBK intervention. In July 1961, a writer states that there have been “*sardonic allusions regarding the practicability of holding a referendum in a country where the literacy rate*

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<sup>68</sup> “Referandum Tomorrow,” *The New York Times*, July 6, 1961.

<sup>69</sup> Schmidt, “TURKS AIM TO BAN FUTURE TYRANTS: New Charter Sets Judicial and Legislative Curbs.”

<sup>70</sup> “Turkey’s Second Republic.”

is still only 35%.”<sup>71</sup> Although not expressing it directly, the inclusion of this one statement both mocks the upcoming referendum and demonstrates the approval of dictatorial tendencies in societies lacking high levels of formal education.

#### 4.5 Economic Development

Unlike the other topics, the *NYT* approach to Turkey’s economy resembles a fluctuation between carrot and stick to keep the MBK administration in line with American objectives. In the first days after the coup, the *NYT* spotlights the Committee’s inheritance of enormous problems from the DP administration: a \$1 billion foreign debt, the lack of confidence in inflated lire, the need for industrial growth, incomplete projects, and a treasury deficit. On January 10, the *NYT* pens an equivocal piece describing both the precarity of Turkey’s economic future that all depend on a multitude of factors (e.g. continuation of foreign friends’ support, specifically U.S. and West Germany) and the positive direction the MBK had taken it in. The article appears to be a manipulative reminder that Turkey’s economy is tied to its American alliance and thus (financial) support. Despite the constant emphasis on economic weaknesses, an unnamed ‘*leading economist*’ asserts that ‘*the economic problems of this country are not economic at all, but political.*’ This ties into Bieber-Roberts’ theme regarding the defense of military regimes based on their ability to manage the instability that civilian governments could not. The writer tries to present the economic instability under the Menderes regime as being based on political issues. In other areas and articles, the *NYT* appears to attempt to positively influence business confidence in the Turkish economy by enumerating domestic faith, MBK’s programs, and the foreign aid packages.<sup>72</sup> As early as June 1960, a writer describes the “constructive” policies of Gürsel’s provisional government with Turks demonstrating their faith in it by donating wedding rings, wages, and profits. Provisional Finance Minister Alican’s program of “balanced development” saves the day, yet his “late entry” to the Ministry is stated to prevent the further rises in living costs and wholesale prices.

To successfully portray the DP regime’s political ineptitude in the economic sector, the *NYT* had to account for the initial economic boom of its administration, which had

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<sup>71</sup> “Referandum Tomorrow.”

<sup>72</sup> “TURKEY WILL RECEIVE \$250,000,000 IN AID,” *The New York Times*, December 29, 1960.



allowed the launch for so many ambitious public works programs. This boom is discounted as luck –

*the benefit of 3 auspices: erratic rain cycle produced bumper crops, new roads to collect and export the surplus, and the Korean War produced high prices.*<sup>73</sup>

This economic success attracted foreign money into the country, spurring growth in the Turkish economy and thus conferring the DP administration with the mandate to continue developing the nation. Addressing another factor, the *NYT* raises several charges of alleged corruption by several DP deputies to detract from their reputation of investment in national projects. While we do not argue the verity of these charges, several questions are raised when the *NYT* only discusses allegations and never follows up on their verification.

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<sup>73</sup> Richard P. Hunt, "TURKS FACE HARD TIMES: Drastic Action Will Have to Be Taken to Restore The Country to a Sounder Economic Footing," *The New York Times*, June 5, 1960, <http://proquest.umi.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/pqdweb?did=119105636&Fmt=7&clientId=20174&RQT=309&VName=HNP>.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

Looking retrospectively at the *New York Times*' trends before and after the 1960 Turkish military coup, we argue that the *New York Times* displays subjectivity in two broad manners. In the predominant manner, the *NYT* demonstrates deliberation in three ways: its representation of political events in Turkey according to American relations with the ruling administration, its representation of American involvement in Turkey, and, lastly, its calls to influence the Turkish government in specific matters. The second manner that the *NYT* presents subjectivity in is the uncontrived paternalistic perspective of Turkey and its people. While the original accusation against American reportage implied an inability to understand Turkish politics, we argue that the *NYT* narratives were intended and thus a purposeful distribution of allied Turkish and American perspectives. The sole inclusion of official American and Turkish voices as well as "relevant" experts points to a curation of these administrations' portrayals of reality mediated by the New York Times.

Delving into the first and predominant manner of subjectivity, we will examine how the *NYT* espoused the ruling Turkish regimes' characterizations of their governance, history, and definitions of democracy. As Turkish actors' perspectives on democracy (and the constitution) and their roles in Turkey's democratic history run central to understanding the coup, the *NYT*'s reflection of these elements answers the question as to whether they express an outsider's perspective or a specific Turkish current. In this particular area, we can state that the *NYT* expresses the specific Turkish current of the ruling Turkish regime – whichever party or perspective it may be – when it does traipse into these questions. This *NYT* policy became evident through the break in its approach toward different political and historical actors, which coincided with the occurrence of the 1960 coup. The most obvious example was the initial lack of criticism toward the DP

administration in domestic situations to an openly condemnatory slant of the same administration after the coup. If we can remember the case of Menderes from Chapter Four, there was an instant vilification of his character and government style in the first article describing the military coup. However, interestingly enough, we notice how the *NYT* espouses a regime's historical perspectives and consequently its perspectives on Turkish democracy. Both DP and the junta built their identities as descendants of Atatürk, each selecting different facets of his rule to focus on. In an article from March 1960, Premier Menderes' Istanbul modernization project is described as fulfilling Atatürk's dream "to make Istanbul 'once more the most beautiful city in the world'." Just a few months later, an article from September 1960 shares MBK's perspective that Atatürk's "democratic dream" was "[being] hampered by the previous regime." Due to the *NYT*'s lack of historical exploration and analysis, the reader never grasps the historical precedent of Atatürk's founding rule. As discussed in the historical context of Chapter One, Turkish democracy was described as the exercise of popular will through parliamentary will since the parliament is a representation of the nation. However, following the coup, Turkish democracy takes on a new amorphous dimension, in which the military gains a say on whether parties or policies measure up to their romanticized vision of Kemalism. If we can remember from the early Republican period, Atatürk repressed qualities like democracy in the sake of the same qualities, establishing the precedent that the means justify the dream end. Ironically, like Yeşim Arat states, the Kemalist regime has taken on the symbolism of liberalism, democracy, and secularism. The MBK puts forth the argument that Menderes' rule betrayed the founder's "democratic dream," yet we could not see any remarkable differences between the administrations, including MBK's. Just as the Kemalist government mobilized both the press and educational institutions to spread its message, DP and MBK instituted similar laws to achieve the same effect. Menderes' undemocratic 1954 press law, as alluded to by Ahmet Emin Yalman, resembled Atatürk's 1931 law authorizing the state shutdown of any newspaper that criticized national policies. With the 1960 coup and regime change, we also see how wholeheartedly the *NYT* adopted the MBK's narrative that DP had acted unconstitutionally and that its deputies would be tried fairly. Since we previously noted the existence of two constitutional measures prohibiting punishment for parliament votes and allowing legal alterations, the refusal to address or criticize the political motivations and baseless charges demonstrates how the strength of the alliance reflects through lack of criticism.

Remaining with the first thread, we saw in Chapter Three how the *NYT* adopts an emphatically protective tone of Americans and emphatic criticism of others to deflect from compromising situations. In both of the legal cases involving military personnel, the writers always justified the behavior of the soldiers without ever taking into account local Turkish sentiments. The black-market and vehicular manslaughter legal cases exposed issues of American military abuse, corruption, and local feelings of resentment that the present arrangement with American personnel was at the expense of Turkish citizens. Uncharacteristically of the *NYT*'s tone during the DP regime, there is an openly bold criticism of Turkish officials and policies related to these cases to specifically deflect from the U.S. personnel. For example, the topic of banishment as a legal punishment is described both in domestic cases (with Ahmet Emin Yalman) and in the black market legal case, but it is only demonized as an unacceptable form of punishment when some American stands to be held to these standards.

Finally, we turn our eye to the second thread of subjectivity in which the *NYT* demonstrates its patronizing perspective of the country and its people. The prejudicial undercurrent is present in both the pre- and post-coup periods with occasional allusion to Orientalist tropes. To offer a theme from the pre-coup chapter, writers describe a despotic past without any democratic traditions until Atatürk comes to give Turkey a Western look. The Turkish past is painted with an Orientalist brush, never engaging the nuances that European history is accorded. In the post-coup chapter, these tyrannical tropes are placed on the older, "traditional" generation of Turkish army officers for applying "primitive and violent" discipline within the military. Even when they try to build the saga of the Turkish asker, or soldier, they use dehumanizing terms (e.g. uncomplaining, obedient, brave), which conjure the image of savage simpletons.

In attempting to answer the original question of (mis)perception and (mis)representation of a society through this case, we note the significance of contemplating the original actor's objectives, environment, and perspectives and how these interact with the society in question.

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