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COLLECTIVE POLITICAL ACTION IN THE TURKISH PRESS (1950-1980)

by

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“Collective Political Action in the Turkish Press (1950-1980)”

a dissertation prepared by Mehmet Cem Akay
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the Degree of Philosophy at
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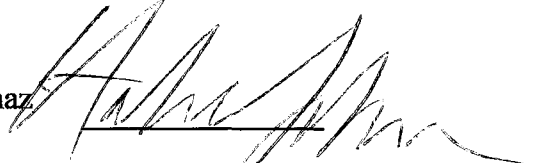
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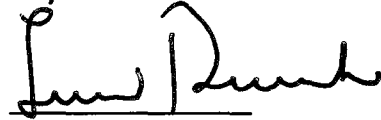
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Title: COLLECTIVE POLITICAL ACTION IN THE TURKISH PRESS (1950-1980)

This dissertation examines the types of collective political action undertaken in Turkey between 1950 and 1980. Instead of examining the period in a purely chronological order, this study groups types of collective action together, and describes and analyzes them in chronological development. Seven such groups are identified: association formation, symbolic action, action in writing, demonstrations and protests, collective action involving the press, boycotts and sit-ins, and contentious action involving violence.

The research for this study is based primarily on a close reading of the newspapers of the period, coupled with the application of the relevant theoretical literature in analyzing the history of collective action in Turkey. The study has found that such action has been widespread in Turkey since the beginning of the democratic era, even during periods of exceptional repressive measures taken by governments to stifle all forms of criticism and opposition. The types of action range from the universal (found in most contentious political action all over the globe) to actions unique to Turkish society; some types of popular action have also been adapted to local conditions and requirements. The variety of these types, however, steadily diminished in the 1970s and was eventually blotted out by a single type: violent action. The role of the youth and the military as the designated guardians of the regime has very much determined both the ideology of actors and the types of action they undertook.

ÖZET

TÜRK BASININDA TOPLU SİYASAL EYLEMLER (1950-1980)

Bu tez çalışması Türkiye’de 1950-1980 arasında görülen toplu siyasal eylemleri ele alıyor. Söz konusu dönemi yalnızca kronolojik bir sırayla incelemek yerine, bu çalışmada toplu eylem türleri bir araya gruplandı ve kendi içlerindeki kronolojik gelişimleri incelendi. Bu tür yedi grup saptandı: dernek kurma, simgesel eylem, yazılı eylem, gösteri ve protesto eylemleri, basını içeren eylemler, boykot ve işgaller, şiddet içeren muhalif eylemler.

Bu çalışmaya temel oluşturan araştırma, dönemin gazetelerinin ayrıntılı olarak okunmasına ve Türkiye’deki toplu eylemlerin analizinde ilgili kuramsal literatürden yararlanılmasına dayanıyor. Çalışmanın sonucunda, Türkiye’de bu tür eylemlerin demokratik sisteme geçişten beri çok yaygın olduğu, hatta en baskıcı dönemlerde bile bu yaygınlığını yitirmediği ortaya çıktı. Eylem türleri, evrensel olanlardan (tüm dünyada muhalif siyasal eylemlerde kullanılan eylem biçimlerinden) Türk toplumuna özgü olanlara kadar çeşitlilik gösteriyor; bazı eylem türleri yerel gereksinim ve koşullara uyarlanmış. Ne var ki eylemlerde görülen bu çeşitlilik 1970’lerde hızla azaldı ve sonunda tek bir eylem biçimi döneme damgasını vurdu: şiddet içeren eylem. Gençliğin ve askerinin rolü, rejimin onlara emanet edilmesi nedeniyle, hem eylemcilerin ideolojik yapısında hem de eylemlerin biçiminde çok belirleyici oldu.

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PREFACE

I was in Ankara in 1999, at the General Staff Headquarters, for my military service; during periods of rest I re-read Erik Jan Zürcher's *Turkey, A Modern History* for inspiration on what to choose as a research topic for my Ph.D. dissertation. My general idea was to take a closer look at the "regime question" in Turkey, focusing on the last fifty years. I thought I would analyze the history of democracy in Turkey since 1950 as the history of three concurrent, non-linear transformations: that of the military, with its increasing (and increasingly adept) grip on politics; that of the citizenry, that collective locus, of which the ideological apparatus of the Rousseauian-Durkheimian state of the 1920s took special heed, with its struggle to come into its own throughout the history of the Republic; and that of the legislative, executive and judicial bodies, which I tended to refer to as the institutions of the political sphere, with their at-best wavering and as-a-rule decreasing command of the powers vested in them.

The arena for the interplay of these transformations was set, in my opinion, by the "Project", that is, the teleological state which claims to be the harbinger of modernization, bent on securing its own survival more than anything else. Through the decades, the military has become the guardian of the Project, even though this has at times been severely contested. Fault-lines formed within the citizenry itself. Overlaps notwithstanding, one segment of society aligned itself with the guardians, another assumed the responsibility of Marxist, liberal-democratic or conservative-nationalist criticism, and still another got involved in the politics of identity; all of these segments tried to come to terms with the large-scale social change brought on by economic growth and the global process of integration. Faced with a demanding

and rapidly evolving society, the institutions of the political sphere proved, more often than not, to be incompetent at both guarding the Project, at providing new and sustainable alternatives, and at providing more than unprincipled populism and patronage in a generally oppressive milieu.

The Republic of Turkey has embraced a democratic regime since 1950, albeit with fits and starts, and a long list of disclaimers. Many students of Turkish politics today find the regime still too authoritarian, the presence of the military too pronounced in political matters; what they see is a regime which pays only lip service to the requirements of a democratic society where civil rights and liberties abound and are safely entrenched. The fact that there has been a series of military “interventions” in 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1997, and that since then the need for interventions has evaporated only because of the indisputable stronghold the military has established vis-à-vis its political counterpart, has added gravity to these assertions. Others like Bernard Lewis, in a more positive assessment of this militaristic bend, have begun to ask whether Turkey is moving towards an idiosyncratic model of democracy.

I was convinced that the manner in which the Republic was founded in the 1920s had proven to be a determining factor for the future of the regime – the “for the people, despite the people” approach of the founding fathers who professed to be social engineers out to shape a backward, though proud and able, people into a modern Western society, defined a Project which needed to be defended at any cost. This Project, broadly aiming at modernization, with its specific content always changing, nevertheless fixed the way the guardians of the state approached the political sphere, its structure, its function, its actors, their actions and relations. This was one of suspicion and bare tolerance, which was cultivated through the years to

become a pronounced anxiety over the survival of –not society but- the state. This in turn dictated how much of a republic or democracy this was to be: not much of either, since it lacked the social contractual moment, in fact excluded from its very definition of citizenship large sections of the population on ethnic and religious grounds, and had a tradition of curtailing freedom of expression, thus undermining the very essence of communicative action. Another outcome was the shrinking of the political sphere in real and perceptual terms: it grew less and less capable of solving problems and coming up with viable visions for the future; politics increasingly assumed the characteristics of a game divorced from any concern for “real” matters and was keyed to inter- and intra-party bickering; the citizenry no longer felt represented by its deputies, and the parliament lost its importance as it turned into a mere theater for this dull show.

On the other hand, however, I recognized that society itself was proven to be highly dynamic, in utter contrast to what goes on in Ankara. The social texture has kept up a rapid pace of change since the 1950s, the populations of cities have grown, the distribution of the work force has shifted away from agriculture towards industry and services, the country and its individuals have become globally more integrated, the GNP has risen (though, in comparison, not as fast as it should have), as have glaring inequalities in income distribution, inflation, and corruption. On top of this came the quest for the recognition of “difference”: the Republican discourse attempted to mold the citizenry into a monolithic body, declaring everyone “Turkish” and that Turkish society was one in which no class conflicts existed. This of course was a conscious denial of the Marxist model of society, and a strong-willed endorsement of the organic structure of Durkheim. It became apparent in the 1970s, however, that these claims to difference –be they religious, ethnic or otherwise-

could not be eradicated by such a sleight of hand. In response, the guardians grew even more defensive and suspicious of critical and self-critical thinking. The political sphere became markedly powerless as fundamental questions pertaining to the definition of the “good life” were forcefully excluded from public debate in continuous attempts to “manage” crises.

The end of the 1990s clearly demonstrated, in my opinion, that the state –or the various guardians thereof- was hard put to continue its politics of exclusion: civil demand for the entitlement to discuss and decide on various different versions of the “good life” came to the forefront. The worst fears of the guardians came true: Islamist and Kurdish nationalist sentiments became heavily politicized, thus replacing the Left and Turkish nationalism so active in the 1970s.

Embedded in this cursory sketch of the last half-century of Turkish history were, I found, the essentials of a legitimate approach: informed by theories of Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Habermas, Rawls, Touraine, communitarianism, and republicanism, I decided to tackle, on the one hand, the legacy of the Republican era prior to 1950, and to determine how the communitarian-republican (going on to authoritarian) elements of its discourse shaped the struggles to bring about and to then constrain a public sphere where communicative action (a la Habermas) could take place. On the other hand, by shifting the focus from a state-centered approach to a society-centered approach, I hoped to capture what had been most lacking in the studies of this period: the politics of the people. This would help me track the interplay of the three transformations mentioned above, and assess in light of this interplay how the Turkish public sphere functioned in the second half of the century. My study would focus primarily on the missing element, that is, political actions taken “by the people”, on a grass-roots level and on a national scale. These actions

would include organized as well as ad hoc protests, citizens' initiatives, and participation in local decision-making processes. The main point in doing this would be to test the validity of my conviction that the citizens of the Republic were much more involved with the regime than is allowed for in most of the dominant writing in this field, in the era under discussion.

These are not the least troublesome thoughts to foster during military service, and on a number of occasions I was summoned by my superiors to explain the notes I had taken, and what I thought the problem with the regime was. Zürcher's book also raised some eyebrows. One night I came across in it a passing reference to "Radio Non-Listeners Associations", founded throughout the country by people who were disgusted with the Menderes regime in the late 1950s.¹ I immediately realized this was exactly the sort of inspiration I had been looking for – the capacity of Turkish people to find ways in which to express themselves politically, even under the most adverse conditions; the humor, the wit, and the vulnerability of those ways; and the inability of political sphere to respond to this in any way other than repression.

Zürcher gave no details as to what became of the Non-Listeners, and that provided me with a starting point for my research. As I went through the newspapers and magazines of the period, I realized that such instances of collective political action were much more common than I had thought, and I began to wonder about the theoretical and comparative aspects of the topic.

This study is the result of these explorations. Initially I had aimed at covering a period of fifty years, from 1950 to 1999, but that proved to be too ambitious a task for the purposes of this study. I therefore limited the period in question to 1950-1980,

¹ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1995), p.349.

since the latter provided a suitable breaking point in Turkish politics in general and for collective action in particular. The research is mainly based on a thorough examination of a number of newspapers published during the period of 1950-1980 for the purposes of determining what types of collective political action were undertaken. In choosing the newspapers, I have preferred to pay more attention to opposition papers, because they dealt with such actions with greater detail. For the 1950s, *Vatan*, *Akşam*, *Ulus* and *Cumhuriyet*; for the 1960s, *Vatan*, *Cumhuriyet*, and *Akşam*; for the 1970s *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *Tercüman* were used. In addition, articles in *Forum*, *Akis*, *Yön*, *Ant*, *İlke*, and *Özgür İnsan* were examined for comments and analyses on collective action.

The study of daily national newspapers introduces a certain bias, regardless of the effort to counterbalance it by examining a variety of such papers. This bias exhibits itself in the coverage and presentation of collective action (for example, where it is placed physically on and within the pages, or the kind of headline used), in the omission or manipulation of certain pertinent facts (such as the number of individuals involved, organizational aspects), and in the wholesale omission of certain instances of collective action (those taking place in smaller cities or those undertaken by ethnic or religious groups such as Kurds and Alawis).

These shortcomings make it extremely difficult to construct a quantitative analysis, and restrict comparative study to non-quantitative aspects. The study of the presentation of political action in the media in general and in the press in particular does, nonetheless, offer significant opportunities for a better understanding of the subject at hand. Zald writes that

We know (Hallin and Mancini, 1984) that nations with different political structures and with different media control report the news in different ways. Hallin and Mancini find, for instance, that the representation of

parties and leaders is quite different in Italy than in the United States. These differences in the media impact upon how movements are reported and how they serve as conduits for mobilization or repression. But there has been little mapping of the range of variation beyond the gross distinction between repressive, state-controlled systems and open systems. We know little about the impact of differences in news formats and styles. How, for instance, adversarial journalism, as contrasted with “neutral professionalism,” impacts on the reporting of movement activity is largely unknown. Nor do we know how mass culture affects “newsworthiness” in different cultures, thus shaping the market for movement news².

The Prodat Project is worth mentioning at this point, for it employs a similar strategy in examining collective political action. Prodat’s official title is “Documentation and Analysis of Protest Events in the Federal Republic of Germany.” Located in the “The Public and Social Movements” research unit at the *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung*, the project is funded mainly by the German Research Council (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*). Principal investigators are Friedhelm Neidhardt and Dieter Rucht.

The basic unit of analysis of the project is the protest event, defined as a “collective, public action of non-state actors who articulate some sort of critique or dissent together with societal or political demands” (Rucht, Hocke, and Ohlemacher, 1992, p.4). The key variables are time, location, duration, form, legal status, theme, claim, policy area, territorial range of the concern, organizing groups, territorial range of mobilization (local, regional, international), number of participants, embeddedness of the event in a campaign, and immediate (e.g., arrests, injuries) and long-term consequences of action (e.g., trials).

² Mayer N. Zald, “Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing”, in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University, 1999), p. 274.

The data are drawn from two national “quality” newspapers, *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Rundschau* (excluding reports in the state and local sections). The full sample covers protest events on all weekends plus all weekdays of every fourth week (46.6 percent of all days). Protest events are coded when occurring in West Germany (including West Berlin) from 1950 onward and, since 1989, also in East Germany. As of April 1997, 8,914 protest events were coded from 1950 through 1992. (p.56,57).

In interpreting the data, it is important to stress the selectivity of representation:

Hocke (1996) has found that it contains only 12 percent of the events reported by a local newspaper in the city of Freiburg and 4.6 percent of the events reported by local police. Whereas from a purely technical perspective this high selectivity may appear disturbing, it is not so from another viewpoint. The vast majority of protests remain unnoticed because they reach neither the wider populace nor the political decision makers. By contrast, protests that are reported by major mass media are the ones that may be relevant in terms of public awareness and, eventually, policy impact. Hence, essentially, we do cover the politically relevant protests.

The other aspect that makes the selectivity bias less problematic is the underlying pattern of media attention. Though national newspapers cover only a small proportion of all protest events, this proportion probably represents 70 to 80 percent of the actual mobilization as measured in terms of participants. Also, the fact that in 45.7 percent of all reported events journalists do not provide figures on the numbers of protesters should not cast serious doubts on the participation figures. These missing data refer mostly to small protests, including those in which protesters tend to hide their identity (e.g., arson)³.

³ Dieter Rucht, “The Structure and Culture of Collective Protest in Germany since 1950”, in David S. Meyer and Sidney Tarrow, eds., *The Social Movement Society* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), pp.34-35.

I have also made a comprehensive review of the pertinent literature on collective action and social movements extensively and found that the resource mobilization theory provides various variables for such an analysis, whereas the approaches of Touraine and Habermas provide a more intellectual, historically aware, and ideology-conscious point of view. I have tried to make best use of all of them.

The introductory chapter lays out the theoretical literature, and gives brief background information on collective action in Turkey before 1950, which serves the purpose of better contextualizing the developments after the transition to democracy. Chapters Two through Eight deal with distinct forms of collective action, looking at the way they change, gain new significance, and sometimes fall out of fashion through the years.

Chapter Two deals with the organized form of collective action, i.e. associations. Here the main focus is on student organizations, but various other associations also come into the picture –including the Radio Non-Listeners Association- to give a better sense of the variety of issues addressed by organized collective action.

Chapter Three fosters a somewhat original approach to collective action. Arguing that symbolic action in Turkey predates the “social movements approach” of the 1980s by at least thirty years, this chapter examines action involving symbols such as Atatürk statues. This chapter’s second claim to originality is its broadened definition of “collective action” to include examples of widespread mode of political action exercised by a big number of uncoordinated individuals who do not formally constitute a group or an organization.

Chapter Four takes up another dubious form of collective action, that which involves the written word. Included are petitions, telegrams, statements, advertisements in newspapers placed by collective actors, and the publication of journals. Some of the most effective instances of collective action in Turkey fall into this category. Demonstrations and marches are what immediately comes to mind when speaking of collective political action and Chapter Five traces the evolution of such contentious action in Turkey, bringing up continuities as well as ruptures in prevalent forms and tools. It also discusses the ideological background of these actions, a feature missing in most of the literature.

Chapter Six takes a look at the medium itself as a locus of collective action, examining the way newspapers reported collective action abroad and giving examples of the way they themselves instigated collective action. Chapter Seven focuses on the events of 1968. University students employed class boycotts, sit-ins and occupations as effective tools to voice their demands until 1971, when the military coup sharply changed the way in which collective student action would be conducted from then on. The new way involved increasing levels of violence and

Chapter Eight examines, à la Charles Tilly, violent action as a continuation of “legitimate” collective action; it also raises the question of how far actors can take violence without negating politics itself. The concluding chapter brings in all the varieties of collective political action examined throughout the study and discusses the findings in light of the role of the “guardians” and the “Project”.

If this study has any merit, part of it is probably due to its attempt to remind the political actors and would-be actors of the present day of the legacy of the first three decades of Turkish democracy. What emerges from these pages is a society in which collective actors, far from being silent, have regularly raised their voice in a

multitude of forms and at times with great bravado, in order to criticize the policies of or to make demands on the state, to influence international public opinion, to make statements of identity or even to take a stance against other groups. It also shows the limits of collective action and the ways in which it can go astray. The fact that collective political action has a history in Turkey that goes back to before the Republic and became widespread almost immediately after the free elections in 1950 surely goes some way in balancing the underdevelopment of democratic institutions. Perhaps it also provides reason to hope that “democracy from below” will prove strong enough to obviate democratization from above.



CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION: THEORY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The general elections of 1950 are customarily taken to mark the beginning of the transition to democracy in Turkey. It is also customary to complain about the lack of institutionalized democracy, which, for scholars and laymen alike, gives rise to the legitimization of military coups. In such a milieu, Turkish politics can be examined by tracing the transformations and interactions of three, non-monolithic groups of actors: the military, which identified itself as the guardian of the regime towards the end of the 1950s and has, since then, steadily increased its political aptitude; the political institutions, comprising the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary, who during the last half century exhibited chequered track records in terms of representation, problem-solving, and vision formation; and the people, the prime interest of the Rousseauist-Durkheimian state apparatus of the 1920s and 1930s, who after the 1950s showed serious attempts at coming to their own.

Collective action, i.e. action undertaken by a group of people with a political agenda, can be regarded as a type of “body language”, where language itself is the metaphor for institutionalized political action such as voting, party membership, and attending rallies. This approach has of course become much outdated since 1968, when “street politics” came into the accepted repertoire of political participation and was no longer considered to be an “anomalie”, as it had been during the 1950s. Nonetheless, in a country with a markedly authoritarian heritage, the metaphor is not without its merits: when freedom of thought and expression is curtailed, when the

regime generates and recycles fear of its own people on grounds of political conviction, religion, identity, and threats from the “outside world” directed at its very existence, “voicing demands”, even if these demands are totally legitimate, becomes excessively difficult. What is left is mostly symbolic action, indiscreet enough to avoid state persecution, yet clear enough to mobilize masses.

To show that this is not totally true is one of the aims of this study. Granted that some of the most popular modes of collective action in Turkey have been only dubitably collective (because large numbers of people engage in a form of action throughout the country individually, not in groups, to avoid arrest and conviction), what emerges is a most vociferous people never shy of founding a plethora of organizations and associations, and shouting their demands in the streets, in marches, demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, and sit-ins. Throughout the three decades in question, even at times when the regime was at its most repressive, individuals and groups managed to find ways in which to express their demands and comments.

Collective political action in Turkey has been, to a great degree, determined by the political culture. The action repertoire has been shaped by this culture; modes that are alien to it have either been overlooked during the process of import, or else have been adapted to current needs and requirements. Some other modes, not commonly found in other societies, have been used frequently since they show an exceptional fit with these needs and requirements. Political culture, in turn, has been shaped by collective political action through the decades.

Some of the questions I have sought answers for are: What courses of action were open to collective actors? What forms of actions were innovations; which were imported or adapted? Who were these actors; how and to what degree were they organized? What transformations can be traced over time? Did these actions result in

a collective learning? How did the political culture shape, and was in turn shaped by, these collective actions? What was the effect of class relations? What transformation did the relations among the three groups of actors mentioned above undergo? From a broader perspective, how did the situation in Turkey compare with that in other countries?

The literature on collective political action and social movements is vast. Given this, I believe there still is merit in asking such questions and undertaking this study, for three reasons: first, the literature, as the overview below will confirm, is almost totally Western-oriented; as far as collective action research is concerned, the number of countries outside of Europe and America is small. A study on Turkey would offer an opportunity to test the current theories and methods in a country where the process of democratization and the relations of state-society have developed differently. Second, almost all of the recent literature focuses on “social movements”, i.e. instances of organized, at times even institutionalized, collective action. Turkey, on the other hand, has a socio-political structure, which can almost be defined by the lowness of the level of organization. When founding the simplest organizations becomes a considerable feat, it is necessary to look at forms of collective action below the usual level of organization. In this respect, Turkey again provides very interesting examples. Third, the gravest shortcoming of the literature is its lack of interest in historical process. Brought on by resource mobilization theory’s bias towards organizational questions, very few studies have been made which take into account historical changes and accumulation; at most, cyclical movements have been studied for their correlation with economic and political cycles, with no serious results. This study, by taking up a period of thirty years, attempts to overcome that shortcoming, and by taking collective actions beyond organizational problems, tries

to understand their meaning, the significance they carry for participants, and the changes they go through from decade to decade.

Theory

The forefathers of the study and theorization of collective political action are, naturally, Marx, Lenin, and Gramsci. Marx and Engels regarded collective action as rooted in the social structure itself, and one can argue that collective action underpins the whole of Marxist theory; nevertheless, both men “underrated the resources to engage in it, its cultural dimensions, and the importance of politics.”⁴ In terms of collective action, Marx proposed a “grievance theory” – the working class was exploited in production relationships, robbed of what rightfully belonged to itself; this basic contradiction between the rightful and factual ownership of production (both in terms of means and of output) would resolve itself in a global workers’ movement that would overthrow the capitalist system.

Lenin, in his attempt to translate “what to do?” into “how to do it?”, took a deep interest in the organizational aspects of collective action, and indeed came to the conclusion that an “advance guard” party organization would solve the workers’ collective action problem. In this respect, he foreshadows the emergence of the resource mobilization theory of the 1980s. Gramsci, on the other hand, was more interested in what the resource mobilization theorists would later call “framing and collective identity formation.” Gramsci argued that developing the consciousness of workers was the main duty of the party; he conceived of the workers’ movement as a “collective intellectual, one of whose prime tasks was to create a working-class

⁴ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University, 1999), p. 11.

culture.”⁵ In this endeavor the party had to overcome the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie by producing a consensus around the party among workers, and to “give them a capacity for taking autonomous action, and building bridges between them and other social formations.”⁶ None of them, however, addressed the problem of political opportunities and constraints, so central to resource mobilization theory.

The classical theoretical paradigm of collective political action was proposed by the Chicago School in the 1950s. This paradigm posited institutional-conventional action against noninstitutional-collective action, and regarded the latter as social anomalies.⁷ This was a distinctly non-Marxist approach, going instead to Durkheim and his functional approach to society and the “anomie”s that rise within it. As such, this dichotomy offered disregard of, rather than interest in, actions that lay outside the “normal” democratic practices such as campaigning and voting, and therefore did not make for much research in this field. Some members of this school, such as Ralph Turner, Lewis Killian, Talcott Parsons, and Neil Smelser went on to study the mechanisms of the emergence of social movements. It was Smelser who argued that a general structural conduciveness to collective action, coupled with a generalized belief in society that “something is wrong” would lead to social movements if a number of precipitating factors also held. These helped mobilize participants, which in turn caused a reaction and put into action mechanisms of social control.⁸ The Chicago School thinkers started from the assumption that collective behavior lay

⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

⁷ For an overview of the works of thinkers such as Arendt and Kornhauser, see R.G. Turner and L.M. Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1957).

⁸ In Sergey Mamay, “Theories of Social Movements and Their Current Development in Soviet Society”, available [online] at <http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/csacpub/russian/mamay.html>

outside the confines of acceptable daily life, and therefore only a few of them worked on its relation to political life.

With the eruption of student movements, coupled with an increase in labor actions in the 1960s, scholars of social phenomena took fresh interest in theorizing about collective action. Rational choice theorists and economists, most prominent among them Mancur Olson, approached the issue from the “free rider” perspective. In his seminal book, Olson concluded that rational actors will not join in collective actions and remain as free riders, reaping the benefits of these actions without getting involved in their risks:⁹ “rational people guided by individual interest might well avoid taking action when they see that others are willing to take it for them.”¹⁰ Olson construed of collective action as cost rather than benefit.

Though charming, this argument begged the question – it did not help those who sought to explain collective actions, as they insisted on happening despite the fact that theory denied they could. In 1970, informed by Olson’s approach, Russell Hardin published *Collective Action*, in which he discussed instances of collective action in social contexts and regarded them as the Prisoner’s Dilemma writ large. He concluded that large groups cannot be treated as though they have certain attributes of individuals, that “collective action must generally fail unless it need not be collective at all (as when we can all let George do it, with the confidence that George *will* do it).”¹¹

In response to the work of rational choice theorists, a new paradigm of research emerged in the late 1970s, and enjoyed its heyday in the 1980s: the resource

⁹ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1965).

¹⁰ Mancur Olson, in Tarrow, p. 15.

¹¹ Russell Hardin, *Collective Action* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University), 1970.

mobilization theory. Propounded by scholars such as Tilly, Hobsbawm, Salisbury and Zald, resource mobilization considers three factors important in analyzing the emergence and development of social movements: “1. The structure of political opportunities and constraints confronting the movement (political opportunity structure), 2. The forms of organization (informal and formal) available to insurgents (mobilizing structures), 3. The collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action (framing processes).¹² McCarthy and Zald agreed with Olson that “the collective action problem was real, but argued that the expanded personal resources, professionalization, and external financial support available to movements provided a solution – professional movement organization.”¹³

In the initial stages of RM research, most of the American scholars focused on the emergence of social movements and tried to identify the changes in the institutional structure or informal power relations of a given national political system. Later on, however, scholars, especially in Europe, “sought to account for cross-national differences in the structure, extent, and success of comparable movements on the basis of differences in the political characteristics of the nation states in which they are embedded.”¹⁴

There are a number of assumptions shared by most resource mobilization theorists:

1. Social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict theory of collective action,

¹² McAdam, et al., p. 2.

¹³ Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Boston, MA: MIT, 1994), p. 507.

¹⁴ McAdam, et al., p. 3.

2. There is no fundamental difference between institutional and non-institutional collective action,
3. Both entail conflicts of interest built into institutionalized power relations,
4. Collective action involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups,
5. Goals and grievances are permanent products of power relations and cannot account for the formations of movements,
6. Movements form because of changes in resources, organization, and opportunities for collective action,
7. Success involves the recognition of the group as a political actor or increased material benefits,
8. Mobilization involves large-scale, special-purpose, bureaucratic, formal organizations.¹⁵

Political opportunity structure has been defined as “consistent -but not necessarily formal, permanent or national- signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements.”¹⁶ These structures involve the “openness” of the institutionalized political system, the stability of elite coalitions that support the political system, the presence of elite allies, and the state’s capacity and propensity for repression.¹⁷

Mobilization is the “process of creating movement structures and preparing and carrying out protest actions which are visible movement ‘products’ addressed to actors and publics outside the movement.”¹⁸ Such mobilization requires various resources: people, money, skills, knowledge, frames, and technical tools to process and distribute information and to influence people. Mobilizing structures are “those agreed upon ways of engaging in political action which include particular ‘tactical

¹⁵ Cohen and Arato, p. 498.

¹⁶ Sidney Tarrow, “States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements”, in McAdam, et al., p. 54.

¹⁷ McAdam, et al., p. 10.

¹⁸ Dieter Rucht, “The Impact of National Contexts on Social Movement Structures”, in McAdam, et al., p. 186.

repertoires’, particular ‘social movement organizational’ forms, and ‘modular social movement repertoires’.”¹⁹ The range of mobilizing structures can be summarized as follows:

Table 1. Range of Mobilizing Structures.²⁰

	Nonmovement	Movement
Informal	friendship networks neighborhoods work networks	activist networks affinity groups memory communities
Formal	churches unions professional associations	social movement organizations protest committees movement schools

“Framing” was originally conceived of by David Snow as “the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understanding of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action.”²¹ Frames, of course, are reminiscent of a number of other concepts, like E.P. Thompson’s “enculturation of the concept of class” (1966); Clifford Geertz’s approach of “thick description”, stressing interpretation; the social-psychological perspective brought in by Goffman (1974), Klanderman (1988) and Gamson (1988); French poststructuralism; Foucault’s concept of “discourse (1972, 1980); and Habermas’s demands for “lifespace”.

Framing is very important in consensus formation and mobilization – particular grievances are justified, dignified, and animated by collective action, and

¹⁹ John D. McCarthy, “Constraints and Opportunities in Adopting, Adapting, and Inventing”, in McAdam, et al., p. 141.

²⁰ John D. McCarthy, in MacAdam, et al., p. 142

are shaped particular grievances into broader and more resonant claims. Framing “not only relates to the generalization of a grievance, but defines the ‘us’ and ‘them’ in a movement’s conflict structure.”²² Movement organizers naturally spend a lot of time in producing the frame of their actions, both in appropriating existing cultural symbols and combining them in new ways, and in turning them into explosive tools for collective action.²³ They are not, however, the only ones forging frames. The media is not only a transmitter of frames, but also a producer in its own right; the state is another frame producer, both in order to gain support for its own policies and to oppose the frames produced by movements.²⁴ A number of scholars, such as Gamson, Melucci, and Klandermans, have tried to conceptualize how movement organizers shape ideological symbols, how these symbols change over time, and how effective they are.²⁵ Snow et al. argue that “by rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective. So conceptualized, it follows that frame alignment is a necessary condition for movement participation, whatever its nature or intensity.”²⁶ In order to define the potential for the success of a collective action frame, Snow

²¹ McAdam, et al., p. 6.

²² Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p. 21.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²⁴ Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p. 22. Bert Klanderman concurs: “Because the mass media play such a central role in modern societies, social movements are increasingly involved in a symbolic struggle over meaning and interpretation.” Bert Klanderman, “The Social Construction of Protest and Multiorganizational Fields”, in Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, PA: Yale University, 1992), p. 79.

²⁵ Sidney Tarrow, “Mentalities, Political Cultures, and Collective Action Frames”, in Morris and Mueller, p. 187.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

uses the term “frame resonance”, which implies the importance of its relationship to existing popular symbols.

Based on these premises, RM theorists then proposed a research agenda, which mainly attempted to understand the *emergence* of social movements: “1. comparison of the ‘organizational infrastructures’ of countries both to understand historic patterns of mobilization better and to predict where future movements are likely to rise, 2. specification of the relationship between organizational form and type of movements, 3. assessment of the effect of both state structures and national ‘organizational cultures’ on the form of that movements take in a given country.”²⁷

The resource mobilization paradigm provided a set of simplifying assumptions and thus made it possible for social scientists to study social movements within the instrumental, utilitarian natural science tradition. The elaboration of the paradigm brought with it an increased interest in formal social movement organizations that mediated between micro-level resource mobilization and macro-level sociopolitical environment.²⁸

Sidney Tarrow refined the theory further by introducing the concept of “cycles of contention”, thus freeing the theory of its initial bias towards the emergence of social movements. By cycles Tarrow meant that social movements do not simply emerge, make claims, and then fade away. The shifting of opportunities and constraints does not cease with the triggering of collective action. Authorities respond to the emergence of contention, setting a pattern of interaction that affects other challengers, too.²⁹ Tarrow took special interest in the decline of mobilization,

²⁷ McAdam, et al., p. 4.

²⁸ Carol McClurg Mueller, “Building Social Movement Theory”, in Morris and Mueller, p. 10.

²⁹ Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p. 141.

and concluded that it happens mainly due to exhaustion: “Although street protests, demonstrations, and violence are exhilarating at first, as movements organize better, and divide into leaders and followers, they involve risk, personal costs, and, eventually, weariness and disillusionment. What results is a decline of participation, one that can be encouraged when political authorities and the forces of order are intelligent enough to bide their time.”³⁰ Better organization is provided by leaders who try to get a broader public involved in their cause, which leads to participation being channeled into organization. This in turn makes the movement more institutionally political, and it begins to engage in implicit bargaining with the authorities. “As the cycle winds down, exhaustion and polarization spread and the initiative shifts to elites and parties.”³¹

The late 1980s and the 1990s, however, witnessed increased criticism of the paradigm, especially in Europe. One of the most important criticisms was that RM was devoid of ideological content, taking up collective action simply as an organizational problem without looking into the ideological structures and political conjuncture. Tarrow granted that McAdam synthesized various approaches within the paradigm to form a full-fledged “political process model” of social movement mobilization,³² but criticized McCarthy and Zald for having used the language of economics without paying attention to commitment, values, and the fight against injustice; for having failed to distinguish social movement organizations from

³⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

³¹ Ibid., p. 160.

³² Ibid., p. 18.

interest groups; and for seemingly having ignored the many grass-roots movements which had emerged in Europe and America in the 1960s and 1970s.³³

McAdam, Tarrow and Charles Tilly would continue with their self-criticism after the turn of the millennium: “Read twenty or thirty years later, early resource mobilization models exaggerate the centrality of deliberate strategic decisions to social movements. They downplay the contingency, emotionality, plasticity, and interactive character of movement politics.”³⁴ Other shortcomings were imposed by the fact that by the 1980s, most North American students of social movements had adopted a common agenda: “because it is a static, cause-free single-actor model, and because it contains built-in affinities with relatively democratic social movements politics, it serves poorly as a guide to the wide variety of forms of contentious politics outside the world of democratic western politics.”³⁵

Resource mobilization theory did not remain static; the increased interest of many scholars in “framing” led to a shift in emphasis away from contention, and towards identity formation and expression. In this transitional period, collective actions came to be seen no longer merely as a direct struggle for power among social groups; it became apparent that civil society’s de-centered, pluralistic structure allowed for easier “symbolic mobilization” operations directed at elites.³⁶ The theoretical framework of a new approach, which posited that social movements did not aim at patronage or political power but rather at convincing the public opinion that they had a just cause, was being laid down. Tarrow and Alberto Melucci, the two

³³ Ibid., p. 16.

³⁴ Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University, 2001), p. 15.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 18.

³⁶ For a more extensive treatment of the subject, see John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, *The Trend of Social Movements* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning, 1973).

most prominent members of the new theory, labeled it the “new social movements” (NSM) approach.

It is only natural that changing movements bring on changing theories. In this new, post-industrial milieu, collective action involves symbolic forms, such as sheathing the obelisk statue in the Place de la Concorde in Paris with a huge condom in order to highlight the need for greater AIDS awareness.³⁷ Contemporary movements -anti-nuclear platforms, gay rights activists, environmentalist all come under this heading- use “new political spaces” for their purposes, and thereby challenge the political decision-making monopoly of centralized institutions and structure. They do not seek “political access as a way of furthering their goals. Instead, they favor a position of autonomy in relation to institutionalized politics,”³⁸ which does not, however, save them from becoming institutionalized themselves. The theorists of the NSM paradigm are aware of Marxist analyses of social movements, but agree that consciousness, ideology, social struggle, and solidarity are important to social action. “Today, collective actors focus primarily on issues of social norms and collective identity. This means that the logic of collective interaction entails more than strategic or instrumental rationality.”³⁹ The *differentia specifica* of these movements was that they used and expanded the public discourse and public spaces of the autonomous, voluntary and local organizations within civil society.⁴⁰ This analysis, put forth especially by Jenkins and Eckert, should be viewed not as an alternative to RM, but as a correction of it – both writers, even though they

³⁷ Sarah Waters, “New Social Movements in France: The Rise of Civic Forms of Mobilization”, in *West European Politics* 21, no. 3 (July 1998), p. 175.

³⁸ Waters, p. 177.

³⁹ Cohen and Arato, p. 510.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

have shown that mass movements and interest groups are necessary for successful collective actions, still define success in terms of “bringing an excluded group into the polity.”⁴¹

Writing during the end of the 1990s, Tarrow and David S. Meyer compared the collective actions of the 1960s and the 1990s, and found major differences. Put side by side, the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley in 1964, and a political rally opposing the government’s new finance bill in Rome in 1997 offered the following differences: 1. the spontaneity of the event had decreased; 2 .the marchers in Rome were interested less interested in changing the rules of institutional politics than in exercising greater influence in them; 3. in Rome, a well-known and “modular” form of protest was employed by an established collective actor in the presence of the media and with a clear and limited political goal.⁴²

One of their main observations is that social protest is no longer a sporadic though recurring feature of modern democracies, but that it has become a fixed element of contemporary social life (hence the title of their book, *The Social Movement Society*). Protests are now employed very frequently by a wider range of groups, and the claims they represent come from a wider range. And finally, increased professionalization and institutionalization are bringing social movement ever closer to conventional politics.⁴³

A similar point is made by McCarthy and Clark McPhail, who, speaking for the U.S., assert that “citizen protest has now become a normal part of the political process, its messages seen as a legitimate supplement to voting, petitioning, and

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 508.

⁴² Meyer, et al., pp. 2-3.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 4.

lobbying efforts to influence government policy and practice. At the same time, the recurring behavioral repertoires of both protesters and police, and their interactions with one another, have become institutionalized, and therefore routinized, predictable, and, perhaps as a result, of diminishing impact.”⁴⁴ This analysis takes up a restricted portion of collective action, since there are other forms of it apart from social movements. Tarrow and Meyer are aware of this fact: “movements were never the only vehicles for contention; they acted in parallel and frequently intersected with other forms of collective action; with isolated instances of collective violence; with strikes and campaigns mounted by unions or other institutional actors; and with rebellions, insurgencies, and revolutions with which they have strong analogies.”⁴⁵ These analogies have been treated extensively by Tilly, who has been recently joined by McAdam and Tarrow in *Dynamics of Contention*.

Comparisons between traditional forms of political participation and movement politics have shown that people who participate in protests are not deterred from participating in conventional forms such as voting. The degree of contention is decisive, however, in the level of participation in movement politics – the less contention there is, the greater the participation. Age is not a factor, and women have been playing an increasingly prominent role in contentious politics on an international level; increase in the level of education and access to the media affect participation directly. The latter also shapes the across-the-borders nature of new social movements, since states have been losing some control over national life. Movement politics are characterized by their high level of organization (so much so

⁴⁴ John D. McCarthy and Clark McPhail, “The Institutionalization of Protest in the United States”, in Meyer and Tarrow, p. 84.

⁴⁵ Meyer and Tarrow, p. 5.

that they have become career options), by their increased discretionary resources, greater access to the media, and their cheaper and faster geographic mobility and cultural interaction.⁴⁶ Activists in the United States, we are told, “may even attend seminars organized by the police on proper demonstration behavior and marshaling techniques.”⁴⁷

A number of changes have made such institutionalization possible. The legal context within which public protest and its social control take place has been transformed, a new public order management system has emerged and has been stabilized, standard protest policing procedures have been transformed, social movement organizations have undergone radical change as principle sources of contemporary protest, and police structures and practices have diffused throughout democratic polities.⁴⁸

Alberto Melucci is another scholar studying the “newness” of new social movements, and his emphasis, similar to the “frames” of RM theorists, is on the codes used in collective action to challenge other actors or the state. He is more interested in the motives and the meaning of action, the “hidden codes that make individuals and groups predictable and dependable social actors,”⁴⁹ rather than in the manifest forms of behavior, the action on the street. Social movements are, in his view, increasingly expressing themselves not through political action, but rather by raising cultural challenges to the dominant language, to the codes that organize

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 5-18.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁸ McCarthy and McPhail, “The Institutionalization of Protest in the United States”, in Meyer and Tarrow, p. 85.

⁴⁹ Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University 1999), p. 8.

information and shape social practices.⁵⁰ In a Tourainian fashion, Melucci studies the effect of scholarly analysis itself on the culture of social movements. He finds that “the work of analysis can contribute to the culture of movements themselves, enhancing their resistance to the illusion that the word they bear is sacred and undermining the urge to the totality that will swiftly turn them into churches or new powers to be.”⁵¹ In Melucci’s analysis of the process of collective identity-building, the choices are between changing social structure and developing alternative cultural codes, between institutional integration and radical marginalization, and between inward and outward orientation.⁵² As such, participation in social movements is not a means to an end (of achieving future changes), but rather an end in itself – through participation, individuals define themselves and create personal, social and political meaning.⁵³

The use of violence in contentious politics has drawn the attention of a number of scholars, Charles Tilly being the most prominent among them. Indeed, Tilly defines contentious politics in such a way as to include the use of violence: contentious politics means “episodic, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims, and b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants,”⁵⁴ and large-scale violence refers to social interactions that

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 2.

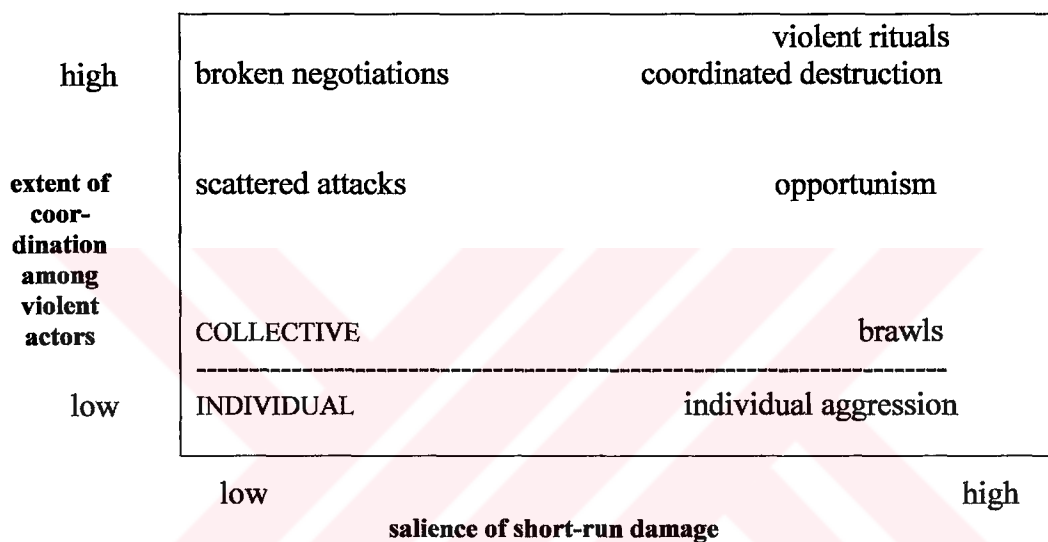
⁵² Peter North, “Exploring the Politics of Social Movements through ‘Sociological Intervention’: A Case Study of Local Exchange Trading Schemes”, in *The Sociological Review* 46, no. 3 (August 1998), p. 3.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵⁴ Charles Tilly, “Large-Scale Violence as Contentious Politics”, paper delivered at New School, New York, NY, 29 January 2000, p. 3.

“involve at least two distinguishable collective actors; extends over at least two adjacent days and localities; immediately inflicts physical damage (including forcible seizure of persons or objects over restraint or resistance) on persons and/or objects; results at least in part from coordination among persons who perform the damaging acts.”⁵⁵ His typology of such contentious politics can be described on two axes of coordination vs. violence.⁵⁶

Table 2. Charles Tilly’s Typology of Interpersonal Violence.



In an effort to streamline their approach to collective action, McAdam and Tarrow have collaborated with Tilly in the writing of *Dynamics of Contention*, in which they return to “mechanisms”, first defined and used by Robert Merton as “social processes having designated consequences for designated parts of the social structure.”⁵⁷ They distinguish three major groups of mechanisms underlying collective action: 1. environmental mechanisms (influences on conditions affecting social life); 2. cognitive mechanisms (individual or collective perceptions); and 3.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

⁵⁶ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University 2003), p. 15.

⁵⁷ Robert Merton, “The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy”, in *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 43-44.

relational mechanisms (altering connections among people, groups, and interpersonal networks). Some mechanisms they use to describe collective actions are: competition for power, diffusion (transfer of information), repression, radicalization, brokerage (linking of unconnected social sites), social appropriation, category formation, object shift (alteration in relations), certification (validation of actors), convergence (radical flank effect), and identity shift (re-definition of actors). Such mechanisms typically concatenate with other mechanisms into broader processes, and at least two processes make up episodes.

Episodes of contention come in two groups: contained contention, where all parties are previously established actors employing well-established means of claim-making, and transgressive contention, which in addition to the definition of “contentious politics” requires that at least some parties to the conflict are newly defined political actors, and/or at least some parties employ innovative collective action.⁵⁸

Tilly’s most recent solo effort on the topic of political collective violence reasserts that “collective violence occupies a perilous but coherent place in contentious politics. It emerges from the ebb and flow of collective claim making and struggles for power. It interweaves incessantly with nonviolent politics, varies systematically with political regimes, and changes as a consequence of essentially the same causes that operate in the nonviolent zones of collective political life.”⁵⁹

In continental Europe, not everyone shares the agenda, or indeed the premises, of the “new social movements” theorists. Alain Touraine and Jürgen

⁵⁸ McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, p. 8.

⁵⁹ Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, p. 238.

Habermas are two seminal figures who have attributed great importance to social movements and studied or theorized about them in ways not wholly congruent with the Anglo-American approach. Touraine takes issue with Melucci's identity-formation theory, and points to the danger of looking at social movements from a purely identity-oriented perspective, because then the theorist "parallels the tendency of some contemporary actors to construe their own ideological representations of social relations... as a utopian organizing principle for all society and to equate their expressive development of identity with the cultural stakes of the struggle."⁶⁰ Touraine insists on the objectivity of a common cultural field shared by opponents,⁶¹ and also warns against too much emphasis on strategic action as evident in some representatives of the RM school: "analyses focusing exclusively on strategies also tend to veer off the map of social movements. Strategic action is only barely social and relational... strategic calculations exclude explicit reference to a common cultural field or to structured social relations between actors."⁶² The focus of his approach is on "fields of alterable but nonetheless structured social relations rather than development, the state or the market. Here, civil rather than political society comes to the fore, while the cultural dimensions of civil society assume major importance."⁶³ Indeed, Touraine regards an action *social* only if it is normative and has cultural orientations, and the term *social movement* doubly emphasizes opposed social projects and contested structures of domination.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Touraine, in Cohen and Arato, p. 511.

⁶¹ Alain Touraine, *The Voice and the Eye: An Analysis of Social Movements* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University 1981), pp. 31-32.

⁶² Touraine, in Cohen and Arato, p. 512.

⁶³ Cohen and Arato; p. 514.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 515.

Touraine's approach of *sociological intervention* involves the researcher to enter the movement and take a look from the inside at the process of creating historicity by members of the movement. He himself has practiced what he preaches by going to Poland with a team of researchers in 1981 and applying his research methods to the Solidarity movement.⁶⁵ In *The Voice and the Eye*, he lays down the theoretical principles of his approach. According to Touraine, society has "only two fundamental components: historicity, i.e. its capacity to produce the models by which it functions, and the class relations through which these orientations become social practices, still marked by a form of social domination."⁶⁶ Touraine repudiates organic, functional or structural approaches in favor of a relational one based on action. Social movements naturally are of central importance in such an analysis: "Social movements are neither accidents nor factors of change: they are the collective action of actors at the highest level –the class actors- fighting for the social control of historicity, i.e. control of the great cultural orientations by which a society's environmental relationships are normatively organized."⁶⁷

Touraine defines society very much in terms of action ("a society is a hierarchized system of systems of action. Action is the behavior of an actor guided by cultural orientations and set within social relations defined by an unequal connection with the social control of these orientations") and the conflict over who gets to define historicity ("society is a cultural field torn apart by the conflict between those who take over historicity for themselves and those who are subjected to their dominators and who are struggling for the collective re-appropriation of this

⁶⁵ Alain Touraine, François Dubet, Michael Wieviorka, and Jan Strzelecki, *Solidarity, The Analysis of a Social Movement: Poland 1980-1981* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University, 1984).

⁶⁶ Touraine, *The Voice and the Eye*, p. 25.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

historicity, for the self-production of society”⁶⁸). In Touraine’s analysis, Marxist class relations come to include the “superstructure”, where class struggle is no longer over means of production but rather over the means of “reproduction” of historicity: “a ruling class identifies itself with historicity, but it also identifies historicity with its own interest. A popular social movement fights against a culture insofar as it is dominated by the adversary class, but it also recognizes the ‘objectivity’ of the stakes, for which it is struggling against the dominator.”⁶⁹

Touraine is careful not to take the historicity of social movements at face value, as his approach of “intervention” may suggest – he repeatedly calls for “reality checks”, referring back to “objective” reality. Likewise, he is careful not to imply that social movements are the agents of historical change (*contra* Habermas). Such transformation in Touraine’s view is part of diachronic analysis, and he stresses the need to separate that from synchronic analysis, which social movements call for.⁷⁰ Such development, defined not in terms of upward progress or higher levels of production but in terms of “transition to a higher level of historicity” and “a different system of historical action,”⁷¹ lies within the prerogative of the state, because the state is the central agent of development: “it is a concrete historical ensemble which is transferred from one societal type to another.”⁷²

Touraine’s aim is twofold: on the one hand, he would like to discover which social movement will hold the central position held by the workers’ movement in

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 62.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 82.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 95.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 109.

⁷² Ibid., p. 108.

industrial society and the civil liberties movement in market society,⁷³ and on the other hand, to help these collective actions to take shape so that they will “in fact constitute the struggle of class actors for the social management of a field of historicity.”⁷⁴

Habermas brings to the discussion of collective action three fundamental theses and a typology of action. First, according to Habermas, the emergence of cultural modernity –of differentiated spheres of science, art and morality, organized around their own internal validity claims- carries with it a potential for increased self-reflection (and decentered subjectivity) regarding all dimensions of action and world relations.

Second, the potentials of modernity (self-reflection, autonomy, freedom, equality, meaning) have undergone “selective institutionalization”. This is a dualistic model of society distinguishing between system and lifeworld, where the requirements of capitalist growth and administrative steering have predominated over “lifeworld” concerns. The “selective institutionalization” of the potentials of modernity has thus produced overcomplexity and new forms of power on the system side, and the impoverishment and underdevelopment of the institutional promise of the “lifeworld”. The “colonization of the lifeworld” related to capitalist development and to the technocratic projects of administrative elites has blocked and continues to block these potentials.

Third, societal rationalization has entailed institutional developments in civil society involving not only domination but also the basis for emancipation: the institutions of our contemporary world (contrary to Marx and Foucault, they are not

⁷³ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 42.

solely based on alienation and domination, and, contrary to Durkheim and Parsons, they are not solely based on integration and corporatism either) have a two-sided character.⁷⁵ In this way, it becomes possible to talk about the positive potentials of modernity which are worth protecting and to explain why contemporary social movements see civil society not only as a field but also as a target.

The action typology of Habermas more or less corresponds to various collective action forms modeled by other theories⁷⁶: *Teleological action* presupposes an actor who chooses between alternative courses of action with a view to realizing an end, i.e. rational action which is the basis of resource mobilization theory. *Strategic action*. Here, calculations of success involve the anticipation of decisions on the part of at least one other actor. This is similar to the “political process” model of Tilly and Tarrow. *Dramaturgical action* entails the purposeful and expressive fabrication and disclosure of one’s subjectivity to a set of others who constitute the public. The two orientations in this form of action are towards the subjective world of the actor and to the external world. This is similar to the pure identity model. *Normative action* refers to members of a group who orient their actions to common (institutionalized) values that have a general binding force for interpersonal actions. This involves a normative content that designates the totality of legitimate interpersonal relations. Smelser’s concept of normatively oriented social movement corresponds to this. *Communicative action* goes beyond the limits of the action theory of Parsons and Smelser. It refers to “the linguistically mediated intersubjective process by which actors establish their interpersonal relations and

⁷⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Collective Action*, vol. 2 (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1985), pp. 332-403.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 85-86.

coordinate their actions, involving negotiating definitions of the situation (norms) and coming to an agreement... Here, any aspect of our culturally ingrained knowledge that has become problematic can be thematized and tested through an interrogation of validity claims.”⁷⁷ This is similar to Touraine’s concept of social movements.

Habermas’s project of detraditionalization and democratization (modernization) of social relations involves: “politics of identity”: cultural norms, individual and collective identities, social roles, modes of interpretation, and the form and content of discourses are redefined; “politics of inclusion”: collective actors attempt to be accepted to political society so that they can obtain benefits for those they represent; “politics of influence”: the language of politics is altered to accommodate new needs, identities and norms, as a result of which civil society is thawed (having been previously frozen by the colonizing effects of administration and economic); “politics of reform”: In order to secure the gains of civil society, institutions are further democratized.⁷⁸ Habermas argues that social movements are the dynamic factor behind the expansion of rights.⁷⁹

With regards to Turkish studies on political participation, two works must be mentioned. The first is Deniz Baykal’s *Siyasal Katılma – Bir Davranış İncelemesi* (“Political Participation: A Study of Behavior,” Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1970). Here Baykal admits that “political participation” involves more than just voting, and goes on to study voting patterns with respect to variables such as income, occupation, education, sex, domicile, psychological and politics. As

⁷⁷ Cohen and Arato, p. 522.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 526.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 405.

such, it does not shed much light on collective action, but it does provide a basis for the application of the resource mobilization theory. The second work was published more than a decade later: Ersin Kalaycıoğlu's *Karşılaştırmalı Siyasal Katılma–Siyasal Eylemin Kökenleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (Comparative political participation: a study of the roots of political action) (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilimler Fakültesi, 1983). Kalaycıoğlu compares Kenya, Korea, and Turkey on the basis of a basic questionnaire in order to understand the patterns governing political participation. Even though it was written as late as 1983, this study still conceives of political action as limited to the exertion of influence on policy makers; it does not consider identity formation, agenda sharing, or public opinion as legitimate goals of political action.

Historical Background

Collective action did not begin in Turkey with the elections of 1950. Student movements have a history that goes back to the late 1870s, to the days of the First Constitutional era. The period of 1923-1950, however, provided the true background for collective actions in the next three decades. Following is a brief sketch of events qualifying as collective political action.

On 19 November 1923, 1400 railway workers of the Orient Railway Corporation went on strike, which lasted until 29 November.

On 26 March 1924, students of the Darülfünun Law School boycotted classes for three days. On 23 April, the Turkish Hearths reopened. The National Turkish Student Union (*Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*) was founded in 1924, as a result of the

efforts of İbrahim Öktem, Tahsin Bekir Balta, and Nihat Üçüncü. The first president of the organization was İbrahim Öktem.

The Şeyh Sait uprising took place in Ergani on 13 February 1925. Sait called for an Islamic order. The uprisings spread over a large area and the state security forces were at a loss to control it. Martial law was declared on 21 February in the eastern provinces. Mustafa Kemal demanded the resignation of the Fethi Bey government, replacing him with İsmet Paşa. A new law called "*Takrir-i Sükun*" (the "Law of Calm") was put into force on 4 March, giving the government exceptional freedom in stamping out any form of opposition. The insurrectionists besieged Diyarbakır, but the city did not fall Şeyh Sait was captured in April; he and 46 of his men were executed on 29 June.

On 14 November 1925, a small group opposing the Hat Reform placed placards on walls in Sivas. Their leader, İmamzade Mehmet Necati, was sentenced to death, and the others received prison sentences. On 22 November, protest demonstrations against the same reform were staged in Kayseri. A similar event occurred in Erzurum two days later; of the arrested, 13 were sentenced to death. The Parliament passed the law on headgear on 25 November. Demonstrations took place in Rize against the headgear reform and other reforms; eight demonstrators were sentenced to death. Protest demonstrations were held in Maraş on the 27th, the day before the law was put into force. Protests in Giresun followed on 4 December.

On 13 January 1928, the Student Association of the Law School declared that only Turkish could be spoken in Turkey. On 20 February, a meeting was organized among the youth in İstanbul to encourage citizens to speak Turkish. On 6 April, a placard reading "Citizens Speak Turkish!" in Edirne was torn down, and the youth of the city attacked the local Jews.

On 12 May, a law was passed which allowed only Turkish citizens in Turkey to establish youth associations.

On 7 October tramway workers in İstanbul went on a 7-day strike.

The NTSU (National Turkish Student Union – “*Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*”) organized a demonstration urging people to “Use Turkish Goods” (“*Yerli Malı Kullan*”) in April 1929. After its 1930 congress, the Union came into conflict with the government and was closed down for a short period. The government allowed the NTSU to function again, but took care to place individuals within the organization to follow its activities⁸⁰.

On 17 February 1930, the Turkish Journalists Union was founded.

On 11 April, Turkish Women’s Union organized a demonstration in İstanbul to celebrate the new political rights granted to women. The majority of the people attending the demonstration were men.

Between 7-14 September 1930, army units finally brought a Kurdish uprisings in Ağrı, which had been flaring up sporadically since 1926 under control.

On 23 December, a group of religious zealots led by a *Nakşibendi derviş* called Giritli Mehmet went to the municipal square of Menemen and, with a group of approximately one hundred people, attempted to declare *şeriat* (religious law). They clashed with a platoon of soldiers led by an officer named Kubilay, killing him and two watchmen. In the aftermath, 29 of the zealots were sentenced to death, and 41 people received prison sentences from one to twenty-four years.

On 10 January 1931, Ankara Law School students organized a demonstration protesting the death of Kubilay in *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* Square.

⁸⁰ Muammer Taylak, *Saltanat, 2. Meşrutiyet ve 1. Cumhuriyet’te Öğrenci Hareketleri* (Ankara, 1969) in Alpay Kabacalı, *Türkiye’de Gençlik Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Altın, 1992), p.78.

On 10 April 1931, the Turkish Hearths were closed down, mainly because the type of nationalism they propounded began to clash with Turkey's international relations, and also because one of its founders, Hamdullah Suphi, had become a member of the opposition Free Republic Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) and defended freedom of thought and pluralism against the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*). The Turkish Hearths had been founded in 1912 by Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura, and Hamdullah Suphi, and functioned as centers for Turkish nationalists in the Second Constitutional era. Stressing language and culture as the appropriate basis for nationalism, the Turkish Hearths were in line with the Turanism of the Committee of Union and Progress.

On 31 December, demonstration was held at Taksim Square to urge the use of Turkish goods.

The first People's Houses were opened on 19 February 1932 with the aim of "uniting the nation and forming a class-free, monolithic body." These Houses would become one of the primary tools at the disposal of the state to educate its people politically, ideologically, and culturally.

A group of about 100 people demonstrated against the Turkish call to prayer on 1 February 1933 in Bursa, in front of the Foundations Directorate (*Evkaf Müdürlüğü*). 23 people were arrested; 4 of whom were acquitted. The others received various prison sentences, ranging from six months to two years.

On 22 February, the Belgian general manager of the French firm Wagon-Lits punished one of its employees, Naci Bey, for having spoken in Turkish on duty. When the incident became known, hundreds of students in İstanbul gathered in front the firm's agency in Beyoğlu, broke its windows, removed its portrait of Atatürk, and carried it to the People's House in Babiali. Protests continued in front of newspaper

buildings, with students shouting “*Vatandaş Türkçe konuş!*” (Citizens, speak Turkish!). The firm was eventually forced to annul the punishment and to consider changing the composition of its work force by increasing the percentage of Turkish employees.

The NTSU organized a “Speak Turkish” demonstration in March. When the papers reported an attack on a Turkish cemetery in Deliorman, Bulgaria, on 17 April, student groups gathered at the Bulgarian cemetery in İstanbul and put flowers on the graves. Organized by the NTSU, the students then marched to Taksim. Eighty of them were taken into custody.

On 3 July 1934, local Jews in some of the provinces and towns in the Thrace came under attack by local Muslims. The first incidents took place in Kırklareli, but the panic soon spread to Edirne and Tekirdağ. The Jewish population began to flee *en masse* to İstanbul. Martial law was declared in the region; the governor and mayor of Kırklareli were forced to resign, and a number of arrests were made, some of which resulted in imprisonment. The magazine *Milli İnkılap* (National Revolution) magazine was closed down on grounds of having incited racial hatred.

On 22 and 23 October 1935, demonstrations were held in Ankara and İstanbul to protest the recent attempts to assassinate Atatürk. These were followed by protest demonstrations in the rest of the country.

On 31 January 1937, demonstrations were held throughout the country in celebration of Hatay’s independence. Another mass demonstration was held on 2 December in İstanbul, upon the commencement of the new regime in Hatay. The parliament of Hatay decided to join Turkey on 29 June 1939.

Dersim uprisings occupied the national agenda between 21 March-22 October 1937. The Alawi Kurdish population in the region clashed with army troops; these

clashes soon turned into open warfare. During the first months, the Kurdish insurrectionists inflicted serious damage to army units, but with summer the tide turned. Their leader, Seyit Rıza, was caught on 12 September. Seven of his followers were executed. In 1938, the government started a new military campaign in the region, destroying numerous villages and killing thousands. A special law was passed for the administration of Tunceli, which remained in effect until 1947.

A mass demonstration was held on 13 November 1938 in Taksim, İstanbul, in memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Other cities followed suit.

On 26 April 1944, students in Ankara gathered in front of the Judicial Palace to protest Sabahattin Ali, who had sued Nihal Atsız for having called him a communist. All subsequent court hearings were accompanied by similar protests until 9 May. Nihal Atsız received four months of imprisonment, but the sentence was postponed, leading the crowd waiting outside to cheer for him and the judges.

The 1940s saw an increase in the attempts of the government to “guide” student organizations. The İstanbul University’s Student Union, for example, was a semi-governmental organization, with its president selected by the rector from among professors and assistant professors. The students were allowed to elect only the members of the executive committee⁸¹.

The *Tan* newspaper incident of December 1945 was directed to a great extent by the RPP (Republican People’s Party) government. *Tan* had a leftist outlook, and was highly critical of government policies after 1945, which attracted a great deal of reaction from other writers such as Peyami Safa, Hakkı Tarık Us, and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın. Yalçın published an article in the daily *Tanin* entitled “Stand Up, the People of This Country” (*Bu Memleketin İnsanları, Ayağa Kalkın*), agitating for an attack on

⁸¹ Doğan Can, in Kabacalı, p.91.

Tan and its writers in order to “shut them up.” Acting under the orders of Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu and the RPP, university students attacked *Tan*’s print shop on 4 December 1945. Earlier in the day en thousand people had gathered in Beyazıt square and marched to Cağaloğlu, shouting “Down with communism, down with the Sertels⁸², long live the Republic of Turkey!” The physical damage inflicted on the printing machines was aimed at making it impossible for the newspaper to be printed again⁸³.

In December 1947 the NTSU was closed down again for a short while and re-opened, and the Turkish National Student Federation (*Türk Milli Talebe Federasyonu*) was founded in 1948; both were regarded as serving the same function vis-à-vis the government⁸⁴.

On 6 March 1947, nationalist students in Ankara gathered in Ulus Square to protest leftists, demanding that leftist faculty members be forced to resign.

On 4 December 1948, members of the NTSU held a demonstration in front of Istanbul University, condemning communism.

Student activity during the Republican era before the 1950s never attained the level it would afterwards, mainly because there was no sufficient reason to evoke the “guardianship” of the youth. Atatürk (the Eternal Leader), and after him İnönü (the National Leader), had been there in person to guard the “Project.” The Republican People’s Party was the one institution trusted with Atatürk’s legacy. It was only after political power changed hands that the issue of protecting Atatürk’s reforms came to occupy the national agenda. The landslide election victories of the DP in 1950 and

⁸² Owners of *Tan*.

⁸³ Kabacalı, pp. 103-105.

⁸⁴ Mükerrerem Taşçıoğlu, “Türkiyede Talebe Hareketleri,” *Cumhuriyet*, 16 January 1967.

1954 were met with great alarm by the RPP cadres, which was to be expected. Menderes was closely watched for possible slanders against Atatürk and especially for any attempt to change course away from secularism and Menderes obligingly provided ample occasion for worry. His policies of deriding the military and stifling the voice of opposition in general and university students in particular eventually led to the emergence of two groups of “guardians”: the youth and the military.

The RPP was an ally of the guardians during the last years of the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s; indeed, the party strongly supported students and İnönü, in his struggle against the increasingly repressive DP rule, repeatedly invoked Atatürk’s speeches in which he trusted the youth with the duty of protecting the regime. After 1965, however, the RPP was increasingly regarded as another party in the multi-party system.

The youth, as a group, was at the zenith of its power around 1960, strong enough to topple a government with the help of the military. It was downhill from then on: by 1971, the youth had lost almost all its credit as one of the guardians of the Project. Student organizations and para-military youth groups were actually seen as threats to the regime.

The military was thus left alone with the grave task of guarding the regime and the reforms. The unwillingness of the guardians to “retire”, or conversely, the inability of the regime to do without guardians, spelled out the predicament of Turkish democracy for the decades to come. It was this predicament that led to yet another coup in 1980 and to the reinstatement of the National Security Council as the locus of real decision-making. Even as these words are written, the role of the military in Turkish politics continues to be hotly debated.

That, however, is jumping ahead of the story. In the summer of 1950, Turkey looked forward to a new beginning, having gotten rid of a government that the majority of the people had come to see as out of step with society and as blocking progress. Student organizations were ready to support the new government and in fact did so indirectly by participating in its communism-bashing. This support did not last very long.



CHAPTER 2:

ASSOCIATIONS: FROM PASSIVE RESISTANCE TO CONCERTED ACTION

Associations (*derneks*) have had a peculiar and striking eminence in the history of Turkish democracy. As mentioned above, their history goes back before the 1950s, to the days of the Union and Progress Committee (*İttihat ve Terakki*). It was, however, after 1950 that they attained an unparalleled ubiquity, which lasted until the first half of the 1970s. After the military coup in 1980, which closed down almost all of the existing associations, and the ensuing Constitution of 1982, which severely restricted the formation of new ones, the number and political power of associations went into a steep decline. Covert political gatherings continued this tradition of associations: one heard of the Canary Lovers' Association or the Stamp Collectors' Association, but these did not last long. By the time freedom of association began to be allowed somewhat more liberally towards the end of the 1980s, the political paradigm had shifted to "civil society" and "non-governmental organizations". Even the term "association" started to carry a new connotation.⁸⁵

In discussing the formation and functioning of associations, it is of key importance to delineate, among other things, their relationship with the government, the military, the official ideology, and the political parties. This is important because

⁸⁵ It is worth noting that student associations, once so powerful and widespread, almost totally lost their salience and dynamism in the period following the coup in 1980. Compared with the students of the 1950s, the students of the 1990s can be seen as having regressed in terms of political consciousness and engagement. In this they are not alone – the workers too, prove to have come a long way since their heyday in the late 1970s. The reason for this must be sought in the new types of relations imposed by the political system.

throughout the three decades in question, the autonomy of associations were brought into question, often with the claim that they either toed the government or the party line, depending on where their allegiances lay. This of course is a question of their degree of independence: can one rightfully speak of associations as independent political actors, or were they simply extensions of existing and more powerful structures?

One predominant aspect of Turkish political culture is its hegemonic tendency, where hegemony itself is propounded as a general good. “National unity” is often put forward and accepted as the ultimate and indisputable goal; since a great variety of political actors endorse this view, it can be used effectively to stifle opposition, especially during times of crisis. Holding a view other than the one dictated by the “national interest” of the country becomes close to heresy. The term “national interest”, however, is always vaguely defined, if defined at all; it is never certain exactly who holds the monopoly over this definition. These factors naturally facilitate arbitrary suppression.

This aspect has had a bearing on the activities of associations in Turkey. A hegemonic understanding of politics, ever since the founding of the Republic, has led to a quasi-corporatist structure where all the major “organs” take on specific functions in support of, not in opposition to, each other. Farmers, workers, industrialists, students, the military, and statesmen are all supposed to work for the national interest – this calls for a rhetoric of “joining hands”, of mobilization, and not for entertaining clashing views or democratic debate. As a result, governments and parties very different from each other have attempted to infiltrate, co-opt, or even directly establish associations to secure such cooperation. Very soon after 1950,

student organizations came into close contact with both the DP and the RPP; in fact, both parties competed for the leadership positions of these groups. In the late 1960s, many demonstrations ostensibly organized by student associations were in fact overtly or covertly supported by political parties. One such student association, the Idea Clubs Federation, openly saw itself as an extension of the Turkish Workers Party, as the *ülküçüs* (the far-rightist “idealists”) fashioned themselves as the extension of the Nationalist Movement Party. Security forces, usually badly disguised, were a staple of association meetings, their identity known to and resignedly accepted by association leaders.

More to the point, the very idea of association formation has been defined as extra-political, thereby marginalizing potential political actors such as students and women. This allows the government to declare illegal any collective activity it finds unsuited to its purposes. Numerous instances of this marginalization exist in the three decades. The military coups in 1971 and 1980 have directly curtailed this mode of collective activity as part of a generalized attempt to shrink the political sphere as much as possible.

The fact that the bearers of the official ideology and the higher echelons of the state apparatus have consistently tried to bring associations under hegemonic control does not, however, necessarily imply the nonexistence of autonomous associations; nor does it mean that all associations which happen to defend the same causes as the government are sponsored or controlled by it. When the Menderes government engaged in a McCarthyist witch-hunt against communists and communism, many student associations gave their support by condemning leftist ideology and their adherents. It is true that they were granted official permission for their demonstrations very easily, but this is not sufficient evidence to show they

themselves did not sincerely regard communism as a threat to the country. Similarly, hundreds of thousands of people throughout the country took part in demonstrations supporting the Turkish Cypriots, not because the state forced them to, but because they sympathized deeply with the plight of their brothers and sisters in Cyprus. Signs of *irtica* (Islamic fundamentalism) and attacks against Atatürk's statues were widely condemned even when the Menderes government was trying to use religious symbols to increase the support it received, and to downplay the Atatürkist legacy to weaken the RPP. Furthermore, the example of the Peace-Lovers Association, which opposed Turkey's participation in the Korean War, shows the extent to which the dictates of political culture can be defied by actors so minded. The zeal with which various governments have reacted to such associations (another case in point being the Radio Non-Listeners Association, discussed below) attests to their power and authenticity as collective political actors.

Student Organizations

The heyday for associations was therefore the 1950s and 1960s, with the major exception of student organizations, which were influential until the very end of the 1970s. Student organizations wielded a considerable amount of political power, so much so that their leaders at times made political pronouncements that changed the national agenda or shaped the outcome of political issues. As Turkish society became deeply fractured along the left-right divide, so did university students and their representative organizations. As civil strife increased to claim scores of lives daily, student organizations became more inclined towards violent means and attacked each other more viciously and uncompromisingly.

The Menderes government actively encouraged, throughout most of the 1950s, stronger relations with the West and a sort of opening up of Turkish society and some of its major institutions, such as the military. Joining NATO was one of the prerogatives of the era. This arguably led to Menderes's demise in the end, because the military cadres became aware of the dire nature of their economic condition after they had the opportunity to compare themselves with their colleagues at NATO. Their bitterness towards Menderes, who consistently refused to ameliorate the wages of the military personnel, may legitimately be counted among the reasons of the 1960 coup d'état.

Student organizations, too, were encouraged at first to build strong ties with their counterparts in the West, but only initially. Their alignment with the military against the Menderes government towards the end of the decade has its roots elsewhere. In 1950, for example, the Ministry of Education donated TL 3,000 to the Turkish National Student Federation (TNSF) to help them organize in İstanbul the second meeting of World Assembly of Youth's (WAY) council. The Federation worked actively until August, when the council was scheduled, to prepare for the event. It organized a competition for a youth march, decided on ways to fight more effectively against extreme ideologies harmful to the country, and chose the delegation that would attend the WAY: Can Kır aç, Orhan Arıman, Vedat  zsan, and M kerrem Taş ıođlu.⁸⁶

University administrations were keen in the 1950s to express their support for student organizations and the democratic participation of students in the decision-making process concerning life on campus. Hulki Erem, the president of İstanbul Technical University, released a press statement on 3 July 1950, denying that the

⁸⁶ *Akşam*, 15 May 1950.

student union was under any pressure from the administration and confirmed that “the wishes of the students, put forward by the İTÜ’s student union, are things already on the development agenda of our university’s administration. The student union is not under any kind of pressure; on the contrary, it receives all our support. We sincerely believe that such organizations, like their counterparts in Europe and the States, ought to develop further and take on the responsibility of certain student matters that are presently undertaken by administrative bodies.”⁸⁷

In an article entitled “Youth and Politics” (“Gençlik ve Siyaset”), Tarık Zafer Tunaya argued that it was necessary and in keeping with democratic practices to allow the youth to participate in politics. His example was the Turkish National Student Union, founded in 1933, at a time when Atatürk was at his strongest. The Union actively followed political developments and often questioned government policies. It even called on the student body in İstanbul to engage in collective action, such as boycotting the streetcar company or protesting against the cruelties of the Bulgarian government against Turks living in Razgrad by leaving a garland at the Bulgarian Cemetery in İstanbul and singing the National Anthem there. “Even under a very authoritarian regime, the youth wanted to make their voices heard vis-à-vis the workings of the Atatürk government –be it positive or negative- but always taking the Atatürk reforms as their standard; this they wanted to do not singly, but as a society, a group, a collectivity.”⁸⁸

⁸⁷ “İTÜ Talebe Birliği üniversitemizde baskı değil, bilakis müzaheret görmektedir. Üniversitemiz, bu gibi teşekküllerin, Avrupa ve Amerika’daki emsalleri gibi, inkişaf etmesini samimiyetle arzu etmektedir. Şimdilik deruhte ettiği birtakım talebe meselelerinin bu gibi birliklere devrinde faydalar ummaktadır.” *Vatan*, 4 July 1950.

⁸⁸ “...çok hakim bir idare altında dahi, gençler Atatürk iktidarının işleyişi karşısında müsbet veya menfi –fakat daima inkılap prensiplerini ölçü edinerek- seslerini duyurmak, onu tenkid hakkının kendilerine tanınmasını istemekteydiler, fakat teker teker değil, bir camia, bir kütle, bir halik olarak.” Tarık Zafer Tunaya, “Gençlik ve Siyaset”, *Vatan*, 3 September 1950.

They got results, but Ankara did not enjoy these “stirrings” in İstanbul. The president of the Union, Tevfik Celal (later Minister of National Education, Tevfik İleri) was sent to Erzurum, and the general secretary, Şükrü Kaya, was sent to Çoruh. Tunaya concluded that while it was apt for the youth to engage in politics, there was another side to the issue: they must be calm, learned, and serious. This, according to Tunaya, was possible only if the students were well provided for in their education, both materially and mentally.⁸⁹

Not everyone concurred that the youth ought to engage in politics. In an article entitled “Youth Organizations” (“Gençlik Teşkilatları”), Hıfzırrahman Raşit Öymen had nothing political in mind when he talked about “youth organizations” – he meant boy scouts, the Youth Red Crescent, sports, health, no alcohol, no sex, no cigarettes, and no politics. In his view, the National Student Federation functioned in a similar way, and was in touch with similar organizations abroad.⁹⁰

The WAY council convened between 12-20 August. Students from forty-nine countries attended the meetings, and left İstanbul with apparently good memories. The İstanbul Radio broadcast the closing ceremonies live, and the newspapers agreed that the “Turkish university students worked hard and demonstrated great success in bringing the WAY council to Turkey and in organizing the whole affair.”⁹¹ The reason for this chorus of support derived from the impression that the WAY was a beneficial enterprise, aiming to save the youth from destructive influences.

Student organizations took on an active role throughout the decade on matters such as the Korean War, the fight against communism and *irtica* (the Islamic version

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Hıfzırrahman Raşit Öymen, “Gençlik Teşkilatları”, *Ulus*, 18 July 1951.

⁹¹ *Vatan*, 13 August 1950.

of religious fundamentalism), and the Cyprus issue and, on the whole, they supported the official ideology in a nationalist-étatist-Atatürkist vein, even though serious disagreements emerged among them. The types of collective political action these organizations undertook usually came in the form of press statements, collective telegrams and petitions (see Chapter Four), and demonstrations, marches and meetings (see Chapter Five). The act of forming associations, however, needs to be viewed as a form of political action in itself.

That this was so was evinced on numerous occasions early on in the 1950s. On 14 December 1950, for example, Tevfik İleri, the Minister of Education, asked the nationalist youth to join forces to support the Turkish soldiers in Korea. The cause for this call was an interesting event: a group of high school girls had bought cigarettes to send to Korea, and written messages on the packs. The school administration, however, had decided that these were not fit to be sent, and sold these packs to the teachers of the school; the packs that arrived in Korea were “clean”. Arif Nihat Asya, an MP representing Seyhan, criticized the school administration for having “censored in the age of democracy the feelings of the nation’s girls for Turkish soldiers.”⁹² The Minister seemed to concur with this view, and concluded that the way to overcome such inadvertent obstacles was for students to join forces on a national scale.

Students abroad also felt the need to set up their own associations, especially in the face of accusations at home concerning their alleged communist tendencies. Thus, on 28 February 1951, Turkish students in France formed an association called “France Turkish Students Home” (*Fransa Türk Öğrenci Yurdu*), and issued a statement declaring that they “vehemently denied the accusations leveled at them to

⁹² *Vatan*, 15 December 1950.

misinform public opinion,”⁹³ and they criticized those who joined forces with the accusers.

Student organizations were never, despite their general respectability, very far from police supervision. In fact, throughout the decade, a number of incidents occurred where the government infiltrated these organizations to get a better grasp of the goings on among the youth. An early example of such police investigations came on 26 March 1951. The members of the National Turkish Student Union’s General Administration Board (*Genel İdare Kurulu*) were taken to court for engaging in politics and thus committing a breach of their statutes. The members were acquitted on 24 May.

The fight against communism and *irtica* was not always praised. The president of the National Turkish Student Union, Senihi Baykan, was removed from this post on 21 October 1951 by the Minister of Education himself, on what seemed to be dubious grounds; *Ulus* claimed that it was because Baykan openly fought against *irtica*.

The big event of 1951, as far as student organizations were concerned, was the idea of forming a Turkish Revolution Hearths (*Türk Devrim Ocakları*). In *Hürriyet*, Sedat Simavi had this to say: “The patriotic and idealist students of the universities of Ankara and İstanbul are forming an organization called ‘Revolution Hearths’ to protect Atatürkist reforms and to stop *irtica* and communism. They are waiting for Atatürk’s anniversary on 10 November to apply for official permission. I had always been assured that the bright Turkish youth would overtake the

⁹³ *Ulus*, 1 March 1951.

safeguarding of reforms and the fight against communism and religious fundamentalism.”⁹⁴

Nihat Erim was also excited about the prospect of the formation of Revolution Hearths. In an article that appeared in *Ulus*, Erim acknowledged the fact that Atatürk’s reforms were not undertaken in a democratic fashion, because, he said, the masses always lagged behind the revolutionists, and caught up only later. Only when the changes could be freely debated could one see what percent of it had taken hold. The era of free discussion, brought on by the 1946 elections, showed that in the democratic game, many of Atatürk’s reforms could be given up in return for more votes. A reaction against these reforms had sprung up. Erim wrote that this was to be expected, as was the reaction against the reaction, this time by the revolutionists. The recently founded “Revolution Hearths”, he claimed, were exactly this, the reaction of the revolutionist Turkish youth to protect Atatürk’s legacy.⁹⁵

The Turkish Revolution Hearths officially came into being on 12 April 1952. In a meeting held at *Küçük Tiyatro* (Small Theater), the guidelines and aims of the new organization were declared to the public, which were summarized as “strengthening the Atatürkist reforms.”⁹⁶ The Hearths would be Atatürkist-nationalist, secularist, and westernist. They were to position themselves above party politics. Behçet Kemal Çağlar recited a poem at the meeting. Three revolutionist

⁹⁴ “İstanbul ve Ankara üniversitelerinin vatansever ve idealist gençleri, Atatürk inkılaplarını muhafaza etmek, irtica, komünizm ve taassup yollarını tıkamak için... ‘inkılap ocakları’ adlı bir cemiyet kuruyorlarmış. Bu cemiyetin müsaadesini almak için de Atatürk’ün ölüm yıldönümü olan günü bekliyorlarmış... Münevver Türk gençliğinin ne yapıp yapıp, inkılap bekçiliğini resmen üzerine alacağına ve komünizm başta olmak üzere kökü şarktan gelen taassuba karşı cephe tutacağına emindim.” *Hürriyet*, 15 October 1951.

⁹⁵ Nihat Erim, “Türk Devrim Ocakları”, *Ulus*, 16 October 1951.

⁹⁶ *Ulus*, 13 April 1952.

associations in İstanbul decided to join the Hearths. On 18 May, two other branches were opened: Şehit Kubilay and Anafartalar.

In a follow-up article, Nihat Erim applauded the organization for its determination to protect and develop the Atatürk reforms, but criticized its leaders for trying to unite all Turks who believe in these reforms, without making any party distinctions among them. Erim argued that politics was still opportunistic in Turkey, and that there were some, i.e. the DP members, who thought they could bargain for votes by giving up Atatürkist principles. This, he said, had to be avoided.⁹⁷

“Idea Clubs” (*Fikir Kulüpleri*) would prove to be of great importance in the shaping of events towards the end of the 1960s. The Idea Clubs Federation (*Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu*) would be the arena of a major confrontation between various leftist groups. The first Idea Club was established to “defend the freedom of thought” by the law students of Ankara University on 14 November 1952. Their stated purpose was as follows: “Thought is the main element of human life and development. It is possible for thought to reach its true value vis-à-vis individuals and societies and to perform the duties expected of it only if there is freedom of thought. Our aim is to debate ideas without getting involved in politics and ideology, with complete tolerance, and always staying within the boundaries set by law.”⁹⁸ The first executive members were Altan Öymen, Hüsamettin Cindoruk, Nahit Özkutlu,

⁹⁷ Nihat Erim, “Devrim Ocaklarında”, *Ulus*, 23 June 1952.

⁹⁸ “*Fikir, insanlık hayatının ve gelişmesinin ana unsurudur. Fikrin insan ve cemiyet bakımından gerçek değerini kazanması ve kendisinden beklenen vazifeyi layıkıyla yapabilmesi ancak fikir hürriyeti anlayışının varlığı ile mümkündür. Politikadan ve her türlü ideolojik propagandadan uzak olarak fikirlerin tam bir hoşgörülük ve mevcut kanunlar sınırı içinde münakaşasını amaç edinmiş bulunuyoruz.*” Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu* (İstanbul: Ozan, 2002), p. 8. It is of course telling how “politics” is ruled out.

Adnan Güriz, Suna Tezcanel, Yüksel Sungur, Tekin Bürzumar, Gülsen Daldal and Necmi Abadan. Nahit Özkutlu was elected president.⁹⁹

On 21 March 1953, during the first press conference he held, Cindoruk stated that they would conduct an opinion poll among intellectuals to determine their ideas about modernizing Turkey. He also pointed out that the laws were not always put into practice, that the radio was not used properly, that democracy depended on ideas and that without them, Turkish democracy would falter, which, he added, brought Turkish cultural life into great jeopardy.

On 12 February 1954, the Turkish Revolution Hearths applied to the Department of Religious Affairs, demanding the calls to prayer to be recited in Turkish again. The *mufti* of Cyprus had sent out a circular to his organization, allowing *muezzins* to recite the calls to prayer in Turkish.

In October 1951, a number of organizations came together to form another overarching association, the Turkish National Youth Organization (*Türk Milli Gençlik Teşkilatı*). The Turkish Women's Union (*Türk Kadınlar Birliği*), the Turkish Nurses' Association (*Türk Hemşireler Derneği*), the Youth Branch of the Green Crescent (*Yeşilay Gençlik Kurumu*), the Workers' Union Federation of İstanbul (*İstanbul İşçi Sendikaları Birliği*), the Turkish Nationalists Association (*Türk Milliyetçiler Derneği*) and the representatives of the Turkish National Student Union gathered under the aegis of the TNYO and agreed that its aim would be to "bring together Turkish youth organizations working in a variety of ways and increase their co-operation, attempt to solve the problems of especially students and workers with regards to the youth, establish solidarity between the world youth and the Turkish

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 78.

youth, represent the Turkish youth both at home and abroad, and also work for world peace.”¹⁰⁰

The student associations realized early in the 1950s that if they could join forces, they would be able to wield even greater power, and plans for unification eventually came to include the two big associations, the NTSU and the TNSF. A protocol was signed by the representatives of the two bodies on 17 November 1953. The new organization was to be called the National Turkish Student Federation (*Milli Türk Talebe Federasyonu*) and would put an end to the competition for representation of students. On 19 January 1954, however, the NTSU changed its mind, stating that competition would serve student organizations better, making them more alert and responsive to student needs. İstanbul University’s Student Union was irate. They complained that whenever they applied for some funding, the NTSU applied, too, and the funds always dwindled. The NTSU issued a statement on 21 January, claiming that the only viable method of unification would be the formation of a confederation (which the TNSF did not like), and criticizing İUSU for its attitude. This matter of unification was still on the agenda in 1955, and on 13 April, *Vatan* was still announcing with approval that the TNSF and the NTSU were about to unite.

It was also in 1955 that national politics and political rifts along party lines became an issue to be reckoned with for student organizations. During the general council meeting of the NTSU in May, for example, the RPP candidate won the elections over the DP candidate, which led to arguments and rumors. After the

¹⁰⁰ “*Türkiye’de çeşitli yönlerde çalışan gençlik hareketlerini birleştirerek dayanışmayı arttırmak, özellikle öğrenci ve işçilerin gençlik kesimiyle ilgili sorunlarını çözmeye çalışmak, dünya gençliği ile Türk gençliği arasında dayanışmayı sağlamak, Türk gençliğini yurtda ve dünyada temsil etmek ve de dünya barışı için çaba göstermek.*” Tanzer Sülker Yılmaz, *Türkiye’de Gençlik Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Toplumsal Dönüşüm, 1997), p. 75.

military coup in 1960, talk about unification erupted once again, because the military found it disturbing to have a multiplicity of organizations representing students. Thus, on 10 June 1961, the Ankara Higher Education Student Union (*Ankara Yüksek Okullar Talebe Birliđi*) issued a statement voicing this demand. After a civilian regime was reinstalled, the search for unification continued. On 28 February 1964, the Ministry of Education announced its proposal to unite student associations under a federation structure.

1956 witnessed the emergence of a new organization: the Idea Club (*Fikir Kulübü*) of Ankara University's School of Political Science (*Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi*). The executive members were Ertuđrul Baydar, Üner Birkan, Teoman Gönen, Ayhan Çađlar, Oktay Uslu, Coşkun Ürünlü and Şükrü Özel. Its first president was Ertuđrul Baydar.¹⁰¹ On 25 January, Nadir Nadi of *Cumhuriyet* applauded this development as the harbinger of a new era. The Idea Clubs were to provide a platform for students where they could level questions at professors, politicians, and writers concerning the political agenda of the day. The first meeting brought together Yavuz Abadan, Turhan Feyziođlu, Aydın Yalçın, Muammer Aksoy and Yaşar Karayalçın as speakers. The orders of the day included: "1. What are the pros and cons of foreign universities? Which would outweigh the other? 2. Would stating an opinion with respect to a proposal debated in the parliament constitute an intrusion in its internal affairs? 3. Do universities need autonomy? 4. Is single-sided education pedagogically advisable?" An article in *Forum* discussed the new club in depth, providing procedural details.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Feyziođlu, p. 84.

¹⁰² "Fikir Kulübü Toplantısının Akisleri", *Forum*, 1 February 1956.

Student organizations did not limit themselves to such austere matters. The rock ‘n’ roll craze, which started out in the States and Europe and was soon imported to Turkey, was also one of their concerns. How could it not be? In Paris, on 17 October 1956, youngsters watching a new R&R dance film at the Rex, broke the seats, threw them onto the stage, tore down the screen, and went on with their “unruly behavior” until finally the police came. As the year drew to its close, such news items began to be more and more frequent in the papers. On 7 January 1957, the NTSU felt compelled to issue a statement on the matter: “As the representatives of higher education students, we are convinced that it is necessary to fight tendencies that lead to the degeneration of moral values and are in conflict with our values, and that if the necessary precautions are not taken swiftly, deep social wounds will be inflicted. The young generation of a country is its ideal, its joy, and the symbol of its vitality. A society with degenerate youths is bound to collapse... We have applied to the authorities for the banning [of these dances]. We are fully assured that our application will be viewed favorably.”¹⁰³

The big night for rockers came on 6 March – a group of young people coming out of a movie theater in Sıhhiye, Ankara, raised a considerable ruckus, dancing in the streets; soon they were circled by passers-by who wanted to watch them. It was the police, *Ulus* reported, that finally prevented them from breaking shop windows.

One organizational novelty came in 1959, when one of the former leaders of the TNSF, Celal Hordan, started up a Cyprus Turkish Youth Organization (*Kıbrıs Türk Gençlik Teşkilatı*) in June, with the aim of signing on 35,000 members, aged

¹⁰³ “Yüksek tahsil gençliğinin temsilcisi olarak, bugün gençlik ahlakını ifşad eden ve bünyemize asla uygun olmayan cereyanlarla mücadele etmenin icap ettiğine, edilmediği ve tedbir alınmadığı takdirde memleketimiz için derin içtimai yaraların açılacağına kaniiz. Gençlik bir memleketin ideali, heyecanı ve hayatîyetinin sembolüdür. Gençliği dejenere olan bir cemiyet çökmeye mahkumdur... [Bu dansların] yasak edilmesi hususunda ilgililere müracaat ettik. Bu müracaatımızın müspet olarak karşılanacağına kati olarak kaniyiz.” *Ulus*, 8 January 1957.

twelve to thirty-five. Hordan disavowed any cooperation with the Greek counterpart of this organization.

The government dealt with student activities with a heavier hand as the decade drew to a close, especially with respect to the NTSU, which had the backing of the RPP. On 14 January 1960, the government decided to evict the NTSU from the building which hosted its headquarters, on grounds that the Child Care Institution (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*), to which it belonged, had not been able to collect rent from the student organization for a very long time. This decision for eviction came at a time when the NTSU insistently asked the office of the governor for permission to organize a panel discussion against *irtica*. The NTSU announced that it was ready to continue its struggle, even if this meant working in tents.

Tents it would be. Running out of financial support from the government, the forty-four year old NTSU was indeed reduced to working in tents, and on 26 January, individuals from all over the country started sending in cash for support, like Adem Han, in jail for a press crime, who sent in 50 TL. The DP (Democrat Party) government, however, continued its pressure on the organization via the DP Youth Bureau, an unofficial body. The RPP called for a parliamentary investigation into the matter, but to no avail.

The Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) would meet a similar fate after the military coup. On 19 February 1961, the government announced that the 100,000 TL of financial support given to this organization had been the last; from then on, Turkish Cultural Associations (*Türk Kültür Dernekleri*) would receive 300,000 TL, and the Turkish Language Institution (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) would receive 75,000 TL. The Turkish Cultural Associations overtook the organizational infrastructure and

property of the People's Houses and quickly established branches in 110 locations throughout the country. Behçet Kemal Çağlar, the president of the Associations, called on the members of the nonextant People's Houses to join their ranks in the name of an Atatürkist, humanist ideology to educate the people. Çağlar's organization was not to go without fragmentation: on 17 December 1962, Osman Nuri Torun founded the Socialist Culture Association (*Sosyalist Kültür Derneği*).

A similar philanthropic organization was the Village Enlightenment Association (*Köyü Aydınlatma Derneği*), established in Nişantaşı, İstanbul, with the aim of setting up libraries in 200 villages. The president of the association, Şevket Özkay, had applied to the governors to give them the names and addresses of people who could help them in their cause. The initial packages sent out by the association included a Turkish flag, a picture of Atatürk, a map of Turkey and a globe, though no books.

The Turkish National Student Federation held its 16th congress on 13 March 1961, in the Municipal Palace; Nejat Gürsoy was elected president. On 17 March, the TNSF issued a statement to the effect that they partially agreed with the government's decision to fire academics who were in violation of Article 147, but maintained that this purge ought to have been made by the universities themselves. A month later the TNSF issued a second statement on the matter, this time completely agreeing with the purge, asking the 147'ers to be barred from returning to universities and calling the whole episode "a serious and necessary reform after 38 years."¹⁰⁴

Just as student organizations were pitted against each other in the 1950's along the left-right fracture, they fell into conflict after the 27 May 1960 coup gave

¹⁰⁴ *Vatan*, 16 Nisan 1961.

way to the second republic, with respect to their stance concerning the military and the prospect of amnesty for politicians who were prohibited from engaging in politics. The TNSF was a staunch opponent of amnesty, and was joined by a number of other student organizations in calling on the government to take action against “traitors seeking amnesty for individuals convicted by Turkish law.”¹⁰⁵ A new organization, calling itself the National Democracy Army (*Milli Demokrasi Ordusu*), distributed pamphlets in İstanbul and Ankara in October 1962, calling for a united front against the enemies of 27 May. On 16 October, another new group called *Ay-Kurtlar* (the Moon-Wolves) issued a warning for the NDA. The TNSF and the NDA issued statements on the next day, urging to government to drop the amnesty issue from its agenda.

Towards the end of 1962, a new association was founded, taking advantage of the breeze of freedom: the aim of the Socialist Culture Association was “to bring the believers of democracy and socialism into closer contact with each other, provide them with a platform to discuss various issues of socialism, to present the results in the form of conferences, brochures, books and to engage in cultural activities that will pave the way to a socialist order.”¹⁰⁶ Among founding members were Erdoğan Alkin, Sadun Aren, Türkkaya Ataöv, Doğan Avcıoğlu, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Aslan Başer Kafaoğlu, Gülten Kazgan, İdris Küçükömer, İlhami Soysal, Mümtaz Soysal, and Cahit Tanyol.¹⁰⁷

Idea Clubs were fashionable with the military regime for a while after 1960. On 27 May 1960, for example, Dr. Memduh Eren founded the 27 May Idea Club (27

¹⁰⁵ *Vatan*, 18 Aralık 1961.

¹⁰⁶ “Sosyalist Kültür Derneği Kuruldu”, *Yön*, 15 December 1962.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Mayıs Fikir Kulübü), and during his opening speech talked about the spirit of 27 May and about amnesty.

The idea of uniting all the Idea Clubs under the aegis of a federation was brought up in the Idea Club of the Ankara University School of Political Science towards the end of 1965. Contacts with other Idea Clubs followed suit and, on 17 December 1965, the Idea Clubs Federation (ICF) was founded with the co-operation of five clubs. Hüseyin Ergün was elected the first president of the federation; his term lasted for nine months.¹⁰⁸ Since the beginning, the ICF was in close contact with the Turkish Workers' Party (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*) and many of its members were also party members. Sadun Aren states the view of the party with respect to the youth as follows: “Young people –meaning mostly students- ought to get organized outside the Party and independent of it. They can of course support the Party if they want to, but from the outside. They should not interfere with the workings of the Party, and the Party should refrain from interfering with theirs. In line with that, the ICF has organized itself independently and outside the Party, and has supported it from the outside until it changed into the Revolutionist Youth Federation.”¹⁰⁹

The ICF engaged in various activities, including tea parties, balls, staging plays, showing films, organizing exhibitions, cultural festivals and conferences, reaching out to the *gecekondu*s (slums – literally, “raised overnight”) in the big cities and the villages in Anatolia, cleaning the streets of Ankara in support of the cleaning workers on strike, and giving free summer courses to students in various towns.

In the wake of the attack on a statue of Atatürk in İzmir on 8 April 1966, the whole country was polarized politically, and the Idea Clubs received their share of

¹⁰⁸ Feyizoğlu, p. 16.

¹⁰⁹ Sadun Aren in Feyizoğlu, p. 142.

this polarization. Occupying the left side of the spectrum was the AU Political Science Department's Idea Club, which stated on 21 April that "the Turkish nation, which carried out the first war of independence and founded the fully independent Turkey is now face to face with some secret agreements and shady pacts threatening its freedom. The Turkish youth will fight against these by using its constitutional rights."¹¹⁰ Singing a similar tune, the president of the Idea Clubs Federation sent a telegram to President Sunay on 29 May in response to his assertion that the constitution precluded socialism; the telegram quoted constitutional law professors and insisted that the constitution was indeed open to socialism.

During the summer and autumn of 1967, the ICF collaborated with TWP to organize "East Meetings" (*Doğu Mitingleri*) in some of the eastern and south-eastern provinces of Turkey. The İstanbul Branch of the ICF issued the following statement: "These meetings aim to disclose the backwardness of the east, and we regard all attempts to denigrate these meetings as part of a new game against Turkey. We believe that this game aims to destroy the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist people's movement growing like an avalanche."¹¹¹

In March 1968, the Second Congress of the ICF convened to elect president Doğu Perinçek, who was at the time a member of the TWP's Science and Research Council and an assistant at AU's Law School.¹¹² A few days later, a new, overarching organization was founded: the "Turkish Revolutionist Forces Union"

¹¹⁰ "Ulusal kurtuluş savaşlarının ilkinin veren ve tam bağımsız Türkiye'yi kuran Türk halkı bugün bağımsızlığına gölge düşüren birtakım paktlar, birtakım ikili anlaşmalarla karşı karşıyadır... Türk gençliği anayasal özgürlükleri koruyacaktır." Cumhuriyet, 22 April 1966.

¹¹¹ "Doğunun geri bırakılmışlığını ortaya koymayı amaçlayan bu mitinglere karşı yapılan tevizir ve iftiraları, Türkiye'de girişilen yeni bir oyunun tezgahlanması olarak yorumluyoruz. İnancımız odur ki, bu oyun Türkiye'de çığ gibi büyüyen anti-emperyalist ve anti-kapitalist halk hareketini yıkmaya amaçlamaktadır." Turhan Feyizoğlu, p.259.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 149.

(*Türkiye Devrimci Güçler Birliği*). Member organizations were as follows: the 27 May National Revolution Association (*27 Mayıs Milli Devrim Derneği*), the National Turkish Federation of Teachers' Associations (*Türkiye Öğretmenler Dernekleri Milli Federasyonu*), the Turkish National Student Federation, the Confederation of Revolutionist Workers' Unions (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*), the Turkish National Youth Organization, the Turkish Teachers Union (*Türkiye Öğretmenler Birliği*), the Idea Clubs Federation, the Association of Turkish Revolutionists (*Türkiye Devrimciler Derneği*), and various student unions. "Natural Senator"¹¹³ (*tabii senatör*) Kadri Kaplan was elected president of the executive committee. The aim of the Union was to "fight with all its might against enemies of the Turkish people, in order to establish a fully independent and truly democratic Turkey."¹¹⁴

After a short while, rifts began to emerge within the structure, mainly due to the opposition against TWP. Another group called the National Democratic Revolutionists (*Milli Demokratik Devrimciler*) defended a coalition with the military in order to bring about a socialist revolution, as opposed to the TWP line of bringing about this revolution through democratic means. Indeed the NDR would take over the ICF a few years later, change its name to *Dev-Genç* (Revolutionist Youth), and take up armed struggle.¹¹⁵ On 9 July 1968, Doğu Perinçek and his group were overthrown; the new president was Zülküf Şahin. In January 1969, the TWP members and sympathizers were ousted from the federation organization, and were

¹¹³ The Constitution of 1961 stipulated that the members of the National Unity Committee would be "natural members" of the Senate.

¹¹⁴ Turhan Feyizoğlu, p. 156.

¹¹⁵ Hüseyin Ergün, in Feyizoğlu, p. 18.

replaced by “socialist revolutionists”. The new president was Hasan Yusuf K peli.¹¹⁶

By June 1969, the Federation had about 2,000 members. Altan  ymen interviewed

Yusuf K peli on 16 June 1969, and asked him about the extent of student actions:

- *Boycotts and sit-ins have become more or less conventional student actions. But throwing rocks at Tuslog, using Molotov cocktails, setting American cars on fire – these are more worrisome. Do you accept these as justified actions?*

- *Is it justified for the Americans to take over Turkish resources and take over Turkey’s order? We are fighting against this injustice. A few cars have been damaged, a few windows have been broken in the process – so what? Can you blame the youths participating in this movement for that reason?*

- *But some say damaging cars and breaking windows creates an antipathy for students among the people.*

- *We don’t believe that. In the beginning these actions may create some worry. But later on, our people understand that we are right. For example, in the incident of setting Commer’s car on fire, many people who sincerely opposed American imperialism criticized our action. But then results were obtained. CIA agent Commer was withdrawn. One day we will see the results of throwing rocks at the Tuslog building. The whole world will become aware of the fact that the Turkish people do not want the Americans; in addition, Turkish workers and peasants will become more aware of American imperialism.¹¹⁷*

¹¹⁶ Feyizođlu, p. 178.

¹¹⁷ “-Boykot, iřgal artık nisbeten alıřılmış direnme hareketleri haline geldi, dedik. Ama Tuslog’un tařlanması, molotof kokteyli atılması, Amerikaluların arabalarının yakılması gibi hareketler, daha fazla yadırganıyordu. Siz bunları da haklı direnme hareketleri olarak kabul ediyor musunuz?

-Amerikaluların T rkiye’nin kaynaklarına el atıp, T rkiye’nin d zenine hakim olması haklı bir hareket midir? Biz, bu haksızlıđa karřı direniyoruz. Bu direnmede iki- c araba hasara uđramıř, birkaç cam kırılmıřsa, bunun iin bu harekete katılan genleri sulamanın imkanı var mıdır?

-Ama deniliyor ki, araba tahrip edilmesi, cam kırılması gibi tahrip olayları, halkta  đrenciye karřı bir antipati uyanmasına sebep oluyor.

Biz buna inanmıyoruz. Bařlangıta yadırganabilir bu hareketler. Ama sonradan halkımız, haklı olduđumuzu anlıyor.  rneđin Komer’in arabasının yakılıřında, Amerikan emperyalizmine itenlikle karřı olanlardan da, ok kimse bu hareketleri yadırgamıřtı. Ama sonra hareketin etkisi g r ld . CIA ajanı Komer geri alındı. Bir g n Tuslog binasına atılan tařların da etkisi g r lecektir. T rk halkının, Amerikaluları istemediđi b t n d nyaya duyurulmuř olacak, bir yandan da T rk iřisinin, T rk k yl s n n, Amerikan emperyalizmine karřı daha ok dikkati ekilmiř olacaktır.” Ibid., p.198. This is a succinct statement of the *raison d’etre* of violent political action.

On 10 October 1969 all members of the TWP left the Federation, and the name of the organization was officially changed to the Turkish Revolutionist Youth Federation. Atilla Sarp was elected the new president.

In competition with the Idea Clubs, which soon emerged on campuses throughout the country, the Revolution Hearths organized similar panel discussions. On 21 February 1960, Nurettin Kösemihal, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu and İsmet Giritli, for example, discussed secularism. The speakers agreed that zealots constituted the greatest threat to the regime.

The new regime was quick to lose patience with student organizations. On 3 April 1965, the attorney-general's office in İstanbul began an investigation into the student organizations with the claim that they engaged in political activities.

On 16 September 1965, the president of the Turkish National Youth Organization, Alp Kuran, held a press conference and complained that their telephones had been tapped, and that they were being followed by the police. He compared this predicament to the "pre-1960 days." On 6 April 1966, the attorney-general's office in Ankara filed a lawsuit against some of the student organizations at Ankara University and the Middle East Technical University, with the same claim of engaging in political activities.

A number of student organizations came together in 1967 to discuss what the youth policies in Turkey ought to be. Executive members of the Idea Clubs Federation, the Turkish National Youth Organization, the Turkish National Student Federation, the METU Student Union, and Robert College Student Union issued the following statement:

1. Turkey is an undeveloped country; the youth of Turkey are the youth of an undeveloped country.

2. The youth will definitely take an interest in national and international problems.
3. Students of higher education bear the burden of carrying Turkey to the level of modern civilization.
4. By the level of modern civilization we mean equality for all Turkish citizens in education, economics, state matters, and the necessary precautions to make these rights possible.
5. In fulfilling its duty to reach the aforementioned level, the youth will in no way support any movement that works "despite the people". Everything will be done with the people, and for the people.
6. The youth will strive to maintain a milieu of free discussion and other freedoms so that the people will understand the situation and take responsibility for their problems.
7. As the youth of an undeveloped country, the youth will carry out its duty conscientiously and guard its rights jealously.
8. The youth must be revolutionist and unified in order to change the conditions of undevelopment.
9. Even if various conservative organizations are founded by various individuals, the majority of the youth will be revolutionist, and the number of those who side with the people will increase. Turkey has to exist, and in order to exist it has to solve its problems.¹¹⁸

After 1967, student organizations came into active clashes with each other, and students of the NTSU were pitted against those of the TNSF. The Turkish National Youth Organization became another important actor in student politics. Its

¹¹⁸ "1. Türkiye geri kalmış bir ülke; Türk gençliği geri kalmış bir ülkenin gençliğidir.
2. Gençlik yurt ve dünya sorunlarıyla kesinlikle ilgilenecektir.
3. Türkiye'nin çağdaş uygarlık düzeyine eriştirilmesi yolunda yüksek öğrenim gençliğine önemli görevler düşmektedir.
4. Çağdaş uygarlık düzeyinden anlaşılan, bütün Türk vatandaşlarına her alanda, eğitimde, ekonomide, devlet işlerinde kanunen ve fiilen eşit haklar tanıyan ve bu hakların gerçekleşmesine yarayacak tedbirleri emreden bir toplum düzenidir.
5. Söz konusu düzene erişilmesi yolunda kendine düşen görevi yerine getirirken gençlik, 'halka rağmen' hiçbir hareketi desteklemeyecektir. Ne yapılacaksa halkla beraber ve halk için yapılmalı çalışılacaktır.
6. Halkın gerçek çıkarları yararına bir işleyişin kurulması yolunda, halkın eninde sonunda durumu kavrayıp sorunlara sahip çıkması bakımından gençlik, özgürlükleri ve gerçek demokrasi demek olan serbest tartışma ortamını korumak için sonuna dek savaşıacaktır.
7. Gençlik, az gelişmiş bir ülkenin gençliği olmanın bütün sorumluluğunu duyarak görevini bilinçle yapacak, haklarına kiskançlıkla sahip çıkacaktır.
8. Az gelişmişlik koşullarını değiştirmek için gençliğin devrimci ve birlik olma zorunluluğu vardır.
9. Bir takım kimseler göstermelik tutucu örgütleri gerçekleştirse bile gençlik, daha büyük kesimiyle devrimci olacak, halktan yana olanlar giderek artacaktır. Çünkü Türkiye var olmak, bunun için de sorunlarını çözmek zorundadır." Feyizoğlu, p. 131.

president, Kazım Kolcuoğlu, blamed the government for the high level of violence: “If the forces organized by the government continue with their action, Atatürkist and revolutionist forces will not passively watch them!.. The clashes will be stopped by the constitutional revolutionist forces who will cooperate to put an end to the charade of the government.”¹¹⁹ These clashes will be discussed in Chapter Six. Suffice it to say here that on the left, internal differences became more pronounced in 1968, and a group of students calling themselves the National Democratic Revolutionists broke off from the Turkish Workers’ Party to form the Revolutionist Student Union (*Devrimci Gençlik Birliği*) in October 1968, with Deniz Gezmiş as president. The fight between the youth groups would determine the course of the next decade.

The group ousted from the ICF was determined to continue their struggle against the National Democratic Revolution, and to go on supporting the TWP. They began to publish a magazine called *Gençlik* (Youth) in November 1969 and formed a new youth organization called the Socialist Youth Organization (*Sosyalist Gençlik Örgütü*). Some members of this organization went to Palestine to be trained as guerillas.¹²⁰

On 29 April 1971, the Turkish Teachers’ Union (*Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası*), the Revolutionist Youth (*Dev-Genç*), the Revolutionist East (*Devrimci Doğu*), the Cultural Hearths (*Kültür Ocakları*) and the Idealist Hearths (*Ülkü Ocakları*) were closed down in provinces under martial law. Eighty-six villages were searched in Diyarbakır, and 60 people were taken into custody. On 1 May, twenty-two student organizations in Ankara were indefinitely closed down on grounds that

¹¹⁹ “Siyasi iktidar tarafından organize edilen güçler, bu hareketlerine devam ederlerse Atatürkçü ve devrimci güçler buna seyirci kalmayacaklardır!.. Bu çatışmalar kuvvetini anayasadan alan devrimci güçlerin birleşerek siyasal iktidarın oyununa son vermesiyle önlenecektir.” Yılmaz, p. 142.

¹²⁰ Feyizoğlu, p. 232.

they had departed from their statutory aims. On 31 December 1971, a new law concerning associations was passed in the parliament, and all student associations, unions, and federations were declared closed, and were prohibited from continuing their activities in official buildings. The law stipulated that new associations were to be held under strict control. From that date on, student politics would only be fought out on the streets.

Radio Days

Before the advent of television, radio was the most popular form of mass media in Turkey, as in many places around the globe. It was customary for *kahvehanes* (coffee houses) in villages to have radios, around which all the men would gather when it was time for the news broadcast. In the cities, listening to the evening news was a ritual shared by many families. The radio was the main instrument of propaganda for the government, and, as the opposition came to realize, an indispensable aid in resisting political oppression.

The radio became the center of attention in 1958, as the crisis surrounding it came to a head. The discussions had started a long time before that and continued into the 1960s, but it was a small piece of news in the papers of 7 December 1958 that announced what constituted a considerably original addition to the political action literature:

Lawsuit Against The Radio Non-Listeners Association
Against the founders of The Association for Those Who
Refuse to Listen to News Broadcasts and Party Propaganda
on Radio Stations, which was established a while ago [in

Ankara] and then closed down on the orders of the governor, a lawsuit has been filed at [Ankara's] Fifth Court of Justice. The attorney-general is asking for an indictment pursuant to Article 526 of the Penal Law, according to which the founders face a one-month term of imprisonment and a fee of one thousand TL.¹²¹

Bedrettin Çalışkur, the founder of the association, had opened the office of the association on 1 December, only to be forced to close it down the next day by decree of provincial governor, Ethem Yetkiner. Çalışkur had received numerous telegrams from individuals from all over the country, wanting to become members of the association, but the association was closed down before he could register a single member.¹²²

A long public debate followed, centering on the question of whether the non-commission of an act, whose commission itself is not punishable by law, nor a duty imposed by law, can be punishable. It was not a crime to listen to the radio, nor a constitutional duty, so how could the act of *not* listening to the radio be construed as a crime? Interesting as this legal debate is, the more striking aspect of this episode of Turkish democratic history is the innovation it entails: a mode of *inaction* was turned into a mode of *action*, was perceived as such by governmental and legal authorities, and was duly punished. Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Yalçın Tuna dealt with the issue extensively in their columns in *Ulus*. In an article entitled “A Matter Concerning the Radio” (“*Radıyla İlgili Bir Mesele*”), Karaosmanoğlu wrote that “three people” working at a law firm had applied to the governor’s office for

¹²¹ “*Bundan bir müddet önce şehrimizde kurulan ve valinin emriyle kapatılan ‘Radyo İstasyonlarından Ajans Haberlerini ve Partizan Neşriyatı Dinlemeyenler Derneği’ kurucuları hakkında şehrimiz beşinci sulh mahkemesinde dava açılmıştır. Savcılık, Sulh Ceza Kanunu’nun 526. maddesi gereğince kurucuların tecziyesini istemektedir. Buna göre cemiyet kurucuları hakkında istenen ceza bir ay hapis ve bin lira para cezasıdır.*” *Ulus*, 7 December 1958.

¹²² Nevra Ersarı Gözübüyük, *The Democrat Party and the State Radio (1946-1960)*. Ph.D. dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 1999, p.95.

permission to establish an association for those who do not want to listen to the agency news reports and partisan broadcasts on the radio. The governor filed a lawsuit against them, and the law firm was closed down. Karaosmanoğlu worried that a foreign news reporter would hear about this.¹²³ Following suit, Tuna asserted that not listening to the radio could not be a crime, and pointed out that even though the attorney general had decided on public prosecution according to Article 33 of the associations law, an association could not be closed down by the governor, but only by the decision of the courts. He also argued that since it was not mandatory by law to listen to the state radio, the act of not listening to it could not be construed as a crime.¹²⁴

The radio broadcasts had been a contentious area even before the elections in 1950. DP deputies would allude to pre-1950 RPP policies regarding the radio when their government was accused of biased broadcasts. The fact remains that the DP government carried this practice to unparalleled degrees. As early as 1951, RPP deputies complained of the government's conduct. During the budget discussions on 5 January, for example, Reşit Eyüboğlu and Ferit Melen complained during commission meetings that the state radio had been turned into the victim of partisanship, broadcasting distorted and misrepresented news even about parliamentary sessions. Fethi Çelikbaş warned the next day that if the people start doubting the objectivity and accuracy of broadcasts, it would become extremely difficult to give them information during times of crisis. Prime Minister Adnan Menderes responded to these accusations on 3 April, reminding the RPP deputies of the state of radio broadcasts when the RPP had been in power, and insisting that the

¹²³ Y.K. Karaosmanoğlu, "Radyoyla İlgili Bir Mesele", *Ulus*, 5 December 1958.

¹²⁴ Yalçın Tuna, "Radyo Dinlememek Suç Olamaz", *Ulus*, 13 December 1958.

government was using the state radio for the good of the state and the country. Not put off by this rebuke, Fuat Köprülü brought up the issue once again on 15 June, asking the parliament whether it was right for the state radio to be put to partisan use by the government without giving any opportunity to the opposition to air its own views.

On 26 December of that year, the prototype of the action taken later in 1958 was staged in Burdur, Antalya and Isparta: RPP members in these cities protested against the partisan and biased broadcasts of the state radio by turning off their radios for 24 hours, in keeping with the decision of the 9th RPP Congress.

On 24 April 1952, the RPP came up with an amendment proposal. RPP Trabzon deputy Faik Ahmet Barutçu said in defense of the proposal that since radio stations were not run by private companies, it was the state radio that informed the population about events at home and abroad, which required radio broadcasts to be objective and to conform to democratic principles. The proposed amendment read as follows: “Political parties that have groups in the parliament have the right to no less than twelve political radio broadcasts a year, to be scheduled at the beginning of each year, these in addition to the special radio talks broadcast during election periods.”¹²⁵ The proposal was rejected. In December, Nermin Abadan translated an article from the German magazine *Der Monat*, which reported governmental interference at the BBC broadcasts in Britain.¹²⁶

On 3 November 1953, RPP Ordu deputy Atıf Topaloğlu asked the Prime Minister how long the dismal state of radio broadcasts would continue.

¹²⁵ “Meclis’te grubu bulunan siyasi partiler seçim zamanlarına mahsus konuşmalardan başka her sene iptidasında tesbit edilen program dairesinde ve o sene içinde yapılacak siyasi yayınların toplamı 12’den aşağı olmamak üzere Devlet Radyosunda konuşma yapmaya yetkilidir.” *Ulus*, 25 April 1952.

A second prototype of the 1958 action came on 13 January 1954, this time carried out by young RPP members in Ankara. Three concerted but separate groups protested the mention of Menderes's name on the radio. One group of fifteen got off the *dolmuş* (shared taxi) in which they were traveling; another group of fifteen walked out of the restaurant where they were having lunch when the owner refused to turn down the volume of the radio; a group of seven put their radios in a sack and then sealed the sack. In 1957, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın wrote an article entitled "Should Radio Broadcasts Serve Its Listeners or A Minister?" ("*Radyo Dinleyicilerinin mi Bir Bakanın mı Emrinde Olmalı?*") where he related the debates in France regarding government control over radio broadcasts. Drawing a parallel with Turkey, he complained that the situation in Turkey was much worse.¹²⁷

Sporadic incidents gave way to sustained debate and action in the second half of 1958. The DP government had come up with the idea of forming a "Motherland Front" (*Vatan Cephesi*), which would unite citizens against the treacherous opposition and their blatantly communistic activities poisoning the youth. Speakers would read endless lists on the radio of those individuals who had joined the Front or the DP. It soon became common knowledge that these lists were fake, often including the names of the deceased, the newly born, of those who had long been DP members, and even those who had nothing to do with the DP, or were in fact staunch supporters and members of the RPP. On 18 August, RPP Sivas deputy Turhan Feyzioğlu tabled a motion of inquiry about partisan radio broadcasts, continuing his criticism during his party's Elazığ Congress in September, and the İstanbul Congress

¹²⁶ Nermin Abadan, "Radyo İstasyonlarına Parti Müdahalesi", *Ulus*, 27 December 1952.

¹²⁷ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, "Radyo dinleyicilerinin mi bir bakanın mı emrinde olmalı?" *Ulus*, 5 March 1957.

in October, stating that “The current use of radio broadcasts by the government is a disgrace. This is no way to be for the radio of a civilized and great nation. We will solve this problem as a nation, the great majority of which complains about the partisan abuse. The Turkish nation will not allow its own radio stations to be used in breaking its own honor and dignity.”¹²⁸ İsmet İnönü spoke on 12 October, to the same effect.

Newspapers such as *Cumhuriyet* and *Ulus*, which were highly critical of the government but were not allowed to freely publish such criticism, resorted to running extensive news items on this limited topic: Members of the RPP’s Sarıca branch had not resigned and then joined the DP. The allegedly new additions to the Motherland Front in Çorum had resigned from the RPP nearly three years ago, and some of them had actually gone back; the RPP’s Yenimahalle Susuz Village Society President Tevfik Yıldırım had not joined the NF; RPP and Free Party members in Haymana had not join the DP; Ramiz Coşkun, the RPP’s party assembly member and one of the new additions to the NF in Antalya, had died in 1954; Abdullah Özen of Bilecik had been a DP member since 1946, so he couldn’t have resigned from the RPP and joined the NF; etc.

Those newspapers which supported the RPP started running counter-articles, claiming that thousands of people had joined the RPP or at least resigned from the DP. *Ulus* ran one such item almost every day, and the radio became the RPP’s obsession. In December 1958, the party group tabled a motion of parliamentary investigation regarding the relevant Minister and others who shared the responsibility. Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu was one of the writers who complained

¹²⁸ “Radyonun bu kullanım tarzı DP’nin yüz karasıdır. Bu hal medeni ve büyük bir milletin radyosuna yakışmaz. Milletçe radyo davasını mutlaka halledeceğiz. Radyonun partizanca istismarından milletin büyük çoğunluğu şikayetçidir. Türk milleti kendi radyosunu kendi haysiyet ve şerefini kırmak için kullanılmasına müsaade etmeyecektir.” *Ulus*, 11 October 1958.

more vociferously. In a series of articles published in 1958, he criticized the radio broadcasts and especially the program “Radio Paper” (*Radyo Gazetesi*) for their clamorous and unabashed support of the DP,¹²⁹ and claimed that “In no other country has the public or private radio stations been turned into a weapon for polemics concerning internal politics, to such a degree as in Turkey.”¹³⁰

Yakup Kadri and Yalçın Tuna continued to accuse the government of committing crimes of verbal abuse on the radio. In an article that appeared in November 1958, Tuna reported that a number of CHP members were planning to take the Radio Administration to court for verbal abuse directed at their persons, and discussed the relevant articles in the penal code.¹³¹ During the first months of 1959, Karaosmanoğlu complained about the Motherland Front broadcasts,¹³² while Tuna picked on the Minister of the Press, Broadcasting and Tourism, who said during budget debates that the Motherland Front broadcasts were not his idea but that of the Prime Minister. Tuna maintained that the minister had no right to dodge his responsibility that way.¹³³ An Article in *Akis* ridiculed the programs by Burhan Belge, which were especially partisan.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Y.K. Karaosmanoğlu, “Radyo Gazetesinin Monologları”, *Ulus*, 4 September 1958.

¹³⁰ “İmdi, burada söylemek istediğimiz şey, devletin olsun, hususi şirketlerin olsun, radyo denilen yayım cihazının Türkiye’den başka hiç bir memlekette böylesine bir iç politika polemiği silahı haline sokulmadığıdır.” Y.K. Karaosmanoğlu, “Devlet Radyosu”, *Ulus*, 20 October 1958.

¹³¹ Yalçın Tuna, “Radyoda Sözlü Saldırı Suçları”, *Ulus*, 3 November 1958.

¹³² Y.K. Karaosmanoğlu, “Basın ve Radyo Münakaşaları Sebebiyle”, *Ulus*, 6 February 1959.

¹³³ Yalçın Tuna, “Devlet Radyosunun Neşriyatı ve İlgili Bakanın Mesuliyeti”, *Ulus*, 11 February 1959. In “Devlet Radyosu ve İktidar”, *Ulus*, 18 January 1959, Yalçın Tuna finds it absurd that even DP members complain about the radio. In “Radyo Neşriyatı Hakkında”, *Ulus*, 20 January 1959, Erdoğan Tamer files a sarcastic complaint about partisan broadcasts.

¹³⁴ “Radyo Dinleyin!” *Akis*, 15 September 1959.

In the 1960s, radio broadcasts were less and less contested by parties, be it the government or the opposition. Printed forms of mass media were used more effectively for propaganda purposes, and a certain amount of impartiality became the norm with respect to state-owned radio broadcasts. Similarly, when television became popular in the 1970s, the debates over its impartiality and the distribution of minutes of airtime was much more benign than the debates over radio use in the 1950s, which proved to be the heyday for the political use of radio.

Two events are worth mentioning here, even though they do not strictly fit under the title in discussion; they do, however, reflect a certain camaraderie to the extent that humor is made part of the political attitude. In 1960, government intervention in the media and its resolve to manage news reached unprecedented levels. One blatant example took place in Eskişehir, involving not radio broadcasts but a mode of protest akin to “radio non-listening.” On 22 April, the local newspaper *Sakarya* was withdrawn by order of the governor because it had published the investigation commission’s report. The next day’s headline read: “How to Cook Stuffed Aubergine” (“*Patlıcan Dolması Nasıl Yapılır?*”). The article on the first page cautioned that aubergines must be carefully chosen so as not to cause indigestion, and that using vegetable oil rendered better results than margarine. Needless to say, for the people of Eskişehir, the paper made their day.

On 31 March 1964, the workers of the Singer sewing machine factory employed a humorous mode of protest to voice their demands. The Miners’ Union had sent in a record player and an accordion, to the accompaniment of which the workers danced the twist on the grass adjacent to the factory.

Other Associations

Going back to the beginning of the 1950s, one is struck by the sense of democratic experimentation, or daring, which permeated even those issues one would consider taboo. The Korean War is a case in point. On 3 July 1950, Tefvik S. Yürüten founded the Korea Volunteers Society (*Kore Gönüllüleri Cemiyeti*) with the aim, as the name suggests, of conscripting volunteers to go to the war – thousands apply within days. Only later did it occur to the officials that this activity was actually in violation of the constitution, attempting as it did to rouse enmity against a country with which Turkey was not yet officially at war.

The Peace-Lovers Society (*Barışsevenler Cemiyeti*) was founded on 21 May 1950 by Behice Boran, Adnan Cemgil, Nevzad Özmeriç, Vahdeddin Barut, Osman Faruk Toprakoğlu, Turgut Pura, Affan Kırımlı, Reşad Sevinçsoy, and Muvakkar Güran. Their stated purpose was as follows: “The preservation of an honorable peace is essential for the future of our country which is trying to develop democratically and socially. It is of utmost importance that the Turkish nation, like all other nations, demand the illegalization of weapons of mass destruction that will be used against civilians during a war. The aim of the Turkish Peace-Lovers Society is to give voice to this peace demand of the Turkish people, to engage in legal action for the installation of an honorable and stable peace, to publish works for this purpose.”¹³⁵

¹³⁵ “Demokratik yolda gelişmeye ve terakki yolunda ilerlemeye çalışan memleketimizin geleceği bakımından şerefli bir barışın idamesi, hayati bir zarurettir. Sivil halka karşı kitle halinde imha silahlarının kullanılacağı bir harpte bütün milletler gibi Türk milletinin de, bu silahların kanun dışı edilmesini istemesi en acil bir davadır. Türk Barışsevenler Cemiyetinin gayesi, Türk halkının bu barış ihtiyacına tercüman olarak şerefli ve sağlam bir barışın kurulması için kanunlarımızın çerçevesi içinde gerekli faaliyet ve neşriyatta bulunmak...” Feyizoğlu, p. 71.

Towards the end of July 1950, the Peace-Lovers Society distributed twenty-four thousand pamphlets against the war, and sent a telegram to the parliament to demand the repeal of the decision to send in 4,500 troops. There was, of course, a limit to such experimentation, and the attorney general in İstanbul started an investigation on the day the telegram was sent. Security forces arrested the members of the society the next day. They were sentenced to fifteen years each by the military court in Ankara, but because the crime had been committed during peacetime, their sentences were reduced to three years and nine months. Only the printer and the typesetter were acquitted. Less than a year later, on 7 April 1951, the military supreme court ruled that the case did not lie within its jurisdiction, and ordered the release of the prisoners.

On the right, various associations such as the Turkish Culture Hearths (*Türk Kültür Ocakları*), the Turkish Youth Organization (*Türkiye Gençlik Teşkilatı*), the Turkish Cultural Studies Association (*Türkiye Kültür Araştırmaları Derneği*) and the Young Turks Society (*Jön Türkler Cemiyeti*) came together to form the Nationalists Federation (*Milliyetçiler Federasyonu*) in April 1950. Bekir Berk was elected president. He declared the aim of the federation as “uniting nationalist associations, representing the nationalist Turkish youth and fighting communism.”¹³⁶ In the General Congress gathered in Ankara on 24 July 1952, these aims were broadened to include “bringing up young people as exemplary Turkish nationalists, protecting their rights and voicing their demands.”¹³⁷ At this date, the federation had around sixty branches. The racist overtones of the federation drew the attention of

¹³⁶ “*Milliyetçi dernekleri birleştirmek, milliyetçi Türk gençliğini temsil etmek ve komünizmle savaşmak.*” Alpay Kabacalı, *Türkiye’de Gençlik Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Altın, 1992), p.122.

¹³⁷ “*Gençleri örnek Türk milliyetçileri olarak yetiştirmek, haklarını korumak ve taleplerine tercüman olmak.*” Ibid., p. 122.

authorities; the DP leadership also grew uncomfortable with this rhetoric, and the Turkish Nationalists Federation was closed down in January 1953.¹³⁸

Teachers' associations were never as prominent as student associations in Turkey, even though they exerted a relatively bigger influence in the 1970s. The first seeds of these organizations are to be found in Teacher Co-Operation Associations (*Öğretmen Yardım Dernekleri*), established from 1948 onwards. More than sixty such associations convened in Kayseri in September 1950, with the aim of becoming united. This they did, and took on the name of the National Union of Turkish Teacher Associations (*Türkiye Öğretmen Dernekleri Milli Birliği*).

Freemason lodges had been banned in 1935, but became active again in 1948. In 1964, when Süleyman Demirel became a candidate for the Justice Party (JP) leadership, rumors were spread that he was a freemason, and freemasonry became a form of popular slander, forcing the lodges to become less transparent in their activities. This, however, had not always been so. On 30 January 1951, for example, grand master Mim Kemal Öke released a press statement after the annual congress asserting that "there is nothing more ludicrous than attempting to cast us as atheists serving the aims of Christendom."¹³⁹

Women's organizations also became more active in the 1950s. The Turkish Women's Union held a congress in February 1951, resolving to join the World Women's Union and to work harder for the advancement of Turkish women. In an article entitled "Why Has the Women's Union Been Founded?" ("Kadınlar Birliği Neden Kuruldu?") Mebrure Aksoley compared the status of the Turkish women in

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.123.

¹³⁹ "Bizi dinsiz ve Hıristiyan emellerine hizmet eder göstermek kadar gülünç bir şey yoktur." *Ulus*, 31 January 1951.

1951 with that of 1935, and concluded that the current condition of women was wanting, having actually regressed during the twenty-five years. She pointed out that the old women's union, which aimed at obtaining modern rights for Turkish women, had been closed down in 1935, and that the new Women's Union, established on 13 April 1949, aimed at the same thing: to further the education and role of women in society, and to establish links with the women of the world.¹⁴⁰

The Society for Spreading Free Ideas (*Serbest Fikirleri Yayma Cemiyeti*) felt it necessary in 1951 to announce its stance on the matter of religious fundamentalism. Secretary General Burhan Apaydın issued a statement on 29 March, emphasizing the urgency of fighting *irtica*. The Turkish Women's Union did the same on 13 April.

In January 1953, the Turkish Nationalists Association issued a statement which was highly critical of Atatürk and his reforms; what was more, the association refused to participate in the demonstration organized to protest the attack on Atatürk's statue in Ankara's Zafer Square. Student organizations roundly condemned the Nationalists Association for this behavior, and before the end of the month the attorney general started an investigation, closing down the headquarters and all the branches and confiscating all its property. The Democrat Party decided to jettison all its members involved with the association, like Energy Minister T. İleri, who had provided the association with funding for the past two years from the ministry budget.

¹⁴⁰ Mebrure Aksoley, "Kadınlar Birliği Neden Kuruldu?" *Ulus*, 6 April 1951.

The rise in fundamentalism led the owners of the major newspapers to seek an association of their own: the National Solidarity Front (*Milli Tesevüt Cephesi*), was founded on 11 February 1953. Among its founding members were the owners of major newspapers, editors, various other associations, the presidents of İstanbul University and İstanbul Technical University, the İstanbul Bar Association, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Union of Turkish Teachers, the Turkish Women's Union, the National Turkish Student Union, the Turkish Revolution Hearths, and the Federation of İstanbul Workers' Union, among others. As such, it constituted a veritable "civil society" action. The declared object of the Front was to lend support to the fight waged by the government against *irtica* and racism, and to spread this fight throughout the country.¹⁴¹

Throughout the 1950s, the Cyprus is Turkish Association (*Kıbrıs Türktür Derneği*) actively supported the Turkish cause regarding the Cyprus issue, at times even hindering it due to too much activism. On 15 April 1955, telegrams sent to the government from fifty-three of its branches demanded action against the terrorist activities in Cyprus. On the next day, a general meeting was held in the Karagümürük branch at Edirnekapı to discuss various policies concerning Cyprus and to affirm that the island would indeed "remain Turkish". In September of that year, the association was held partly responsible for the violence exhibited on 6-7 September. In the aftermath of these events, which will be discussed in the chapters to follow, the association denied any such responsibility. The president of the National Turkish Student Union, Nejat Çerman, told news reporters on 9 September 1955 that Turkish higher education students did not approve of "street politics", and that the Cyprus is Turkish Association had nothing to do with the incidents in İzmir and İstanbul.

¹⁴¹ *Ulus*, 12 February 1953.

An interesting attempt at association formation was one undertaken by the disgruntled officers of the 1960 coup who were forced to resign or retire because they were considered to be against the coup or in the process of concocting a coup of their own. Their activities, however, soon drew the attention of the government, and EMINSU (*Emekli İnkılap Subayları Derneği* – Association of Retired Revolution Officers), as their association was called, was closed down on 6 September 1961, on the grounds that “it engaged in activities harmful to the interests of the country under the present conditions.”¹⁴² Nonetheless, EMINSU continued its activities; on 24 May 1962, for example, it issued a strongly worded statement, criticizing the natural senators for attempting to monopolize the revolution and for forgetting their vows: “Until the EMINSU issue is resolved in this country, it will not be possible to engage in social, economic and political reforms and to ensure peace throughout the land.”¹⁴³

The first years of the Second Republic were filled with a sort of experimentation with ideas unparalleled before. In this vein, for example, Hilmi Özgen attempted to defend socialism by pointing out the similarities between socialistic tenets and the maxims of major religions such as Islam and Christianity. In an article published in *Yön*, Özgen argued that most religious movements in history, both Christian and Islamic, had been founded on socialist principles, and cited the Karmati uprisings, the Sheikh Bedrettin uprisings, and the *Ahi* tradition as examples.¹⁴⁴ Even though the Constitution of 1961 was probably the most liberal and “leftist” of all, the post-coup era was still marred by accusations of communism. One

¹⁴² “*Yapılan tahkikat neticesinde derneğin bugünkü şartlar muvacehesinde memleket menfaatlerine zararlı faaliyette bulunduğu tesbit edildi.*” *Vatan*, 7 September 1961.

¹⁴³ “*Bu memlekette EMİNSU davası halledilmedikçe, sosyal, ekonomik ve politik hiçbir reform yapılmasına ve dolayısıyla huzurun tesisine imkan yoktur.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 25 Mayıs 1962.

¹⁴⁴ Hilmi Özgen, “İslamda Halk Hareketleri”, *Yön*, 29 August 1962.

such incident occurred on 1 November 1964, when a lawsuit was brought against a magazine and its translator for having published an article by Babeuff. A number of the big wheels of the Turkish literati protested this by putting a garland at the base of the Independence Memorial in Taksim Square. Representing the Writers' Union were Melih Cevdet Anday, Yaşar Kemal, Arif Damar, Şükran Kurdakul, together with members of the Union who claimed to be accidentally passing through the Square, namely Memet Fuat, Demir Özlü and Edip Cansever. Vedat Günyol and Orhan Arsal claimed they were not even there at the time, but all of the above were arrested anyway. The case was closed on 23 December, and all the writers were acquitted.

Writers were not left to their own devices for very long, however. On 13 July 1971, Sabahattin Eyüpoğlu, Azra Erhat, Vedat Günyol, Magdalena Rufer and Matilda Gökçeli (Yaşar Kemal's wife) came under military investigation, on charges of "forming a secret society with the purpose of destroying a social class."¹⁴⁵

The violent political action of the 1970s (see Chapter Eight) has its roots in the last years of the 1960s. Taking part in that violence on the right would be the "comando"s aligned with first the Republican Peasant Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi*) and later, the National Movement Party (*Milli Hareket Partisi*). These paramilitary groups underwent training in camps founded by these parties from the summer of 1968. These camps were established on the outskirts of İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir, and there were reports that smaller camps were being opened in other parts of Anatolia. According to the semi-official mouthpiece of the RPNP, the National Movement (*Milli Hareket*), the daily schedule of the camps was as follows: prayer in the morning, two hours of physical education (judo, wrestling, boxing),

¹⁴⁵ "Sosyal bir sınıfı ortadan kaldırmak amacı ile gizli bir cemiyet kurma iddiası", *Milliyet*, 14 July 1971.

breakfast, reading period, lunch, two hours of physical education (as above, plus walking on rope and climbing walls), prayer, tracking, games, prayer, dinner, lectures (such as “the spirit of nationalism in face of communism”). The militants adopted the name “commando” at first, but later changed this to “nationalist socialists,” “grey wolves” (*bozkurtlar*) and finally to *ülkücüs*.¹⁴⁶ Alparslan Türkeş, the leader of the NMP, said that the “grey wolves” helped the party in fighting against communism.¹⁴⁷

Even though student organizations and many associations were banned, the issue remained on the forefront of political debates. In an article entitled “The Youth Problem and Duties” (“*Gençlik Sorunu ve Görevler*”), Oya Baydar argued that even though a socialist party did not yet exist in Turkey, it was necessary to convince the youth that they did not of themselves constitute an “advance guard”, that their organizations could never replace a socialist party. All youth organizations and actions, according to Baydar, needed to serve the working class and its ideology; this was the only way the revolutionist potential of youth could be most efficiently used.¹⁴⁸

Writing in 1975, Baykal Gürsoy insisted that getting organized was the *sine qua non* condition of class struggle. “Youth movements gained momentum after 1968-69 and until 12 March, that is the stage at which fascism became blatant. These movements have developed and played an ever-increasing role in national politics. The university students in Turkey became involved in collective action during 1968-69 in order to solve some of their academic problems and to put an end to the anti-

¹⁴⁶ “Ülkücü” literally means “idealist”, and is used to denote sympathizers and militants of the far-right, nationalist movement.

¹⁴⁷ Kabacalı, p. 217.

democratic practices on campus. These actions made it clear to students that their problems cannot be held separate from national problems.”¹⁴⁹

Gürsoy argued that youth movements had to have a class-struggle consciousness, and that the youth must align itself with the working class in order to obtain results. The problems of the youth arose from economic problems, and this was true for the whole world. It was necessary, according to Gürsoy, for various segments of the young population to organize first as students, workers, peasants, etc, and then contribute to a central socialist organization that would act as one with the workers. The Young Socialists Union (*Genç Sosyalistler Birliği*), headed by Gürsoy, aimed to lead the youth in this process of organization and concomitant unification with the workers’ movement.¹⁵⁰

Student associations were the predominant organizations among collective actors for most of the era under study and, as will be seen in Chapter Five, they were the ones responsible for the majority of demonstrations and marches, the most visible forms of collective action. Their stature as guardians of the regime was probably a factor in the ease with which they got organized. As for other groups willing to engage in collective political action, less direct forms seemed more suitable. The use of symbols was one such form, and was most popular among religious fundamentalists,

¹⁴⁸ Oya Baydar, “Gençlik Sorunu ve Görevler”, *İlke*, no.6 (June 1974), pp. 3-8.

¹⁴⁹ “Türkiye’de de gençlik hareketleri 1968-69 döneminden sonra hızla gelişmiş ve bu hareketler 12 Mart dönemine kadar, yoğun bir şekilde devam etmiştir. 1968-69 döneminde Türkiye’de üniversite gençliği akademik bazı sorunlarını halletmek ve üniversite içindeki anti-demokratik uygulamaya son vermek amacıyla harekete geçmiştir. Bu hareketler, kısa zamanda gençliğe, kendi sorunlarının, ülke sorunlarından soyutlanamayacağı gerçeğini göstermiştir.” Baykal Gürsoy, “Gençlik ve Örgütlenme Sorunu”, *İlke*, 14 Ocak 1975.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

the pariahs of the Atatürkist regime. Attacking statues, busts, and pictures of Atatürk turned into a powerful form of protest; collective action of the secularists in response to these attacks again involved the same symbolism.



CHAPTER 3:

THE POWER OF SYMBOLS

It has often been noted that, particularly in repressive political systems, collective action can take the form of symbolic action – words begin to carry new meanings, particular garments become endowed with special connotations, even the use of certain consumption goods can become politicized. The advantage of symbolic action is twofold: first, even though the meaning of the action is a shared one, that is, it carries a public message, it is nevertheless not in violation of any law, which makes it harder for the regime to accuse individuals engaged in the practice. Second, it allows for individual action and thus averts the dangers –and usually increased penalties- of group action. What one has, in effect, is a widespread mode of political action exercised by a large number of uncoordinated individuals who do not form a group or an organization. Does this, however, really make for collective action?

I would like to argue that it does, albeit with some caveats. The “new social movements” approach, with strong proponents like Tarrow and Melucci, has asserted that one of the novel aspects of the movements in the 1980s and 1990s was the use of symbols in their action repertoire. A case in point was the demonstration organized by ACT-UP, which sheathed the obelisk statue in the Place de la Concorde in Paris with a giant condom, with the intention of highlighting the need for greater AIDS awareness. The subject matter, the strategy, the manipulation of the media and the public reception of the spectacle –indeed, the very form of “spectacle” as a mode of

political action- all testify to the “newness” of the action; nonetheless, these are all contingent elements dictated by historic circumstances. Removing these, one is left with the core element, namely, the idea that symbolic action can be political, and as such, this mode of action goes way back in history. The ahistorical fallacy of the NSM approach should not be an impediment to recognizing similar forms before the 1980s and outside western European societies.

As for the question of whether the action of a number of non-organizational individuals constitutes collective action, the “A Minute’s Darkness for Permanent Light” (*Sürekli Aydınlik için Bir Dakika Karanlık*) events of 1997 in Istanbul and other big cities in Turkey would probably constitute a well-suited answer. In protest of the clandestine associations that emerged in the wake of the infamous traffic accident in Susurluk in 1996 (in which the head of a police academy [who died], a hit man sought by Interpol, with fake ID [who died], a fashion model also with fake ID [who died], and an MP were travelling together in a Mercedes which crashed into a truck) a growing number of people began to turn off their houselights on 9 p.m. every night for one minute. Within a month, participation grew very popular, with many people switching their lights on and off, banging on pots, shouting in the streets, and drivers honking. These protests became so popular, in fact, that similar demonstrations were staged by Turks in Paris, Rotterdam, the Hague, Amsterdam and Washington, D.C., and the whole event received extensive international media coverage.

Apart from the initial call to action published in the daily newspapers, and the concomitant support expressed by various political parties and democratic organizations, the “Darkness for Light” protest was not *organized* in any sense. People heard about it, saw it in action, felt sympathy for the cause, and they

participated. The sense of *collectivity*, on the other hand, was palpable – so much so that towards the end of the pre-determined period of protest, group identities began to form among people who did and did not participate.

It remains to be said that, from an organizational perspective at least, such actions, while rightly considered as types of collective political action, nevertheless make up an inferior sub-category. Their significance lies not in the sophistication of their organization -or lack thereof- but rather in their capability to mobilize individuals to speak out for themselves in forms of action that are common to, and recognized by, a great number of people, and this in a milieu that is not very conducive to such expressiveness.

Any first-time visitor to Turkey, even today, is quick to point out the most widespread symbol throughout the country: Atatürk. Since the early of the 1990s, Turkish political culture has witnessed a certain amount of desanctification with respect to Atatürk. It is now easier to criticize his policies and principles without risking accusations of blasphemy, and it has become somewhat less common to run into his pictures in such places as public toilets, public transportation vehicles, grocery stores or pharmacies. This, however, was not always so.

In roughly the first decade of the post-Atatürk era, starting from 1938, in other words during İsmet İnönü's presidency until 1950, the sanctity of Atatürk as the symbol of the republic remained more or less intact. İnönü attempted to introduce himself as a symbol in his own right by issuing banknotes with his picture on them, and by having his own statues and busts erected throughout the country, but this did

not produce the intended result, perhaps because İnönü was not as charismatic a leader as his predecessor. Atatürk remained the foremost symbol.

In the aftermath of the landslide victory of the Democratic Party in the 1950 elections, a number of legacies from the Republican Party era came under attack, both by the new government and by social actors. The İnönü banknotes were withdrawn from circulation; the call to prayer, which had been delivered in Turkish during the latter part of the İnönü era, was changed back to the traditional Arabic form; a large portion of the immovable property that belonged to the Republican People's Party were confiscated; and İnönü's statues were removed from city squares and public buildings to warehouses. Attacks on Atatürk statues and busts, however, preceded these state initiatives.

The first such attack of a long series occurred on 25 February 1951, in Kırşehir. In the early hours of the morning, the Atatürk statue in Republic Square was attacked, and its nose and chin were broken. *Ulus* reported that “the incident created great sorrow and hatred”, and that “the people of Kırşehir are certain that security forces will soon arrest the unknown culprit.”¹⁵¹ This attack led to widespread protests. On 5 March, a demonstration was held in Kırşehir; one hundred students from İstanbul University took part in this demonstration, under the leadership of Temel Enderoğlu, the president of the İU Student Council. Delivering the message of the İstanbul youth, Enderoğlu said that, “the revulsion we feel at the insolent and impudent attack on the Atatürk statue which adorns the Republic Square of your city is boundless... we bring to all of you who have gathered here around his edifice, the

¹⁵¹ “Atatürk heykeline tecavüz/ Hadise büyük bir teessür ve nefretle karşılandı. Kırşehir’de dün sabahın erken saatlerinde Cumhuriyet meydanındaki Atatürk heykelinin burun ve çene kısımları kırıldı. Kırşehirliiler, emniyet teşkilatının bu meçhul şahsı yakında yakalayacağından emindirler.” *Ulus*, 26 February 1951.

greetings of the nationalist, reformist and Atatürkist youth whom we represent.”¹⁵²

On the same day, the National Turkish Student Union (NTSU) organized a lively meeting at the Eminönü People’s House. The next day, students in Ankara held a condemnation meeting organized by the Ankara Higher Education Student Union (*Ankara Yüksek Tahsil Talebe Birliği*) in Ankara University’s Department of Language, History and Geography. On 9 March, a protest demonstration was organized in Konya, where opponents of Atatürk came under attack, and the Kırşehir incident was condemned. The organizers of this demonstration were the Press Society (*Gazeteciler Cemiyeti*), who professed to act in the name of the youth of Konya. The event took place in one of the movie theaters of the city, and close to two thousand people reportedly attended the event, after which a statement was issued to the effect that the youth were ready to shed their own blood if necessary in order to defend the reforms.

By 18 March the waves of protest had not subsided – the youth of Tokat organized a meeting on that day in Tokat’s Republic Square to condemn Kırşehir. The attack created immediate sensitivity, which at times got misplaced. On the same day, a peasant in Selçuk, İzmir discovered a wrapped-up Atatürk bust in the mud. He informed the village *muhtar* (headman), who transferred the bust to his home and informed the police. A formal investigation ensued, and the papers were quick to label this a second Kırşehir incident. Two days later it was discovered that the bust belonged to Selahattin Önder, a small-scale sculptor from Uşak, who had been living in Selçuk for the last month and a half. He had left the bust with Mustafa Topal, who sold oranges, asking him to sell it for 250 *kuruş*. The bust was then stolen by an

¹⁵² “Şehrinizde Cumhuriyet alanını süsleyen Atatürk büstüne karşı işlenen küstah ve hayasızca tecavüz dolayısıyla duyduğumuz infial sonsuzdur... onun anıtı etrafında toplanan sizlere temsil ettiğimiz milliyetçi, inkılapçı ve Atatürk’çü gençliğin selamlarını iletiyoruz.” *Ulus*, 4 March 1951.

unidentified person, wrapped in clean paper and hidden in the grass in the fields. The next day's papers reported that the thieves were Mehmet Sertel (19) and Ömer Görgülü (12), who had stolen the package from Topal's shop. When they discovered it was just a bust, they dropped it in the field. Two days later they told a peasant named Ali that they had seen a package in the grass, which was how the bust came to be discovered.

Similarly, an Atatürk bust was reportedly attacked in the Alama village of Taşköprü, Kastamonu, on 22 March. The culprit was caught by the gendarme. Later on, a statement issued by the governor of Kastamonu, Nurettin Aynuksa, said that the object attacked was not a bust but a photograph hanging on the wall of a classroom in the village school. A few peasants had entered the building through a broken window and started playing cards. One of them, a 23-year old man named Şükrü, had taken out his knife and practiced knife-throwing with the photograph as his target. The governor expressly stated that the incident had no political content whatsoever.¹⁵³

The 27 March issue of *Ulus* reported that three attacks on Atatürk statues had taken place within one week. One was in Eryamanlar, where the villagers had commissioned a concrete bust of Atatürk in 1939; the second was in Burhaniye, where a man named Rasim Akcan broke the bust in the police station; and the third was in Dalama, Aydın, where the bust in the DP building was attacked and its eyes were "abominably carved out."¹⁵⁴

İnönü's statues also received their fair share of this kind of vandalism. On 29 March, 1951, one arm of the İnönü bust in front of the Ministry of Education

¹⁵³ *Ulus*, 23 March 1951.

¹⁵⁴ "Tam gözlerine gelen kısım iğrenç bir şekilde telvis edilmiştir." *Ulus*, 27 March 1951.

Pavilion at the İzmir Fair was broken. On 30 May, *Ulus* complained that the İnönü bust in the Ereğli Cloth Factory had been taken down, just like the İnönü photograph at the Pötürge City Club.

On 7 April of the same year, the government announced that it had drafted a new law in response to the increase in attacks against Atatürk, and the draft was sent over to the Justice Commission. Upon the RPP deputy Kamil Boran's question, the Minister of Interior Halil Özyörük informed the Parliament on 27 April that from the date of Atatürk's death to 14 May 1950, there had been sixty-seven attacks; the number of attacks since then (i.e., during the past year) was twenty-nine. All of the culprits, he said, had been arrested. The RPP announced that it was in favor of the draft, but wanted it to explicitly express that these attacks aimed at the very foundations of the Republic and the reforms. The party's main objection, however, was the clause which stipulated the banning of statues of living persons, which of course meant İnönü. Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver asked the Assembly to avoid passing such a law, which also worked backwards in time, requiring existing statues to be taken down. Cezmi Türk warned the deputies on 21 May that "the people don't like our messing with İnönü."¹⁵⁵ On 8 June, the "statue law" as it was called was rejected in Parliament. On 25 July, the final version of the draft was voted and accepted – the law stipulated imprisonment for one to three years of those who insulted the memory of Atatürk in public. Attacks against photographs were left out, and no mention was made of attacks against reforms.

Meanwhile, the attacks continued, sometimes extending the range of symbolic action to include the Turkish flag. In Konya, for example, on 10 April, some members of the Konya Turkish Youth Organization Association (*Konya Türk*

¹⁵⁵ "İnönü ile fazla uğraşmayalım, milletin hoşuna gitmiyor." *Ulus*, 22 May 1951.

Gençlik Teşkilatı Derneği) came across a shop with a broken window; the hole in the window had been stopped with a flag. With great bravado the young men broke the window and rescued the flag. Upon inspection, security forces found out that the shop belonged a sign-painter who was being tried for communist propaganda, and that the flag was in sad shape, smeared with oil paint and torn in places.

Attacks continued unabated through 1951. On 2 July, an unidentified individual broke the Atatürk statue in the garden of the Mohair Society Model Farm (*Tiftik Cemiyeti Numune Çifliği*) in Lalahan, Ankara. The next day, a big demonstration was held in İzmir's Republic Square, in protest of such attacks. Members of the RPP and the DP, the mayor, teachers, intellectuals and townspeople attended the meeting. The National Anthem was sung, and speeches were delivered after lots were drawn to determine the order. One of the placards read "*İtcaniler*" (dog criminals), a wordplay on the *Ticanis*, a Muslim sect held responsible for the attacks. Vows were taken to protect the reforms, and people stood guard in front of the Atatürk statue, with torches in hand. A week later, a similar protest demonstration was held in Aydın, organized by the local Students of Higher Education Association (*Yüksek Tahsil Talebeleri Derneği*). On the same day, A Ticiani dervish attacked a bust with his stick in a grocery store in Eskişehir, but was averted by a child who took away the bust and held it against his chest. On 21 August, the bas-relief of Atatürk on a fountain in Altındağ, Ankara, was destroyed, but the governor denied that there had been an attack, putting the blame on the wear of time.¹⁵⁶

Sensitivity on this issue continued to lead to exaggerations. When a Sitki Arslan, hailing from Gümüşhane, decided to climb the Atatürk statue in Ulus,

¹⁵⁶ *Ulus*, 23 August 1951.

Ankara, and speak his mind, he was duly taken away by the police, who suspected he was either mentally unstable or a *Ticani*.

Such actions created their symmetrical opposite. In Eryamanlar, a new bust, donated by President Celal Bayar, was installed in the place of the broken one after a big ceremony on 25 April, attended by the governor of Ankara. Another ceremony was held in the National Turkish Student Union's Laleli center on 30 April for a flag sent to the Turkish youth by General Tahsin Yazıcı, head of the Turkish forces in Korea. İnönü himself attended the opening ceremony on 19 May for an Atatürk statue by the sculptor Sabiha erected in Çankaya, Ankara. On 16 November, the senate of Ankara University decided to have a statue "of a size commensurate with the greatness of Atatürk"¹⁵⁷ to be erected on the campus. İstanbul University decided to do the same, via the initiative of the students. İş Bank donated twenty thousand TL for this statue. *Ulus* supported the initiative, and started a fundraising campaign itself.

1952 was no different. On 21 January, the bas-relief pictures of Atatürk and İnönü on the wall of the People's House were broken down publicly in Biga, Çanakkale, where the audience shouted, "Hit the eye!" and "That's the way!"¹⁵⁸ On 1 March, an engineer called Hüseyin Türkmen found a destroyed Atatürk bust in the mud in the Parliament parking lot. The culprit was arrested two days later. His identity was not disclosed, but he was a *Ticani*. On 18 March, a bust of İnönü in Selçuk was attacked, and its chin was broken. On 18 April, the Atatürk picture in the

¹⁵⁷ "... dikilecek abidenin Atatürk'ün büyüklüğü ile mütenasip olması." *Ulus*, 17 November 1951.

¹⁵⁸ "Vur, gözüne vur!" "Ha şöyle!" *Ulus*, 22 January 1952.

primary school of Lakdikras, Kars, was torn to pieces by three people during the lunch hour, with the students witnessing the act.

Ankara University's plans for a new Atatürk statue gained momentum in 1953. The rector decided the base stones to be brought in from all the provinces so that "all corners of the country will be represented."¹⁵⁹ The president of the NTSU gave a detailed description of the statue: "The monument has three figures. In the center is Atatürk, with his left arm raised, pointing to the future of the Turkish people. On his left is a young girl, symbolizing the past struggles of our nation. On his right is a young man with a flag over his shoulder, symbolizing the Atatürkist youth. In this monument Atatürk is depicted in the idea of eternity; thus he wears no dress or uniform to suggest his being a great soldier or a statesman. The monument will be seven meters high together with the base, and will be cast in bronze."¹⁶⁰

One of the "counter-uses" of Atatürk as a symbol involves his mausoleum, the Anıtkabir, in Ankara. Visits paid there often turn into a form of collective political action with the intention of underlining secular or Atatürkist intentions. In 1953, for example, university students of Ankara gathered twice, once in March and once in November, and went to the Anıtkabir in order to renew their vows to protect the reforms.

Assaults on Atatürk's image continued. On June 6, 1955, Mehmet Demirbaş from Büyükdere entered the RPP building and tore two of Atatürk's pictures into pieces. Caught red-handed, he was sent for medical examination.

¹⁵⁹ "Heykelin kaidesine konacak taşların Türkiye'nin her vilayetinden ayrı ayrı getirilmesi ve böylece yurdun her köşesinin temsil edilmesi komitece kararlaştırılmıştır." *Ulus*, 7 February 1953.

¹⁶⁰ "Anıt üç figürlüdür. Ortada Atatürk sol kolunu yukarı kaldırmış, Türk milletinin geleceğine işaret etmektedir. Solunda bir genç kız, milletimizin geçirdiği mücadeleleri temsil ediyor. Sağda bir genç erkek ve omzunda bir bayrak vardır. Bu da Atatürk gençliğini ifade ediyor. Bu anıtta Atatürk ebediyet fikri içinde şekillendirilmiştir. Üstünde büyük bir kumandan veya devlet adamı olduğunu hatırlatan bir elbise yoktur. Heykel kaidesiyle beraber 7 metre yüksekliğinde olacak ve bronzdan yapılacaktır." *Ulus*, 8 February 1953.

The events of 6-7 September 1955 have been studied extensively elsewhere and have gone down in Turkish history as an example of provocation and manipulation of the masses into hysterical reaction aimed at minority citizens and their property. For the purposes of this study, one feature of the upheaval is of special significance: the use of symbols in turning the metropolitan crowds into mobs. On the night of the 6th, rioting masses wrought havoc on the streets of İstanbul and İzmir, ostensibly in protest of the prosecution of Turks in Cyprus and the news that Atatürk's house and the Turkish Consulate in Salonica had been bombed. The target, of course, was the Greek minority in these two cities; their houses and shops in Beyoğlu, Pangaltı, Yüksek Kaldırım, Karaköy, Bankalar Avenue, Eminönü, Sirkeci and Kumkapı were looted, put to fire, and vandalized. People began to gather in Taksim around 6 p.m., upon the spreading of the news about Atatürk's house, and marched in different directions. The mob grew in size as the march continued. Churches were put to fire in Taksim and Yenışehir. The upheavals spread uncontrollably throughout the city after 11 p.m. One group uprooted the electrical poles of the railway between Sirkeci and Bakırköy and used them to attack stores and houses in Yeşilköy and Bakırköy.

Military troops were brought in from neighboring İzmit and martial law was declared, banning all long distance telephone calls. In İzmir, the Greek Consulate, the Greek Orthodox Church, and boats belonging to Greeks were burnt. The next day, after midnight, a march was organized by Ankara University students, who gathered in front of the Law Department and walked down to Ulus singing "Misty Mountain Top" ("Dağ Başını Duman Almış") and the National Anthem, continuing on to Sıhhiye. Here the crowd shouted slogans against the Greeks who had bombed

Atatürk's house. In Kurtuluş the police clashed with the crowd. On 8 September, a group of children aged 8-10 attempted to march to Anıtkabir with Atatürk's pictures and maps of Cyprus in their hands, but were dispersed by security forces.

An article that appeared in *Forum* one year after the incidents accused the government of doing nothing on the issue: "Right after the event, the authorities, who know how these things happened much better than we do, called the incidents [of 6-7 September 1955] 'a national disaster'. But such a diagnosis would have required the heaviest punishment of all those responsible, all those who were at fault and showed neglect... Then, as time has passed and the memory of the incident has become dimmer, the same authorities have started to call the incidents 'a national uprising',"¹⁶¹ thus exempting the perpetrators of investigation.

The summer of 1956 witnessed two attacks on Mersin's Atatürk statue. The first came on 27 July. Osman Memiş from Niğde stood in front of the statue and started berating it. Passersby informed the police, who came and took Memiş to the police station for interrogation. About two weeks later, on 13 August, Mehmed Zelho climbed on top of the statue and started to hit it with a sledgehammer. He could not be caught by the people in the vicinity, and managed to run away. He was later arrested by the police in front of his house, to be tried for violation of the Atatürk law.

1957 was not without incidents. In Silivri's Çeltik village, on 22 April, Mustafa Başak invited Mehmet Ali Aygün (19) for *iftar*, the evening meal during

¹⁶¹ "Hadisenin hemen akabinde, bu işin nasıl cereyan ettiğini hepimizden iyi bilen resmi makamlar, bunu 'milli bir felaket' olarak adlandırdılar. Fakat milli bir felaket teşhisi, mutlaka buna sebep olanların, kusur ve ihmali görülenlerin, en ağır bir şekilde cezalandırılmasını gerektirirdi..."

Nihayet zaman ilerleyip, bu hadisenin hafızalardaki tesirinin küllenmeye başladığı bir devrede, 6-7 Eylül, resmi makamlar tarafından 'milli bir galeyana' olarak tavsif edildi." "6 Eylülü Nasıl Adlandıracağız?", *Forum*, 15 September 1956.

Ramadan. After the meal, while sitting in the living room, Aygün saw Başak's bust of Atatürk, got mad and broke it to pieces. On the next day, a holiday celebrating national sovereignty, a Greek immigrant was found to be going around in villages dressed as an *imam*, preaching against Atatürk and breaking his busts.

In November, Çanakkale became the locus of similar incidents. On 30 October, in the town of Çan, a number of young men destroyed Atatürk's portrait and got arrested. On 4 November, in the village of Gökçalı, some unidentified people broke the Atatürk bust in the village square by throwing stones at it. The coffee shop owner Mustafa Pehlivan repaired the bust himself and then painted it. The next day, one of the attackers was caught and delivered to the Çanakkale court of justice.

1958 was the year when the Cyprus issue came to a head. On 28 January, British forces used their weapons against Turkish Cypriots for the first time. Turkey refused to accept British proposals, and Britain replaced the military governor on the island with Sir Hugh Foot. On 19 June, Prime Minister Macmillan announced a new plan which entailed a partnership regime; there would be an interim government for seven years, after which a new government would be formed based on the British, Turkish, Greek and the Turkish and Greek Cypriots on the island. Greece and Makarios refused the proposal; Turkey found it wanting with respect to clarification of the status of the island, but nevertheless announced on 25 August that it was not against the plan, which was then put into practice in October. Greek terrorist attacks disrupted the plan's success, and the United Nations took up the issue in November. The Political Commission decided for a conference to be held with all parties attending, and for a new constitution to be written. The Zurich and London

conferences were held in 1959, as a result of which the Cyprus Republic was founded in 1960.¹⁶²

The Turkish flag emerged in this period as the foremost symbol of patriotism and national solidarity. At times, the flag replaced any practical aid sent to Cyprus and took on the quality of aid in its own right. Thus on 9 February, the NTSU organized a campaign to send flags to the Turkish Cypriots. The campaign proved to be very popular – 250 flags were donated in one day. This was regarded as ample response to the British forces on the island, who had confiscated Turkish flags during a demonstration and refused to give them back. Even though the British agreed the next day to return the flags to Dr. Küçük, the NTSU went ahead and sent all the donated flags to Cyprus, after the members of the Union took a pledge on them.

Alongside the Turkish flag, Atatürk's figure was also deemed to be a source of hope for the Turkish Cypriots and a sign of their compatriots' solidarity back in the motherland. It was in this vein that sculptor Mehmet İnci made a big bust of Atatürk using a special stone brought in from Balıkesir, and sent it to Cyprus on 28 April 1959.

1958 was also a year of increased strife with respect to domestic politics. The DP was attempting to stifle all forms of opposition, criticism and freedom of expression. At such a time, the safest bet was to revert to the use of symbols once again, and this was exactly what *Ulus* did on 19 May, the national holiday for youth and sports. The paper ran a long quotation from Atatürk which called on the “revolutionist youth” to protect the regime:

¹⁶² *Cumhuriyetin 75 Yılı* (İstanbul: YKY, 1998), pp.432-451.

The Turkish youth is the owner and keeper of the reforms and the regime; he has identified himself with the regime and the reforms, and as soon as he detects the slightest or greatest attempt to weaken them, you [sic] will not leave it to the police, the gendarme, the military, or the judiciary to take counter-action. You will fight against it immediately and protect what is your own work. The police may come and arrest him instead of the real culprits. The youth will think that the police are not yet the police of the reforms, but will never beg for pardon. The court will find him guilty, and again he will think: 'it is necessary to streamline the judiciary as well.' He will be put in jail, but he will say: 'I did what my conscience and judgment dictated; I am right in my intervention and action. If I am here unjustly, it is my duty to correct the causes and factors that create this injustice.'¹⁶³

The public prosecutor took immediate action against the newspaper, demanding to know the source for the quotation, which indeed was questionable: Rıza Ruşen Türer's book of mostly hearsay stories of Atatürk, entitled *A Few Stories and Memories of Atatürk*.¹⁶⁴

On 2 June, the municipal council of Bafra, Samsun, decided to take down its İnönü statue. The RPP was outraged, but could not do much because it was replaced with Atatürk's statue. They could only complain that "there was no ceremony for the placement of the new statue, which the people thought was a shame."¹⁶⁵

The Cyprus meeting on 12 June was rich in the use of symbols. One hundred fifty thousand people gathered at the Anıtkabir to protest the British and the Greeks;

¹⁶³ "Türk genci inkılapların ve rejimin sahibi ve bekçisidir. Rejimi ve inkılabı benimsemiştir. Bunları zayıf düşürecek en küçük veya en büyük bir kıpırtı, bir hareket duydu mu, bu memleketin polisi vardır, jandarması vardır, ordusu vardır, adliyesi vardır demiyecüksin. Hemen mücadele edeceksin ve kendi eserini koruyacaksın. Polis gelecektir, asıl suçluları bırakıp suçlu diye O'nu yakalayacaktır. Genç, polis henüz inkılabın polisi değildir, diye düşünecek, fakat asla yalvarmayacaktır. Mahkeme O'nu mahkum edecektir. Gene düşünecek: demek adliyeyi de ıslah etmek lazım, diyecek. O'nu hapse atacaktlar. Diyecekki: 'Ben iman ve kanaatimin icabını yaptım. Müdahale ve hareketimde haklıyım. Eğer buraya haksız olarak gelmişsem, bu haksızlığı meydana getiren sebep ve amilleri düzeltmek benim vazifemdir.'" *Ulus*, 19 May 1958.

¹⁶⁴ Rıza Ruşen Türer, *Atatürk'e Ait Birkaç Fıkra ve Hatırası*.

¹⁶⁵ "Bu büstün yerleştirilmesi sırasında hiçbir tören yapılmaması halk arasında üzüntü ile karşılanmıştır." *Ulus*, 3 June 1958.

young men displayed painted maps of the island on their bare chests, *efes* (swashbucklers) with national costumes were there, as well as other old people and students carrying caricatures of the British government and Makarios, the Greek Orthodox leader of Cyprus, in their hands. An effigy of Makarios was hanged and then burned.

8 November brought vindication to the RPP. Ahmet Özoğlu, the mayor of Gelibolu, who had taken down İnönü's statue eight years earlier, finally received a sentence in court for his deed.

As the DP rule grew increasingly hostile towards any actual or even potential opposition in 1959, various tools came to the forefront to manipulate public opinion, and the sensitive issue of minorities, especially with the developments in Cyprus in the background, provided many such opportunities. At times, however, attempts at manipulation became too obvious and bordered on being ridiculous. For example, a junior high school student named Povliya Çola, obviously of Greek descent, was arrested by the police on the grounds that he had torn out a picture of Atatürk published in *Hayat* magazine and thrown it on the ground on 14 July.

The coup d'état of 1960 changed the political climate in Turkey drastically, but as far as the use of symbols goes, it mostly served to institutionalize existing tendencies. Atatürk's statues and busts, for example, would no longer be produced haphazardly. A new association was founded under the name of the Association for the Production of Atatürk Statues (*Atatürk Heykeli Yaptırma Derneği*) for the express purpose represented by its name. On 18 August 1961, one such statue made under the auspices of this body was erected in Kütahya. On 10 September, a new Atatürk

bust was installed in the garden of the Torpedo Depot Administration in Kocaeli in a ceremony attended by the governor and the commander of the army corps.

The alleged bombing of Atatürk's house in Selanik in 1955 had caused riots in İstanbul. A similar thing might have happened in 1962, when Atatürk's house in Şişli, now a museum, caught fire. On 9 January, after midnight, upon hearing the news, thousands of university students left their dormitories to gather in Taksim. They marched to Harbiye, reached the house, and sang the national anthem. Two minutes of silence followed, after which the governor made a speech. The crowd dispersed peacefully, since there were no identifiable suspects, and no agitators.

Agitation would soon follow. In Silifke, on 28 May, a young Islamic fundamentalist named Kürşat Kunt (30) destroyed Atatürk's bust in front of the local high school. He was caught, and a protest march was organized by the youth of the town, who then replaced the broken bust with a new one. When a similar attack occurred in Kulu on 17 September, the Turkish National Youth Organization condemned the act and issued a statement claiming that the reason why such attacks continued was the lenient application of laws, and asking for forceful punishment of the attackers. On 21 September, the representatives of youth organizations came together to visit the Anıtkabir in condemnation of the recent attacks. Leaving a garland of flowers at the mausoleum, they signed the guest book, stating that they were "ready to join our friends who have been lost in the battle for democracy."¹⁶⁶

The 27 May Idea Club organized a conference at the Turkish National Student Federation, where "all the progressive forces of Turkey" were invited to a

¹⁶⁶ "Demokrasi uğruna verdiğimiz şehit arkadaşlarımızın yanına gelmeğe hazırız." *Cumhuriyet*, 22 September 1962.

close co-operation in the name of “the great revolutionary war.”¹⁶⁷ This was followed a week later by the words of three Justice Party senators in the town club of Giresun, to the effect that they were determined to erect Menderes’s statue right beside that of Atatürk. The youth present there applied to the public prosecutor’s office for the necessary action to be taken. General Güventürk, who happened to be there at the time of the incident, spoke harshly and was quoted by the papers: “We will string up the carcasses of those who attempt to hang another picture beside Atatürk’s, or erect another statue beside his. Let them do it.”¹⁶⁸

It was not until February 1964 that a new attack was staged. On 14 February, a primary school teacher named Osman Nuri Amasyalı bought two Atatürk busts from a bookstore in Urfa and then smashed one of them right in front of the shop and took the other to the mosque to break there. Duly arrested, Amasyalı said that he had acted under the influence of a preacher who had told his congregation of the way Abraham had broken idols. About a month later, on 7 March, a man named Cemil Kalkan entered the primary school building in Albayrak, Van, and broke the Atatürk bust there. He was caught by the gendarme and the people.

A different type of symbolic action, one that was not designed as an attack to destroy anything, took place in September the same year. The Cyprus issue was high on the agenda once again, and the US policy with respect to the status of the island had come heavily under attack. Public opinion was swinging towards military action, and youth organizations were especially vocal in making such demands. On 14

¹⁶⁷ “*Büyük devrim savaşı için Türkiye’nin bütün ileri güçlerini yakın bir işbirliğine davet ediyoruz.*” Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ “*Atatürk heykeliin yanına bir heykeli dikmeğe, onun resmini asmağa kalkanların biz oraya leşlerini asarız. Diksinler görelim.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 29 September 1962.

September, the National Turkish Student Union sent Prime Minister İnönü a pair of soldier's boots, and held a press conference to elaborate the point.

Two attacks caught the attention of the national press in 1965. On 17 January 1965, a young man named Rıza Çiçek attacked the Atatürk statue in Ulus, Ankara, with a stick in his hand, and was arrested. On 11 December of the same year, Selahattin Dedeoğlu (16) attacked the Atatürk bust in the school garden in Talas, Kayseri. He was arrested after the school teachers informed the security forces; in turn the teachers were attacked by the villagers and were forced to leave the village.

1966 was richer in attacks. Edip Erat (50) brought down the bust in front of the Koca Mosque in Burhaniye on 14 February, shouting, "Can there be a statue where Muslims pray?"¹⁶⁹ He was arrested. The attack on 8 April made it to *Cumhuriyet*'s headlines: "Atatürk's Statue in İzmir Attacked with Axe."¹⁷⁰ Ahmet Ali Gezgin, aged 55, had come in from the village of Gümüldür with his son. After praying by the base of the statue, he took an axe from his son, and shouting that he was on a mission from God, he started hitting the statue. The crowd that gathered was about to lynch him, but Gezgin was saved by the police. The Turkish National Student Federation decided keep watch in front of the Atatürk monument in Taksim, İstanbul, and put a garland of flowers at its base. Four hundred students gathered, but the police intervened and put fourteen people into custody. The crowd shouted one of the popular slogans of the day: "Is this the way it ought to be? Does a brother shoot his brother?"¹⁷¹ The head of the police department spoke to the crowd, saying that a group of three representatives should be chosen to put the garland of flowers on the

¹⁶⁹ "Namaz kılınan yerde heykel olur mu?" *Cumhuriyet*, 15 February 1966.

¹⁷⁰ "İzmir'deki Atatürk heykeline balta ile tecavüz edildi." *Cumhuriyet*, 9 April 1966.

¹⁷¹ "Olur mu böyle olur mu?/ Kardeş kardeşi vurur mu?"

base of the monument. Another group walked to the Monument of Freedom to stand at attention. In Ankara, the youth stood watch in front of the Monument of Victory with flags in their hands; the minister of interior gave personal permission for the torches of the monument to be lit.

On 11 April, the Atatürk busts in the primary schools of Çanakçı, Antalya, and Dilek, Malatya, came under attack. Members of the İstanbul University Student Council stood watch in front of the Taksim monument throughout the night, in protest of the two incidents. The next day, three primary school students were turned over to the court of justice in Malatya. On 13 April, the Turkish National Student Federation announced a week-long watch in the name of national loyalty to Atatürk. On 15 April, the students in İzmir, organized by the TNSF, marched from Konak to Republic Square and back to Konak, in protest of the attacks. In Malatya, the real culprit was identified as the schoolteacher named Şaban Özayabakan, who was denounced by the villagers in a meeting. The people of Dilek brought people from other villages and towns with their tractors and minibuses; the army provided ten vehicles for public transportation. The head of the National Turkish Student Union spoke in disapproval of the Respect for Atatürk Watch on 19 April, and claimed this was not a national watch but a “fever attack of leftist circles.”¹⁷² On the last day of the month, in the village of Apaydın, Urfa, the village’s schoolteacher Abdurrahman Yaşar took down the Atatürk bust there.

On 19 May, in Buldan, Denizli, a bust in one of the public parks was attacked. The next day police investigation determined that the “attacker” was a 14-year old boy named Cengiz Demiray, who said in his testimony that he had been

¹⁷² “*Bu nöbet ulusal nöbet değil, solak çevrelerin humma nöbetidir.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1966.

“playing football with his friends and they had a bet about whether the bust was alive or not, so he made a mudball and threw it at the bust, and it came down.”¹⁷³ Two months later, on 13 July, the last incident of 1966 took place: in the village of Tepecik, İstanbul, unidentified people took the Atatürk bust in front of the office of the *muhtar* down to the highway and smashed it against a milestone.

The single event of 1967 involving symbols came on 30 July, when the representatives of twelve student organizations marched to the Anıtkabir to complain about the government. Alp Kuran, head of the Turkish National Youth Organization, wrote in the guest book that the government was treating the youth with hostility.

It was not until 1969 that a new attack occurred. On 9 April, a group of members of the Justice Party Youth Division entered the Department of Language, History and Geography in Ankara and tore down and burned Atatürk’s picture. They also broke windows by randomly shooting around with guns. On 2 August, in the Gemici village of Uzunköprü, a young man named Burhan Er took shots at the Atatürk picture in the village coffeehouse after drinking six bottles of wine with his friends. The villagers tried to conceal the incident by hiding the picture, but the office of the public prosecutor was informed, and Er received a sentence of two years and eight months in prison.

On 8 February 1970, three people threw rotten eggs at the Atatürk bust in the garden of the Ankara State Conservatory around 6.30 p.m. They were arrested the next morning, around 10 a.m. On 13 March, a different bust was attacked: this time it was that of Halide Edip Adıvar, the famous woman writer of the War of Independence era. Her bust had been erected in the Sultanahmet Park by the Turkish

¹⁷³ “Parkta arkadaşlarıyla oynarken büstün canlı olup olmadığı yolunda bahse girdiklerini, bunu öğrenmek için de çamurdan bir topaç attığımı, büstün böylece kırıldığını anlattı.” *Cumhuriyet*, 20 May 1966.

Women's Union. It was blown to pieces by a bomb; revolutionary students later placed a garland of flowers on the base of the bust.

The 14 April issue of *Cumhuriyet* reported that attacks on the photographs of Atatürk had increased. RPP Kayseri deputy Tufan Doğan submitted a motion of enquiry pertaining to the reports that in the religious schools of Kayseri, Atatürk's eyes had been punctured in the schoolbooks. On 24 November around 8.30 p.m., the Chemistry Department of İstanbul University was attacked by fundamentalist students and outsiders. The doors of the department were broken and pictures of Atatürk were torn down.

A long interim followed. It was not until 1976 that a similar action occurred. On 6 March of that year, ultra-nationalists calling themselves "commandos" attacked the People's House in Fatih, İstanbul, and threw Atatürk's busts to the ground. They wrote "God save the Turk", "İstanbul Idealists Association", "Down with Communists"¹⁷⁴ on walls and tables, using ballpoint pens.

This overview of symbolic action within the first thirty years of democracy in Turkey reveals that there was a considerable concentration with regards to type of action and the years such actions were undertaken. By far the most popular symbol was Atatürk, and action involving this symbol was Janus-faced: it involved attacks on Atatürk's busts, sculptures and monuments, his pictures and photographs on the one hand and a ritual of consecration to his image on the other. The attackers were usually identified as religious fundamentalists, but especially during periods of political unrest and

¹⁷⁴ "Tanrı Türkü korusun", "İstanbul Ülkücüler Derneği", "Kahrolsun komünistler." *Tercüman*, 7 March 1976.

instability, a certain hysteria developed which saw fundamentalist attacks everywhere and feared the end of the regime was at hand. This led to the arrest of schoolchildren, drunkards, and petty thieves on political grounds. It is noteworthy, however, that many of the incidents studied in this chapter involved school teachers and villagers, which leads to the conclusion that many primary school children, especially in the countryside, were being inculcated against Atatürk and presumably the founding ideas of the secular republic. In a country where the religion of the overwhelming majority is one which bans all representations of human beings as idolatrous, it is only natural that the representations of the very person who is held responsible for the establishment of a secular state, and hence of the alleged demise of the religion, should come under attack. The other major figure who was the victim of such attacks was İnönü, for very much the same reason – he was, after all, “the second man” after Atatürk, carrying his legacy on through the next decades.

The diametric opposite form of symbolic action again involved Atatürk: students and the youth, to whom Atatürk had entrusted the republic, frequently organized marches to and congregations at the Anıtkabir, paying tribute to the founding father and demonstrating to the enemies of Atatürk’s legacy that they were a united force ready to crush those who aimed to destabilize or overthrow the regime. These enemies included not only religious fundamentalists, but also the DP government in the 1950s. Similarly, Atatürk’s pictures were carried in marches and demonstrations; new statues and busts were commissioned and erected, sometimes with great flourish; keeping watch at the base of the Atatürk monuments symbolized the vigilant watch kept to protect the modern Turkish state.

As for the years in which such actions were mostly concentrated, even a cursory glance reveals that the 1950s were the busiest years for symbolic action, and

that this form petered out in the next two decades. Two reasons can be cited, which are again the two sides of the same coin. The DP era was seen by many as the harbinger of a type of freedom of religion, because the RPP rule since the founding of the republic was regarded as having stifled that freedom with its charade of secularity. As such, the 1950s offered an opportunity to fight back against the stifling ideology. Since all-out war was still out of the question, partly because even the DP government, even though it made ample use of religious gestures to support its populist policies, did not envision any radical departure vis-à-vis the basic tenets of secularity, the only route available to the “opposition” was staging a clandestine, unorganized, de-centered attack, or rather, a series of disparate attacks. In addition, the young generation, and especially the more organized university students, saw it as their foremost duty to protect the secular republic and, as political actors, they derived their legitimacy directly from Atatürk. Thus, when faced with attacks directed at the source of their legitimacy, they undertook organized action (unlike their opponents) to defend both the symbol itself and what it symbolized.

Even for far-left groups of the late 1960s and 1970s, Atatürk remained a reference point. One member of the Revolutionist Youth (*Dev-Genç*) Executive Committee would reminisce in the 1990s, as the president of the Generation ‘68 Foundation (*68 Kuşağı Vakfı*), that Atatürk’s Bursa Speech or his Address to the Youth had always been very important for them.¹⁷⁵

In the decades that followed, many of the ground rules changed. The introduction of the military as a major actor in the game raised the risks of directly attacking Atatürk. Religious fundamentalists began to employ other forms of action, and attacking statues more or less fell out of fashion. Visiting the Anıtkabir

¹⁷⁵ Hülki Cevizoğlu, *Dünü Bugünü ile 68’liler* (İstanbul: Toplumsal Dönüşüm, 1997), p. 15.

remained, however, a basic form of public statement with regards to one's -real or purported- orientation in the field of Turkish politics.



CHAPTER 4:

ACTION IN WRITING:

PETITIONS, TELEGRAMS, STATEMENTS, ADS, JOURNALS

Petitioning the Sultan or the local representatives of imperial power was the staple form of political action during most of the Ottoman period. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that this was supplanted by other forms such as demonstrations and marches. The advantage of collective petitioning lay in the fact that it offered a way of acting as a group without necessarily becoming “visible.” It did require a certain amount of group formation, in the sense that it was necessary to enroll people for the cause and get them to sign the petition, but this could be done on a one-to-one basis. As such, petitioning was ideally suited for a political culture wary of multitudes, and thus it was a natural legacy to be carried on to the Republican era.

Collectively sent telegrams were but a variation on the same instrument, perhaps even better suited to reactionary endeavors because of the limitations imposed by the medium, which customarily allowed for only messages of a certain length. The one drawback was that telegrams were often officially traceable to the sender(s) and thus did not make for clandestine action.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ The idea behind both petitions and telegrams is simple and fundamental to political participation, and can be observed today as fuelling the new trend of electronic mail sent to all kinds of officials, on the local, national and international levels. In this respect the popularity of petitioning as a form of political action in Turkish culture has tied in well with the globalizing push of the Internet: the world political culture, which prominently features chain e-mails on a variety of issues ranging from AIDS awareness to corruption, from anti-war movements to anti-globalization, has been easily accommodated on this score.

Issuing statements is arguably the most passive form of this genre of collective action. Any number of organizations, from student unions to underground activists, have engaged in writing up statements and sending them to the media, thereby hoping to have accomplished at least some of their “duties”. The ease with which this can be done makes statements also the most popular form of action; yet, their effectiveness has to be questioned.

Placing advertisements with political content in newspapers and magazines is a slightly different story, and when first practised in the 1970s by the Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen (*Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği*), it was hailed as a powerful innovation that shook the Ecevit government then in power. Yet, when seen from a certain perspective, the same idea can be found here, with the important proviso that this form takes on a much more public character, is much more visible, and therefore involves a greater number of people than only the ones who place the ad and the ones addressed by it. It also raises issues regarding who can place such ads in which newspapers, how governments attempt to suppress such action, and the web of relationships among interest groups, the loci of political power, and the media.

The popularity of action in writing as a form of collective political action has not been constant; in fact, with the relative maturation of democracy, violent forms of action –antithetical, for some, to “mature democracy”- took center stage. It is during the 1950s, when politics was still “starched” to a degree with the manners of the previous decades, that various organizations preferred this mode of action to taking political matters to the streets. This is reminiscent, to a degree, of the Soviet way of doing politics, where national broadcasts go on and on with official statements, always giving some incrementally good news to the population with

respect to the performance of the government. A biting satire of this, of course, is *1984* by George Orwell. In fact, government members and state officials themselves took “making politics” to mean exactly this— the delivery of speeches and the writing of statements, which would then be read on the radio and published in the papers.

This form of action might be considered to negate the very essence of action; indeed, from a certain point of view, it is a type of action that individuals or groups engage in to avoid “real” action. In terms of its effects, however, the difference is not so clear. For people who are not primary witnesses to a certain demonstration, for example, their main way of knowing about it is the media, which literally acts as an intermediary of experience. With the advent of televised scenes, it has become much easier for audiences to feel the heat of the moment, to engage in the action on screen at a level that is not easily attained through the written word or the printed picture. The 1950s were, however, limited to the latter, with the addition of radio broadcasts. Thus for most people involvement in political developments meant reading the paper or listening to the radio; in both cases, “real” action was not so different from action in writing. Both were essentially words.

The decision by a variety of groups with political agendas to take to the streets nevertheless predates the introduction of television broadcasts in Turkey, rendering the above explanation insufficient, though not totally irrelevant. The fact is that at times of political polarization, actors find it difficult to restrain themselves to the domain of words, and action becomes an ontological necessity. Such polarization, however, may simultaneously lead to more repressive measures by governments, making overt action more difficult, forcing actors to take up the “word” again. If the regime is really heavy-handed, even action in writing and forms

of symbolic action will suffer a decline. The obverse is also true: during periods of relative freedom, all types of action may experience a rise.

This complex web of factors explains the relatively high frequency of action in writing in 1959, when the Menderes government was at its most repressive and the number of street actions was very low. It explains the sudden increase in all forms of collective action around 1961-62, when the perception about the liberalness of the new Constitution was at a peak. It also explains why, during the second half of the highly polarized 1970s, very few instances of action in writing were recorded.

The case of publishing political journals is an interesting one from the point of view of collective action. It may be argued that political actors, instead of yielding themselves and their actions to the mercy and discretion of the press, would have a natural interest in publishing their own views so as to reach the public directly. Detailed studies exist for *Kadro* and *Yön*, both of which were journals with specific political agendas, and a more than cursory treatment of the subject would be redundant here, since very little of *Yön*'s influence on the thinking of political actors can be evinced from what appears in the press per se. Nonetheless, a treatment of this form of collective action, which overlooked the *Yön* experience, would be incomplete.

1950 was an exciting year for Turkey, not only because of the elections and the subsequent drastic change in the political structure of the country, but also because Turkey's new role in the post-war era as a NATO member would be put to test during the Korean War. Turkey had resisted Western European pressure to enter the Second World War until (almost literally) the last minute, and Prime Minister İnönü's tactics to stall the inevitable created something of a gall among his European colleagues. In the aftermath, Turkey found itself alone, having to face the threats

posed by the Soviet Union. Prime Minister-elect Menderes charted a simple course: muster the military and political support of the West against the USSR, and for that purpose, become a member of NATO. By joining the United Nations' resolution to stop North Korea's invasion of South Korea, and by sending troops of its own, Turkey hoped to create a favorable impression and use that card when the time came for its NATO membership negotiations.

When the Democrat Party government announced on 25 July that it would send 4,500 troops to Korea, not everyone was pleased. The Peace-Lovers Society, headed by Behice Boran, sent a telegram to the Parliament on 28 July and, according to *Vatan*, "had the insolence" to demand the retraction of the decision.¹⁷⁷ Not satisfied with addressing the Grand Assembly alone, the Society also distributed the text of the telegram as a public statement. The attorney-general of İstanbul immediately ordered an investigation into those who had drafted, printed, and distributed the statement. The next day Behice Boran, Vahdettin Barut, Adnan Cemgil and Kemal Anıl (the printer) were arrested; various incriminating "documents" were claimed to have been discovered at their residences. The investigation was broadened and more people were arrested. Eventually, the leaders of the Society were sentenced by a military court in Ankara to fifteen months imprisonment.

The telegram and statement issued by the Peace-Lovers Society led to counter-telegrams and statements. The İstanbul University Student Council, along with a number of professional organizations, sent a joint telegram to Menderes in order to protest Behice Boran, whose leftist views also came under attack. In fact, her

¹⁷⁷ "*Cemiyet Büyük Millet Meclisi'ne telgraf çekerek kararın iptalini isteme cüretini gösterdi.*" *Vatan*, 29 Temmuz 1950.

anti-war stance was immediately identified with communism, and the government was quick to seize the opportunity. On 10 August, the Minister of Justice invited a number of law professors with the express purpose of drafting a law with heavy penalties against treason and communist activities.

Turkey's application for NATO membership was accepted in 1952, and troops were sent to Korea. 721 Turkish soldiers were killed in combat, 2,147 were wounded, 234 fell captive and 175 were lost. Turkey suffered one of the heaviest casualty figures of the war, but Menderes's plan had paid off. The communist hunt and "the fight against the red danger", on the other hand, would continue for decades.

The Turkish McCarthyism of the 1950s was, for the greater part, sponsored by the DP government, which was keen not to lose public support as a result heavy casualties in what was essentially someone else's war. The Korean War, therefore, had to be cast as Turkey's own war, waged together with the Western democracies against the world-wide threat of communism. Communism was not a remote possibility: it was a clear and present danger. The Peace-Lovers Society might have been but an insignificant example. Nonetheless, everyone and especially the university students had to be alert against such an example, which could suddenly turn into unforeseen threats posed to national security.

It was the attacks against Atatürk statues by religious fundamentalists that created an awareness of another national security threat, namely, *irtica*. The populist rhetoric of the DP included many religious themes, such as the reinstatement of the Arabic call to prayer, but the DP government was no more inclined towards an Islamic state than the RPP had been. With a little prompting from the university students who fervently demonstrated against attacks on the legacy of Atatürk, the DP government was quick to point out the difference between religious freedom and

political rule based on religion. The labels “red danger” and “green danger” soon became a part of the Ankara lexicon, and both were used to their fullest to exploit and tightly control public opinion.

The fight against the red and green dangers generated most of the telegrams and statements in the 1950s, and most of the senders were various student associations both on the left and right. On 7 January 1951, for example, *Ulus* announced that “the Turkish youth has taken up action against *irtica*”.¹⁷⁸ The Turkish National Student Federation’s member associations in Istanbul issued a joint statement which read, in part:

1. It has been accepted that political and religious movements against the Turkish revolution have appeared and continue to appear from time to time...
3. The disparity of the attempts of various groups at promoting nationalist views has led, inadvertently or not, to a confusion in public opinion with dire consequences... *İrtica* and communism must be aware that the Turkish nation and the Turkish youth with their Kubilays are ready to wash every inch of this sacred land with their own blood in order to protect our future and the reforms. We expect the government, which has declared a relentless war against Communism, to do the same against *irtica*.¹⁷⁹

Following up on this statement, the Turkish National Student Federation asked for a meeting with the President and the Prime Minister, which was granted on 10 January.

¹⁷⁸ “Türk gençliği irticaa karşı harekete geçti.” *Ulus*, 7 January 1951.

¹⁷⁹ “1. Türk inkılabına aykırı siyasi ve dini irticai hareketlerin zaman zaman baş gösterdiği kabul edilmiştir...

3. Muhtelif zümrelerin ortaya sürdükleri milliyetçilik görüşlerinin birleştirilmemesi, bilinerek veya bilinmeyerek memleket efkârı umumiyesinde manevi zararlar ika eden karışıklıklar husule getirmektedir... İrtica ve komünizm bilmelidir ki, Türk milleti ve gençliği istiklalimizi ve inkılaplarımızı korumak için bu aziz vatanın her köşesini tekrar kanlarıyla sulamaya hazır, Kubilay’larıyla beklemektedir. Komünizme amansız mücadele açan Hükümetimizin irticaa karşı da aynı savaşı açmasını bekliyoruz.” *Ulus*, 7 January 1957.

Celal Bayar said on record that it was indeed true that religious fundamentalism was on the rise.

On 12 January, the Student Federation issued a statement condemning communism and religious fundamentalism. The occasion was the meeting organized by the National Turkish Student Unions Federation at the Ankara People's House the previous day. One of the students present at the meeting demanded that a prayer be said for the recently deceased head of Religious Affairs, Ahmet Akseki. The president of the Federation said it would be more fitting to have a minute of silence, but this was met with wide contention, and disorder ensued. The president and representatives of the Federation left; a new president was chosen, the prayer was said, and the meeting continued as programmed. On 13 January, the Higher Education Students Union and Ankara University's School of Agriculture Student Association issued a statement each, condemning the incident at the People's House in Ankara and jointly asking for the students who had sabotaged the meeting to be punished. The next day, the National Students Federation issued yet another statement, declaring that the federation had no place for fundamentalists under its roof. Ankara University's Student Council President Yuran Kutsal said in his own statement that they refused to accept the incriminations of atheism leveled at students who vowed to fight against religious fundamentalists, and that they condemned those who exploited religion for the sake of despicable ideologies. The Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Law Student Association joined in with statements to the same effect.

The paranoia of communism was not limited to Turkey, and extended to Turkish students abroad. The issue was brought to the attention of the Parliament when news reached Ankara that students with government grants in Paris were

involved in communist propaganda. Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü himself answered the allegations and denied that any Turkish student had handed out communist pamphlets. He did concede, however, that “there exists a certain group of ‘Young Turks’ among the Turkish students in Paris, who regard themselves as reformist and open-minded. They engage in quite impertinent acts by publishing pamphlets... I have confirmed that there is no student in this group who is there on a government grant.”¹⁸⁰ In response, the students in Paris founded a society with the express aim of informing the Turkish press by means of statements that the Turkish students in Paris were good citizens and nationalists. This apparently did not go a long way in quelling local worries. The National Student Union organized a press conference in Ankara and announced that they were closely following the activities of the “Young Turks” in Paris and filing reports.

Women’s organizations in the 1950s were admittedly not among the most active; even in terms of press statements, they do not seem to have accomplished much. On 20 March 1951 the Turkish Women Union issued one such statement, in response to certain inclinations towards attacking Atatürk’s reforms. The statement belligerently opposed these inclinations and declared that “Turkish women will not give up the slightest of their civil and political rights.”¹⁸¹

In 1952, student organizations were again at the forefront in issuing statements; even though the organizations themselves varied greatly, the issues and reactions remained within a limited repertoire. On 16 April, the İzmir Trade School Association declared its dedication to the protection of Atatürk’s principles and to

¹⁸⁰ “Paris’te Türk talebeleri arasında terakkiperver, ileri görüşlü olduklarını iddia eden bir ‘jön Türkler grubunun’ bulunduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bunlar risaleler neşretmek suretiyle oldukça küstah hareketlerde bulunuyorlar... Öğrendim ki bu grubun içinde Hükümet tahsisatı ile okuyan bir talebe yoktur.” *Ulus*, 18 January 1951.

fight against attacks. On 2 May, the Ankara University Student Council took a public stance against communist and fundamentalist publications. On 13 May, the Turkish Student Union (*Türk Talebe Birliği*) issued a statement, addressing the protests in Athens about Cyprus: “Such protests will only serve to damage the friendship between the two nations. Cyprus is Turkish. Beware of provoking Turks and the Turkish youth.”¹⁸² On 2 June, the Turkish National Student Federation and the National Turkish Student Union’s Revolution Hearths (*Devrim Ocakları*) issued a joint statement against Islamic activists: “The fanatics who are the enemies of progressive thinking, scientific thought, and civilization and who employ the tactics of communists are doomed to failure in their attempts to disrupt Turkish society.”¹⁸³ It is noteworthy that in this statement the two dangers are in a way unified and shown to work in similar ways. The statement went on to express elaborately that “those who attack the deep-rooted reforms and their institutions with the fake grandiosity of a shabby Don Quixote would do well to bear in mind that the intellectual Turkish youth are united against them.”¹⁸⁴

Such unity was questionable, to say the least. On 7 January 1953, the Turkish National Student Federation paid a visit to the President, and after a second meeting where the first was discussed, issued a public letter in which the Turkish Nationalists Association was openly criticized for their pronouncements against Atatürk and the

¹⁸¹ “*Türk kadını sahip bulunduğu medeni ve siyasi haklarından bir zerresini asla feda etmez.*” *Ulus*, 21 March 1951.

¹⁸² “*Bu gibi hareketler iki millet arasındaki dostlukları haleldar eder. Kıbrıs Türktür. Türkleri ve gençliği kızdırmayın.*” *Ulus*, 14 May 1952.

¹⁸³ “*İleri düşünüşün, ilmi görüşün ve medeniyetçiliğin düşmanı olan, komünist taktikleriyle çalışan yobazlar, bozguncu emellerinde asla muvaffak olamayacaklardır.*” *Ulus*, 3 June 1952.

¹⁸⁴ “*Bu memlekette kökleşmiş inkılap müesseselerine süfli bir Donkişot’un yalancı heybetiyle çatanlar, iyi bilmelidirler ki aydın Türk gençliği buna imkan vermeyecek şekilde fikir birliği içindedir.*” *Ibid.*

reforms, and their neglect in attending the meeting where the attack on Atatürk's statue in Ankara's Zafer Square was condemned.

The expressly political attitudes of some student organizations did not always go by without raising some eyebrows, especially those at the Ministry of National Education. Ali İhsan Çelikkan, the president of the Turkish National Student Federation, sent a telegram to the Minister who was critical of the organization's political involvement, saying that "we are taking part in politics in order to fight *irtica*... the organization that is really involved in politics with the purpose of opposing Atatürk and the reforms is the Nationalists Association, but they have always been protected. [The Ministry] has regularly purchased the magazines and publications of this organization, whereas we rarely even receive an answer... Our federation feels compelled to inform you that we deeply regret your disinterest in the problems of the students we represent."¹⁸⁵

The events in Cyprus inspired many forms of collective political action, and the written form was not the least nor the last of them. On 10 April 1955, the Turkish National Student Federation, which was having its 12th congress in Balıkesir, sent a telegram to Prime Minister Menderes regarding the current situation on the island: "We have been hearing of the unreasonable acts and despicable cries of the Greek youth. How can such an unruly people chase new dreams, since they once cut each other's throats on their own island, and now revolt against their government's forces, a people who have not been able to attain stability in all the years since they were freed from Turkish rule? We as the Turkish youth, having worked in accordance with conscience, reason and positive science, will continue to do so, staying away from

¹⁸⁵ "Asıl siyasetin içinde olan... hem de inkılap aleyhtarı, Atatürk aleyhtarı olarak siyaset yapan teşekkül, Milliyetçiler Derneği, devamlı olarak himaye edilmiştir. Bu derneğin dergileri, neşriyatı satın alınmıştır. Bize ise cevap bile verilmiyor." *Ulus*, 24 January 1953.

the methods of street politicians.”¹⁸⁶ This telegram refers to student protests in Athens on 24 March, where close to 1,000 students marched in the streets of the Greek capital, demanding that Cyprus be annexed by Greece. They were stopped by the police who used tear gas as the crowd started marching to the district of embassies.

Medical students issued a statement regarding this matter on 18 August, in response to the Greek demands expressed in “The White Book”, which included demands on land in Cyprus as well as in Turkey. The Medical Students’ Union read in part: “Turkish doctors, who ran to the aid of defeated and wounded Greek soldiers during the War of Independence, now regard it as a requirement of magnanimity, one of our national characteristics, to help cure this people who seem to have lost their mind and their memory.”¹⁸⁷

Islamic activists made ample use of the written word as well. On 6 August 1955, a group of *Ticanis* plastering statements on street walls were apprehended in Tokat, and a formal investigation ensued, headed by the chief of state security himself. The *Ticanis* had been active in the late 1940s and early 1950s, breaking Atatürk’s busts and statues. Their leader was a sheikh called Kemal Pilavoğlu, who was arrested in 1952 together with his most prominent followers. In 1955, they seemed to reappear in smaller, peripheral towns. The investigation in Tokat was instigated by the information given by a child who had read a poster on the street

¹⁸⁶ “Biz Türk Gençliği Kıbrıs meselesinde söz sahibi ve hak sahibi olduğumuzu söylerken bunu dost yunanistn’da olduğu gibi, sokak mitinglerinde aşırı heyecanların esiri olarak iddia etmiyoruz. Türk Gençliği her davasında olduğu gibi Kıbrıs davasını da ilim ve mantığın haysi,yetli çerçevesi dahilinde mütalaa etmektedir... Demokrat bir memlekette halktan, gençlikten yükselen sesin, meclislerde verilen kararlar kadar ve hatta onlardan çok daha derin manalar taşıdığını ekselans Stefanopulos’a bir kere daha hatırlatırız.” *Ulus*, 2 June 1953.

¹⁸⁷ “İstiklal savaşında mağlup ve yaralı yunanlıyı tedavi eden türk hekimi bugün düşünce, hatıra ve hafızasını kaybeden bu topluluğun tedavisini sağlamağı türk karakterinin alicenaplık vasfının icabı sayar.” *Ulus*, 19 August 1955.

and, realizing this was not an ordinary poster, went to the police on the night of 1 August.

Variations on the theme did occasionally occur. On 19 January 1956, for example, the inhabitants of Ankara's shantytown district presented the secretary general of the RPP, Kasım Gülek, with a petition written on cambric cloth two meters long, asking him to find a solution to their residence problem. In another instance, there were unsigned letters sent to the PM which strongly criticized the then current situation, blaming it on economic policies undertaken by the government. Most of the letters were sent from the Şişli Post Office in İstanbul, though the handwritings on them varied. *Cumhuriyet* said on 8 February 1956 that these letters had been sent by members of the Democrat Party. On the day the brochures had been distributed to schools in favor of religion classes, the same brochures had been previously seen at hotels. Upon investigating the matter, the police concluded that they had been printed abroad.

Towards the end of the 1950's, the DP government increasingly found it imperative to stymie the opposition. An ever-increasing number of journalists, for example, were put into jail, and one of the methods used to show solidarity with them was to send telegrams. When Metin Toker, the publishing advisor of *Akis* magazine was sentenced to seven months and twenty-three days in February 1957, telegrams poured in from political elites. Similarly, Tahir Burak received hundreds of telegrams when he was punished by the Press Court in April. The telegram sent by the RPP's parliamentary group read, in part: "Our group follows your continuous and determined struggle with great admiration and wishes to express its grief at your imprisonment."¹⁸⁸ More than two years later, on 26 November 1959, another

¹⁸⁸ "Hürriyet yolundaki devamlı ve azimli mücadelenizi takdirle takip eden grupumuz, mahkumiyetinizden dolayı üzgündür." *Ulus*, 14 April 1957.

example of collective telegram in support of silenced opposition found its way to the front pages of newspapers: Ülkü Arman, one of the editors at *Ulus*, began a hunger strike 19 November, protesting press regulation and anti-democratic press laws. He had been sentenced to sixteen months in prison for having published an article by the American journalist Puliam. Journalists' societies in İstanbul, İzmir, and Eskişehir started a campaign of support, and sent joint telegrams to the Minister of Justice for Arman's release and re-trial.

In January 1958, Turkish university students in Cyprus sent collective telegrams to Mr. Foot, the British governor of the island, stating with irony that they knew him as "a person adept at showing as white what in reality is black."¹⁸⁹ Sending collective telegrams to the governor of Cyprus was not the only example of international action undertaken by students. On 26 July 1959, the TNSF sent a telegram of gratitude to General Kasım of Iraq, who had condemned the "barbaric murder" of Turks in Kirkuk by communists.¹⁹⁰

1959 witnessed a marked increase in events related to religious fundamentalism. In March the center of attention was the magazine *Büyük Doğu* (Great Orient), which had been closed down in 1946 when it had caused a great flurry with one of its covers, depicting the Republican era as part of the Ottoman decline. The magazine returned to newspaper stands in 1959 with an issue featuring an article which called the founding fathers of the Republic "fake heroes."¹⁹¹ University students were outraged with the issue, and on 17 March Erol Ünal, the

¹⁸⁹ "Kıbrıslı yüksek tahsil gençleri, Genel Valiyi siyahı beyaz göstermekte mahir bir insan olarak tanıdıklarını ifade ettiler." *Cumhuriyet*, 28 January 1958.

¹⁹⁰ "Kerkük'te komünistlerin ırkdaşlarımıza yaptıkları barbarca hareketi telin eden gençler, general Kasım'a, gösterdiği yakın alakadan dolayı teşekkürlerini bildirdiler." *Cumhuriyet*, 27 July 1959.

¹⁹¹ "Sahte kahramanlar." *Ulus*, 18 March 1959.

vice president of the Turkish National Student Federation, issued a press statement, calling on the state attorney general to take action. University students in Eskişehir issued another statement and distributed hand-outs, organizing for a protest demonstration. The TNSF asked all students to attend a mass demonstration to be held pending the permission of the governor's office, but not only was permission refused, the leading members of the TNSF were held in custody for sixteen hours, and Erol Ünal's statement was banned from publication. The federation issued a new statement, filed a lawsuit against the state attorney general and Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, the editor-in-chief of *Büyük Doğu*, and sent telegrams to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior.

Not long after the incitement in İstanbul cooled down, students in Balıkesir took to the streets, protesting *Büyük Doğu*. On 13 May, the members of the Necatibey Education Institute Student Society (*Necatibey Eğitim Enstitüsü Talebe Cemiyeti*) bought numerous copies of the magazine and tore them to pieces, while bystanders applauded. On 3 June, students of the School of Political Science in Ankara University clashed with law and theology students, when one theology student shouted "communist puppets" at the former group, the "revolutionaries."¹⁹² Two days later two students of Ankara University were arrested for having spoken against Atatürk. The president of the student association condoned the arrests, admitting that "red and green dangers have finally infiltrated the university,"¹⁹³ and announced that the student association would ask for permission to organize a demonstration against communism. On 7 June, Saffet Bilhan, president of the School

¹⁹² "Komünist kuklalar," *Cumhuriyet*, 4 June 1959.

¹⁹³ "Dün bir basın toplantısı yapan Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Öğrenci Derneği Başkanı, 'Kızıl ve yeşil tehlikenin maalesef üniversiteye sızdığını' belirtti ve bunlara karşı mücadele açılmasını istedi." *Cumhuriyet*, 7 June 1959.

of Theology Student Association (*İlahiyat Fakültesi Öğrenci Derneği*), issued a statement which blamed the press for the recent developments and denied the existence of any activity in his school. On 10 June, the presidents of the student associations in Ankara met and issued a joint statement, declaring that they were ready to “crush communism and *irtica* wherever they are found.”¹⁹⁴

1959 came to an end marked by upheavals of the masses revolting against the attack against İsmet İnönü in Uşak. The governor was accused of having ordered İnönü to be shot. 308 students of Ankara University’s School of Political Science sent a telegram to the governor of Uşak, strongly condemning him for this insolent act. It was clear that the DP era was coming fast to an end, and that it was only a matter of time. The first months of 1960 saw İnönü going around the country to speak to the people, overcoming the hindrances raised by the government, such as the governor of Kayseri trying to stop him from entering the city.

The first events of 1960, however, were not about the stranglehold of the government but about religious freedom. On 2 January, a group of *Nurcus*¹⁹⁵ in Konya sent two telegrams to the Prime Minister, one 591 words long, the other 38, asking him to set an arrested *Nurcu* free. Said-ii Nursi, the spiritual leader of the *Nurcus*, had begun a “mysterious” tour of the country at the age of 93. During his visit to İstanbul he told the journalists that he had been “trying to save the youth for the last fifty years... and [he would] visit İstanbul University the next time.”¹⁹⁶ The

¹⁹⁴ “*Komünizmi ve irticaı, bulduğumuz yerde ezmeye kararlıyız.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 11 June 1959.

¹⁹⁵ Followers of *Bediüzzaman* (the incomparable beauty of the age) Said-i Nursi, a religious leader who died in March 1960.

¹⁹⁶ “*Elli yıldır gençliği kurtarmaya çalışıyorum, bir dahaki gelişimde İÜ’yü ziyaret edeceğim.*” *Ulus*, 5 January 1960.

response was swift: the Student Council issued a statement condemning Said-i Nursi and warning him to stay away from university students.

On 8 January, student representatives at Ankara University's School of Political Science held a press conference, declaring that they had lost patience with *irtica* and demanding that authorities take action against it: "We have been vigilantly observing with utmost attention and calm the recent fundamentalist stirrings, the showcase tours, the brochures distributed here and there, and the activities of the enemies of the reforms."¹⁹⁷ University students distributed "Atatürk's Address to the Youth" ("*Atatürk'ün Gençliğe Hitabesi*") in turn, and two students were arrested for it in Beyazıt, İstanbul, on 23 April. The government would have none of that pamphleteering, and Ahmet Hamdi Sancar, head of the Parliamentary Investigation Committee, announced on 12 May that security forces were now entitled to search for such printed statements and punish those who had possession of them in their homes or carried them on their persons.

Nationalist sentiments were on the rise in response to the feeling of doom inflicted upon the masses by the DP government. On 5 April 1960, university students began to collect signatures against a new film called *Michel Stragof*, which purportedly hurt national pride. "The undersigned" demanded the film be banned, and accordingly sent a telegram to the General Press Directorate.

The last collective action before the coup on 27 May 1960 in way of telegrams came on 27 April: İstanbul University's School of Medicine was holding a congress in order to decide how to express their solidarity with students arrested in Seoul. Just when the members agreed to send a telegram, the police officers present

¹⁹⁷ "Son günlerde ortaya çıkan gerici kıpırdanışları, gösteri gezilerini, sağda solda dağıtılan broşürleri ve devrim düşmanlarının amaçlarına varmak için çabalamalarını büyük bir dikkat ve soğukkanlılıkla izliyoruz." *Ulus*, 9 January 1960.

at the meeting got up and intervened, breaking up the congress and arresting the president and ex-president of the organization. The first statement after the coup, on the other hand, came on 4 June. Issued by the Revolution Hearths in Ankara, it regarded the “recent revolution as an outcome of the national devotion to Atatürk and his works, and in complete congruence with law,”¹⁹⁸ and praised the military for its timely intervention.

Such praise was not unflinching. As early as February 1961, less than a year after the coup, university students used collective means to criticize the military, their strange bedfellows in protecting the country and the reforms of Atatürk. The cause of criticism had to do with the application of Article 147, as a consequence of which a great number of professors, assistant professors and other members of faculty were removed from their teaching posts. On 19 February, the Student Association and the Student Society of Ankara University’s School of Political Science issued a statement which opposed the laying off of faculty, saying they would have liked to applaud the representatives of the armed forces on this occasion.¹⁹⁹ The matter signalled, however, a rift in the student body: the Turkish National Student Federation issued its own statement on 17 March, agreeing that the government was right concerning some of the faculty members who had been laid off according to Article 147. The only caveat of the TNSF was that this necessary action ought to have been taken by the relevant bodies within the university. One month later, on 15 April, the TNSF issued another statement, this time unconditionally supporting the *putsch*: “This is a serious and imperative reform, one we have been

¹⁹⁸ “*Son devrim hareketini Atatürk’e ve eserlerine milletçe bağlılığın bir tezahürü kabul eden Ankara Ocağımız, şanlı ordumuzun davranışını hukuka tamamiyle uygun bulmuş ve gönülden alkışlamıştır.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 5 June 1960.

¹⁹⁹ “*Silahlı Kuvvetlerimizin temsilcilerini bu konuda da alkışlamayı çok isterdik.*” *Vatan*, 19 February 1961.

awaiting for thirty-eight years. There is nothing to be gained from exaggerating the matter.”²⁰⁰ While the TNSF expressed its support, the National Turkish Student Union continued to be critical of the lay-off, and its president Faruk Narin was arrested for his statement, to be let free on 18 August.

Another occasion that soured the relations between some student representatives and officer-cum-politicians was the discussion and evaluation of the DP era. The rather left-inclined student body of Ankara University was highly vigilant about “revisionist” accounts of the 1950s and did not miss any opportunity to strongly condemn such attempts. On 2 September 1961, for example, the students of AU protested a speech delivered by Aydın Yalçın, member of the new Justice Party, which fashioned itself as the inheritor of the DP’s legacy. Yalçın had said among other things that “the DP era was a golden age”, upon which the AU students immediately issued a statement signed “the Atatürkist Youth” (“*Atatürkçü Gençlik*”) criticizing Yalçın and other politicians who seemed to be interested in eulogizing the DP government.²⁰¹ Such an attitude was apparently regarded as a form of political ambition gone bad, a misdirected attempt to capitalize on the extant supporters of the DP. When the Yassıada trials drew to a conclusion in September 1961, on the other hand, the Turkish National Student Federation took the opportunity to express its support for and loyalty to the Turkish Armed Forces, stating that whatever the outcome of the trials, its members had full faith in the High Court.

In the aftermath of the coup in 1960, most of the prominent DP members were banned from political activity. After the general elections in 1961, however, in

²⁰⁰ “*Otuzsekiz senedir ilk defa ciddi ve lüzumlu bir ıslahat... hadiseyi izam ettirmekte fayda yoktur.*” *Vatan*, 16 April 1961.

²⁰¹ “*DP devri altın devirdir.*” *Vatan*, 3 September 1961.

which the RPP had a slight lead over the JP, demands were voiced to grant these banned politicians the right to return to active politics. Since the JP openly declared its fidelity to the DP and since in the new balance of power it enjoyed a strong hand, such demands succeeded in finding their way to the top of the national agenda. This did not go down well with that part of the university students who had put their lives on the line to fight against the DP government.

On 17 December 1961 the TNSF, representing seventy thousand students, sent a telegram to İnönü, warning him against “political amnesty.” On 14 April 1962, the TNSF was joined by Istanbul and Ankara University’s Student Unions and other student associations in its protest: “We are against a political amnesty, and under current circumstances we deem even the discussion thereof to be detrimental to our national interests.”²⁰² On 21 May, the TNSF issued yet another statement to the same effect, this time adding the warning that “we will fight against such a *fait accompli*; our methods of fighting will be seen when the time comes.”²⁰³ On 18 September the press release of the TNSF read: “It is time to let everyone know that we will not allow this comedy that tries to hide itself behind a strange conception of democracy. No one can defy Atatürk’s principles and 27 May. The higher education youth of Turkey will prevent the comeback of those individuals and mentalities convicted by Turkish justice. We invite the government to take action in accordance with the constitution and laws.”²⁰⁴

²⁰² “Siyasi bir affa taraftar değiliz. Ve bugünün şartları içinde münakaşa edilmesinin dahi milli menfaatlerimiz yönünden zararlı olduğu kanaatindeyiz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 15 April 1962.

²⁰³ “Bir oldu-bitti karşısında bırakılmak istiyoruz... mücadelenin şeklini zamanı gelince görürsünüz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 22 May 1962.

²⁰⁴ “Garip bir demokrasi anlayışı arkasında oynanmak istenen komedyaya müsaade edilmeyeceğini kesinlikle bildirme zamanı gelmiştir. Atatürk ilkeleri ve 27 Mayıs karşı çıkmaya hiçbir kuvvet muktedir olamayacaktır. Türk yüksek öğrenim gençliği, Türk adaletinin mahkum ettiği kişilerin ve zihniyetin hortlamasına fırsat vermiyecektir... TC hükümetini anayasa ve kanunlar müvacehesinde göreve davet ederiz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 19 September 1962.

The atmosphere was tensed as the year drew to an end, with an increasing number of incidents such as attacks on Atatürk's statues, protest demonstrations and violent clashes between those who supported the amnesty and those who were against it. October 1962 witnessed the emergence of a new and quasi-clandestine entity: the National Revolution Army (*Milli Devrim Ordusu*). On 4 October, the NRA distributed leaflets in the residential areas of Yenisehir, stating that they would protect 27 May and its results against any threat whatsoever. The JP, in the meantime, organized public demonstrations in support of amnesty in İzmir and Adana. Four days later a more detailed leaflet, again by the NRA, was distributed in İstanbul: "To the Great Turkish Nation. We are joining forces against the enemies of 27 May. The Atatürkist Youth, the Turkish Military, and the prudent Turkish nation. We are determined. We announce to the world for the second time that when necessary, we will destroy those whose existence threatens our country. We are determined and strong, and we will do it."²⁰⁵ About a week later, on 14 October, the NRA felt it necessary to declare its political orientation via another leaflet: "We are the enemies of racists and rightists. We believe that the well-being of the country lies in the middle-of-the road."²⁰⁶

In response to the NRA, a similar but opposite group came into existence under the name *Ay-Kurtlar* (The Moon-Wolves). In their own leaflets they claimed to be acting on the behalf of the nationalist Turkish youth and warned "the newspapers engaged in communist propaganda and the members of the NRA who wear the mask

²⁰⁵ *Büyük Türk Milleti. 27 Mayıs düşmanlarına karşı birleşiyoruz. Atatürk gençliği, Türk ordusu ve sağduyulu Türk ulusu saflarımızdadır. Kesin olarak kararlıyız. Bu memlekette icap ettiği an, yaşamaları memleket için zararlı olan vücudları ortadan kaldıracığımızı ikinci defa dünyaya haykırıyoruz. Kararlıyız, güçlüyüz ve yapacağız."* *Cumhuriyet*, 9 October 1962.

²⁰⁶ "Memleketin selametinin, orta yol olduğuna inanmaktayız." *Cumhuriyet*, 15 October 1962.

of the progressive, the revolutionist, and the Atatürkist.”²⁰⁷ On 17 October, the Turkish National Student Federation and the National Revolution Army sent two similar statements to the government, both critical of the RPP’s role in the amnesty issue: “The amnesty is not such an important issue for the higher education youth we represent. The important issue is that the decisions of the 27 May revolution are broken by the very party which most strongly supported the 27 May revolution and contributed to it greatly with its actions while in opposition.”²⁰⁸

One of the early examples of collective action involving foreign press occurred in 1963, foreshadowing the Millennium Poll of *Time* magazine in 1999, where the greatest figures of the twentieth century were determined by the votes of internet users, and voting for Atatürk turned into a national campaign in Turkey. Incidentally, the 1963 incident also involved *Time* and Atatürk. An article in the magazine covering Orthodox Christians in Turkey said, “Most of the 1.5 million Orthodox Greeks living in Turkey prior to 1922 were either expelled or killed by Atatürk. Today, Patriarch Athenagoras has a congregation of only eighty thousand, and they have gathered in İstanbul and the few surrounding islands.”²⁰⁹ The TNSF took the lead in sending a collective response in the name of Turkish youth to the editor of the magazine. Going by the motto that the best form of defense is offense, the Federation’s statement inquired about the crimes committed by the Greeks against Turks and reminded the magazine of the incidents in Alabama.

²⁰⁷ “*Suratlarında her zaman ilerici, devrimci ve Atatürkçü maskesini taşıyan satılmışlar ordusu MDO’nun mensuplarına, kızıl propagandası yapan gazetelere ihtar ediyoruz.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 17 October 1962.

²⁰⁸ “*Affin çıkması, temsilcisi bulunduğumuz Türk yüksek tahsil gençliği için pek büyük bir ehemmiyeti haiz değildir. Ancak 27 Mayıs ihtilalinin tasarrufları, 27 Mayıs ihtilalini en kuvvetli bir şekilde desteklemiş üstelik tutumu ile muhalefet devresinde buna çok yardımcı dokunmuş bir partinin önderliğiyle çığnenmektedir.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 18 October 1962.

²⁰⁹ Cited in *Vatan*, 7 July 1963.

When the Cyprus issue came to occupy the national agenda in 1964, one of the methods of engaging in collective action was again issuing statements and sending collective telegrams, on both the national and international levels. On 8 April, for example, the TNSF issued a statement, calling for tougher measures on the island. On 10 May, the National Turkish Student Union sent a telegram to President Johnson, criticizing US policy regarding Cyprus and asking for the payback of the Turkish contribution in Korea. On 19 June, student organizations got together and issued a joint statement calling on the parliament to act in unity on the Cyprus issue and to refrain from using it for populist ends. A leaflet distributed during a demonstration on 6 September caused trouble for the directors of the İstanbul University Student Union, because it urged the Turkish Army to take action in Cyprus, which was construed as “war-mongering” and as such constituted a crime under Turkish law. A formal investigation was ordered on 15 November.

Not only Greeks but Armenians, too, got their share of protests in 1965. That year, a big demonstration was to be organized in Beirut on 24 April in condemnation of the Ottoman massacres of Armenians. The Armenian Patriarchate in İstanbul, as well as Archbishop Makarios in Cyprus, supported the organization, which caused great dismay for the National Turkish Student Union and İstanbul University Student Union. The two bodies issued a statement protesting “the spoiled and disrespectful attitude of the Patriarchate which has a history of abusing Turkish tolerance.”²¹⁰

As 1965 drew to a close, foreign policy came to occupy the attention of various segments of the intelligentsia. The major discontent arose from the U.S.

²¹⁰ “Bugüne kadar Türk müsamahasını kötüye kullanan Patrikhanenin şımarık ve saygısız tutumu protesto edildi.” *Cumhuriyet*, 19 April 1965.

involvement in Vietnam, and from Turkey's willingness to support the United States in what was seen as an imperialist quest. Thus, in December, first university professors and then writers and artists issued two statements calling for an independent and anti-imperialist foreign policy dedicated to upholding Atatürkist principles, and to condemning the U.S. presence in Vietnam.

The second half of the 1960's gave rise to a greater involvement on the part of student bodies in internal politics. During this period, student representatives enjoyed political prowess second only to the parliament and the military. Unions, for example, paled in comparison. The Turkish National Student Union could be seen, in February 1966, giving a public warning to the Prime Minister about the problems of the regime.

In 1967, as student demonstrations, marches, and sit-ins turned into staple daily events, confrontations between students and police forces naturally increased, and student organizations sought to rekindle their alliance with the military. This was not anything new. It hearkened back to the coup in 1960 when they had collaborated with the military to overthrow the government. Students were used to regarding themselves, along with the military, as the guardians of the Atatürkist regime. In the days following the coup, the rhetoric of the military, which was unfamiliar with such interventions and desperately needed allies to bolster its legitimacy, had given substance to this impression. True, there had been examples throughout the decade of divergence among students and the military, but the essential elements of the coalition struck up in 1960 were still intact. The student body itself was, of course, far from being monolithic; nonetheless, leftist and rightist groups rivaled each other to win the support of the military, not only vis-à-vis the police, but also vis-à-vis

each other. Even among the leftist students, anti-militarism as such was not yet very popular.

On 1 February 1967, Salim Yavuz, the secretary general of the Turkish National Youth Organization released a press statement which stressed the unity of Turkish youth and the Turkish army: “The attempts to sever the ties between the youth and the military only serves the enemies of Turkey. We are certain that the Turkish armed forces regret the slanders against Atatürkist youth as much as the youth do.”²¹¹ On 29 May, the Federation of Idea Clubs sent a telegram to President Sunay, who had said in his last speech that the constitution excluded socialism. The Federation joined the professors of constitutional law in reminding the President that the constitution did not, in fact, exclude socialism as a possible regime. When Pope Paul VI came to İstanbul on 25 July and was met at the airport by President Sunay and Prime Minister Demirel, various student organizations such as the TNSF and İstanbul University’s Student Union declared it a “black day”. A black flag was hung from the window of the TNSF building. The ceremony for the Pope was declared “an abominable stab in the back against Atatürk’s principles.”²¹²

As the 1960’s drew to a close, student protests in Turkey against militarism and American imperialism echoed similar protests in Europe and the States. On 13 May 1968, the police arrested students who put up posters that said “No to NATO” and “Independent Turkey”. Members of the İstanbul Technical University Student Union, while putting up the posters, engaged in fights with intervening bypassers in Beyazıt. On 23 January 1969, nine student organizations, namely the Ankara

²¹¹ “Gençlik ve orduyu birbirinden ayırma gayretleri, Türkiye’ye düşman kuvvetlerin işine yaramaktadır. Atatürk gençliğine atılan iftiralar karşısında, Türk silahlı Kuvvetlerinin, en az gençlik kadar üzüntü duyduğundan eminiz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 2 February 1967.

²¹² “Karşılama töreni Atatürk ilkelerine arkadan indirilen şen’i bir saldırı olarak adlandırıldı.” *Cumhuriyet*, 26 July 1967.

University Student Society of the School of Language, History and Geography, the School of Agriculture, the School of Sciences, the School of Political Science, the Veterinary School, the School of Pharmacy, the School of Medicine, the Gazi Education Institute, and the Academy of Social Services issued a joint statement condemning the imperialist interventions of the United States in Turkey and the commando attacks. On 7 February, twenty student organizations issued another joint statement calling for protests against the Sixth Fleet of the United States navy, which was due in İstanbul Harbor on 10 February. The protests lasted for more than a week.²¹³

The 1970's were marked by the increasing rift between highly politicized groups of university students. The Memorandum of 1971, delivered by the military high command to warn the government and the parliament of an incipient intervention in the case of continued social, political and economic instability, resulted in a period of interim governments that lasted until the general elections in 1973. These governments, led by Nihat Erim and Ferit Melen, effected a change for the worse in constitutional rights and freedoms, even though the initial expectations on 12 March were rather on the left. Student protests escalated and soon began to involve organized armed clashes between groups, creating a sense of pending anarchy throughout the country. The military, on the other hand, began to pull back its support from the youth, and felt increasingly alone in the role of guardians of the republic. Whatever their previous leftist sympathies, the military cadres became more conservative in their views. The coup of 1980 would demonstrate both elements of self-righteousness and weariness in the military.

²¹³ For further discussion, see Chapter Six.

In such a milieu, those peaceful forms of political action described here and in the previous chapter became less popular, leaving their place to more dramatic and often violent forms. What remained in way of using the written or spoken word was little. On 16 April 1971, the student organizations of Ankara and Hacettepe Universities held a joint press conference where they demanded that the Erim government openly express its views about youth, adding that they had “reason to doubt [the goodwill of] the government.”²¹⁴ On 11 March 1974, the students of the School of Forestry in Ankara issued a press statement to complain about the “commandos” and their attacks. On 17 March 1976, ten “revolutionist” student organizations declared their commitment to the fight against fascism.

Placing Ads: Putting Their Money Where Their Mouths Were

It was in 1979, while Ecevit was in power, that one of the more interesting examples of collective action took place. The end of the 1970’s found Turkey not only in social turmoil and deadlocked politics, but also on the brink of economic bankruptcy. All segments of society felt the sting of soaring inflation, a negative growth rate, growing unemployment, and a huge black market which, among other things, robbed the state of resources that were direly needed. The Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (TIBA) chose to oppose the policies of the Ecevit government by placing advertisements in newspapers. Starting on 13 May, the TIBA criticized the government via a series of ads, complaining that the private sector was given short shrift due to increased etatism; the realistic way out was private enterprise and a true market economy. On 23 May, TIBA’s ad read: “the nation is

²¹⁴ “Bizde Erim hükümeti hakkında haklı bir şüphe doğuyor.” *Vatan*, 17 April 1971.

waiting”; on 30 May, “Sharing poverty? Or creating abundance?” The Ecevit government was shocked by what it saw as the audacity of businessmen, which came at a time when the government was about to obtain foreign credit. Ecevit threatened TIBA with taking the association to court, adding for good measure that the Turkish state will not be saved by the memorandum of businessmen, and that in this country only the people will have their say. Workers’ unions were also critical of TIBA’s ads. On 12 November, Ecevit’s government was replaced by one led by Demirel. On 22 November, the IMF demanded a new devaluation of the Turkish Lira.

This, however, was not the first instance of the TIBA engaging in such action. Indeed, back in 1971, the association placed an advertisement in major newspapers upon its establishment on 2 August, stating its views and aims:

We have established the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association in order to serve the aim of developing Turkey in a democratic and planned manner and of bringing Turkey up to the level of Western civilization.

In these days, as our country is entering a new period, we believe this direction will affect the fate of our country for many generations to come. With this belief, we regard it our duty to announce to the public our aims and views:

1. Atatürk’s principles and his understanding of Turkey as a secular and thoroughly Western state have to be sincerely defended and put into practice.
2. Free enterprise is the underpinning element of financial life and the guarantee of a democratic regime.
3. We believe that capital, labor, and enterprise are major elements complementing each other. In order to have a harmonious mixed economy, it is necessary to abide by business ethics and the rules of social justice as far as the economic conditions of our country allows.
4. Our rapidly growing population demands new jobs, and our longing for economic development requires our modest means to be put into efficient investments. Productive work is the distinguishing quality of free enterprise. It will be our duty to make this quality more useful.
5. It is also our duty to help all positive efforts at stopping tax evasion and at bolstering the national economy.

6. It is clear that industrial and business endeavors required to reach the economic and social development of the modern western world can only exist in an environment of stability. We therefore find dangerous all attitudes that aim to break up the unity of our people.
7. We desperately need young people endowed with modern knowledge for the technological and social development of our country. We believe that it is necessary to eliminate all conditions and elements that hinder the education of the Turkish youth, the hope of our future.
8. Our belief in and respect for the freedom of press and constructive criticism is complete. We will, however, never side with an understanding and attitude that attacks human honor and dignity, tampers with news reports purposefully, encourages the breaking of laws and disobeys its own Press Ethics Law.
9. We are determined to carry out with all our might all our duties in order to realize these principles fully in our country.²¹⁵

²¹⁵ “Türkiye’nin demokratik ve planlı yoldan kalkınmasına ve Batı uygarlık seviyesine çıkarılmasına hizmet etmek amacı ile Türk Sanayicileri ve İş Adamları Derneği adı altında bir birlik kurduk.

Ülkemizin yeni bir devreye yöneldiği şu günlerde, biz bu yönelimin Yurdumuzun kaderini nesiller boyunca etkileyeceği inancındayız. Bu inançla, amaçlarımızı ve görüşlerimizi Türk Kamu Oyuna açıklamayı görev saymaktayız:

1. Atatürk ilkeleri ve O’nun Türkiye’yi layik, tam anlamıyla Batılı bir devlet olarak gören anlayışı, içtenlikle savunulmalı ve uygulanmalıdır.

2. Hür teşebbüs, iktisadi hayatın dayanağı ve demokratik rejimin teminatıdır.

3. Sermaye, emek ve teşebbüsün birbirlerini tamamlayan ana unsurlar olduğuna inanıyoruz. Karma ekonomi nizamının ahenkli bir şekilde yürütülmesi için, ticari ahlaka ve memleketin gücü içinde sağlanacak sosyal adalet ilkelerine uyulmasını şart olarak görmekteyiz.

4. Hızla artan nüfusumuz yeni iş sahaları istemekte, iktisadi kalkınma ölçümüz ölçülü imkanlarımızdan verimli yatırımlar beklemektedir. Prodüktif çalışma hür teşebbüsün belirli bir niteliğidir. Bu özelliği daha da yararlı kılmak görevimiz olacaktır.

5. Vergi kaybını önleyici her türlü olumlu tedbire yardımcı olmayı ve milli ekonomiyi güçlendirmeyi görev saymaktayız.

6. Çağdaş Batı dünyasının ekonomik ve toplumsal gelişmelerine yetişmek için gerekli sınai ve ticari çalışmaların yalnız istikrarlı bir ortamda var olabileceği açıktır. Bunun için halkın bütünlüğünü bölücü tutumları her şekliyle tehlikeli bulmaktayız.

7. Ülkemizin teknolojik ve sosyal kalkınması için çağdaş bilgilerle donatılmış gençlere şiddetle ihtiyacımız vardır. İstikbalimizin ümidi olan Türk gençlerinin yetişmesini engelleyen şartların ve unsurların bertaraf edilmesi gerektiğine inanmaktayız.

8. Basın özgürlüğüne ve yapıcı tenkitlere inancımız ve saygımız tamdır. Ancak; insan şeref ve haysiyetine tecavüz eden, haberi maksatlı olarak değiştiren, yasalara karşı gelmeyi teşvik eden ve kendi ‘Basın Ahlak Yasası’na uymayan bir anlayış ve tutumun yanında olmayacaktır.

9. Bu ilkelerin yurdumuzda tam anlamıyla gerçekleştirilmesi için bize düşen görevleri bütün gücümüzle yerine getirmek kararındayız.” İlke, no.1 (January 1974), p. 13.

New Directions: The Case of *Yön*

Throughout the history of the Turkish Republic, a number of political journals have played a role of signal importance. These have usually appeared as the work of a collective entity, forming organic links with a greater circle of individuals in translating their views and ideologies into action. *Kadro* was the first example. Published between 1932-1934 by a group of intellectuals, all members of the RPP, including Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin, Vedat Nedim Tör, Burhan Asaf Belge and headed by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, the journal produced serious discussions on ideology and strategies of development. Indeed, the *Kadro* (Cadre) movement contributed to the development of the Kemalist ideology, and became the instrument of eliminating all intellectuals and intellectual movements unfaithful to the Kemalist regime.²¹⁶ The National Economy and Savings Society (*Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti*), founded in 1929, was an important factor in bringing together the writers of the journal, and provided them with a passage to the Kemalist bureaucrat-intellectual circles.²¹⁷ Published during a time when debates on etatism were at a peak, *Kadro* also attempted to provide a theoretical framework for the Turkish Revolution. *Kadro* supported a brand of etatism it called nationalist etatism. Explaining this concept, İsmail Hüsrev wrote that its main principle was to protect national sovereignty against the outside on the one hand, and to increase the income generated by “national economy” in keeping with the interests of the whole

²¹⁶ Yalçın Küçük, “Cumhuriyet Döneminde Aydınlar ve Dergileri”, in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1988), p. 140.

²¹⁷ Türkeş, *Kadro Hareketi* (İstanbul: İmge, 1999), p. 69.

nation and including all individuals on the other. Such an etatist structure required guiding cadres comprised of experts, technocrats, and organizers.²¹⁸

Atatürk and prominent members of the RPP supported the journal for some time, both as readers and in the financial sense. The single-party era's intolerant attitude meant that the writers of the journal had to express their views under conditions of implicit censure, and their differences with the regime brought on the demise of the journal soon enough.²¹⁹ During the 1950s, *Forum*, a journal that began to appear in April 1954, had a similar function of debating the policy alternatives open to the regime.²²⁰

During the 1960s, *Yön* (Direction) was the locus where intellectuals on the Left sought a "direction" for Turkey. Published for 222 issues between 1961-1967, the journal was the brainchild of Doğan Avcıoğlu, Cemal Reşit Eyüboğlu, and Mümtaz Soysal. Its Declaration was signed by 1,042 people, most of whom were state employees of sorts, intellectuals, and university students.²²¹ The *Yön* movement can be construed as the attempt of a group of intellectuals, disgruntled by the 27 May coup, to bring to Atatürkism a new and Leftist interpretation. In this they were influenced by the previous generation which had brought out *Kadro*. Major differences between the two groups do exist: the Kadroists wanted to develop Atatürkism by using Marxism, whereas the Yönists were more interested in a new interpretation of Marxism, for which they used Atatürkism.²²²

²¹⁸ Zafer Toprak, "Türkiye'de Tek-Parti ve Otoriter Modernizm".

²¹⁹ Mustafa Türkeş, p. 94.

²²⁰ Hikmet Özdemir, *Yön Hareketi* (Ankara: Bilgi, 1986), p. 269.

²²¹ For a detailed breakdown of occupations, see *ibid.*, p. 52.

²²² A similar comment was made by Aziz Nesin in "Kemalist Devrim İdeolojisi' ve Bu Neslin Trajedisi", *Ant*, no. 171 (7 April 1970), p. 10.

Of course, *Kadro* was very much aligned with the ruling class, and as such could hardly be called a movement, whereas *Yön* was the project of a group which aimed at seizing power and had many characteristics of a movement.²²³ Some students of the era have gone so far as to insist that the ideology promoted by *Yön* (which in part argued that a strong leadership could seize power with the help of the military and endorse an interim government to undertake necessary reforms and even a revolution) could be regarded as having shaped the thinking of various military and civilian groups taking up action in March 1971.²²⁴

A group of *Yön* writers founded the Socialist Culture Association (*Sosyalist Kültür Derneği*) in 1962, with the aim of scientifically studying socialism and promoting it. Their hope was that socialist parties and unions would largely benefit from such studies. Through the SCA, *Yön* was able to go beyond the written word and actually engage in action. After 1964, some of the proponents of National Democratic Revolution, such as Mihri Belli and Erdoğan Berktaş, also began to appear in the journal, and from 1965 onwards there could be seen a major overlap of subject matter between the articles in *Yön* and the theses of the SCA.²²⁵

In fact, once *Yön* became more than a platform of discussion and aligned itself with the NCA and its actions, a number of writers not in agreement with this change left the journal. The new attitude of the *Yön*ists became clearer in October 1969 with *Devrim*, a journal that emerged after *Yön*.²²⁶

²²³ Özdemir, p. 275.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 287.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 61.

²²⁶ H. Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Fikir Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Birey, 1995), p. 71.

Between 1950-1980, the written word proved to be one of the most potent tools for collective actors. The regime was even more distrustful of words than deeds and regularly persecuted dissident voices. Under these conditions, phrasing dissent became an extremely delicate matter; the marchers in the streets posed problems for the regime which it could handle – the language of action was decipherable. The written word, however, seemed to function differently – there were shades of meaning, puns, irony, metaphors which the regime was hardly able to fathom. To make matters worse, most collective actors loved to wax poetic, engulfed in their own serpentine rhetoric. This, of course, considerably diminishes the effect of all writing, and provided one of the main reasons why the student movements fell out of touch with the rest of the population in the 1970s.

CHAPTER 5:

“SMOKY MOUNTAIN TOP”:

DEMONSTRATIONS, MARCHES, PROTESTS

The previous chapters dealt with forms of collective action that were, to some extent, inhibited excuses for collective political action proper: the extent to which they were “collective”, “political” or “action” could be put to question. Even with associations, where a concerted and sustained effort was seen on the part of association members to have their problems included in the national agenda, their repertoire of action would be wanting were it not for the numerous demonstrations, marches, and public meetings they organized. This chapter will examine these incidents which constitute some of the most “visible” and “audible” ways for non-politicians to act politically.

There exist a number of leitmotifs, woven through the years after 1950, which appear again and again, sometimes as simple repetition, sometimes with variations around a central theme; these leitmotifs make it easier to relate and understand the story. The routes chosen for the marches, the songs and slogans chanted, the choice of locations for demonstrations, along with the subject matter of these activities are a few such strings that guide the researcher in his quest for discovering continuity and change. Even as decades pass and generations change, a certain know-how of demonstrations remains intact and is passed on; some of the changes are mere adaptations to the times, whereas some changes point to radically altered political culture.

Throughout the thirty years between 1950 and 1980, some locations in Istanbul and Ankara were especially popular with activists, either because of their

symbolic importance or their centrality or, in some cases, both. University campuses are naturally first on the list for university students engaging in collective political action. The campuses of Istanbul University, ITU, METU and Ankara University have staged most of these demonstrations and protests. In Istanbul, Beyazıt, Taksim, Saraçhanebaşı, Babıali, Dolmabahçe (especially during the visits of the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet), Şişli, and Hürriyet squares were the main venues for demonstrations; İstiklal Avenue, the hot center of the 1990s and the 2000s, saw very little action. In Ankara, most of the demonstrations took place in Zafer, Ulus, Kızılay, Kurtuluş and Tandoğan squares and the Anıtkabir (Atatürk's mausoleum).

Major routes for marches included Beyazıt–Gümüşsuyu–Taksim, Beyazıt–Bankalar Avenue–Taksim in İstanbul, and Tandoğan–Ulus–Anıtkabir in Ankara. The main activities involved placing garlands at the pedestals of statues, the singing of the National Anthem, a 1-5 minutes' silence, speeches, and the shouting of slogans. Burning pictures and effigies of various world leaders became popular in the 1960s. The National Anthem, apart from inciting nationalistic fervor, occasionally served the additional purpose of breaking the attack of police forces on demonstrators. Other popular marches were the “Tenth Year” (*Onuncu Yıl*) and “Smoky Mountain Top” (*Dağ Başını Duman Almış*). The “Gazi Osman Paşa” March, however, proved to be the most adaptable. The original lyrics are as follows:

*Tuna nehri akmam diyor
Etrafımı yıkmam diyor
Şanı büyük Osman Paşa
Pilevne'den çıkmam diyor.*

*Düşman Tunayı atladı
Karakolları yokladı
Osman Paşa'nın kolunda
Beşbin top birden patladı.*

(The Danube says it won't flow
I won't destroy my surroundings
The famous Osman Paşa
Says I won't go out of Plevne.

The enemy crossed the Danube
Tried the outposts
On Osman Paşa's arm
Five thousand cannons went off.)

In 1960, this march was used during demonstrations in support of the military coup:

*Olur mu böyle olur mu?
Kardeş kardeşi vurur mu?
Ama siz vurursunuz
Çünkü kardeş değil kalleşsiniz.*

(Is this the way it ought to be?
Does a brother shoot a brother?
But you would
For you are no brother but a stabber in the back.)

In 1962, the same march was adapted to the purpose of condemning plans for amnesty with respect to ex-DP members:

*Olur mu böyle olur mu?
Kardeş kardeşi vurur mu?
Kaatiller af olursa
Türk gençliği durur mu?*

(Is this the way it ought to be?
Does a brother shoot a brother?
If killers are pardoned
Can the Turkish youth stay put?)

In 1964, the Gazi Osman Paşa March was changed once again to protest the killings in Cyprus:

*Olur mu böyle olur mu?
Kıbrıs Rumlara kalır mı?
Kahrolası EOKA'cılar
Bu dünya size kalır mı?*

(Is this the way it ought to be?
Will Cyprus be left to the Greeks?)

Damned EOKA
Will this world be left to you?)

In 1966, the demonstrators protesting USA's Sixth Fleet sang the march as follows:

*Tuna Nehri akmam diyor
Amerika Türkiye'den
Çıkmam diyor.*

(The Danube says it won't flow,
America says it won't get
Out of Turkey.)

Another song, which was adapted for political purposes, was the "Rose Tree." It went:

*Gül Ağacı değilim
Her gelene eğilem
Çek elini yurdumdan
Ben sömürge değilim.*

(I am not a rose tree
I won't bend before thee
Take your hands off my country
This is not a colony.)

Singing songs and shouting slogans did not always go down well with the authorities, which gave rise to the innovation of "the silent march" during which huge crowds would walk for kilometers on end, without uttering a single word, thus avoiding prosecution (at least for a while).

Demonstrations, marches and protests were not limited to İstanbul and Ankara; other big cities like İzmir, Adana and Bursa, along with smaller cities like Diyarbakır, Erzurum, Isparta, Eskişehir, and İzmit also had their share of collective action.

Demonstrations and marches were most popular during 1967-1971, which coincided with the period when student protests were at an all-time high, leading one

to conclude that most of these were organized by student activists, and even a cursory analysis of data supports this view. Similarly, the demonstrations and marches around 1962 were also led by student groups. This brings up the issue of malleability: how autonomous were the students engaging in political action, and to what degree were they manipulated by the “powers that be”? It is true that a number of student groups were in direct contact with political parties and even the government; this, however, does not suffice to prove that they were toeing someone else’s line. In fact, the same can be said of most student activists around the world.

In a study published in 1970 called *Student Activism and Protest*²²⁷, Sampson argues that the university students of the 1960s became interested in politics as a result of their interest in educational matters²²⁸. Demands for having a say in a sort of education more in touch with the world was perceived by university administrators as a threat, backed by the possibility of mass action, and were handled accordingly, thus turning into self-fulfilling prophecies. Once this demand for “in-touch”ness was turned down, the demand spiraled outward to include matters not limited to education, such as social justice, freedom, and racial equality.

The Skolnick Report reiterates the point that,

The present generation of young people in our universities is the best informed, the most intelligent, and the most idealistic this country has ever known...It is also the most sensitive to public issues and the most sophisticated in political tactics...the ability, social consciousness and conscience, political sensitivity, and honest realism of today’s students are a prime cause of student disturbances²²⁹.

²²⁷ Edward E. Sampson and Harold A. Korn, eds., *Student Activism and Protest* (San Francisco, LA: Berkeley University, 1970).

²²⁸ Ibid., p.21.

²²⁹ Jerome H. Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest* (New York, NY: 1969), p. 80.

Similar points can be made about the Turkish university students in the 1960s (a more detailed discussion of this matter can be found in Chapter Seven). It should be stressed, however, that although the social backgrounds of Turkish student activists were quite different from those in the United States, their political awareness and idealism were not in any way lacking. This can be evinced from their statements and the types of issues they show sensitivity for (see Chapter Four).

Right after the 1950 elections, on 17 May, a group of 200 students from Ankara University marched to Çankaya to visit İsmet İnönü, the new opposition leader. This was their way of showing their loyalty to one of the founding fathers of the republic, in the wake of an electoral defeat the RPP had not expected. Some members of the high command were also seen at İnönü's door, in an attempt to gauge his inclination to call the election results null and void, and perhaps even to persuade him in that direction. The march of the students carried a similar meaning. İnönü, however, was resolute in upholding the new status quo dictated by democratic procedure, and on this occasion, as on numerous others throughout the month of May, he declared it an honor to serve the country in the capacity of parliamentary opposition.

Student demonstrations were very common in the 1950s, a fact which may seem surprising in light of the dogma which favors the children of 1968 as the epitome of activism. The topics ranged from political to educational matters. As early as 6 June 1950, for example, university students complained about the quality of higher education, and organized demonstrations to make their voices heard. On this date, İstanbul Technical University students first gathered in the gym, and then marched to Taksim via Gümüşsuyu, shouting "This is as much education as we can get by ourselves!", "We can pass midterm exams!", "This mentality has to change!",

“We can’t see the forest for the trees!”, “The result is not knowledge but sacrilege!”²³⁰ The police stopped the group from leaving a garland of flowers on the pedestal of the Statue of Freedom, but they were allowed to do so after the president of the university talked with the governor, upon which the students dispersed peacefully.

Two months later, the first political demonstrations took place, all of which were in line with official policies. On 4 August, İstanbul University’s student union organized a conference at the Marmara Locale, attended by students as well as representatives of professional organizations, members of three political parties, and a group of immigrants. The secretary general of the union, Faik Güven, delivered the opening speech, which was followed by others, all condemning communism and declaring that the youth was ready to fight the red danger. Afterwards, the crowd drove to Taksim in cars, placed a garland at the statue, and sent a telegram to Prime Minister Menderes. A similar demonstration was organized in İzmir on the same day in specific condemnation of the Peace-Lovers Society which protested the war in Korea. The members of the İzmir Higher School of Economics (*İzmir Yüksek İktisat Okulu*) and the Trade Student Association (*Ticaret Talebeleri Derneği*) held an open-air meeting, then marched to the Atatürk statue and placed a garland of flowers there. Afterwards, speeches were delivered, a three-minute silence was observed, and finally the crowd sang the national anthem.

On 11 August, when a number of people were arrested in Isparta on charges of communism, the youth organized a meeting to protest them. On 26 August, workers in three cities, İstanbul, Ankara and Eskişehir, gathered to condemn

²³⁰ “Kendi kendimize bu kadar yetişiriz”, “Vize alamıyoruz”, “Zihniyet değişmelidir”, “Teferruat arasında özü seçemiyoruz”, “Netice ilim değil elim”. *Akşam*, 7 June 1950.

communism. They were joined by student representatives in mass gatherings where placards read: “Communists! Go to the heaven you dream of, on the double!”, “We won’t let communism live!”, “Moscow is our old enemy, communists are the new!”, “Red bullets can’t enter the fortress of faith!”, “Communists don’t know what love for the country means!”²³¹ On 27 August, the Cellulose Industry Workers’ Union organized a condemnation demonstration in İzmit’s People’s House, where the target was again communism.

Towards the end of the year, on 9 December, two big demonstrations were held in İstanbul and Ankara, where students gathered to commemorate the dead soldiers of the Korean War. The meeting in İstanbul was organized by the National Turkish Student Union. The group started its march in front of the university building in Beyazıt at 1 p.m., and passing through Cağaloğlu, Sirkeci, Bankalar Caddesi, it reached Taksim by 2.30 p.m. There, in front of the statue, the marchers shouted “Down with communists, long live Mehments!” (the generic name given to Turkish soldiers). The crowd sang the national anthem, observed a five minutes’ silence, and listened to the speeches. The students marched on to Hürriyet-i Ebediye Hill with flags and placards in hand, and from there to Şişli, where they sang the national anthem once again in front of the house of a captain who had died at war, and then again in front of the Revolution Museum. The group returned to Hürriyet-i Ebediye around 4 p.m. and dispersed after singing the national anthem one last time and shouting, “Long live Mehmet!” In Ankara, students and people gathered in Zafer Square with flags in their hands. Their placards read “We fight for the freedom of mankind!”, “Turks will fight communism even if they have to do it alone!”, “Ye

²³¹ “*Komünistler! Özendiğiniz cennete marş marş!*”, “*Komünistliği yaşatmayacağız!*”, “*Moskof eski düşmanımız, komünist yeni düşmanımız*”, “*İman kalesine kırmızı mermi işlemez*”, “*Vatan sevgisini komünist bilmez*”. *Akşam*, 27 August 1950.

martyrs, your bed of roses is our bosoms!” “Down with communists!” “Our fist will always smash your heads in!”²³² Here the Turkish commander in Korea, General Tahsin Yazıcı’s telegram was read to wild applause. Singing marches the crowd walked to Ulus and then dispersed.

The hysteria concerning communism soon spread to other cities and age groups. On 11 January 1951, the Turkish teacher of Aydın High School was arrested along with a student on charges of communist activity, which led to a demonstration organized by high school students to condemn communism. During the meeting, a Kadir Bozdağ rose to defend communism, which of course led to his prompt arrest; the police searched his house and found some books related to communism.

The second most prevalent theme of the 1950’s was, of course, the “green danger”, i.e., *irtica*. Konya was singled out by many as the stronghold of fundamentalists; An article by Ahmet Emin Yalman dated 14 March 1951 combined the red and green dangers in a specific way: “Konya is turning into the center of *irtica*”, he wrote, “due to the provocations of the reds.”²³³ The youth of Konya felt much insulted by this article, and organized a demonstration on 17 March, attended by thousands, avowing their dedication to the reforms.

Three days later, on 20 March, two thousand students in İstanbul held a march at night, protesting *Büyük Doğu* magazine, which had published an article critical of Atatürk and the reforms. The students gathered in Beyazıt Square in front of the gates of the university and marched down to Ankara Avenue, where they were met by the police. The group then walked on in an orderly and serious manner,

²³² “*İnsanlığın hürriyeti için savaşılmaktadır*”, “*Türk yalnız kalsa da komünistlerle savaşıacaktır*”, “*Aziz şehitler yattığınız yer sinemizdir*”, “*Kahrolsun komünistler*”, “*Yumruğumuz daima beyninizdedir*”. *Akşam*, 10 December 1950.

²³³ “*Kızulların tahrikleriyle Konya’nın bir irtica merkezi haline gelmesi*,” cited in *Ulus*, 15 March 1951.

visiting the offices of all the newspapers in Cağaloğlu and stating their cause. After protesting the magazine in question in front of its building, the students sang the “Onuncu Yıl” (Tenth Year) and the “Dağ Başını Duman Almış” (Smoky Mountain Top), both favorite marches, and went back to their dormitories around 11:30 p.m. The official reaction came the next day, when the Ministry of Interior stated that there was “no serious reason to believe that a fundamentalist movement is on the rise in Turkey,”²³⁴ and a number of the students involved were interrogated at the İstanbul Police Department. Another group of ten students visited the governor of İstanbul to ask for permission to organize a demonstration against *irtica*, but their wish was not granted.

In 1959, the same magazine would again invoke strong protests for similar reasons. In its March issue, *Büyük Doğu* printed an article that called the war veterans “fake heroes”, which of course created a fury among university students. The vice president of the TMTF, Erol Ünal, asked for the attorney general to step in and conduct an investigation. The students in Eskişehir asked permission for a demonstration, and distributed a printed statement; the workers of Eskişehir, represented by the president of the TOLEYİS federation, Ahmet Aras, also condemned the magazine. The TMTF in İstanbul issued a general call to all its members for a demonstration, and applied to the office of the governor for permission. Not only was a permission denied, but the vice president and some other members of the federation were also interrogated for sixteen hours at the Police Department. The federation sent telegrams to the President, the Prime Minister, the

²³⁴ “Tebliğde, yurt içinde irticai bir hareketin mevcudiyetine delalet edecek hiçbir ciddi sebep yoktur, denilmektedir.” *Ulus*, 23 March 1951.

Minister of Interior and the Minister of Justice, explaining the situation. Erol Ünal's statement was banned, which resulted in the TMTF issuing yet another statement calling for a freer press.

The attacks leveled at Atatürk statues reached their peak in 1951, and student organizations were quick to respond: one of the biggest protest meetings was held in Zafer Square in Ankara, on 30 June, organized by the Turkish National Student Federation. Thousands of students responded to its call, filling the square by 17:30. The meeting lasted for three hours. The placards read: "21 million busts in 21 million hearts!", "Down with zealots!", "Atam, you are the fire in our hearts, the light of our eyes, the hands that attack you shall be broken!", "The reforms of Atatürk cannot be knocked down with the hammers of zealotry!", "The statues of Atatürk are not idols but the sign of our devotion cast in bronze!"²³⁵

The statue of Atatürk in the square, which had been attacked a few days earlier by a group carrying hammers, was now decorated with garlands of flowers and beacons. The crowd sang the national anthem, played by the orchestra of the gendarme. After a series of speeches delivered by the president of the TNSF, the mayor, the RPP representative, a representative of a workers' union, the president of the Women's Union, the president of the Drivers' Association (*Şöförler Derneği*), and a medical student. The crowd then marched to Ulus Square, where another crowd was waiting. New speeches were made, and telegrams sent in support from all over the country were read. The meeting finally came to an end after the people took oaths to protect the reforms and fight against *irtica*. On the same day, eight *Ticanis*

²³⁵ "21 milyon kalbde 21 milyon büst", "Kahrolsun yobazlar", "Atam içimizin ateşi, gözümüzün nurusun, sana uzanan el ta kökünden kurusun", "Atatürk inkılapları yobazların balyozları ile yıkılmaz", "Atamızın heykelleri put değil, sevgilerimizin tunçlaşan nişanesidir". *Ulus*, 1 July 1951.

were arrested in Kalecik, caught while trying to hand out brochures against Atatürk and the reforms. Investigations continued in Çubuk, Çankırı, and Şabanözü. Sixty-three *Nakşibendis* were arrested two days later in İstanbul; one of them was quoted as saying, “We are the ones who instituted democracy in this land, the present government came to power with our votes, who are you to stop us?”²³⁶ On 24 July, another twenty-one *Ticanis* were arrested in Bağlum, Ankara. The *Ticani* trials began in March 1952; the group of seventy-four accused denied being *Ticanis*.

Demonstrations continued throughout the month of July. On 2 July, a big crowd gathered in Cumhuriyet Square in İzmir around 18:00, led by representatives of three parties, the mayor, professors, and intellectuals. After the national anthem, speeches were delivered in the order determined by lot. Some people carried placards that read “*İtcaniler*” (Dog criminals). The usual oaths were taken, and a number of people stood watch in front of the Atatürk statue with beacons in their hands. On 10 July, another demonstration was held, this time in Aydın, where the Association of Higher Education Students of Aydın protested the attacks on reforms.

Throughout the 1950s, a regular form of collective political action was for university students to visit İsmet İnönü in large groups (often comprising hundreds). Cases in point took place on 10 January and 1 April, the anniversaries of two victories gained by İnönü during the War of Independence. During these visits, İnönü would tell the students about the war, and would comment on the current political situation, especially pointing out the heavy responsibility of the youth in protecting the reforms of Atatürk and the secular republic. Towards the end of the 1950s, these

²³⁶ “63 *Nakşibendi* ayinde yakalandı. Bunalrdan biri diyor ki: demokrasiyi biz kurduk, hükümet bizlerin reyiyile iş başına geçti, siz kim oluyorsunuz?” *Ulus*, 3 July 1951.

visits came to be regarded by the DP government as another form of subversive activity.

One of the rare workers' meetings of the 1950s, actually the first, took place in Eskişehir on 22 February, 1953. Thousands of workers from various parts of the country gathered in Eskişehir on that day to refute the accusations of communism leveled at representatives of unions by the governor and the public prosecutor of Kütahya. The next day's *Ulus* sang praises for the workers, who condemned communism and vowed their allegiance to the reforms: "Even though it was organized for the first time, the fact that such a massive demonstration of workers ended peacefully and in great maturity gives reason to cherish the highest hopes for the future of unionism in Turkey. Turkish workers today have passed a most difficult test."²³⁷

On 15 March, however, workers were not allowed to hold a demonstration in Taksim to protest the laying off of fifty-three workers at the cement factory in Zeytinburnu. Authorities denied permission on the grounds that the matter came under the jurisdiction of the court. The workers wanted to gather in Taksim anyway, going there in buses, but security forces dispersed them, allowing only a group of representatives to leave a garland of flowers at the statue.

After 1953, communism and *irtica* retreated to secondary importance as far as demonstrations went, replaced by the situation in Cyprus. A number of demonstrations were held in Cyprus itself, attended by workers and peasants from Turkey, especially from the Adana and Mersin regions. One such demonstration was held on 17 February 1954 in Nicosia, condemning the attacks on Turkish foundations

²³⁷ "Böyle muazzam bir işçi mitinginin ilk defa yapılmış olmasına rağmen vakur ve olgunluk içinde geçmiş olması sendikacılığımızın atisi hakkında büyük ümit vermektedir. Çünkü Türk işçisi bugün büyük bir imtihan vermiştir." *Ulus*, 23 February 1953.

in Cyprus. The Turkish population in Cyprus demanded to take over the administration of these foundations in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty, complaining that the Greek Cypriot administration had turned a blind eye on its unlawful seizure. Turkish women were represented by a delegation from the Turkish Women Union. Telegrams were sent to authorities both in Turkey and in Great Britain.

On 5 March, members of the Turkish National Youth Committee gathered in the former People's House in Eminönü to discuss the Cyprus issue. The specific matter at hand was the grain export to Cyprus, which had recently come under attack by the Greek Cypriots. Speakers of the day agreed with Secretary General İsmail Zarakolu that Turkey and Greece must avoid a conflict over the issue.

On 24 March, the day of independence for Greece, a demonstration for Cyprus was held in Athens by hundreds of Greek university students, who tore the British flag to pieces and demanded the annexation of Cyprus to Greece. People on the street shouted "Enosis!"²³⁸ On the same day, 5,000 Greek Cypriot university students in Nicosia organized a march and repeated the same demand.

Turkish Cypriots were ready to show some muscle themselves. On 28 March, a crowd of fifteen thousand gathered in Nicosia to demand the right to manage the property of Turkish foundations. People from the remotest villages of Adana had come to attend the demonstration organized by the Federation of Turkish Cypriot Institutions (*Kıbrıslı Türk Kurumları Federasyonu*). The *mufti* of Cyprus, the president of the federation, the secretary general of the Cyprus National Turkish Union, and the owner of the daily *Voice of the People* delivered speeches, after which delegations were chosen to attend the matter in Turkey and Great Britain, and

²³⁸ In Greek, "union" (with Greece).

telegrams were sent to the relevant authorities. *Vatan* praised the demonstration as having been “conducted in a manner befitting of mature societies and nations, and ended in the pure atmosphere created by people fully determined to seize what is rightfully theirs.”²³⁹

On 21 April, the Turkish National Student Federation organized an indoor meeting in Taksim. The president of the federation, Mesut Ülkü, declared that they will “strive to make our voices heard until Britain gives back the green island temporarily put under its trust.”²⁴⁰ The İstanbul president of RPP’s Youth Organizations İzzet Sedes then gave Mr. Ülkü a bust of Atatürk to be passed on to the youth of Cyprus. The TNSF declared 21 April as Cyprus Day in order to “demonstrate our concern for such matters.”²⁴¹

On 16 May, Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia held another meeting to protest the British office of education for stifling Turkish culture on the island by trying to collect all Turkish schools in one district while Greek schools continue to exist both inside and outside the city walls.

1955 was another year filled with strife for Turkish Cypriots, and this was reflected in demonstrations and protests. The first incident of the year took place on 6 February, when Turks in Nicosia were joined by Turks from Adana’s remote villages and, numbering close to fifteen thousand, they demonstrated for the return of

²³⁹ “Bu muazzam miting olgun cemaat ve milletlere yaraşır bir şekilde cereyan etmiş ve mukaddes bir hakkı almağa tam manasıyle azmetmiş insanların yarattıkları temiz hava içerisinde sona ermiştir.” *Vatan*, 29 March 1954.

²⁴⁰ “Emaneten İngiltere’ye verdiğimiz yeşiladayı geri alıncaya kadar sesimizi duyurmaya çalışacağız.” *Vatan*, 22 April 1954.

²⁴¹ “Böylece Kıbrıs’a olan bağlılığımızı ve uyuyor zannedilen gençliğin bu gibi meselelerdeki hassasiyetini göstermiş olacağız.” *Vatan*, 22 April 1955.

foundations to the Turkish administration. The event was held in front of the historical Selimiye Mosque.

University students in İstanbul organized an academic meeting on 21 April to discuss the situation in Cyprus. Action erupted afterwards – a sizeable group marched to Taksim, singing “Smoky Mountain Top”, and left a garland of flowers on the pedestal of the statue. Another group walked down İstiklal Avenue, and were joined by people in singing the national anthem. The police were unable to disrupt the march. The crowd, gaining in size as it went through Tepebaşı, Bankalar, Sirkeci and Babıali, shouted slogans calling the army to go to Cyprus, and declared that Cyprus would remain Turkish. When the crowd stopped in front of the *Hürriyet* building in Babıali, the governor of İstanbul, Kerim Gökay, came and ordered them to disperse, and asked the members of the TNSF board of directors to come immediately to his office. The members of NTSU board of directors were also brought in to meet with the governor. Those who were detained were released the next day, and both organizations held press meetings to deny the charges of having organized an impromptu demonstration. Nizamettin Canöztürk, president of the TNSF, said, “Not only did we not organize the demonstration, we hadn’t even imagined such a thing... if we had wanted to organize such a demonstration, we would have gotten the necessary permission from the authorities and would have carried it out in a manner befitting our federation. At the present we do not believe such action to be necessary.”²⁴²

²⁴² “Biz miting tertiplemediğimiz gibi tasavvur dahi etmedik... eğer miting yapmak isteseydik müsaadesini alır ve federasyona yakışır bir şekilde yapardık ki şimdilik buna lüzum hissetmiyoruz.”
Ibid.

In Cyprus the situation worsened during the summer of 1955. On 22 June there were clashes between the EOKA²⁴³ and Turkish groups, which resulted in bloodshed. One Turkish police officer was killed, and twenty Turks were wounded. The British troops were put on high alert. Two months later, on 21 August, Turkish Cypriots founded the *Volkan* (Volcano) Organization to fight against Greek terrorism conducted by the EOKA. On the 26th, uprisings by Turkish Cypriots protested Makarios and the approximately one thousand Greek Cypriots gathered in the Nicosia Cathedral for the third National Cyprus Congress, which announced that the struggle for annexation would continue. Greek crowds shouted “Enosis!” after the congress was over.

The events of 6-7 September 1955, discussed in Chapter Three, were partly the result of this deterioration in the conditions under which the people of Cyprus lived together. Apart from the looting and vandalism, there were also protest meetings and demonstrations. On the night of 7 September, one such meeting was held in Ankara, but the security forces took all precautions to prevent violence. A big crowd, mostly students, gathered in front of the Law School, and walked down to Ulus, singing “Smoky Mountain Top” and the national anthem, and from there they marched on to Sıhhiye. There the crowd protested the Greeks, who had purportedly bombed Atatürk’s house in Salonica; afterwards a group of students clashed with the police in Kurtuluş. On 8 September, a big group of primary school students, aged between eight and ten, attempted to march to the Anıtkabir with maps of Cyprus and pictures of Atatürk in their hands, but were stopped by security forces. Some papers claimed that one of the reasons events got out of hand in İstanbul was that the office

²⁴³ “Ethniki organosis kypriou agoniston” – the Greek Cypriot liberation organization founded in 1955, engaging in violent action against first the British and later on the Turkish Cypriots on the island.

of the governor did not grant permission to the Turkish National Student Federation to hold a “venting” demonstration on 6 September. The office of the governor replied only much later, on 14 January 1956, denying that the TNSF had asked for such permission. Governor Gökay said the delegates from the Federation came only after the lootings had begun, and that they had condemned the incidents in Beyoğlu. The Federation had asked for permission for a meeting to be held the next day, but had been denied such permission, Gökay said, on the grounds that “no good would come of an event that was taken to the streets.”

1956 brought no peace to the island. On 10 March, Makarios was arrested and deported, which led to violent protests both in Cyprus and in Greece. British shops on the island were destroyed; fifty people were wounded in Salonica, one hundred in Athens. Greece protested the arrest in the UN Security Council, and on 11 March, one thousand Greek Cypriots were wounded in the clashes with British troops. In Greece, thousands demanded that the British ambassador be branded *persona non grata*; the Greek government suspended indefinitely the English courses in all schools. Demonstrations continued. After this point, violence on the island was stepped up; the summer of 1956 witnessed killings on both sides, with the British governor to the island, Harding, looked on helplessly.

1956 was the year during which university students began to stage demonstrations not only against communism or *irtica* but also against the government. It was also the year in which the government began to seriously think of taking action to curtail the freedom of congregation. The new student demonstrations began with an “innocent” enough boycott at Robert College. The head of the engineering department, Mr. Butterfield, had resigned over a dispute with the general director of both the boys’ and girls’ colleges, Mr. Ballentine. A popular professor,

Butterfield's resignation caused great chagrin among the students. 270 of them boycotted classes and skipped lunch on 9 May to air their protest and force the university administration to reinstate their beloved professor. Seeing that the boycott continued the next day, Ballentine spoke to the students and said that the disagreement between himself and Butterfield was irresoluble, and asked the students to put an end to the boycott. The protest continued, however, until 15 May, when the university administration gave in to the demands of the students, and promised not to punish any of them for having expressed their love for a member of the faculty.

The opening ceremony of the İstanbul University that year marked the beginning of a more serious clash between students and the university administration, which they increasingly regarded as an ally of the government. On 12 October, the Student Union of İstanbul University declared that they would hold a separate opening ceremony at the Marmara Locale because students had been denied the right to speak at the official ceremony organized by the administration. On 30 October, the president of the university Fehim Fırat said that "Speeches by students would do no harm, but they would not do any good, either,"²⁴⁴ and added that he saw no reason to change the custom of having the president make the opening speech. The president of the İUSU Aydın Tansan responded: "Students are the essential elements of universities and there isn't a single free and civilized country, ours included, where students demand to be represented at the opening ceremony of their university but are denied that right."²⁴⁵ The Turkish National Student Federation's president, Hüsameddin Canöztürk, gave his support to Tansan in a press release. The

²⁴⁴ "Talebelerin konuşturulmalarının zararı yok, fakat faydası da yok." *Cumhuriyet*, 31 October 1956.

²⁴⁵ "Talebeler, üniversitenin asli unsurudur ve memleketimiz de dahil olmak üzere, hür, medeni memleketlerden hiç birisinde talebenin asıl unsur olduğu üniversitenin açılış merasiminde temsil edilmek isteyip de bundan mahrum bırakıldığı görülmemiştir." *Ibid.*

matter could not be settled, and two separate ceremonies were held at İstanbul University that year.

On 3 December 1956, 760 students at Ankara University boycotted classes to protest the Ministry of Education for having removed Turhan Feyzioğlu from his post as dean of the School of Political Science, on the grounds that he had been talking politics in the classroom. Security forces took precautions inside the campus, and the party for the school's anniversary was banned by the office of the governor. Students wrote a petition with 221 signatures to President Celal Bayar, to the effect that they found Feyzioğlu to be a very valuable professor and that they did not believe he engaged in politics in the classroom.

The cause of the problem was the speech Feyzioğlu had made during the opening ceremony of the new school year on 3 November. In that speech Feyzioğlu had criticized the government for denying a professorship to assistant professor Aydın Yalçın because he had published articles in the leftist periodical *Forum*. He had also urged the students not to be “one of those intellectuals who go with the current.”²⁴⁶ Another assistant professor, Mehmet Köymen, had written to the daily *Zafer*, which supported the government, complaining that the graduates of that school came to posts in state administration, and that they could not be expected to be impartial if those who head the school were not.²⁴⁷ Feyzioğlu replied in the same paper, claiming that the university had become an institution with no tolerance for freedom of expression. The Ministry regarded this reply as an involvement in politics, and asked the university senate for an opinion. The senate ruled that

²⁴⁶ “Nabza göre şerbet veren münevverler.” *Cumhuriyet*, 4 December 1956.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Feyziođlu's response did not constitute an instance of involvement in politics, but the Ministry removed him from his post anyway.

The DP group convened in a crisis meeting and decided to take swift action. The decision was to remove from their teaching posts all those who attempted to turn institutions of education into an arena for their destructive political games. Prime Minister Menderes and two of his cabinet members told the press that some members of the faculty in İstanbul and Ankara gave political speeches and incited the students to revolt.²⁴⁸ On 4 December senior classes were suspended, and a comprehensive investigation ensued. Three hundred students were taken into police custody. Other faculty members began to resign in support of Feyziođlu. Among them were assistant professors Münci Kapani, Aydın Yalçın, and Muammer Aksoy, as well as research assistants Coşkun Kırca and, later on, Şerif Mardin. Professor Feyziođlu also resigned in the wake of these events and became a member of the RPP.

1956 was an important year for collective political action in another way: the DP government began to consider an early election in 1957 and sought ways to curtail opposition both within and outside the parliament. Talk began to circulate in Ankara of a new legislation which would allow the government to ban open air meetings and take legal action against papers which would publish the minutes of party meetings. The speech Menderes delivered in Zonguldak seemed to give indications of such an inclination. The president of the Republican Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi*), Osman Bölükbaşı, strongly condemned the government in a speech he made in Kırıkkale on 7 April.

The government was not dismayed. The draft legislation, which stipulated the banning of speeches and propaganda during demonstrations, the requirement of

²⁴⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 December 1956.

special permissions for meetings, and heavy penalties for those who break the new law, was brought to the parliamentary commission on 22 June. The commission discussed the draft in one day and sent it on to the parliament on 23 June, where it was passed on 27 June with 281 MP's in favor, and 2 against – the opposition had boycotted the vote and walked out after fierce debates. İnönü, Karaosmanoğlu, and Bölükbaşı severely criticized the new legislation, and were met with the words of the Prime Minister: “We are under no obligation to please the unreasonable opposition or the unfair press.”²⁴⁹

The new law was first put to use against student activities in 1957. A seminar organized by the Youth and Idea Clubs of İstanbul University was banned by the police on 7 March; the speaker, Feridun Ergin, was escorted out of the conference hall before he could give his lecture on the economics of underdevelopment. A deputy from the RPP called Governor Gökay on the phone to inquire the reason for the ban, and the latter said such conferences too came under the span of the new legislation. Similarly, on 6 May, another series of conferences organized this time by İstanbul University's Institute for Economics and Sociology was refused permission by the authorities, who also ordered a legal investigation of the organizers of the event, on the grounds that they aimed to infect workers with foreign ideologies.

The Cyprus issue continued unresolved in 1957. On 23 April, Turkish Cypriots marched in celebration of the National Sovereignty and Children's Day, carrying Turkish flags and placards with quotes from Atatürk. Close to a thousand people protested the release of Makarios, but the British police dispersed the crowd forcefully and confiscated the flags. Throughout Turkey, student organizations

²⁴⁹ “Biz kendimizi insafsız muhalefete ve ölçüsüz matbuata beğendirmek mecburiyetinde değiliz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 28 June 1956.

applied to the Ministry of the Interior for permission to hold similar protest demonstrations. Not all, however, received that permission. A large demonstration was held in Diyarbakır on 25 April, organized by the TNSF, which stated that “we will always fight the mentality that tries to mislead the public opinion by employing tactics of anti-propaganda throughout the world. In closely following the developments we will act seriously, cautiously and calmly, and this in itself will constitute a sufficient answer to our enemies.”²⁵⁰ İstanbul University’s Student Union, on the other hand, was not allowed to distribute placards throughout the city to protest the new developments in Cyprus; these placards featured the map of Cyprus and the first two lines of the national anthem.

When the Political Commission of the United Nations accepted the Greek point of view with respect to Cyprus in December, university student organizations were outraged. Police control was stepped up in Ankara; the NTSU and the TNSF decided to organize protest demonstrations in a big number of cities. Neither of them, however, were granted permission. İstanbul University’s Student Union called on the political parties to act in accord during these critical days “when national peace is of utmost importance.”²⁵¹ On 15 December, the TNSF started a new campaign called “Fellow citizen, speak Turkish - it is your duty to warn those who don’t”²⁵² – this campaign was naturally aimed at the Greek-speaking minority living predominantly in İstanbul. The posters were placed in the windows of the shops on İstiklal Avenue,

²⁵⁰ “*Dünyaca aleyhimize girilen tezvir, yaygara, tahripkar propagandalarla efkarı umumiyeyi bulandırmak isteyen zihniyetle daima mücadele edeceğiz. Hadiseleri takip ederken her zamanki gibi: vakur, temkinli, sakin hareket etmemiz bile çığırkanlık yapanlara yeter bir cevap teşkil edecektir.*” *Ulus*, 25 April 1957.

²⁵¹ “*Kıbrıs konusunda önemli günler yaşanıyor, iç politikada sulh lazım.*” *Ulus*, 16 December 1957.

²⁵² “*Vatandaş Türkçe konuş, konuşmayanları ikaz etmek vazifendir.*” *Ulus*, 16 December 1957.

inside trams, buses and “*dolmuş*”s; people could be seen arguing in the streets; students warned members of the Greek minority who spoke in Greek in public places. On the next day, the governor and the chief of police department ordered the posters to be taken down, and “had a long and serious talk” with the representatives of the TNSF.²⁵³ A renewed application by the TNSF for a Cyprus demonstration in Kayseri was again turned down, on the grounds that it ran against government policies. When the office of the governor announced that no demonstration with the name “Cyprus” in it would be granted permission, the TNSF held a *mevlid*²⁵⁴ in the Fatih Mosque on 29 December, where the prayers were said for “Atatürk and the souls of our martyrs.”²⁵⁵ The Federation demanded on 30 December that the word “Greek” be removed from Orthodox churches and that the dioceses in cities with no Greek population be abrogated.

Another nationalist collective action instigated by the TNSF and the İstanbul University’s Student Union in 1957 was the boycotting of French films for the month of May. The wrath of these organizations was brought on by a film shown at the Cannes film festival, depicting Turkish atrocities – the scriptwriter was Greek, and the lead role was played by an Armenian.

The national agenda of 1958 had Cyprus written all over it. On 27 January, Turkish Cypriots held a big demonstration – ten thousand people shouted slogans in favor of partition of the island, and clashed with British soldiers for seven hours. A British armed vehicle ran over some of the protestors, and a number of people were

²⁵³ “*Polis afişleri toplattı, vali ve emniyet müdürü TMTF temsilcilerini celbederek kendileriyle uzun uzadıya konuşular.*” *Ulus*, 17 December 1956.

²⁵⁴ Islamic memorial service.

²⁵⁵ “*Vilayetçe kabris adı geçen hiçbir toplantıya müsaade edilmeyeceğinin bildirilmesi üzerine mevlid ‘aziz atatürk ve şehitlerimizin ruhlarına’ ithaf edildi.*” *Ulus*, 30 December 1956.

wounded as a result of gunshots. The next day witnessed a massive amount of telegraph activity, as discussed above. On 2 February, the Turkish village headmen in Cyprus began to resign their posts – this protest was the idea of the Turkish Clandestine Resistance Organization, and the first headman to go was Hüseyin Derviş of Kandü. On 23 February, eight thousand Turkish Cypriots, with the added support of 500 Pakistanis, walked the streets of London, demanding partition. British authorities were very strict with security measures, keeping, for example, the secretary general of the NTSU, Ali Sait Oğuz, at the airport for seven hours and letting him into the country only after he had signed a document stating that he would not attend the demonstration and would leave Britain within one week. The demonstration itself was peaceful. The attendants gathered in front of the Turkish Cyprus Society, shouted slogans demanding partition and the resignation of Governor Foot; speeches were delivered at the Trafalgar Square, where a black coffin was sighted: “*Burada Enosis yatıyor*” (Here lies Enosis). The march ended at 10 Downing Street, where Prime Minister MacMillan was delivered the demands of the demonstrators. A copy of the document was sent to Menderes, Zorlu, Dr. Küçük, Hammerskjöld, Lloyd, Boyd, Galtskel and Foot.

Akis presented a broad coverage of the London demonstration:

The London demonstration was attended by eight thousand Turkish Cypriots living in London. The march started off from the “Cyprus is Turkish” Association’s center on Charing Cross Street. Foremost was a six-year old girl carrying a map of Cyprus; behind her, six young women in traditional clothes, each carrying one letter of the word “taksim” (partition). Behind them the group carried placards and frequently shouted “Partition!” Garlands had been sent in memory of the Cypriot martyrs, and each garland had eight white flowers symbolizing the eight people that had died. The length of the cortege was over three kilometers... 250 cops

and sixty media members attended the march. On their way the demonstrators handed out leaflets describing the Turkish thesis. The group came to a halt in Trafalgar Square and started shouting that they would fight to the last drop of blood in their veins for the acceptance of partition.²⁵⁶

A delegation of three went to 10 Downing Street and delivered a message to Prime Minister MacMillan, though not in person. A copy of the message (describing the Turkish demands) was sent to Menderes, the UN Secretary General, and the governor of the island, Sir Hugh Foot. The demonstrators left in the square a coffin with “ENOSIS” written on it and went back to the association center. The magazine pointed out that in the night there was extensive coverage of the event on TV. A placard that read “Is terrorism the only way to convince you?” was given special attention.²⁵⁷ *Akis* lamented the fact that such demonstrations could not be held in Turkey, because the government was distrustful of the youth and did not believe in the power of public propaganda.

Back home, student associations put on an exhibition in co-operation with the Turkish Cyprus Society, where photographs of the London demonstration were shown to the public. The *kaymakam*²⁵⁸ of Eminönü banned the exhibition on 29 March, claiming that it carried no artistic value. The next day, Celal Hordan, the vice president of the TNSF, held a press conference, announcing that a jury would

²⁵⁶ “*Kıbrıs Türktür Cemiyeti merkezinden hareket eden sekiz bin kişilik kafile Charin Cross caddesinden aşağı doğru yürümekteydi. En önde Kıbrıs haritası taşıyan altı yaşında bir çocuk vardı, arkasında herbiri taksim kelimesinin bir harfini taşıyan milli kıyafetlerini giymiş altı genç kız gelmekteydi. Daha geride ellerinde dövizler taşıyan ve sık sık taksim diye haykıran Kıbrıslı Türkler yürümekteydi. Kıbrıslı şehitler için gönderilen çelenklerde sekiz şehidin sembolü olmak üzere sekizer beyaz çiçek vardı. Kortejin uzunluğu üç kilometreyi aşmaktaydı... 250 polis, 60 gazeteci ve televizyoncu mitingi takip etmekteydi. Yol boyunca Türk tezini anlatan beyannameler dağıtıldıktan bir saat sonra kafile Trafalgar meydanındaki havuzun etrafında toplandı. Sekiz bin Türk hep bir ağızdan ant içiyordu: Kıbrıs davasında taksim tezinin kabulüne kadar mücadele edecekler, bu uğurda kanlarının son damlasına kadar akıtacaklardı.*” “*Kıbrıs*”, *Akis*, 1 March 1958.

²⁵⁷ *Sizi ikna etmenin tek yolu terörizm mi?*” Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Head official of a district.

investigate the artistic value of the exhibition, adding that “at a time when the Greeks avail themselves of every opportunity to turn the Cyprus issue to their favor, we regret the fact that our authorities ban our activities aimed at informing public opinion of our just cause.”²⁵⁹

The summer months saw demonstrations in Nicosia, İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Adana, Malatya, Konya, Bursa, İskenderun, Zonguldak, Uşak, Hakkari and Diyarbakır. On 11 May, a demonstration took place in Nicosia, with thousands of Turkish flags in the air. On 8 June, a massive turnout of two hundred thousand people protested the situation in Cyprus. Placards read: “Turks may have to endure hardships for their future, but they can never sacrifice national honor”, “Don’t forget the battles of Sakarya and İnönü/ Take out Trikopis’ head from the grave and ask him if you need to”, “Cyprus is Turkish, and will remain Turkish”, “Partition or death”, and “The dog whose time is up.”²⁶⁰

The demonstration in Ankara on the next day, organized by the TNSF under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior, was comparable to the one held in İstanbul: 150,000 people showed up; 90,000 placards and 6,000 posters were printed. The march started in Tandoğan; the huge crowd walked to Ulus, and from there to the Anıtkabir. There were young men with maps of Cyprus painted on their bare chests, *efes* in traditional costumes, “people from all ages and walks of life,” as *Ulus* described them. Some people carried caricatures of the British government and Makarios; an effigy of the latter was first hanged and then burned. The

²⁵⁹ “*Celal Hordan, Yunanlıların bütün imkanlardan istifade ederek Kıbrıs davasını lehlerine çevirmek için uğraştıkları şu sırada, haklı davamızı umumi efkara duyurmak için yaptığımız faaliyetlere mani olunmasını üzülererek karşıladık dedi.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 31 March 1958.

²⁶⁰ “*Unutma Sakarya, İnönü Savaşını, mezardan çıkar da sor Trikopis’in başını*”, “*Kıbrıs Türktür Türk kalacaktır*”, “*Ya taksim ya ölüm*”, “*Eceli gelen köpek*”. *Cumhuriyet*, 9 Haziran 1958.

demonstration ended with the usual singing of the national anthem, speeches, and garlands left at the mausoleum.

On 15 June, close to 500,000 people gathered at Bornova Stadium, arriving there the night before. Tanks patrolled the residential areas where the Greeks and the British lived. The demonstration in Adana was on the same day. Dr. Küçük addressed a crowd of 150,000 in İnönü Square. The next day's meeting was in Malatya, with 30,000 people shouting "*Ya taksim ya ölüm!*" (Partition or death). On 22 June, 150,000 people in Konya, 100,000 people in Bursa, and 50,000 people in İskenderun gathered to protest Makarios' return to the island. Governor Foot issued a statement to underscore the volatility of the situation on the island. On 6 July, smaller demonstrations in the range of thousands were held in Zonguldak (where a Turkish flag, painted with the blood of bus drivers, was presented to Dr. Fazıl Küçük), Uşak, Hakkari and Diyarbakır.

The national agenda shifted briefly to the "radio debates" for the remaining part of the year, but in December the student associations began to express their concern over the emerging possibility of a settlement which would preclude partition. This concern resulted from the meeting of Turkish Foreign Minister, Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, and his Greek counterpart, Averof, in Paris on 18 December. The idea of an independent Cyprus was brought to the table, and both sides agreed to meet again in February 1959, this time at the premier level. İTU's Student Union president applied for permission for a demonstration on 25 December when Reuters reportedly announced that an agreement had been reached between the three guarantor states to grant total autonomy to Cyprus. Vice president to the TNSF Erol Ünal issued a statement reconfirming their support for partition. When his statement was censored,

Ünal telegraphed Prime Minister Menderes to voice his concern about independence.²⁶¹

A similar view was expressed in a *Forum* article in January 1959. Entitled “‘Partition or Death’ or...” (“‘*Ya Taksim Ya Ölüm’ ya da...*”), the article questioned the apparent change in the Cyprus policy of the government. A few months earlier, the official policy was to demand partition, and numerous demonstrations were organized, with the sanction of the authorities, to voice that demand. Now, however, the government seemed to have moved closer to the Greek view of some sort of independence for the island, and the popular demand for partition had been muted by the government.²⁶²

Such concerns turned out to be not unfounded. Menderes and Karamanlis met in Zurich between 5-11 February 1959 and agreed to an independent Cyprus. The constitution and the international status of the new state were also discussed, but no mention of this was made in the final declaration, on the grounds that Great Britain would also have to approve all agreements. At the London Conference, attended by MacMillan, Menderes, Karamanlis, Dr. Küçük and Makarios, the Zurich Agreement was accepted on 19 February with a few addenda concerning Britain. The agreement dissolved Greek hopes of *enosis* and Turkish hopes of partition. Instead, a republic would be founded based on close co-operation between the two communities on the island plus Greece and Turkey. Intra-communal matters would be handled by community parliaments, and inter-communal matters would be delegated to a joint parliament. The chief executive would be the president of the republic, always a Greek Cypriot, and the vice president would always be Turkish; he would have the

²⁶¹ *Ulus*, 31 December 1958.

²⁶² “‘*Ya Taksim ya Ölüm’ ya da...*” *Forum*, 1 January 1959.

power of veto on matters concerning foreign affairs, defense and security, and the right to ask for reconsideration on other matters. Turks would be represented in the parliament with thirty percent of the seats. Britain would retain its military bases on the island, but not Greece or Turkey. The Republic of Cyprus was founded on 16 August 1960, with problems erupting almost immediately afterwards.

1960 was also a difficult and momentous year for Turkey. The DP government set out to suppress all dissident voices, in fact, almost all voices not expressly supporting the government. This included students who wanted to organize meetings against *irtica*. Vigilance against *irtica* had been a prominent item on the TNSF's agenda since 1959, but they had been unable to obtain official permission to organize a demonstration. Vice president Erol Ünal had been detained at the "First Branch" (*Birinci Şube*) for his activism.²⁶³

The NTSU and İstanbul University's Student Union applied to the office of the governor on 6 January for permission to hold such a meeting, but were duly refused. The student representatives tried their luck with the Minister of the Interior, Namık Gedik, promising that the demonstration would be peaceful, but to no avail. On 8 January, the Student Union of the School of Political Science at Ankara University held a press conference, calling on the authorities to take more effective measures against rising fundamentalism. The next day the NTSU organized a silent protest march on the İU campus against Said Nursi, but the directors of the student union were interned at police headquarters unbeknownst to the gathered crowd, who began to disperse because nothing was happening. Two hundred people stayed put, and they began to sing the national anthem in front of the Atatürk statue, at which

²⁶³ "Gençliğin Protestosu", *Akis*, 28 March 1959.

point the police came in without warrant, and started beating the students, arresting thirty. The films of photographers were confiscated. The president of the university, Sıddık Onar, stated that even though the students had not officially applied to his office for permission to stage a demonstration, he would nonetheless take the necessary steps in the face of the unlawful intrusion of the police.

The issue of the autonomy of universities and student rights was taken up on 14 January during one of the meetings of the budget commission. In response to members of the DP who claimed that the protesters were “just kids”, Turhan Feyzioğlu asked those “kids” to be allowed to “raise their voice against small-time politicians who attempt to abuse our religion for their vile self-interest.”²⁶⁴

On 2 March, students of a technician school held a silent march in İstanbul, demanding the reinstatement of certain student rights that had been recently annulled.²⁶⁵ Undercover police officers, joined by policemen in uniform, caught up with them near Taksim and gave the students a thorough beating. The next day, a similar incident took place in Adana. Technician school students boycotted their classes and held a protest march, but were dispersed by the police; twenty of the protesters were taken into custody. Meanwhile in İstanbul, the police used tear gas on technician school students boycotting classes. On 4 March, technician school students marched in Bursa. A similar march was prevented in İzmit before it had a chance to begin. On 7 March, students marched in the streets of Erzurum, but were stopped by the police.

²⁶⁴ “Bırakınız, gençler, dinimizi en adi menfaatler uğrunda istismara kalkışan küçük siyasetçilere karşı sesini yükseltsin.” *Ulus*, 15 Ocak 1960.

²⁶⁵ As a result of the amendment of the article 14 of the public constructions law, number 6785, which changed the status of technician school graduates.

RPP leader İsmet İnönü began touring the country in April. At the outset of the tour, İnönü met with over a thousand university students at the RPP Headquarters on 1 April and told them that “very important duties will be thrust upon you in forthcoming days. We have full trust in you, and you will be victorious in these important duties.”²⁶⁶ On 4 April he visited Nevşehir, Aksaray, Şereflikoçhisar, and Ankara, where he was met with police truncheons and barricades. Despite all security measures, however, a convoy of four hundred cars followed him into the city. The next day, the governor of Kayseri attempted to stop İnönü from entering the city, but the latter won the showdown. Hundreds of telegrams, sent from all over the country in protest of the governor, followed suit.

The strong reaction by the government to İnönü’s tour was one factor among many, expediting its demise on 27 May. Another such factor was the harsh measures taken against protesting students in İstanbul on 28 April. The following day, students in Ankara boycotted classes in support of their friends in İstanbul. These events, however, were censored and went unreported in the papers. This series of events had in fact started a couple of days earlier, on 26 April. The cause for widespread and alarmed protest was the instigation, on 18 April, of a new bureaucratic/political body called the “Investigation Commission” (*Tahkikat Komisyonu*). This Commission had the duty to investigate the acts of the opposition and the press for a period of three months, and to determine whether the RPP did in fact, as claimed by the DP government, agitate the masses and the military to revolt against the government and use the press to do so. It was empowered to ban publications, prohibit the printing

²⁶⁶ “Gençler, sizi önemli vazifeler bekliyor... önümüzdeki günlerde, bu önemli vazifelerde zafer kazanacaksınız.” *Ulus*, 2 April 1960.

and distribution of newspapers, confiscate all kinds of documents for the purposes of investigation, ban all kinds of political activities, and use all appropriate instruments of the government. The rulings of the Commission would be final and irrevocable. Anyone objecting to the measures and rulings of the Commission would face imprisonment of one to three years. The fifteen members of the Commission were chosen from among the MP's.

On 26 April, the faculty members of İstanbul University held a protest demonstration and condemned the political oppression practiced by the government. Two days later the students of the same university held a widely attended meeting in the main conference hall. Security forces disrupted the meeting, and this led to further confrontations. The university administration strongly protested this uncalled-for intrusion of the police; the president of İU, Sıddık Sami Onar, called on the security forces to immediately leave the campus, but not only did his call go unheeded, but he was also taken to police headquarters.

The clashes between students and security forces soon spilled over to Beyazıt Square, where Turan Emeksiz, a student of the School of Forestry, was shot dead. Martial law was declared in İstanbul and Ankara, and a curfew was imposed after midnight. Nonetheless, these measures did not suffice to stop student demonstrations – they went on unabated the next day, spreading to Ankara. On 30 April, another student, called Nedim Özpolat, died during the protests in Sultanahmet Square.

In response to this bout of heavy protests, the martial law administration closed down all student dormitories for one month, and demanded that all students return to their hometowns immediately.²⁶⁷ On 1 May, despite martial law and curfew, students of İstanbul University took to the streets and marched towards the

²⁶⁷ Kabacalı, p. 159.

Municipality Palace. On that day, NATO ministers were holding a meeting there, and Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu was hard put to downplay the events. The reaction of the military was so strong that the head of the General Staff, General Rüştü Erdekun, personally led the intervention.²⁶⁸

The government organized a meeting of support to be held in Kızılay, Ankara, on the fifth day of the fifth month, at five o'clock. According to the plan, Bayar and Menderes would go to Kızılay from the Parliament, and the crowds would cheer them. The opposition, however, got wind of this plan, and on 5 May the protesters, clearly outnumbering the supporters, booed the two leaders and even hassled them. On 21 May Military Academy students in Ankara held a protest march, which signalled that the military was ready to take action of some sort against the government.²⁶⁹

Pre-scheduled, traditional celebrations and festivals were also banned in pre-coup 1960. The "cow festival" of Ankara University's School of Political Science, for example, had been celebrated every year in Cebeci, but the office of the governor refused to give permission for the march this time, confining the celebrations to the campus. The last straw was the cancellation of the 19 May celebrations, which showed the degree of paranoia and insecurity of the Menderes administration.

The coup in which all the student protests culminated gave rise, in retrospect at least, to a question of agency: how autonomously did the students act in these events? Some, like one time minister Mehmet Altınsoy, have maintained that even though it would be wrong to assume that the students took direct orders from the RPP, they nonetheless were encouraged by that party, and that most of the student

²⁶⁸ Yılmaz, p. 86.

²⁶⁹ Yılmaz, p. 90.

leaders came from the RPP's youth organizations.²⁷⁰ In addition, the press of the day is also cited as another incendiary "actor, preparing the grounds for the toppling of the government by military means."²⁷¹ Mahir Kaynak supports both views in his account of the events of April 1960.²⁷² Journalist Cüneyt Arcayürek reports that some statements of youth organizations were printed with machines belonging to the RPP, and confirms the informal coalition of the RPP, the military, the press, and the youth organizations.²⁷³

After the military coup d'état of 27 May, demonstrations, marches and meetings were united in their aim: lending full support to the military and celebrating the dawn of a new era of freedom. On 29 May 1960, İTÜ students walked from Beyoğlu to Taksim in support of the coup, singing "Smoky Mountain Top" and the Military School March. In Taksim they left a garland at the statue. In the meantime, various student organizations were busy sending telegrams of respect and congratulation to the army. The Revolution Hearths were quick to join the bandwagon – on 4 June, the statement issued read, in part: "The Ankara center of our Hearths regards the recent revolutionary action as the outcome of the nation's devotion to Atatürk and his work; we therefore consider this noble act of our army as completely lawful and praiseworthy."²⁷⁴ On 8 June, simultaneous meetings were held in Topkapı, Beyazıt, Şişli and Taksim, with massive turnouts in support of the coup. The army itself participated with tanks and military vehicles. The NTSU brought in a

²⁷⁰ Davut Dursun, *27 Mayıs Darbesi* (İstanbul: İnsan, 2001), p. 45.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁷³ Cüneyt Arcayürek, *Bir İktidar Bir İhtilal 1950-1960* (Ankara: Bilgi, 1985), p. 129.

²⁷⁴ "Son devrim hareketini Atatürk'e ve eserlerine milletçe bağlılığın bir tezahürü kabul eden Ankara Ocağımız, şanlı ordumuzun davranışını hukuka tamamıyla uygun bulmuş ve alkışlamıştır." *Cumhuriyet*, 5 June 1960.

portrait of Atatürk close to 140 square meters. The next day, a similar meeting was held in Kızılay, Ankara, organized by the Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences; about fifty soldiers and officers were carried on the shoulders of the crowd. On 10 June, 30,000 people in Denizli attended a meeting to express their allegiance to the military. Finally, ten days later, on 20 June, a crowd of 100,000 gathered in Kızılay Square in Ankara – bands played marches, groups of students joined hands in folkloric dances, and the people chanted, “Atatürk, we stand by our oath”, “Big events create big revolutions in ideas”, “Atatürk’s youth has fulfilled its duty”, “The army hand in hand with the youth”, “Does a brother shoot a brother?/ But you would/ For you are no brother but a stabber in the back.”²⁷⁵

1960 witnessed the rekindling of old ashes: on 20 August, the Student Union of İstanbul University started a campaign called “Fellow citizen, speak Turkish” (“*Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş!*”) just like the one in 1957. The call read:

Fellow citizen!
If you want to see better days,
Know that this is possible only if you live as a unified
community.
Your homeland is where everyone speaks the same language.
Join the national unity movement by speaking your mother
tongue.
Fellow citizen, speak Turkish!²⁷⁶

The next day, İstanbul’s governor put an end to the campaign, stating that it was against “our national interests as well as our international obligations.”²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ “Yaşasın ordu”, “Atatürk izindeyiz”, “Diktatörler kahrolsun”, “Olur mu böyle olur mu/ Kardeş kardeşi vurur mu?” *Cumhuriyet*, 10 June 1960.

²⁷⁶ “*Vatandaş, iyi günler yaşamak istiyorsan, bu senin birlik olarak kaynaşmış bir kitle olarak yaşamakla kabildir./ Vatan aynı dili konuşanların toprağıdır./ Milli birlik hareketine sen de öz dilini konuşarak katıl/ Vatandaş Türkçe konuş.*” *Akşam*, 21 August 1960.

²⁷⁷ “*Vali, bu kampanyanın milli menfaatlerimize olduğu kadar, beynelmilel taahhütlerimize de aykırı olduğunu tebarüz ettirmiştir.*” *Akşam*, 11 September 1960.

A strange incident occurred on 4 October, an incident which *Ulus* called “the youth attempted to organize a meeting,”²⁷⁸ but was, in fact, much more cryptic than that. In various parts of İstanbul, an unidentified person or a group of people wrote “MBK 6000” on shop windows with oil paint. “MBK” referred to the *Milli Birlik Komitesi* (National Unity Committee), but “6000” proved to be indecipherable. Four people were interrogated, but no leads were found to prove *Ulus*’s claim that “these secret messages are meant to slander the National Unity Committee.”²⁷⁹

On 20 March 1961, a protest meeting was held in one of İzmir’s villages. This was, of course, unusual – protest meetings almost always took place in cities, and usually in big cities. The reason for this meeting in Bademler village was the demonstrations staged a few days earlier by eight members of the DP against the 1960 revolution. Thousands of villagers were joined by members of the TNSF, the youth of İzmir, members of the İzmir Committee for Spreading the Revolution, and prominent officers and bureaucrats to protest the anti-revolutionists, or, as Yakup Yücel, the assistant of the governor of İzmir, said, “the perverse actions of the greasy tail remnants.”²⁸⁰

29 April was the first anniversary of the events that had culminated in the coup -now revolution- of 27 May. Numerous celebrations were held in Ankara to commemorate “the war for freedom.” Students gathered at the same hour in front of the university building, but were joined this time by gendarme band and the air force band, as well as a member of the National Unity Committee. In a similar vein, thousands of students gathered in İstanbul on 11 May to protest the “tails”

²⁷⁸ “Gençlik miting yapmak istedi.” *Ulus*, 5 October 1960.

²⁷⁹ “Şehrin bazı semtlerinde duvarlara ve vitrin camlarına yağlı boya ile yazılan ve MBK’ni ilzam eden bazı manidar ibarelerle ilgili olarak dün dört kişinin ifadesi alınmıştır.” Ibid.

(*kuyruklar*), those individuals who still supported the DP and were set out to disrupt the new order.

The last instance of collective action in 1961 was the big worker demonstration in İstanbul, where around 100,000 people turned up in Saraçhanebaşı on 31 December to demand social justice, the right to strike, collective bargaining, and to protest the salaries of deputies.²⁸¹ Some of the placards read: “Everybody cooks meat, workers cook suffering”, “We don’t have bellies, how can we tighten our belts?”, “Captain, you are experienced, but your crew is hungry”, “You gave us promises and got our votes, now in deep sleep you lie”, “A union without strikes is like a soldier without God”.²⁸² *Yön* praised “the orderly, calm and serene attitude of those attending the demonstration”.²⁸³

Most of the protest demonstrations for the next twenty years would involve students and ideological matters, but one demonstration in Ankara in 1962 was the exception to the rule. On 2 January, two thousand *dolmuş* drivers turned to violence to demand that minibuses carrying eight passengers be banned from traffic, because their own cars had lower capacity and thus were at a disadvantage. The drivers beat up other drivers who refused to join them, overturned their cars, leveled verbal

²⁸⁰ “Yağlı kuyruk artıklarının sapık hareketleri.” *Vatan*, 21 March 1961. The “tails” were those who still supported the DP and were opposed to the NUC.

²⁸¹ Volkan Yaraşır *Sokakta Politika* (İstanbul: Gendaş, 2002), p. 518.

²⁸² “Herkesin sahanında et kaynar, işçilerin sahanında dert kaynar”, “Göbeğimiz yok ki kemerlerimizi sıklım”, “Tecrübeli kaptan, tayfaların aç”, “Mebusa zam, işçiye gam”, “İşçiye hıyar, patrona havyar”, “Söz verdiniz rey aldınız, şimdi uykuya daldınız”, “Patronlar Kadıllaklı, işçiler yalınayaklı”, “Aşındırdık çok kapı, yutturdular uyku hapı”, “Hepimiz dokuz ay on günlüğüz”, “Grevsiz sendika allahsız askere benzer”. *Cumhuriyet*, 1 January 1962.

²⁸³ “Gerçekten, miting hakkında birçok şeyler söylemek, tenkitler ileri sürmek mümkündür. Fakat herkesin ittifakla üstünde durduğu nokta, bu mitingin umulandan çok daha sakin, intizamlı ve tertipli geçmiş olmasıdır. Başlangıcından sonuna kadar, işçiler miting yerine hareketlerinden oradan evlerine dönünceye kadar, hatta dönüşte ellerindeki dövizleri bile katlayarak yürümüşlerdir.” “Saraçhane Mitingi”, *Yön*, 3 January 1962.

attacks at officials, and blocked city traffic. The Minister of the Interior, Ahmet Topalođlu talked to the drivers, asking them to stop their illegal action, and reminded them that the decision pertaining to the 8-passenger minibuses was due to be taken on 5 January. The crowd then dispersed, but the drivers issued a reply on 4 January, threatening the minister with continued action. The minibuses were nonetheless put into service.

Attacking communism and preaching about the threat of communism came into vogue once again in 1962, this time by religious fundamentalists. On 6 January, about 150 students from the Higher Islam Institute (*Yüksek İslam Enstitüsü*) and İstanbul University's Law School gathered to protest a number of daily newspapers, among them *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *Dünya*, on the grounds that they hid behind a façade of socialism but in fact engaged in communist propaganda. The TNSF and the NTSU jointly organized a big demonstration in response on 10 January. Tens of thousands of students first gathered on the İU campus, and walked to Hürriyet Square, where they observed a minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Turan Emeksiz. The students carried flags, Atatürk portraits, garlands and placards that read "The Turkish youth will never forgive you", "We are the relentless guardians of the reforms", "Tails, you will get crushed."²⁸⁴ Students from İTU joined the first group on the way to Saraçhanebaşı; the bigger group then marched on to the *Yeni İstanbul* building, where they shouted slogans of protest, and sang "Smoky Mountain Top". The crowd then walked to Galatasaray, Taksim, and, whistling the tune of the Gazi Osman Paşa March, reached Atatürk's house in Şişli. After speeches were

²⁸⁴ "Türk gençliği sizleri affetmeyecek", "Devrimlerimizin yılmaz bekçileriyiz", "Kuyruklar, kafanız ezilecektir". *Cumhuriyet*, 11 January 1962.

delivered and the crowd sang the national anthem, someone read Atatürk's Bursa Speech to those present.

On 13 January, the TNSF organized another meeting called "The Last Word of the Youth" (*Gençliğin Son Sözü*) in Ankara's Zafer Square. The target was again the leftist radicals, and clashes took place between the two groups. The president of the federation, Kemal Kumkumoğlu, said in a speech that "the Turkish youth has sworn to utterly destroy those with rotten ideologies."²⁸⁵ Students from the School of Theology (*İlahiyat Fakültesi*) and members of the NTSU entered the square carrying placards condemning communism, and they handed out leaflets to the crowd. During the meeting the Islamist media received most of the attention of the speakers. The officers present saved both sides from being lynched by the other side. When the TNSF members started shouting "No amnesty to traitors!", the other group responded by shouting "Amnesty to all!"²⁸⁶

The usual commemoration for the 28 April 1960 events took place in Saraçhanebaşı in 1962, organized by the TNSF. Youth marched from there to Harbiye, singing the "Gazi Osman Paşa" march (the new lyrics went, "Is this the way it ought to be?/ Can there be amnesty for killers?/ If the killers are pardoned/ Can the Turkish youth stay put?"), shouting "No amnesty to traitors!" and "Thank the military!"²⁸⁷ The Minister of Press and Tourism, who tried to stop publications about 28 April, was invited to resign. Flowers were left at the Atatürk statue on campus and at the spot where Turan Emeksiz fell. In İzmir, too, a march was held; in Adana, a statue of Turan Emeksiz was unveiled with ceremony in Emeksiz Park. On the next

²⁸⁵ "Kemal Kumkumoğlu konuşmasında Türk gençliğinin ideolojisi bozuk olanları tarumar etmeye yeminli olduğunu söylüyordu." Yılmaz, p. 103.

²⁸⁶ "Hainlere af yok!", "Af var, af var!" *Cumhuriyet*, 14 January 1962.

day, students in Ankara celebrated 29 April. Student associations, bureaucrats, officers and natural senators attended the ceremonies. President Gürsel sent a garland to the Anıtkabir, where the crowd first gathered.

Doğan Avcıoğlu organized a round-table discussion of young activists, asking them what they wanted. The topic was the recent demonstration and the march against amnesty for ex-DP members. Most of them regarded their activities as “above” political parties, and demanded precautions against the resurrection of the “old mentality” of the DP government, citing as examples the post-Hitler regime in Germany and the post-Mussolini regime in Italy.²⁸⁸

On 22 December, Türk-İş, the leading union in Turkey, organized a big meeting in Ankara’s Tandoğan Square to protest communism and anti-democratic currents. President Seyfi Demirsoy delivered a speech and stated that Turkish workers would accept no regime other than democracy. Representatives of political parties also spoke. The final speaker Mucip Ataklı, one of the natural senators, was booed with slogans like “Down with the National Revolution Army.”²⁸⁹

A number of “minor” demonstrations also took place in 1962. On 23 January, for example, students from technician schools staged a silent march to demand that their schools be accepted as university equivalents. The next day, about one hundred Iranian students held a demonstration in the garden of the Iranian Embassy and demanded that the Shah and Prime Minister Amini resign. A similar incident would occur on 11 June 1963, when about 150 Iranian students marched to the Embassy in Cağaloğlu to protest the Shah and the government. On 26 March, Cypriot students in

²⁸⁷ “*Olur mu böyle olur mu?/ Kaatillere af olursa/ Türk gençliği durur mu?*”, “*Hainlere af yok!*”, “*Orduya şükredin.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 1962.

²⁸⁸ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Gençlik Ne İstiyor?” *Yön*, 17 October 1962.

²⁸⁹ “*Kahrolsun Milli Devrim Ordusu!*” *Cumhuriyet*, 23 December 1962.

Ankara gathered in front of Ankara's Güven Memorial and marched to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, leaving a bouquet of flowers at its doorstep. On 12 September, close to two hundred people from the *gecekondu*s of Ankara gathered in front of the Prime Ministry and protested the government's decision to demolish their houses. Ankara's governor Alican had to give his word that this would not happen. On 22 September, women in Ankara organized a march to protest the recent increase in assaults, abductions and rapes.

On 11 October, primary school students marched from Aksaray to Cağaloğlu for a political cause. Students from the fourth grade of Eyüp Kılıçaslan Primary School sang the "Gazi Osman Paşa" march and left flowers at the Turan Emeksiz statue. Their teacher, of course, came under immediate investigation. On 22 October, around two hundred students who had failed the university entrance exams marched in Ankara and threatened authorities that they would sleep in parks until they were accepted into universities. The high school graduates repeated their march on 7 November, shouting "We don't want to be Koçero's spouse, we want to be the protectors of Atatürk's reforms", "Science or death", "Press, where art thou?", "We want double-time instruction".²⁹⁰ Finally on 15 December women and children aged 6-12 marched in Akatlar, İstanbul, demanding water, electricity and schools.

The demonstrations of 1963 started with the march of prostitutes on 14 January – İstanbul Police Department had decided to move the brothels to the outskirts of town, and prostitutes, observing that this would seriously undermine business, decided to march in their underwear. Neither of the plans materialized.

While the Parliament was debating the laws for the right to strike and collective bargaining in 1963, the workers of the Kavel cable factory halted work and

²⁹⁰ "Koçero'ya eş değil, Atatürk ilkelerine bekçi olmak istiyoruz", "Ya ilim ya ölüğm", "basın neredesin?", "Çift tedrisat isteriz". *Cumhuriyet*, 8 November 1962.

started a sit-in action in front of the benches. Of the 173 workers involved in the action, ten were fired on the first day, and the employer placed ads in the papers for new workers. Minister of Labor Bülent Ecevit took part in the negotiations as a mediator. The Metalurgy Workers' Union (*Maden-İş*) reached an agreement with the employer on 4 March, and the Law of Collective Bargaining, Strikes and Lock-Outs (*Toplu Sözleşme, Grev ve Lokavt Kanunu*), coming into force on 24 July 1963, included an article (known as the "Kavel Article") which dropped all the lawsuits against the Kavel workers. The first legal strike was organized by the bus drivers of the Bursa Municipality on 7 November 1963. The strike ended with success on 27 November.²⁹¹

On 16 February, the Turkish Writers' Union (*Türkiye Yazarlar Sendikası*) demanded during their congress in İstanbul that articles 141-142 be scrapped, and afterwards marched silently with placards in their hands. Walking to the spot where Turan Emeksiz fell, the group of fifty writers left a bouquet of flowers at the statue; the writers then went to the office of the governor and left their placards at the entrance.

On 20 February, teachers from all over the country gathered in Ankara for a meeting organized by the Turkish National Federation of Teachers' Association (*Türkiye Öğretmen Dernekleri Milli Federasyonu*). About ten thousand teachers gathered in the Tandoğan Square, carrying placards that stated, "Teachers are Atatürkists", "Teachers work the most, get paid the least", "Stop education which numbs", "We won't be instruments of political aims", "We are ready to be Kubilays", "We are against communism and fascism", "We are all brothers, fine/

²⁹¹ Yaraşır, p.521.

come to the village some time”, “We want an education drive”.²⁹² The teachers then marched to the Anıtkabir, where they left a garland and then stood for a minute’s silence; after protesting the absence of the minister of education, the group dispersed.

On 24 March, close to ten thousand students gathered in Zafer Square to protest Bayar’s release from the Kayseri prison for two days. The crowd shouted “No amnesty to murderers!”, “Traitors!”, “Servants!”, “To the gallows, to the gallows!”²⁹³ The National Security Council held an emergency meeting.

On the next day, university students in Ankara and İstanbul organized mass demonstrations to lend their support to the 27 May regime and to protest its opponents in general, and Bayar’s release in particular. In Ankara, the students placed a garland at the Zafer statue, and then held demonstrations in front of *Vatan* and *Dünya*, supporting the two dailies, and in front of *Son Havadis*, *Yeni Sabah* and *Hürriyet*, in protest. Speeches were delivered in Kızılay. More demonstrations took place in front of the Justice Party building. An officer ordered the soldiers to hit the students with the butts of their rifles, and many students were injured. After the soldiers were ordered back, the crowd reached the JP building and threw stones at it. In İstanbul, four thousand students gathered in front of the Atatürk statue on the İÜ campus and marched to *Hürriyet*, shouting, “Be ashamed of your name!” and “Hypocrites!”²⁹⁴ and singing the youth march and the military school march. Next in line was the *Yeni İstanbul* building – the crowd demanded a Turkish to be hung down from the building, and threw stones when this demand was not met.

²⁹² “Öğretmen Atatürkçüdür”, “En çok çalışan, en az alan öğretmen”, “Uyuşturan eğitime paydos”, “Hiçbir siyasal amaca alet olmayız”, “Binlerce Kubilay şehit vermeye hazırız”, “Komünizmin ve faşizmin karşısındayız”, “Hep kardeşiz güzel – biraz da köye gel”, “Eğitim seferberliği istiyoruz”. *Vatan*, 21 February 1963.

²⁹³ “Katillere af yok!”, “Hainler!”, “Uşaklar!”, “Sehbaya, sehbaya!” *Vatan*, 25 March 1963.

²⁹⁴ “İsminden utan!”, “Dalkavuk organ!” *Cumhuriyet*, 26 March 1963.

On 26 March 1963, a meeting was organized on the İU campus. Students supporting the JP gathered at Saraçhanebaşı. The two groups met at Galatasaray and clashed. In Ankara, students marched to the Military General Staff Headquarters in protest of Bayar. Two student representatives visited Cevdet Sunay, chief of General Staff. After the meeting, the students marched to Zafer Square, and there were more incidents in front of the JP building. On the next day, protests continued, and when people inside the JP building opened fire on the crowd, the building was put on fire. In Eskişehir and İstanbul, students demonstrated in favor of the military, carrying portraits of Atatürk and Gürsel.

On 27 March, 146 of the 300 workers of the Singer factory in İstanbul held a vote and decided to go on strike to get their social rights. There were clashes between the police and the workers on 19 September, and twelve workers were taken into custody. The strike ended successfully on 3 October.²⁹⁵

On the third anniversary of 29 April, a large ceremony was held at the Anıtkabir by the TNSF. As usual, there were garlands, speeches and a one-minute silence. Ankara University Student Union issued a statement of protest on 30 April because the anniversary was not commemorated in the parliament.

On 8 May, 800 students of Adapazarı High School felt compelled to participate in a silent march, organized by the school administration, to protest slanders against their school. Rumors had been circulating, especially by the local newspaper, to the effect that communism had taken hold there. The source of these rumors was a minor incident: one of the students, Şefkati Bircan, had drawn a sickle and hammer on the blackboard.

²⁹⁵ Yaraşır, p. 522.

As 1963 drew to an end, violence in Cyprus increased, resulting in a new series of killings. Makarios, the president of Cyprus, had announced on 3 April that the clauses in the 1959 Constitution pertaining to municipalities would not be put into effect. On 30 November he called for changes in the constitution. His list of thirteen amendments was designed to decrease the rights and guarantees for Turkish Cypriots as designated in the 1959 London and Zurich Agreements. When the Turkish government announced on 6 December that it refused Makarios' proposal, tension on the island turned into violence. In response, demonstrations in Turkey took an upturn. On 23 December, tens of thousands of youth in İstanbul and İzmir protested the killing of four Turks. On the 26th, ten thousand people, mostly students of Ankara University, marched to support the Turkish minority in Cyprus. The event was organized by the Turkish National Youth Organization and the TNSF. The crowd at the meeting in the Zafer Square carried placards that read, "Turkish Cypriots, you are in our hearts!", "We demand a new and stable order for Cyprus!", "Supporters of Enosis, wake up!", "To die for one's country is the greatest honor for a Turk!", "Blood for blood, life for life!", "Death or Annexation!", "Chief Commander of the Western Front, put on your boots!"²⁹⁶ After a minute's silence and the singing of the national anthem, the crowd marched to the parliament, to the general staff headquarters, and from there to the Prime Ministry. There the crowd demanded İnönü take military action: "Çizmeni giy!" ("Put on your boots!") İnönü tried to calm them by saying that the country was going through a period of serious tensions, but the crowd was not to be lulled: "Annexation or death!" they shouted as they dispersed.

²⁹⁶ "Kıbrıs Türkleri, kalbimizdesin", "Kıbrıs için yeni ve sağlam bir nizam istiyoruz", "Enosisçiler uykudan uyanın", "Vatan için ölmek, Türk için en büyük şereftir", "Kana kan, cana can isteriz", "Ya ölüm, ya ilhak", "Garp cephesi komutanı, çizmelerini giy." *Vatan*, 27 December 1963.

These developments set the agenda for 1964. The Third London Conference was held in January with the participation of the three guarantor states, but no accord was reached to end the violence on the island. On 5 June, Foreign Minister Cemal Erkin announced that if the current state of affairs continued, Turkey would undertake military intervention. Troops were to land on the island on the 7th, but US President Johnson's letter to İsmet İnönü prevented the implementation of these plans. When clashes continued unabated, the Turkish Air Force undertook a limited attack on 8 and 9 August, bombing Erenköy and Mansura. After the UN Peace Hearths became active, the death toll on the island decreased significantly, although no lasting solution to the Cyprus problem was found in 1964.

Meanwhile, in Turkey, the government decided to take measures against what it regarded as the non-cooperation of the Greek government by annulling the 1930 Agreement for Accommodation, Trade and Transportation (*İkamet, Ticaret ve Seyrisefain Sözleşmesi*) in March, and declaring that the annulment would come into force after six months. By September, the number of Greeks extradited reached 7,200; by 1965 the number of Greeks in İstanbul had dropped from 12,000 to 2,000.

1964 was thus filled with demonstrations addressing the Cyprus problem. On 12 March, about 250 Cypriot university students marched silently in İstanbul. Their placards called on the Turkish youth to take action: "Turkish youth, where are you?", "Be patient Paşa, the 100 thousand are not all dead yet!", "Politics against arms!", "We don't want money. We want intervention!", "Isn't Cyprus part of the motherland?", and "Enough!"²⁹⁷ The group clashed with security forces twice, and dispersed only with nightfall. On the next day, more than 20,000 people attended the

²⁹⁷ "Türk gençliği neredesin?", "Sabır Paşam 100 bin daha bitmedi", "Kıbrıs bitmedi", "Silaha karşı politika", "Para değil müdahale istiyoruz", "Kıbrıs vatan değil mi?", "Yeter". *Cumhuriyet*, 13 March 1964.

meeting in Zafer Square in Ankara to protest Makarios. The crowd shouted, “Take the army to Cyprus!”, “Cyprus is Turkish and will stay Turkish!”, and sang the Osman Paşa march with adapted lyrics: “Is this the way it ought to be?/ Will Cyprus be left to the Greeks?/ Damned EOKA, will this world be left to you?”²⁹⁸ Afterwards, the crowd marched in two lines to the parliament and the general staff headquarters.

On 14 March, there were demonstrations for Cyprus in Diyarbakır and Balıkesir. In Diyarbakır, close to 10,000 people gathered in the municipal square, among them high school students carrying pictures of Atatürk, flags and placards that demanded the press go to Cyprus. In Balıkesir, both high school and higher education students attended the meeting. On 15 March, the NTSU, the TNSF and Türk-iş organized a big meeting in Saraçhanebaşı Square in İstanbul. Speeches were made, critical of the government, the UN, and Makarios. Some provocative placards were destroyed by the organizers. First the national anthem was sung, which was followed by three minutes’ silence. After the speeches, the crowd marched first to Taksim, where an effigy of Makarios was burnt, and then to the Officers’ Club, singing the Military School March. The commander of the First Army, Refik Yılmaz, spoke to the demonstrators, praising their sensitivity.

After the military landing in August, a number of youth and student organizations, including the NTSU, the TNSF and İstanbul University’s Student Union issued statements in support of the government. Türk-İş decided to postpone all strikes. On 14 August, a big funeral was organized for Captain Cengiz Topel, who had died during the Cyprus landing. More than 100,000 people attended the funeral,

²⁹⁸ “*Olur mu böyle olur mu?/ Kıbrıs Rumlara kalır mı?/ Kahrolası eokacılar/ Bu dünya size kalır mı?*” *Cumhuriyet*, 14 March 1964.

marching from Sultanahmet to Sakızağacı. Soil brought in from Cyprus for the occasion was sprinkled on his grave.

The United States received its share of protest when the talks in Geneva came to a halt. The youth in Ankara gathered in Kızılay on 27 August and marched to the American Embassy, carrying placards that read, in English: “Yankee go home!”, “You can’t buy us with your dollar!” and “USA don’t play with our proud [sic]!” The attempt of the police to stop the group resulted in clashes, and the group promised to come back the next day in greater numbers. After singing the national anthem at Zafer Square, they dispersed. Come back they did – the next day, approximately 20,000 people first gathered in the Lozan Square, sang the national anthem, and walked to Kızılay, singing marches. Some of the placards read “30 million people demand partition!”, “NATO a fiasco!”, “Get the army to Cyprus!”, “Johnson is a fake friend!”, “Is the US our ally or our enemy?”²⁹⁹ The route extended to the parliament, the American and Greek embassies, and finally to İsmet İnönü’s house. The crowd demanded to see the PM, but İnönü did not appear. Security forces and a fire brigade came, which directed the crowd back to the Kızılay Square. After singing the national anthem once again in front of the Statue of Victory, the crowd dispersed.

Demonstrations continued the next day. A huge crowd gathered again in Kızılay, shouting in favor of the army. Ironically, the troops brought there for security purposes clashed with the crowd, and a number of people were injured; this violence did not escalate thanks to some youths who started to sing the national anthem, upon which the whole crowd joined them. The demonstrators then went to the American embassy, and attacked the Greek Embassy, shouting “Long live

²⁹⁹ “30 milyon taksim istiyor”, “NATO fiyasko”, “Ordu Kıbrıs’a”, “Sahte arkadaş Johnson”, “Amerika dost mu düşman mı?” *Vatan*, 29 August 1964.

Pakistan!”³⁰⁰ A heavy downpour of rain put a gradual end to the demonstrations. In İstanbul, students gathered on the İU campus, singing the national anthem in front of the Atatürk statue; they then marched to Dolmabahçe and observed a minute’s silence. Their attempt to walk to Taksim was pre-empted by the police.

September was no different. Demonstrations in Adana, Ankara, and İstanbul continued. The NTSU sent İnönü a pair of soldier’s boots on 13 September. After this date, however, the Cyprus issue slowly receded from the national agenda.

In 1965 one of the bigger worker actions took place. On 9 March, 5,000 mine workers at Karadon went on strike, protesting the union leaders who were collaborating with the employer. Police and gendarmery forces were sent to the area and forty-nine workers were taken into custody. On the next day, the strike spread to Kozlu, and the Ministers of the Interior, Labor, and Energy and Natural Resources came to the area. On 11 March, new army units were sent in to “catch the provocateurs among the workers”, which led to clashes. When the strike ended on 13 March, two workers had died and seventy-one had been taken into police custody; fourteen were eventually arrested. Extraordinary military precautions went on in Zonguldak and Kozlu; public opinion was shocked at the fact that a workers’ action could reach such proportions.³⁰¹

On 10 September 1965, the NTSU organized a protest demonstration in İstanbul; the issue was an international one not directly involving Turkey: clashes between Pakistan and India. Three thousand students attempted, without success, to march to the Indian consulate; stopped by the police line, they went instead to the Pakistani consulate to show their support. Some members of the crowd were dressed

³⁰⁰ “*Pakistan Pakistan çok yaşa*”. *Cumhuriyet*, 30 August 1964.

³⁰¹ Yaraşır, p. 524.

in the national attires of Pakistan. The placards went, “The lions of Kashmir fighting the rabid elephants”, “Two crescents in the same sky”, “Our jets can fly over Kashmir too”.³⁰² This demonstration happened to be the second, after the one in Indonesia, to support Pakistan.

On 17 December, the UN passed a resolution which denied Turkey the right to intervene in Cyprus, and this led, as might be expected, to heavy protests in Turkey. Tens of thousands of youth gathered in Taksim on 20 December to voice their frustration with the UN. They sang various marches, shouted “Send the army to Cyprus!”, “Rights have to be taken, not granted!”, “United Nations or united cannibals?”, “United Nations or united watchers?”, “Cyprus, from pen to sword!”, “Paşa put on your boots!”³⁰³ The demonstrations spread to İzmir and Ankara during the next two days.

The first half of 1966 saw demonstrations sponsored by the JP government against communism; the second half was occupied with demonstrations against the United States. The NTSU organized a demonstration in İstanbul on 20 March. Initially five thousand people gathered in Beyazıt, marched to Sirkeci, Karaköy, Dolmabahçe, and finally reached Taksim, where they became 15,000 in number. Another group gathered in Sultanahmet and demanded that the St. Sophia be converted into a mosque. The placards read, “We will crush the communists!”, “Death to communists!”, “141-142?”, “Is your mother Catherina [the Great]?”, and

³⁰² “*Keşmir’in aslanları kudurmuş fillere karşı*”, “*Aynı gökte iki hilal*”, “*Jetlerimiz Keşmir’de de uçabilir.*” Cumhuriyet, 11 September 1965.

³⁰³ “*Ordu Kıbrıs’a*”, “*Hak verilmez alınır*”, “*Birleşmiş Milletler mi, yamyamlar birliği mi?*”, “*Ayıdan post, gavurdan dost olmaz*”, “*Kıbrıs, kalemden süngüye*”, “*Paşam çizmeni giy.*” Cumhuriyet, 21 December 1965.

“We warn you, join our way!”³⁰⁴ In Adana, on the same day, two thousand people condemned communism. Among them were numerous radical Islamists, according to reports. On 10 April, another demonstration with the same agenda took place in İzmir. Members of the Fight with Communism Association (*Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*), Türk-İş unions, the Nationalist Fighters Association (Kuvayı Milliyeciler Derneği), the NTSU, along with people from all over the Aegean region gathered in Cumhuriyet Square, carrying various placards: “No such thing as a Muslim communist!”, “Turkish workers have vowed to fight communism!”, “All communists are servants of Moscow!”, “*Cihad* in the name of country and religion is sacred!”, “The young generation will suffocate the servants of Moscow!”³⁰⁵

The last two events of 1966 involved the two superpowers of the world, and both took place in Ankara. The first one was a demonstration to protest the United States. On 12 November, around one thousand people gathered in Tandoğan Square, mostly members of Türk-İş and various student associations. The march started off with the proclamation, “We are here to instigate the first Turkish movement against the imperialist moves of the Americans. Blessed be our cause.”³⁰⁶ The group walked to Cebeci, singing the Gaziosmanpaşa March, with lyrics that went, “The Danube says it won’t flow, America says it won’t get out of Turkey”.³⁰⁷ Placards read, “Turkey won’t be another Vietnam!”, “Turkey belongs to us, underground and above

³⁰⁴ “Komünistleri ezeceğiz”, “Komünistlere paydos”, “141-142?”, “Annemiz Katerina mı?”, “İhtar ediyoruz, yolumuza giriniz.” *Cumhuriyet*, 21 March 1966.

³⁰⁵ “Müslüman komünist olamaz”, “Türk işçisi komünizmle savaşa and içti”, “Her komünist Moskom uşağıdır”, “Vatan ve dinimiz için cihad mukaddestir”, “Moskof uşağını genç kuşak boğacaktır”. *Cumhuriyet*, 11 April 1966.

³⁰⁶ “Amerikalıların emperyalist hareketlerine karşı ilk Türk hareketini başlatıyoruz. Uğurlu olsun.” *Cumhuriyet*, 16 November 1966.

³⁰⁷ “Tuna nehri aksam diyor/ Amerika Türkiye’den çıkmam diyor”. *Cumhuriyet*, 13 November 1966.

ground!”, “Go to hell America!”, “Long live workers, peasants, and national petroleum!”, “The Dollar can’t beat us!”, “The day is near when Turkish workers will beat imperialists!”³⁰⁸ Another song was the “Rose Tree”: “I am not a rose tree/ I won’t bend before thee/ Take your hand off my country/ This is not a colony”.³⁰⁹ When the group reached the Nationalist Youth Organization, its members sitting in the balcony were booed; the police prevented further escalation of tension, and dispersed the demonstrators, who later gathered once again in front of the Victory Statue, marching on to Kızılay via Atatürk Boulevard, shouting “Damn America!”³¹⁰ Clashes occurred between the demonstrators and the police in front of the American News Center, which lasted more than an hour and a half.

On 20 December, the Soviet Prime Minister Alexey Kosigin paid an official visit to Ankara, and had to face protesters waving Hungarian flags at him on the streets. Five people were taken into police custody.

From the labor point of view, one of the most momentous developments took place in 1967. On 13 February, the Revolutionist Workers’ Unions Confederation (RWUC – *Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*) was founded. The already existing confederation, Türk-İş, was regarded as “yellow” by many, not defending the interests of workers sufficiently and collaborating with employers. Türk-İş accepted aid from the United States and followed a policy of not getting involved with any political party. The RWUC, on the other hand, strongly condemned Türk-İş

³⁰⁸ “Türkiye Vietnam olmayacaktır”, “Türkiye’nin altı da üstü de bizimidir”, “Defol git Amerika”, “Milli petrol, işçi, köylü çok yaşa”, “Dolar bize işlemez”, “Türk işçisinin emperyalistleri yıkacağı gün yakındır”. Ibid.

³⁰⁹ “Gül ağacı değilim/ Her gelene eğilem/ Çek elini yurdumdan/ Ben sömürge değilim”. Ibid.

³¹⁰ “Kahrolsun Amerika!” Ibid.

on the aid issue, and defended “class and masses” unionism. From this date on, many of the workers’ actions pitted the two confederations against each other.³¹¹

One of the main themes for political action in 1967 was again the United States, and more specifically, the 6th Fleet, which was scheduled to cast anchor in İstanbul in October. The protests were foreshadowed by student action on 22 June. A number of university students, all members of the TNSF, put to fire a garland left by American marines at the Taksim Statue. On 6 October, İTÜ and Yıldız University students organized a protest meeting at Dolmabahçe, gathering in the square at 8 p.m. and participating in a sit-in. The fleet arrived the next day, but American marines could not go on land due to the demonstrations and the sit-in still going on. The American admiral had to be flown in by helicopter. He made a statement to the effect that they “could not comprehend the reason for the demonstrations.”³¹² The Idea Clubs Federation issued a statement on the same day, and organized a hunger strike in Dolmabahçe on 11 October. Four of the strikers were taken to the office of the attorney general. On 15 October, protests were staged in İzmir. University students from all over the Aegean region participated in the “Honor Demonstration” (*Haysiyet ve Namus Mitingi*) at Republic Square. Afterwards the crowd marched in the streets, breaking the windows of a car belonging to Americans, throwing paint at American soldiers on İstiklal Avenue³¹³ and tearing down an American flag at a tobacco factory.

The last two months of the year witnessed rising tension in Cyprus. The Greek National Armed Forces in Cyprus, headed by Colonel Grivas, engaged in the

³¹¹ Yaraşır, p. 532.

³¹² “*Protestonun manasını anlayamadık.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 8 Ekim 1967.

³¹³ Aydın Çubukçu, ed., *Bizim '68* (İstanbul: Evrensel, 1999), p. 81.

massacre of Turkish Cypriots in Boğaziçi and Geçitkale in November. In response, the Turkish parliament authorized the government to send military troops to the island when necessary. On 17 November, the Turkish fleet started sailing towards the island. The government issued a statement to the effect that it would stop the military intervention on the condition that Colonel Grivas left Cyprus and the 12,000 Greek troops deployed on the island since 1964 were pulled back. Cyrus Vance, US president Johnson's special envoy to Cyprus, acted as mediator between the two countries and succeeded in convincing the Greek government to pull back its troops and the Turkish government to bring the military intervention to an end. Turkey and Greece reached an agreement on 2 December 1967. Turkish Cypriots formed what was called the "Temporary Turkish Administration of Cyprus" (*Kıbrıs Geçici Türk Yönetimi*) and declared nineteen principles by which they would abide until the time the constitution of 1960 came into full effect. This paved the way to the formation of a federal government on Cyprus.

On 11 November, student demonstrations took place in İstanbul and Ankara. 20,000 people gathered in Hürriyet Square in İstanbul; the crowd marched to Taksim, burning pictures of Makarios and Athenagoras. The police stopped one group which attempted to attack the Greek Embassy, and clashes were reported. In Ankara, the NTSU organized an unauthorized meeting in Kurtuluş Square, which ended with the crowd marching to Kızılay and shouting, "The army to Cyprus!"³¹⁴ On 17 November, the Greek attack on Turkish settlements in Cyprus was protested in İstanbul, Ankara, and Erzurum. The crowd called on Prime Minister Demirel to resign. 700 Turkish Cypriot students marched on İstiklal Avenue and clashed with the police; bystanders supported the students, shouting, "The Turkish proposal will

³¹⁴ "Ordu Kıbrıs'a!" *Cumhuriyet*, 12 November 1967.

be enforced with Turkish might!”, “The US supports Greek murderers!”, “Are you waiting for the 100 thousand to die before you say the last word?”³¹⁵

On 18 November, the Turkish Cypriots in İstanbul organized one last demonstration, criticizing the government for its inaction. The NTSU organized a boycott campaign on 20 November, asking everyone to stop shopping at Greek stores. The campaign was followed by demonstrations in İzmir, Adana and Denizli, where volunteer lists were drafted for a military operation in Cyprus. On 22 November, 100 thousand people, mostly students, participated in a huge demonstration organized jointly by the NTSU and İstanbul University’s Student Union. Placards read, “Cyprus is our 68th province, Athens our 69th”, “Imperialist dogs – what on earth are you good for?” “Blood for blood!”, “To die is better than to suffer!”, “Bomb them Tural!”³¹⁶ Other demonstrations took place in Konya and Tarsus, which spread to İzmir, Trabzon, Urfa, Maraş, Balıkesir, Antalya, Hakkari, Kütahya, and Kayseri during the next few days. Demonstrators all over the country demanded military intervention in Cyprus. They put to fire Makarios’s effigies and protested the United States. The latter theme was repeated in the demonstrations in Ankara on 9 December. Members of the METU Student Association, the Peace Association (*Bariş Derneği*) and the Idea Clubs Federation demanded that Turkey withdraw from NATO.

Other interesting examples of collective political action in 1967 saw students

³¹⁵ “*Türk tezi, Türk gücü ile kabul edilir*”, “*Yunanlı kaatillerin destekçisi Amerika*”, “*Son söz için 100 bin tükensin mi?*” *Cumhuriyet*, 17 November 1967.

³¹⁶ “*Hay dingala dingala, Makarios’u koyduk mangala, Demirel de sen ortala, bombala tansel bombala!*”, “*Kıbrıs 68’inci, Atina 69’uncu vilayetimiz*”, “*Emperyalist köpekler, dünya sizden ne bekler*”, “*Kana kan istiyoruz*”, “*Ölmek sürünmekten iyidir*”, “*Bombala Tural bombala*”. *Cumhuriyet*, 23 November 1967.

participating in the cause of groups other than themselves, such as the street vendors march in July, the confiscation protest in Elmalı in September, and the Singer strike.³¹⁷

The 6th Fleet caused more of the same trouble in 1968, when six of its ships anchored at Dolmabahçe harbor on 15 July. Students from İTÜ protested the arrival of the American battleships by lowering the Turkish flags on the poles at Dolmabahçe. The president of İTÜ's Student Union, Harun Karadeniz, delivered a speech on the spot, and talked about Turkey's independence. That night, a group of İTÜ students threw ink and firecrackers at American marines. On 16 July, a group of youths throwing stones at the hotel where the marines stayed, clashed with the police. On the morning of 17 July, the police raided İTÜ's student dorms, and another clash ensued – fifty-three students and four police officers were injured. This resulted in an increase in the violence of the demonstrations, and students, gathering in Taksim on the noon of the same day, marched to the Dolmabahçe harbor, destroyed US vehicles, beat up those marines they could lay their hands on and threw them into the sea. On 18 July, the American *chargé d'affaires* met with Foreign Ministry's secretary general Zeki Kuneralp to convey Washington's concern about the events and to warn that Turkish-American relations would suffer if the attacks against US marines could not be stopped. Thirty youths were arrested on the same day, and İTÜ's president, along with all the deans and members of the university's senate, resigned.

On 20 July, demonstrators gathered in Hürriyet Square to condemn the United States, the government and the police. Demonstrations were also held in Ankara, İzmir, Trabzon, Burdur, and Eskişehir. A big demonstration was scheduled

³¹⁷ Kabacalı, p. 179.

for 24 July, called “*Amerikan Emperyalizmini Telin Mitingi*” (“Condemnation of American Imperialism”), but on the day before, those who opposed that meeting organized one of their own in Konya. Nationalist University Students (*Konya Milliyetçi Yüksek Tahsil Gençliği*), the Student Society of the Higher İslamic Institute (*Yüksek İslam Enstitüsü Talebe Cemiyeti*), the Fight with Communism Association (*Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*), the Enlightened Ideas Club (*Aydın Fikirler Kulübü*), The Society for Protecting and Perpetuating Moral Values and Beliefs (*Manevi Değerleri Koruma ve İnançları Yayma Cemiyeti*), and the Konya branch of Yeşilay all collaborated on this project. A big crowd led by men wearing green turbans destroyed the Teachers’ Locale, the provincial headquarters of the Turkish Workers’ Party and some bookstores; they also clashed with the members of the other group who had organized the protest meeting.

That night there was an earthquake in Konya – it lasted for only three seconds, and there was a power shortage for only about forty-five minutes, but that was enough to send most of the people outdoors to spend the night. Support troops were brought in to ensure order. The ships of the 6th fleet left İstanbul in the early hours of 24 July, only to come back, like a bad omen, in February 1969, and again in December. The demonstrations and events that preceded and followed that visit went down in modern Turkish history as “Bloody Sunday” (“*Kanlı Pazar*”), and will be discussed in the final chapter of this study, under “Violent Political Action”. The same is true for much of the demonstrations and protests that took place in the 1970s – violence was such an intrinsic part of these actions that they deserve a section of their own.

On 29 October 1968, the Revolutionist Student Union organized a march from Samsun to Ankara, symbolizing the way Atatürk’s fight against imperialism

began in 1919. Police forces stopped the march at the fourteenth kilometer and took the leaders into custody. The students were set free after a court hearing, and the march resumed on 1 November. The Idea Clubs Federation joined the march on 3 November. The marchers reached Çorum on 5 November, and mended a bust of Atatürk which had been attacked a few days before.³¹⁸

The most characteristic quality of worker actions in 1968 was that factory occupations, one of the most confrontational modes of action of class struggle, became widespread. In 1970, the government decided to limit the activities of the RWUC. A new law was drafted, stating that the multiplicity of unions hampered work life and purporting to create stronger unionism by making it very difficult for the RWUC to exist alongside Türk-İş. On 15 June, protest demonstrations began. 70,000 workers participated in the actions, first stopping work and then taking to marches. On 16 June, close to 150,000 workers participated in demonstrations. Interestingly, many of them were members of Türk-İş. That night martial law was decreed in İstanbul and İzmit, and twenty-one prominent members of the RWUC were arrested. On 29 July, the draft was passed in Parliament, and President Sunay ratified it. The RPP and the TWP applied to the Supreme Court for a repeal, which the court granted on 9 February 1971. The demonstrations of 15-16 June were among the most important worker actions in Turkish history.³¹⁹

In 1976, the RWUC engaged in another important political action – the fight against State Security Courts. By the summer of 1976, the RWUC had reached a size of 500,000 members and had become a political power to be reckoned with. The RWUC had been fighting against the SSCs for some time, regarding them as

³¹⁸ Çubukçu, p. 88.

³¹⁹ Yaraşır, p. 568.

remnants of 12 March, enabling the state to rule the country under martial law conditions without having to declare martial law. The RWUC began a nationwide worker resistance and declared “general mourning” on 16 September as the SSC Law was being debated in the Parliament. On the next day, 300,000 workers joined the protest; demonstrations were organized in various cities. The Parliament decided to close down the SSCs, marking one of the greatest political achievements of labor in Turkey.³²⁰

On 5 January 1979, the RWUC organized a five-minute silence to protest the killings in Kahramanmaraş (see Chapter Eight); 500,000 workers participated in the action, and fascism was condemned.

Handle with Care: Collective Action and the Police

In 1966, chief of police Turhan Şenel wrote a book entitled *Toplu Hareketler ve Polis*³²¹ (Collective Action and the Police) to be used by security forces. Published a year after the “social police force” (*toplum polisi*) came into being, this short book (ninety-four pages long) describes the reasons for unrest and civil disobedience, the way the crowds and mobs behave, the kinds of mobs according to their constitution, the different types of uprisings, important signs for the police to watch out for, the importance of intelligence and planning, good public relations, tactics for controlling crowds, and the equipment to be used in crowd control. It is of some interest for the purposes of this study to take a short look at this book in order to have a better understanding of the other side of the dynamics of contention.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 596.

³²¹ Turhan Şenel, *Toplu Hareketler ve Polis* (Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü Önemli İşler Müdürlüğü Yayınları, n.d.)

The “social police force” served between 1965 and 1982. It was first established in İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Adana, and Zonguldak, in response to the increased collective actions such as meetings, demonstrations, marches, strikes and lock-outs. The force was commonly known as “*Frukos*” because its vehicles looked like trucks carrying Fruko, a brand of Turkish soda. The duties of the force included “preventing illegal street and square actions, the partial or complete destruction of physical or spiritual belongings of individuals or society as a whole as a result of illegal strikes or lock-outs, other types of illegal collective actions, and rendering them ineffectual in case they do occur.”³²² One of the main reasons for its replacement in 1982 by “agile forces” (*çevik kuvvet*) was its ineffectiveness in face of many incidents during the 1970s. In contrast, the agile forces would be widely criticized for their harshness and disrespect for human rights. Indeed, during a demonstration organized by the agile forces themselves, members of the force would shout, “*Kahrolsun insan hakları!*” (“Down with human rights!”).

In writing the book, Turhan Şenel had made extensive use of a handbook entitled *Prevention of Mobs and Riots*, published by the FBI in February 1965, and *Advanced Police Procedure*, prepared by the Public Service Institution in 1940.³²³ The categories Şenel uses for describing groups, for example, are taken directly from that source: casual crowds (like shoppers), cohesive crowds (like concert audiences), expressive crowds (like supporters at an election rally), and aggressive crowds (like mobs).³²⁴ He also offers a typology of participants: 1. Excited individuals who do not

³²² ainfos. This is “a multi-lingual news service by, for, and about anarchists,” available [online] at <http://www.ainfos.ca>

³²³ Turhan Şenel, p. 95.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

obey laws, 2. Easily influenced individuals, 3. Cautious individuals, 4. Shy individuals, 5. Supporters and shouters, 6. Resistant individuals, and 7. Psychopaths.³²⁵ For effective crowd control, it is important for the police to know what kinds of individuals they are dealing with. In addition, there are two other factors: intelligence and planning.

All planning depends on the gathering of quality intelligence. Members of the police force must be alert to all changes at all times, and must report to their seniors the smallest piece of information, no matter how insignificant it may seem. It is helpful if leaders and provocateurs can be identified by name and by description, or if their photographs can be obtained. Personnel must be sent to locations where incidents take place for the purposes of gathering intelligence. These must avoid wearing uniforms and must look as much like members of the crowd as possible. It is of utmost importance to carry a city map and to note all streets leading in and out of the area of unrest, the types of buildings, roads, fences, empty yards, means of lighting at night, etc. Officers on duty must park their cars far away from the area under consideration, in order not to draw unnecessary attention. A detailed report of all findings must be given to seniors periodically and in person.³²⁶

All plans for crowd control must be made well in advance, and all members of the police force must be taught what is expected of them, and what kind of outcomes are desired. All necessary equipment must be made ready, including maps, equipment for communication, transportation, lighting, chemicals, photography

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 43.

equipment, police dogs, weapons, high pressure water tanks, head gear, sign for unit recognition, truncheons, protective glasses, mobile barricades, and so on.³²⁷

Şenel provides detailed procedures for police forces faced with collective action. The single most important thing to do is to announce clearly and repeatedly that all types of violence will be dealt with swiftly and decisively. This is what impresses masses the most, and many of those present will stop participating in the action. It is also important to identify and remove the leaders of the group. The crowd must be broken up into smaller groups as isolated small groups are much easier to deal with, and it also increases the fear of the participants of being recognized. Police forces should at all times show that they are acting justly and impartially. An excellent show of force and discipline by well-trained policemen has a positive effect in preventing incidents.

The social police should be cognizant of the fact that collective action usually gets organized around a symbol, be it a person, a place like a mosque or memorial building, or a date, like certain anniversaries. It is a good idea to be prepared beforehand for actions to be concentrated around these symbols. The police should also know whom to trust, and whom to ask for help; responsible and respected citizens are always a great help. In addition, the police chief must also know his own men very well. As a preventive measure, it is good policy to inform people why the police need to act in certain ways under certain conditions, and why this is important for the maintenance of law and order.³²⁸

Establishing and maintaining good public relations is crucial. Media relations must be based on informing the members of the media via a designated

³²⁷ Ibid., pp. 78-87.

³²⁸ Ibid., pp.45-48.

spokesperson. Entertainment and education programs should be organized for the youth. Minority groups should be regularly contacted.³²⁹

In dealing with the crowd forcefully and in using truncheons, there are various guidelines to follow. The truncheon is to be used in cases of emergency only. The reason to hit with a truncheon should never be to injure the person, but to momentarily disable him from continuing his fight. Truncheons should never be used on the head, the two sides of the neck, armpits or the midriff. The permissible points are: toes, biceps, kneecaps, shins, thighs, hands, arms, the inside of elbows, shoulders, the collar bones, breasts, shoulder blades, behind the knees, heels and testicles.³³⁰ There are various hitting techniques using the truncheon; members of the police force should be well trained in how to hold the truncheon in “guard” position and in ways of hitting with it.

Finally, various chemicals can be used to disperse the crowd, such as chloracetophenon (tear gas), orthochlorobenzalmalononitrile (cough gas), and diphenylaminechlorarsine (vomit gas). Police officers must be aware that they are not immune to the effects of these gases and must be equipped with gas masks that are in good condition.³³¹

It is interesting to note that demonstrations in Turkey have been quite similar to street action elsewhere around the world. One small innovation was the occasional “silent march”, the result of strict regulations concerning permission for protest demonstrations. Students used demonstrations most often. It is somewhat surprising

³²⁹ Ibid., pp. 50-56.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 88.

³³¹ Ibid., pp. 90-93.

that workers did not engage in this form of collective action as frequently. On the whole, the incidents studied in this chapter give the lie to the widespread notion that the Turkish people constitute a “silent majority”. Even in smaller cities, thousands of people participated in collective action, risking being beaten by police truncheons and being taken into custody. After 1980, regulations grew even stricter; this did not, however, stop people from taking to the streets. Marching, it is safe to venture, comes to them naturally.



CHAPTER 6:

COLLECTIVE ACTION IN THE PRESS, THE PRESS IN COLLECTIVE ACTION

This study is based on a thoroughgoing examination of the newspapers of the three decades from 1950 to 1980, and as such, this chapter may seem superfluous, going by its title. Hopefully, it is not: there have been two interesting ways in which the Turkish press, either directly or indirectly, has supported collective political action. One the one hand, the Turkish press has consistently resorted to reporting collective action *abroad* during times of heavy-handed governments when they could not print what was going on in the country. These news reports were a way of calling students and even workers to action, without overtly doing so and it provided agitation for those who were action-minded, together with an array of importable modes of action. At times, though, they served the opposite purpose of warning the public of the possible eruption of disorder if collective political action were to get out of control. On the other hand, there have been instances where it was the press itself that organized people into concerted action. These two ways will be discussed in this chapter.

Reporting collective action as an editorial matter brings in issues of freedom of the press and political allegiance. Turkish newspapers have had to adopt a limited definition of the motto “all the news that’s fit to print.” Towards the end of the 1950s, for example, the government exerted so much pressure on the newspapers and so much control over news content, that the national dailies had to resort to reporting

events abroad, with the hope that the readers would see the connection between what went on “there” with what was going on “here.” This taught them a valuable lesson, and in the aftermath of the military coup in 1960, the major papers joined forces to oppose the National Security Council’s draft legislation concerning their freedom.

The matter of political allegiance is more nettlesome. On the one hand, papers like *Ulus* were not expected to be objective, because their political affiliations were clear, but they nonetheless served as major sources of criticism for the government. On the other hand, papers with claims to objectivity pursued political agendas of their own in a less blatant fashion, and this affected how much collective action they would report at any given time, depending on who was in power. This in turn determined to a great degree how effective any collective action would be, because that effect depended on the “visibility” of the action in question, and for those not personally present during the action, papers provided that visibility. Editorial discretion thus became a tool in shaping collective political action.

Action at a Distance: Communism and Its Discontents

Turkish papers liked to report on certain events taking place abroad: the fight against communism, workers’ strikes, student boycotts, and racial uprisings; some events offered a combination of these. Communism, as in other parts of the world, was the scariest bogeyman of the 1950s, and Turkey was very much on edge, being situated right next to the USSR. In the aftermath of WW II and during the cold war period, therefore, Turkish politicians deemed it crucial that Turkey continue to receive the backing of the US and stay as far away from communism as possible. Student activities to that effect have been discussed in the previous chapters, and these have

found ample space in the pages of newspapers, but this was not enough. It was also necessary to add to this a foreign perspective.

On 29 January 1951, for example, *Ulus* reported that the American Workers' Federation supported the government in its campaign against communism. The largest workers' association, the WF, demanded that every country ready to fight communism must be given military support by the American army. There was no need to worry – Turkish workers would continue to be docile and in line with the “official ideology” for a long time to come.

The only source of “red” danger was not the Soviet Union; Iran, too, proved to be dangerously volatile when it came to communism. When Great Britain and Iran fell into conflict over Iranian petroleum, the latter country's government was forced, on 29 May 1951, to take serious precautions against communists who had organized a big meeting in Tehran. Similarly, on 3 November of the same year, just when Iranian Prime Minister Musaddiq was visiting Washington, D.C., communists in Tehran staged a mass protest, winning the support of local media as well. On 19 January 1953, this time Musaddiq's supporters gathered in front of the Parliament, and the huge crowd chanted, “Musaddiq or death”³³²; the parliament in turn prolonged Musaddiq's full authority.

Arrests of communists in other countries were regarded highly in the Turkish press. On 24 March 1953, the center for the Workers' Confederation was raided by the police, and plans to attack France's international security were disclosed, which was followed, naturally, by extensive arrests, and the cancellation of French Communist Party member Jacques Duclos' immunity. About a year later, on 16 February 1954, communists in Italy organized a general strike against the

³³² “*Ya Musaddık ya ölüm!*” *Ulus*, 20 January 1953.

government, throwing the precarious coalition into jeopardy, as a result of which six hundred workers were arrested, and three policemen were wounded.

When Soviet leaders paid an official visit to London in 1956, East Europeans living in England seized the opportunity. On 22 April, twenty thousand people marched the streets of London, in order to “save the countries of East Europe.” A petition with the signatures of 40,000 Polish immigrants was given to Prime Minister Eden. Close to one million people watched the event.

Strikes Abroad - Home Strikes

Tandem to the issue of communism was the issue of strikes, which usually remained as an economic matter, but did at times turn into political contention. Reports concerning workers in other countries, especially the US and France, kept coming in. On 9 April 1952, *Ulus* reported, 100,000 (out of 650,000) steel workers in the States went on strike, forcing the federal court to allow Truman to intervene in the affairs of industrialists. On 6 May, it was the electrical power plant workers, numbering close to 60,000, who threatened the government with going on strike. On 6 June, with the steel strike still going on, the United States Secretary of Defense announced that the strike would have its toll on the country’s relationship with Western Europe and its allies. On 1 October 1953, it was the dock workers on the Atlantic coast that went on strike this time, forcing Eisenhower to bring up the Taft-Hartley Ruling. On 3 December, more than two million dock workers in England went on strike, demanding a fifteen percent raise in pay.

On 16 June 1953, workers in East Berlin took to the streets, a piece of news that was given ample place in the Turkish papers because it underlined the quest for

freedom in the land of communism. According to *Ulus*, thousands of workers protested the increase in work norms, and called for free elections. On 17 February 1954, workers in England, India and Sumatra went on strike; some were reported dead. In 1955, four thousand teachers quit their jobs in Greece because they did not get their salaries; in Finland, state employees went on a strike which lasted five days; in England, newspapers could not be printed because electric plant workers went on strike, later joined by railroad and dock workers, forcing the Queen to declare a state of emergency; in Italy, two million agricultural workers went on strike; in Chile, 60,000 state employees went on strike and another state of emergency was declared there; in Brazil, three thousand dock workers went on strike; in Tunisia, a general strike was announced on 1 July.

Workers in Poland staged a veritable uprising on 29 June 1956 in Poznan. According to news agencies in Warsaw, thirty-eight people died, 270 were wounded, and hundreds of workers were arrested. Armed workers shouted on the streets, “We want bread, we want freedom, down with the oppressors!”³³³ and put up a fight against army tanks.

1961 found Belgian workers on strike. Worker unions called on their members via secret radio broadcasts to attend the massive strike, but the police got wind of the call and had time to organize against demonstrators. This did not make much of a difference, for the next day’s papers reported the bloody clashes both between the police and the demonstrators, and also between demonstrators and those workers who crossed the picket line. On 14 January, *Türk-İş* announced in a press statement that it totally approved of the strikes in Belgium.³³⁴

³³³ “*Ekmek, hürriyet isteriz, kahrolsun müstebitler!*” *Cumhuriyet*, 30 June 1956.

³³⁴ *Vatan*, 15 January 1961.

Students in Action

Student activities in foreign countries were also very popular with the Turkish press. On 8 January 1953, for example, students in Karachi took to the streets, and police forces opened fire on them. forty people were arrested.

On 12 January 1954, *Vatan* reported that students in Paraguay were tired of dictatorship. The Paraguay delegation attending the COSEC meeting in İstanbul expressed their strong desire to “breathe the air of freedom.”³³⁵ The Student Federation president Yusto Diaz de Vivar told reporters that after the coup in 1947, their dictator had outlawed student associations and put an end to university autonomy. De Vivar and his friends had founded the federation in 1953, but three students in the administration had been jailed. Students throughout the country boycotted classes for three days and their friends were set free. “This is something that European and Turkish students cannot begin to comprehend,” de Vivar said to the delight of the newspaper, “because the air you breathe here is liberal. In Paraguay, the dictator tries to stop every move of students because he knows their effect on public opinion.”³³⁶

On 26 January 1954, Spanish students, numbering close to ten thousand, attempted to occupy the radio building in Madrid, demanding Gibraltar to be given back to Spain, and clashed with the police. Many were wounded, and the students demanded the resignation of the Chief of Police. Clashes continued the next day. A police inspector was killed in Morocco.

³³⁵ “COSEC kongresindeki Paraguaylı delegeler, hürriyet havasını teneffüs etmek istiyorlar.” *Vatan*, 13 January 1954.

³³⁶ Ibid.

Students in Egypt joined forces with Egyptian women in 1954 to protest the regime. On 14 March, students marched the streets, calling on the rector of Cairo University to resign, which he refused to do. The students then demanded the release of the professors previously arrested, and they were. During the meeting of university students, which was also attended by policemen, demands were voiced to reinstate a civilian government and to go back to a democratic regime. When they threatened the government with going on strike, all of the universities in Egypt were closed down.

Students in Czechoslovakia rebelled against the Stalinist regime on 9 June 1956, leveling heavy criticism at the government, which led to the banning of all student meetings. In Hungary, students protested the government on 21 October, demanding the freedom to travel abroad and freedom of press, and they threatened the government with civil strife if their demands were not met within fifteen days. On 24 October, Soviet forces entered Pest and started the bloodshed against anti-Soviet revolutionaries. Hungary was cut off from rest of the world, but Turkish papers reported that because collective political action had reached the level of a coup, the communists had brought Imre Nagy to power and the new government had asked for immediate help from Moscow, declaring martial law. The uprisings, however, could not be stopped, and masses destroyed Soviet enterprises and factories. In Warsaw, similar events took place upon Gomulka's declaration that "Friendly relations with Russia will continue."³³⁷ On 26 October, the revolution spread throughout Hungary, with heavy clashes occurring between the people and the Soviet army in a number of cities. An interim government was formed by the

³³⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 October 1956.

revolutionaries. On 15 November, ten thousand people marched against Russia in Pest, where the crowds protested the sending of Hungarian youths to Russia.

Meanwhile, the Hungarians in İstanbul submitted a petition to the office of the governor, asking for permission to organize a march, together with Romanians, Albanians, and Bulgarians, in protest of the Soviet army. The Soviet army opened fire on Hungarian children and women on 4 December; the United Nations gave a final warning to the Soviet Union and the puppet regime in Hungary. On 10 December, even heavier bloodshed ensued: enhanced Soviet troops began mass arrests, but a radio station run by the revolutionaries broadcast the following message nonetheless: “We are afraid of no one and we will use whatever weapons we have to protect our freedom.”³³⁸ *Cumhuriyet* reported on 15 December that in all Iron Curtain countries, university students had started to rebel against Russia, including those in Russia itself. In Kiev, for example, university students clashed with police forces on 17 January 1957; on 12 April, students in the Ukraine, Belorussia, Armenia, and Caucasia engaged in passive resistance against the regime, resulting in mass arrests. On 10 February, East German students demanded that Russian be no longer a compulsory course.

The imminence of the coup in 1960 could be felt in the newspapers of the day, at least in retrospect. On 19 April, for example, thousands of students in Korea demonstrated against the government by ambushing the residence of the President; the US ambassador met with Synman Rhee to find a solution. On 20 April, the papers reported that some high-ranking officers in Venezuela, having been previously extradited, returned to Caracas under cover and started an uprising. On 25 April, it was Korean professors this time who took to the streets, marching to save

³³⁸ *Vatan*, 10 December 1956.

their students from prison. University students took up action again on 23 March 1961, when five thousand students demanded food and called on Prime Minister John M. Chang to resign.

In Tehran, close to ten thousand students hit the streets on 21 January 1961, after the Friday prayers, to demand free elections and to criticize the government. This went on for two weeks, and Iranian students in Vienna gave their support to their friends back home by boycotting classes. On 25 February, Tehran University was closed down until further notice, due to continuing anarchy.

Action in Iran continued to be an attraction for the Turkish press, even when this action took place elsewhere, as in 1961. On 6 September, Iranian students in New York went on a hunger strike, in protest of the political attitude of the Iranian government.

On 11 April 1962, students in Athens boycotted classes and marched through the streets, shouting, "We don't need the king, we want democracy."³³⁹ In ensuing clashes, forty students, together with fifteen policemen were injured. On 21 April, Papandreu told *Cumhuriyet* that "the demonstration was held to ensure freedom of congregation." Athens had been shaken with the demonstration of the Central Unionist Party, which had lasted five hours and resulted in much bloodshed, leaving thirty-three people seriously wounded. Similarly, in Portugal, about one thousand students and five professors were arrested on 11 May, 1962, in the wake of demonstrations in Lisbon, where Salazar was heavily condemned; eighty-six students, who had gone on hunger strike in college cafeterias were also arrested. In July, these students were banned from attending classes for thirty months. On the next day, twenty-one Spanish students who had demonstrated against Franco and

³³⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 12 April 1962.

demanded his resignation were arrested. On 13 May 1964, students against the Franco regime turned to terrorism, delivering serious blows to the Spanish economy by action aimed at tourism.

The demonstrations in Germany resulted from a much more “innocent” event: the police attempted to break up a group of youths who were listening to a band of guitar players in Munich on 25 June 1962. Soon there were clashes, as a result of which 162 students were arrested; demonstrators broke into and looted restaurants and bars in the night.

Another incident of looting took place in Brazil, when the heavy economic crisis in the country forced hungry peasants to attack stores that sold food; the clashes on 6 July 1962 resulted in sixty-five dead and 2,000 injured.

In Yemen, a student uprising left five dead and hundreds injured. The “aristocratic” schooling system in Yemen barred many students from attending special schools for the nobility. During the uprising on 12 September 1962, a sizable group of students attempted to take over the national radio station.

Student protests in Paris again turned into clashes with the police on 29 November 1963, after thousands of students demanded the allocation of a greater share of the budget for universities. The police were exceptionally brutal in their methods of suppression.

In Korea, students demanding the resignation of President Park Chung Hi engaged in violent clashes with the police on 4 June 1964 and these clashes spread throughout the country. On 21 April 1965, five hundred students in Seoul marched the streets, protesting against the *rapprochement* between the Korean and Japanese governments. On 26 August of the same year, 10,000 Korean students clashed with the army over this matter.

In the States, the war in Vietnam proved to be, of course, an unparalleled cause of collective political action, and was reported on in the Turkish press regularly. On 17 April 1965, a group of ten thousand students calling themselves “students for a democratic society”, demonstrated against the involvement of the States in the Vietnam War, forcing president Johnson to cancel all his trips abroad.

Turkey in the News

Certain news in foreign papers could also lead to action in Turkey. University students in İstanbul, for example, were outraged at the criticism leveled by Egyptian papers in Cairo and Alexandria against Turkey’s stance regarding the Middle East question, and they held a demonstration on 25 October 1951 to protest against this unjust treatment. On 18 November, protesters in Aleppo, Syria, condemned Turkey for participating in talks with the US, Great Britain, and France, with the aim of working out a strategy to “protect” the Middle East against Soviet threat. Turkish flags were put to fire on the streets by an angry mob. The Syrian political action caused considerable strain between the governments of the two countries. When the Egyptian government banned all demonstrations and declared martial law on 6 December, Turkish papers found cause to celebrate. On the same day, another report gave news from Tehran, where nationalists and communists had clashed the day before and communist cells had been raided.³⁴⁰

Action against Turkey would continue. On 27 March 1954, students in Beirut protested against the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. In the bloody clashes with the police, one demonstrator was killed and twenty-nine were wounded. On 20 February 1955,

³⁴⁰ *Ulus*, 7 December 1951.

about one thousand junior high school students in Damascus quit their schools to protest the Turkish-Iraqi Defense Agreement; five hundred of them took to the streets, shouting slogans against Turkish Prime Minister Menderes and his Iraqi counterpart, Nuri Sait. During budget sessions in the Turkish Parliament, one deputy asked the Foreign Minister why demonstrations against Turkey went on in Arab countries.³⁴¹

On 25 April 1965, 20,000 Armenians gathered in Samun Stadium in Beirut to vent their frustration with the Turkish state; some ministers of the Lebanese government also attended the meeting. Turkish papers claimed the meeting was a big fiasco.³⁴²

Women on the Streets

“Women in action abroad” was another popular news item for Turkish papers as early as 1952. On 23 January, the Girls of the Nile Society in Cairo demonstrated against the British, distributing leaflets that claimed they would beat the British on all fronts. Their president, Mrs. D. Şefik Nuri, announced that they called for an economic boycott against British goods. The police took away the members of the group demonstrating in front of Barclay’s. On 28 March, communists marched in Tehran, leaving five dead and more than two hundred wounded. On 17 March, the Iranian National Socialist Party, founded by an Iranian professor, staged its first collective action in the crowded streets of Tehran.

³⁴¹ “*Arap devletlerinde bize karşı nümayişler neden devam ediyor?*” *Ulus*, 18 January 1957.

³⁴² “*Beyrut’ta yapılan Ermeni mitingi fiyasko ile sonuçlandı.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 26 April 1965.

In 1954, the Girls of the Nile made the papers again. Doria Şefik went on a hunger strike together with thirteen women, with the aim of forcing the government to extend suffrage to women. This seemed to be an opportune moment, for a new constitution was being drafted. Their headquarters was the Press Syndicate in downtown Cairo. Telegrams of support rained in from all over the world, but the former Minister of Education, Taha Hüseyin, told the press that women who went on hunger strike for suffrage were neglecting their duties as wives and mothers, and that the hunger strike spoiled their beauty.³⁴³

Cyprus – The Unsolvable Riddle

The Cyprus issue also provided instances of action abroad, duly reported in the Turkish papers. In 1952, demonstrations were held through Turkey, Cyprus and Greece, almost turning into a competition of whose demonstration would be the most impressive. On 7 May 1952, the demonstration organized by the Pan-Helen Society in Athens drew the support of the Greek government, which closed down shops and businesses for an hour so that participation in the demonstration would be high. On 25 March 1954, thousands of university students engaged in demonstrations in Athens, Nicosia, and Patras over the Cyprus issue. In Athens, university students gathered in front of the University Club and demanded the annexation of Cyprus. They clashed with the police, burned British flags, and shouted “Enosis!”³⁴⁴

³⁴³ “Taha Hüseyin... rey hakkı için açlık grevi yapan kadınların zevce ve anne olarak vazifelerini ihmal ettiklerini, açlık grevinin güzelliklerini bozduğunu söylüyor.” *Vatan*, 17 March 1954.

³⁴⁴ *Vatan*, 26 March 1954.

In a rare event combining the Cyprus issue with labor, hundreds of Turkish workers on the island demonstrated against Britain on 11 May 1960, marching on to Governor Foot's offices and demanding jobs and bread.

On 4 July 1964, five hundred demonstrators walked into the Greek Parliament building where the parliamentarians were discussing the Cyprus issue. One minister and six deputies were injured, and thirty-two demonstrators –one a soldier without uniform- were arrested. The demonstrators carried various placards and shouted “Karamanlis come back!”, “Papandreu resign!”, “Kanellepulos is our national hero!”.³⁴⁵ The incidents spread and grew in magnitude. Two weeks later, on 18 July, workers in Salonica clashed with the police after demonstrations organized by various unions. On 23 July, workers in the Athens area clashed with state forces, leaving forty-six gendarmerie and nineteen workers wounded.

Miscellany

The “Black Problem” in the States was first reported in the Turkish press on 30 July 1957. *Ulus* informed its readers that in Chicago, crowds protested the black population, destroying cars. On 13 May 1963, a group of white youths attacked blacks leaving a church in Alabama; on 27 June, 300,000 black people took to the streets for equal rights. On 23 July 1964, rampant vandalism shook New York to its very foundations. 145 stores were looted and destroyed, and the police shot down four blacks. On 26 July, the incidents in New York turned into an uprising, anarchy reigned in the city, and people paid no heed of the curfew. The uprising spread to

³⁴⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 July 1964.

upstate New York within one day. In Rochester, blacks fought the police in heavy clashes.

In Greece, not all collective action revolved around the Cyprus issue. Greek society had internal problems of its own. The summer of 1965 was replete with instances of such contentious behavior. On 18 July, for example, people in Salonica protested against the king and prime minister Novas, in support of Papandreu, who called on all Greeks to participate in the uprising. At least twenty-five people were wounded that day, and it was deemed certain that the violence would spread to other cities. Which it did. In August, clashes stained the streets of Athens, which took on the proportions of a revolt on 21 August. The new prime minister blamed Papandreu for the upheaval, and decided to ask for a vote of confidence in the parliament.

Collective political action happened in North Africa as well. On 21 June 1965, women and youths of Algeria shouted, "Long live Ben Bella!" in the streets.³⁴⁶ Ben Bella had fallen victim to a military coup, and papers reported that he was still alive, kept captive in a military station somewhere in the desert.

The first instance of a reporting of anti-nuclear/disarmament demonstrations took place on 18 April 1960, when fifteen thousand British protesters marched to demand an end to nuclear experiments. *Ulus* said they planned to walk to Geneva if necessary. On 21 September 1961, ten thousand people marched in London and protested against nuclear arms. 1,318 people were arrested, not because of unlawful demonstration, but because they blocked the traffic. The nuclear experiments conducted by the Soviet Union also drew widespread protestation throughout the globe, leading the US secretary of State to tell the press that "the Russians are mistaken if they think they can intimidate the world. I think they will regret this in

³⁴⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 22 June 1965.

the end.”³⁴⁷ The US, however, was quick to follow suit. When the president announced the commencement of nuclear experiments in the states, a number of demonstrations took place in England. Indian Prime Minister Nehru said, “The US should not start nuclear experiments while the Geneva Talks continue.”³⁴⁸

In Saigon, close to five thousand people protested the government led by President Ngo Din Diem on 12 August 1963, accusing him of not ensuring freedom of faith for Buddhists in the country.

1968: “Année Erotique”

The events of 1968 and their aftermath have been widely discussed, studied, dissected elsewhere; as for those events taking place in Turkey, I refer the reader to Chapter Seven. As far as 1968 goes, this chapter will concern itself only with the repercussions of the events that took place in the West, especially in France and the United States.

The first report about “1968” to find its way into *Vatan* appeared on 11 May under the header “The Youth Revolt in France is Growing,”³⁴⁹ the paper informed its readership that thousands of students in Paris had clashed with police forces, putting cars on fire, and setting up barricades on some fifty roads leading to the Sorbonne. Two days later, the papers gave news of millions of workers supporting the students with a general strike, which had brought daily life in France to a virtual standstill. On 15 May, the Odéon was occupied because it symbolized the Gaulists – this was

³⁴⁷ *Vatan*, 1 November 1961.

³⁴⁸ *Vatan*, 28 April 1962.

³⁴⁹ “Fransa’da Gençlik İsyamı Büyüdü.” *Vatan*, 11 May 1968.

likened by the papers to “a Chinese-style Culture Revolution.”³⁵⁰ The demands of the revolutionaries crystallized along the lines of demanding a socialist regime, and right-inclined Turkish papers talked about the panic of the French people at the prospect of seeing their parliament dissolved.

Repercussions of the events in France were felt elsewhere, too. In England and Sweden, university students joined their French mates in making their voices heard. On 22 May, Swedish students decided to organize a big demonstration in Stockholm to urge the governments of the developed world to extend more aid to developing countries. On 28 May, “Red Danny”³⁵¹ returned to Paris, and a serious shortage of food started to make itself felt all over France. Students at Columbia University, New York, took over the state radio station on 1 June. In Belgrade, more than one hundred people were wounded as a result of street clashes. In France, journalists joined the general strike on 3 June. Rome University was evacuated on the same day – students in Rome had put up a giant poster of a naked Raquel Welch at the university dormitory entrance, with a sign on it that said, “No to sexual oppression!”³⁵² Students in Brazil resorted to violence in June, but the government did not opt for martial law – five hundred students were arrested, sixty-five of them to be tried at military courts. On 22 October, thousands of students occupied the Central Station in Tokyo, leaving one hundred fifteen wounded. Finally, on 13 November, thousands of high school students in France joined the line and boycotted classes, demanding the end of the examination system and disciplinary punishment.

³⁵⁰ “Fransa’da Çin Usulü Kültür Devrimi Yaşanmaya Başlandı.” *Cumhuriyet*, 16 May 1968.

³⁵¹ Daniel Cohn-Bandit, one of the student leaders of May ’68.

³⁵² *Vatan*, 4 June 1968.

Most of the student action in Turkey took place after June 1968, and continued with a crescendo toward 1970. During the process, the Turkish press became obsessed with what went on at home, to the neglect of reporting in sufficient detail what happened abroad. The 1970s were a different story altogether, in that the civil unrest and the death toll caused by the rise of terrorism left room for little else on the national agenda. Reports of collective political action became rare and far apart, signaling a significant change in the frame of mind both of the media and the Turkish society.

The Press in Action

The press itself participated in collective action on a number of occasions, sometimes instigating such action on its own initiative. The campaigns in the early 1950s for Atatürk statues often made use of the extensive reach of the newspapers to mobilize people. Two incidents are worth mentioning separately.

On 10 January 1961, nine newspapers –*Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Dünya, Milliyet, Tercüman, Vatan, Yeni Sabah, Yeni İstanbul,* and *Hürriyet*– ran a common declaration in protest of the National Union Committee, which had put into force new legislation enabling the committee to exert considerable power over the press:

The new laws concerning the press, announced by the NUC on the second night of the constitutional assembly meetings, have put the press in unprecedented jeopardy at a time of national recuperation... Since our numerous attempts have failed to prevent such a control system, the kind of which does not and cannot exist in any free country, from being established over the Turkish press, we the following

newspapers hereby declare with regret that we will not be published for three days.³⁵³

This protest had an almost immediate effect. The day the declaration was published in these papers, the constitutional assembly passed a highly amended version of the law. In fact, as it stands today, Article 212 serves to protect the rights of press workers, and 10 January is celebrated as Press Workers' Day.

An incident four years later was of a much more international nature. In 1965, The U.S. Senate tampered with the balance of military aid it gave to Greece and Turkey, in favor of Greece. This caused great chagrin in the press, and the perceived threat of Greece rocketed due to the volatile Cyprus issue. In retaliation, *Cumhuriyet* started a campaign on 2 May to collect money for the building of war ships: "The People Will Make It!" ("*Millet Yapar!*") Two days later, the government decided to support the campaign. Youths throughout the country volunteered to work at the docks. On 10 May, the Turkish Navy Association was founded. On 31 May, the Armed Forces contributed 2.5 billion TL to the campaign. Two small ships were eventually built with the funds collected; a US delegation came in November to discuss the military aid issue with the Turkish government and military officials.

The involvement of the press, and in general of the media, with collective action brings up the question of "manipulation". Admittedly, Turkish papers are not, and never have been, known for their objectivity and wealth of information provided. To

³⁵³ "*Kurucular Meclisinin faaliyete geçtiği günün ikinci akşamı MBK tarafından ilan edilen basınla ilgili kanunlar milletçe girilen bu aydınlık devirde basını emsali görülmemiş bir tehlikenin içine atmıştır... Hür dünya cephesi basının hiç birisinde emsali görülmemiş ve görülmeyecek olan bir kontrol sisteminin Türk basınının üzerine kurulmak istenmesi karşısındaki müteaddit müracaatlarımız da neticesiz kaldığından, biz aşağıdaki gazeteler, teessürümüzün ifadesi olmak üzere yarından itibaren üç gün çıkmayacağımızı sayın halk efkârına üzüntü ile bildiririz.*" *Vatan*, 10 January 1961.

varying degrees, the press has always been accused of “serving an agenda”, be it the agenda of a class, or of media moguls. This situation has become worse, if anything, over the decades. The papers of the 1950s and 1960s seem almost naive in their attempt to influence the public opinion. As such, and to the extent that the media can be said to partake in collective political action, today’s media have become much more blatant in their intrusion and manipulation. As for reporting collective action goes, the dictum has not changed: collective actions (as are other forms of dissent) are most extensively covered in newspapers opposed to the government.



CHAPTER 7:

THE LEARNING CURVE: STUDENTS IN ACTION

Collective political action in Turkey, as elsewhere, carries the stamp of student activists. This is to be expected, since it is customarily during college education that individuals tend to question life, society, parents, institutions, and the values attributed to them. In the case of Turkish students, there is the additional factor of guardianship: the regime has been entrusted to their safekeeping (or so the official rhetoric goes), and there was a period of time, which lasted until the 1980s, when they took that rhetoric at face value. Previous chapters have dealt with this phenomenon as it surfaced in the 1950s and 1960s, indicating that the military coup of 1960 aimed to obtain –and succeeded in doing so– the express support of university students in its showdown with the political establishment; that in the aftermath of the coup, Turkish university students became, collectively, one of the most influential political groups, credited with the preservation of Atatürkist reforms; that they lost much of that credit towards the end of the decade when they became more politicized than the political establishment deemed desirable; and that in the 1970s, they became targets of the political and military establishment, having lost their glitter as guardians and having turned into a major threat to be crushed down. This chapter will mainly deal with that short period between 1968 and 1971, when students in Turkey engaged in collective action very much in the manner of students in Europe and the United States, boycotting classes, questioning their lifestyles, demanding better education and more freedom even when they were hard put to articulate that demand in more detail.

These boycotts served a further agenda. Since 1965, when the Turkish Workers' Party was established, a very serious Leftist rhetoric had taken hold in universities. Very shortly afterwards, however, TWP became the scene of intra-left power struggles, and a number of offshoots began to contest the terrain. University assistants were among the leaders of these new socialist movements such as the National Democratic Revolution, employing tactics and modes of action common to other student actions both in Turkey and elsewhere, in the name of completing the emancipation of the country from semi-feudal production relations.³⁵⁴ The ascendancy of the NDR, its taking over the Idea Clubs Federation in 1969 and turning it into Revolutionist Youth was discussed in Chapter Two; the point here is that at a time when very similar forms of collective action were seen all over the globe, and even when the blanket rhetoric of freedom and emancipation was the same everywhere, striking local differences existed. In the hands of politicians, this difference would later be cast as "innocent youths being woefully misled by the propaganda of dark forces."³⁵⁵

The official rhetoric, in condemning students engaged in the modes of collective action described in this study, usually reverted to the allegation that boycotts and occupations were forms of resistance against authority and discipline, and that their transformation into armed struggle was often supported by "external forces", meaning foreign countries aiming at destabilizing Turkey. It is noted that these movements emerged at a time when social and economic development were at their fastest, when the social structure was rapidly changing due to mass movement

³⁵⁴ Nahit Töre, in Cevizoğlu, p. 87.

³⁵⁵ "*Saf heyecanları kötüye kullanılmış gençlik yığınlarının ağır bir yarılgısı ve yenilgisi...*" Çubukçu, p. 13.

from the countryside into cities, and from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy. It is also noted by this rhetoric that the rate of growth dropped in the 1970s for various reasons, the Turkish lira was seriously devalued and purchasing power dropped, that a number of external destabilizing factors were introduced. All of these resulted in the increased discontent of the masses. Their reaction was expressed in more radical forms, and often with tools of terrorism. The stability of the regime, indeed its very existence, came under threat, and all of this began in the form of “innocent” student demands for improved conditions in universities.³⁵⁶

Before the Flowers

It is of interest to note that students emerged on the scene of collective action before 1968. The first note of warning that students should stay away from “extreme” political views came as early as 1952. In a premonitory article, Muvaffak Akbay warned university students of the excesses of ideology; the longing for social justice, when carried to its extreme, would turn into socialism and communism; the longing for the protection of traditional values and patriotism could turn into racism and Turanism. These excesses were harmful and must be avoided.³⁵⁷ The question of the political involvement of the university would occupy the minds of many in the years to come. Another proponent of involvement was Namık Zeki Aral, who, in an article that appeared in *Ulus* in 1957, argued that universities and professors have to be involved with politics and government matters, because their expertise bears directly

³⁵⁶ Müjgan Dericioğlu, in İbrahim Örs, ed., *Abdi İpekçi Semineri: Türkiye’de Terör* (İstanbul: Der, 1980), p. 98.

³⁵⁷ Muvaffak Akbay, “Sağ ve Sol Akımlar Karşısında Üniversite Öğrencileri”, *Ulus*, 3 April 1952.

on the policies of the government. Aral also disagreed with those who preferred professors to refrain from writing in papers instead of writing special reports to the prime minister. He insisted that writing publicly was their duty, because public opinion needed to read such articles.³⁵⁸

The first such instance was noted by *Vatan* on 3 April 1954, when the students of the Technical School under Yıldız University decided to boycott classes. The reason behind this unprecedented action was educational: the new technical school at İTÜ offered a shorter curriculum, and allowed tenth grade graduates to enroll in the program, which apparently offended the Yıldız students' sense of equality. The school administration was at a loss to explain how all 825 of their students participated in the boycott without their knowledge. The story had it that the students gathered in a coffeehouse in Beşiktaş and that each and every one of them swore on the Turkish flag that they would not attend classes until our demands were met.³⁵⁹ The headmaster of the school, Atıf Kansu, conceded that their demands might be legitimate, but found their action "bad" because they had not made any sort of application before to have their complaints heard.

On 3 December 1956, 760 students at Ankara University boycotted classes to protest the Ministry of Education for having removed Turhan Feyzioğlu from his post of dean of the School of Political Science, on the grounds that he was preaching politics in the classroom. The events that followed have been discussed in detail above; suffice it to say here that at this date, university students were already quite

³⁵⁸ Namık Zeki Aral, "Siyaset ve Üniversiteler", *Ulus*, 28 June 1957.

³⁵⁹ "Bayrak üzerine yemin ederim ki arzumuz yerine gelinceye kadar derslere girmeyeceğim." *Vatan*, 3 April 1954.

well-versed in collective action and were already taking a stance against the oppressive methods of the Menderes government.

Schooling problems would continue to constitute the main cause of collective action for university students for much of the 1950s and 1960s. On 11 September 1958, for example, ITU students protested against the hike in the prices of food served in the school cafeteria (an increase of seventy percent) by boycotting classes and hanging placards on walls which said “Enough!”, “We are hungry!”, “No pencil, no notebook, no place to sleep, nothing to eat!”³⁶⁰ On 15 January 1959, students at Erzurum Atatürk University did not attend classes, demanding a change in the regulations. They wanted the number of permissible days of absence to be increased, the lowering of the passing grade from 7/10 to 5/10, and the discontinuation of the practice of expelling students with an average lower than seven. On 24 March, it was İstanbul University School of Forestry that provided the scene for a student boycott, its students declaring they were determined not to enter the classrooms until the newly upgraded status of Forestry School graduates, which was equaled to the status of the School of Forestry graduates, was revoked. The Dean of the School announced that all of them would receive punishment. The president of the Student Society of the School of Forestry went to Ankara to visit the Minister of Agriculture. Promised that the forestry high engineers would retain their privileges, the president declared that forestry students would go back to their classes.

On 23 November 1961, 1,500 students at Yıldız University Technical School announced that they would boycott classes until their demands were met; the school administration asked for more time to work on the changes in the regulations, but the

³⁶⁰ “Yeter!”, “Açız!”, “Gösteriş yerine iş”, “Kırtasiye yok, yatacak yer yok, gıda yok”. *Cumhuriyet*, 12 September 1958.

students were not to be appeased. The boycott continued, and posters were put up that read “We are determined to bring our case to a resolution!”, “Still trying to beguile us?”, “No promises, more action!”³⁶¹

“Flowers Never Bend with the Rainfall”

Getting accepted to universities began to be a serious issue for high school graduates after the mid-1960s, and the inability to do so resulted in ever-increasing distress, so much so that students began demonstrating against what they perceived as systemic injustice. Perhaps the more interesting fact was that they were avidly supported by their friends who did get accepted to various universities. When three hundred high school graduates occupied the dean’s office at İstanbul University on 5 November 1966, students in their freshman, sophomore and junior years gave them support by boycotting classes. The senior students issued a statement, saying they fully supported the action but unfortunately had to attend classes so as not to forfeit their right to graduate at the end of the school year. This event marked the first time police forces had set foot on a university campus since 27 May 1960.

1967 witnessed a variety of student activities. Posters were put up against the CIA; the new Forestry Law was protested; a campaign to “Fight Hunger” was organized; a gynecology seminar was protested on the grounds that it was part of the “imperialistic plan to sterilize the Turkish nation”; the Palestinian people were supported in their fight against Israeli forces.³⁶²

³⁶¹ “*Davamız halledilinceye kadar kararlıyız*”, “*Hala mı uyutma politikası*”, “*Vaat değil icraat bekliyoruz*”. *Vatan*, 25 November 1961.

³⁶² Çubukçu, p. 54.

In retrospect, the events of 1968 have been personified in the image of Deniz Gezmiş. His emergence as a student leader is now seen in a gesture of protest that took place on 7 March 1968. The 20th Annual AIESEC meeting was held in İstanbul in 1968, and Minister Öztürk was booed by a number of students during his speech at İstanbul University School of Science. Deniz Gezmiş was among them. Charged with “insulting a Minister of State on duty and denigrating the moral character of the government”, Gezmiş became the subject of police investigation.³⁶³

Middle East Technical University students were the first to engage in boycotts in 1968. Demanding extensive freedoms for universities, they started their boycott on 5 April and met with increasing pressure to stop by the university administration. They were joined by students at the Ankara University in June, when close to twenty thousand students refused to attend classes. Their demands were again restricted to educational matters, such as examinations and fees. İstanbul Technical University and İstanbul University Law School were next in line. On 11 June, law students occupied the school building. Student leaders told the press that they did not have a political or ideological agenda; nor did they have any connection with the student movements in the West. The president of the Idea Club, Atıl Ant, said, “We want to study law. We want to learn about the world. That’s all.”³⁶⁴

The Turkish National Student Federation supported the boycott, as a result of which the examination regulations were changed at Ankara University School of Language, History and Geography. On the same day, two more schools of the İstanbul University joined the action: Economics and Medicine. İzmir’s students

³⁶³ “*Vazifeli Devlet Bakanına hakaret ve hükümetin manevi şahsiyetini tahkir*”. Ibid., pp. 70-71.

³⁶⁴ “*Biz hukuk öğrenmek istiyoruz. Dünyayı öğrenmek istiyoruz. Mesele budur.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 12 June 1968.

would not be outdone. On 14 July, students there attempted to occupy school buildings but were stopped by other students, members of the RPP and the RPNP; heavy fighting ensued. In Ankara, fifteen students were injured in clashes, and hundreds of students marched to protest the government for its policies concerning education. On 15 July, the president of Ankara University Student Society and the SLHG Boycott Committee, Celal Kargılı, sent an ultimatum to the President, the government, the University Senate, the Parliament and the Senate describing the demands of the students.

Students took their action a step further and occupied the Ministry of Agriculture on 18 June. Female students in Ankara and İzmir occupied the institutes. The Ministry of Education was helpless in the face of events, and the boycotts continued even though the school year was officially announced to have ended. The occupation at the Law School was ended as a result of the promises given by the President. This marked a change in the direction of events: by the end of June, most boycotts in Ankara and İstanbul had ended (also thanks to increased pressure exerted by the government, such as cutting off electricity and water supplies at the Institute for Maturation), with two exceptions. In İstanbul, the Technical Night Institute of Maturation for Girls (*Akşam Kız Teknik Olgunlaşma Enstitüsü*) went on with the boycott. It had started under the leadership of Ayşe Hekimoğlu, who had organized a press conference but had handed in the school keys to the administration afterwards, without the consent of the rest of the boycotting students. The group decided to go on with their action. In Ankara, Philosophy students of Ankara University started a new boycott on 27 June with the following demands:

1. The Philosophy Department should be divided into three departments, viz. Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology;
2. The barrage system should not be used until the senior year;

3. After the department is divided into three separate departments, the two-year examination system must be discarded;
4. New faculty members and assistants should be hired;
5. The number of students sent abroad for Ph.D. degrees should be increased;
6. Freedom of thought must be respected.³⁶⁵

Exams there proved to be a problem. Those students who wanted to take their exams on 1 July clashed with those who occupied the building, and succeeded in taking over classrooms. The philosophy students retreated to their own floor as a result.

Boycotts and occupations were not the monopoly of students. In Ankara, the housewives of the 22-storey Güneray Apartment House barred entrance to their husbands. The placards at the entrance read: “We want retirement pensions!”, “This order must change!”, “Turkish women, wake up and come to your senses!”³⁶⁶

The summer of 1968 passed without further incidents at universities, apart from the major clash in Konya between students protesting American imperialism and fundamentalists. With the beginning of the new school year in October, however, new events sprang up. Students put up a barrier at the entrance of Ankara University’s main entrance; the placards read: “Put an end to book peddling!”, “Give responsibility to students!”, “The right to participate in decision-making!”, “We want to serve science, not money!”³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ “1.Felsefe bölümünün felsefe, sosyoloji, psikoloji olarak üçe ayrılması, 2.Ders statüsüne tabi tutularak, son sınıfa kadar barajın kaldırılması, 3.Felsefe Bölümü müstakil bölümlere ayrıldıktan sonra, iki yıllık sınav sisteminin mutlaka kaldırılması, 4.Öğretim kadrosu yetersizdir. Yeni hocalar ve asistanların alınması, 5.Yabancı ülkelere doktora sayısının artırılması, 6.Düşünce özgürlüğüne saygı gösterilmesi.” *Cumhuriyet*, 28 June 1968.

³⁶⁶ “Tekait maaşı isteriz”, “Bu düzen değişmeli”, “Ey Türk kadını silkin ve kendine gel”. *Cumhuriyet*, 29 June 1968.

³⁶⁷ “Kitap ticaretine son”, “Öğrenciye şahsiyet ve sorumluluk”, “Yönetime katılma hakkı”, “Paraya değil ilme hizmet istiyoruz”. *Cumhuriyet*, 2 October 1968.

The first signs of an increase in tension appeared around this time. Students began to criticize the social police more openly, especially with respect to the cooperation between university administrations and security forces. Ankara University's School of Medicine became the new locus of contention in October. The Board of Directors refused to meet the demands of the students, who in turn began a sit-in on 9 October, supported by sixty percent of the student body according to the spokesperson of the boycott committee. Professors disagreed with the students; the president of the Human Rights and Liberties Association, Refik Korkud, told the press that, "Student boycotts are damaging the higher interests of our state, our democracy, our nation and Turkish youth itself."³⁶⁸ On 25 October, non-boycotters clashed with boycotters, resulting in numerous injuries.

In İstanbul, too, the new school year started off eventfully. During the opening ceremonies at İstanbul University on 1 November, members of the National Turkish Student Union clashed with University Occupation and Boycott Committee (*Üniversite İşgal ve Boykot Komitesi*) members. The latter announced a list of demands for university reform; among these demands were "putting an end to the dictatorial administration of a privileged minority of professors; enabling students to take part in the decision-making processes of their universities; adjusting scholarships to inflation; rapidly solving the dormitory problem; providing students with cheap and good food; providing them with facilities for cultural activities; publishing school books at low cost; and removing anti-democratic practices."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁸ "Öğrenci boykotları devletimizin, demokrasimizin, milletimizin ve bizzat Türk gençliğinin yüksek menfaatlerine büyük ölçüde zarar vermektedir." *Cumhuriyet*, 14 October 1968.

³⁶⁹ "İmtiyazlı profesörler azınlığının diktatöryel yönetimini engellemek... öğrencilerin üniversite yönetimine katılması... bursların hayat pahalılığına uygun oranda arttırılması, öğrenci yurtları sorununun süratle sonuçlandırılması, ucuz ve kaliteli yemek verilmesi, kültürel faaliyetlerin yürütülmesine uygun olanaklar tanınması... ucuz ders kitaplarının basılması... ve antidemokratik maddelerin ve engellerin kaldırılması." Haşmet Atahan, in Hulki Cevizoğlu, p. 24.

In Ankara, students of the School of Political Science began a boycott, which was partly to support high school graduates engaged in protests because they had not been able to enter universities. The SPS boycott ended on 9 November, as a result of the understanding and complying attitude of the Board of Directors. Similarly, the boycott at the Gazi Education Institute ended on 17 November when all the demands of the students were met.

The opening of a new private law school in İstanbul was another cause for protests. Ankara University's Law students began a boycott on 4 December, and were joined by their professors the next day.

1969 started off with violence on campus and more boycotts were quick to follow. On 1 February, 250 university assistants in Ankara decided to boycott classes and examinations because their compensations had not been increased by the Minister of Education, İlhami Ertem. In just two days, the number of assistants participating in the boycott increased to one thousand. In İstanbul, İTÜ students continued their boycott despite the Senate decision to the contrary, and walked into exams to tear up exam papers. Classes were cancelled in İU School of Science because the assistants were relentless. Student boycotts at Ankara University also went on in various schools. The boycott committee of the School of Education's press release explained that the boycott was to "change the lottery-type selection of vocation, the exhausting schooling system, the way new generations are brought up without any master plan, the inequality of educational opportunities, and education in general, which has lost its dynamic aspect at the hands of pedagogically minded pseudo-experts. This change will be brought about by applying a scientific approach to problems, guided by the head teacher and great leader Atatürk."³⁷⁰

³⁷⁰ "Direnış, toto usulü meslek seçimini, tüketici eğitim düzenini, plansız insan yetiştirmeyi, eşit olmayan eğitim imkanlarını ve dinamik bir süreç olma niteliğini pedagoğ zihniyetli sözde

The boycott at Ankara University in April was against the new law concerning national radio and television, and the state of the universities. On 4 April, “commando”s (NMP sympathizers) attacked the School of Language, History, and Geography building and tore down all placards and posters about the boycott. When they were not allowed to march against the new law. METU students occupied one of the buildings of the school of architecture, claiming that radical structural reforms were required in the university. By 8 April, METU was totally under the control of students. They were sitting in the president’s seat, and placard at the entrance of the building read, “This American base has been taken over.”³⁷¹

The decade came to an end with a massive boycott, this time not by students but by teachers. Between 15-19 December 1969, close to 110,000 teachers throughout the country boycotted classes. The Turkish Teachers’ Union had the strong backing of a big number of other unions, even though as state employees the teachers had no legal right to go on strike.³⁷²

On the whole, the collective political action of “the 1968 era” started off as demands related to university conditions, but soon began to fashion itself as a movement against imperialism.³⁷³ Students took to the streets with various political agendas, such as the nationalization of petroleum, land reform, opposition to NATO and the Common Market, and the growth of a national industry.³⁷⁴ In voicing these

uzmanların elinde kaybeden eğitimimizin bilimsel anlayışın ışığı altında başöğretmen ve büyük önder Atatürk’ün işaret ettiği yolda geliştirmek içindir.” Vatan, 23 March 1969.

³⁷¹ “Bu Amerikan üssü ele geçirilmiştir.” *Vatan*, 9 April 1969.

³⁷² Yılmaz, p. 138.

³⁷³ Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, *Öğrenci Ayaklanmaları* (Ankara: Bilgi, 1974), pp. 52-53. Kışlalı believes that one of the reasons why student movements aimed to change the universities was that universities were unable to meet the demands of the students; another reason was the high level of unemployment among university graduates.

³⁷⁴ Haşmet Atahan, in Cevizoğlu, p. 28.

demands they began to form coalitions with other segments of the population such as workers and peasants; they took part in strikes, and engaged in land occupations. “National Salvation” (*Milli Kurtuluş*) was the buzz-word, echoing the rhetoric of the war of independence. As such, the student actions could be seen as harking back to the power of the “primary symbol”, Atatürk. Nonetheless, there was an element in these actions that went beyond both anti-imperialism and Atatürkism, and that was the clear socialist content.³⁷⁵ Until severely punished by the coup of 12 March, the clamant Turkish Left became seriously and multifariously organized to affect radical change. As İsmet Özel pointed out, this socialist content was perhaps what set the Turkish 1968 apart from that of Europe.³⁷⁶

In the words of Ertuğrul Kürkçü, the ‘68 movement in Turkey “carries the signs of Western Europe in its theorization, its discovery of new problematics and their solutions. But as far as it is a determination to engage in real emancipative struggle, and in its desire to obtain a permanent victory... it has incorporated the revolutionist and socialist movements of Latin America and Palestine.”³⁷⁷ The significance of the student movement lay, in his opinion, in its attempt to reach out to workers and peasants, both of which were at their strongest at the time.³⁷⁸ Atıl Ant, one of the prominent activists in Ankara during the period, describes the specificity of the 1968 student movements in Turkey as follows: “The Turkish ‘68 was influenced by the ‘68 in the world, but there were differences. Our Generation ‘68

³⁷⁵ Kışlalı, p. 65. Kışlalı argues that students wanted to change the social order because that was at the root of the problems concerning universities.

³⁷⁶ İsmet Özel, in Cevizoğlu, p. 59.

³⁷⁷ “Teorizasyon... yeni problemlerin keşfi ve çözümlenmesibakımından, Batı Avrupa’nın izlerini taşır. Ama gerçek bir kurtuluş mücadelesine girişme kararlılığı... kalıcı başarılar elde etme azmi açısından da... Filistin’in... Latin Amerika’nın devrimci ve sosyalist hareketinin alışımını kendine doğru emdi.” Ertuğrul Kürkçü, in Çubukçu,, p. 60.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

was a continuation of the 27 May generation, which had overthrown a government. The generation after them was also a highly respected generation. The 1961 Constitution brought an extensive democracy [sic]... but the universities remained despotic... The 68 movement was brought on by the milieu of democracy and wanted the same democracy within universities. Then it went on to demand a more advanced democracy in general under the influence of the 68 in the world.³⁷⁹ One major difference between the two generations was that the first was much more interested in world-economic issues, whereas the latter was fighting predominantly for classic freedoms.³⁸⁰ Nonetheless, they were much impressed by the example of 27 May; in their struggle to change the regime, many activists of the 1968 generation opted for a revolution ushered in by the military – it would be much swifter and more decisive than a democratic revolution. Many of these activists would later acknowledge the naiveté of this view.³⁸¹

Even though student protests in Turkey coincided with those in Europe and elsewhere, and even though they started off with similar demands and made use of similar forms of collective action, the Turkish 1968 differed from the European 1968 in important ways. In the Turkish experience, the rhetoric of the students rapidly became totalizing, in the sense that changing university conditions was no longer

³⁷⁹ “Türkiye’deki 68, dünyadaki 68’den etkilendi. Ama dünyadaki 68’le bizimki arasında farklar vardı. Bizim 68’liler 27 Mayıs kuşağının devamıydı. Onlar hükümet devirmiş bir kuşaktılar. Ve onların devamı olan sonraki kuşak da itibarlı, sözü dinlenir bir kuşaktı. 61 Anayasası’nın getirdiği geniş demokrasi, üniversite gençliğini çok etkilemişti... ama ne var ki... üniversitenin içine girememişti... Despot yönetimler vardı üniversitede... Bu yüzden 68, demokrasi ortamının getirdiği, üniversite içinde de demokrasi isteyen bir hareketti. Ayrıca dünyadaki 68’den etkilenecek, genel olarak daha ileri demokrasi isteyen bir hadise haline geldi.” Atıl Ant, in Alev Er, *Bir Uzun Yürüyüşü Altmışsekiz*, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: Gendaş, 1998), p. 23.

³⁸⁰ Raif Ertem, in Er, p. 52.

³⁸¹ Mustafa Gürkan, in Er, p. 94.

enough – the whole regime had to change. In this quest, the student events of the late 1960s –together with some of the events of the 1970s- contributed significantly to setting the terms of social criticism. Even though the rhetoric consisted at times of sweeping generalizations and shallow analyses, it nevertheless had a retrospectively refreshing edge to it – people discussed issues such as social justice, independence, dependency, imperialism, ownership of the means of production, and the transfer of power to workers very seriously, indeed earnestly. A sense of urgency was coupled with a sense of potency.



CHAPTER 8:

NECROPOLITICS: VIOLENT POLITICAL ACTION

The addition of the use of violence as an extension to the usual array of legitimate “tools” of collective action is, at best, contestable. While many students of democracy and questions of regime have almost zero-tolerance for any form of violence, and strongly denounce its use and its inclusion in discussions of collective action as an expression of the democratic principle, there are others, like Charles Tilly, who construe “contentious action” on two axes of violence versus organization and do not flinch at regarding all possible extremes in this schema as types of collective action similar to petitioning or marching.

Violence in collective action is, despite the taxonomical controversy, very common, if only as a response to official suppressive action in face of more peaceful versions of collective action. It is often difficult to pinpoint who starts it all, the police or the demonstrators, but activists throughout the world are usually briefed by fellow activists (and sometimes even the police) on what to do in the case when the demonstration turns violent.

In discussing the use of violence as a form of political action, it is imperative to make certain distinctions, and it is worthwhile here to follow the arguments put forth by Charles Tilly in his latest study of contentious politics, *The Politics of Collective Violence*. One common distinction pertains to the legitimacy of violence, and introduces another distinction between “force” and violence³⁸².

³⁸² Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University, 2003), p. 27.

The classical definition of the state depends on the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a specified and fixed region, but analytically this is a difficult distinction to tender. Force used by the state is a contested terrain. In almost all the polities in the world, the right amount of force available to police forces has been subject to debate. Other forms of state violence may involve certain secret operations by governmental agents or some segments of states³⁸³. In some cases, state forces figure on the receiving end of violence, where rebels or insurgents levy heavy casualties on them³⁸⁴. In the international arena, one would have to include other governments as perpetrators of violence as well. Tilly also introduces the terms “political entrepreneurs” and “specialists in violence”³⁸⁵; the former connect previously unconnected segments of the polity and specialize in “activation, connection, coordination, and representation”, whereas the latter may work within or outside the state, controlling “means of inflicting damage on persons or objects.”³⁸⁶ It is important to note that specialists in violence do not only serve other, larger entities and causes, but “regularly engage in exploitation and opportunity hoarding, sometimes at the expense of their own nominal employers or constituencies.”³⁸⁷

In the Turkish experience of violent political action, the use of violence started out as directed to objects rather than persons. Buildings and vehicles came under attack— offices were stoned, cars were put on fire. The transition to targeting persons was swift, and occurred as a result of groups of demonstrators, especially

³⁸³ Ibid., p.28.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p.29.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., p.34.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 35.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 40.

students, being handled roughly by security forces, especially the police. By the end of the 1960s, leftist political theorists and student groups had already produced a strain of revolutionist approach to politics called “national democratic revolution”, which ironically was not democratic at all but involved the enlistment of the military as the forceful procurer of a new order. In response, the NMP organized cells of youths called “*ülküçüs*” as specialists in violence, expressly for the purpose of destroying communist plots to overthrow the regime. Political entrepreneurs had hooked up political activists with specialists in violence, whose identity and ultimate interest and gain remain one of the most hotly debated issues in modern Turkey.

As the 1970s progressed, these non-governmental specialists gained the upper hand, to the detriment of governmental specialists, which marked the demise of the political sphere of the second republic. Violent collective action eventually left no room for other forms, and begot only more of itself.

Turkish politics have often been carried on in the streets, at least partially, since the very beginning of the era under consideration. Violence has not been uncommon, either, even though its epitome has been the 1970s. One of the most outrageous examples of this were, of course, the incidents on 6-7 September, which were described in Chapter Two. Some stores and houses belonging to Greek citizens in Beyoğlu, Pangaltı, Kurtuluş, Yüksek Kaldırım, Karaköy’s Bank District, Eminönü, Sirkeci and Kumkapı were attacked and looted. Some places were set on fire. The upheavals spread uncontrollably throughout the city after 11 p.m.. One group uprooted the electricity poles of the railway between Sirkeci and Bakırköy and used these to attack stores and houses in Yeşilköy and Bakırköy. Military troops were brought in from neighboring İzmit, and martial law was declared, banning all

long distance telephone calls. In İzmir, the Greek Consulate, the Greek Orthodox Church, and boats belonging to Greeks were set on fire.

This “uprising”, serious as it was, nonetheless constituted an exception for the use of violent means in Turkish politics, aiming, as it did, at an ethnic group and staged by a heterogeneous multitude. The 1960s witnessed violent action mostly by students, who now, in the aftermath of the military coup, began to take much more seriously the rightful guardianship of the regime, and thus found it increasingly easy to express their views stridently. News items from abroad found their way into the papers, confirming the use of violence as a general trend. On 26 March 1960, for example, six hundred students in Mexico reportedly attacked the Ministry of Education, throwing bottles and stones at the windows. The police used tear gas on the students, who in turn marched downtown to stone the headquarters of the party in power. Four hundred students were arrested as a result.

In the Fall of 1961, after the Supreme Court announced its verdicts in the Yassıada hearings, the Justice Party and its supporters came under heavy attack, and they usually reacted in kind. On 19 October, for example, young supporters of the JP were attacked in front of the party building in İstanbul. On 30 October, a group of JP supporters in Serik attacked the local youths and the gendarme, shouting, “Down with the RPP!” and “Long live the JP!”³⁸⁸ Additional security forces had to be brought in from Antalya.

University students in Ankara and İstanbul became agitated in November. The government responded to increased activity on campus by setting up “order offices” (*nizam memurluğu*) in universities, with the purpose of stopping non-students from entering the campus. In response, high school graduates who couldn't

³⁸⁸ “Kahrolsun CHP!” “Yaşasın AP!” *Vatan*, 31 October 1961.

enroll in universities engaged in further contestation by halting buses in Taksim and writing “Science or death!” and “We want to study!”³⁸⁹ on them. By the end of the month, these students had begun a hunger strike. In Ankara alone, one hundred students set up camp in Kızılay on 28 November, sleeping in the square and catching cold.

On 18 February 1962, the offices of a local newspaper came under attack and were burnt down by “revolutionist youths” (read RPP supporters) on account that the paper had overtly praised the past DP era and its politicians.

Another example of ethnic strife took place in Mardin on 7 May, at the stadium, during the football game between Mardin and visiting Diyarbakır. When the Mardin fans attacked the Diyarbakır fans, the gendarme intervened by throwing rocks, injuring women and children. The home-team fans, together with a large number of other locals, chased the gendarme to their barracks and marched on to the governor’s office with torches and flags, singing “Is this the way it ought to be?/ Can the army shoot its people?” and demanding that the officer who shouted “Shoot the Arabs!” at the stadium be handed to them. The mob then marched to the barracks shouting, “We are not Arabs!”³⁹⁰ breaking windows, injuring 180, of which thirty were in serious condition.

A minor attempt at demonstrating against the new regime in 1962 led to a mass demonstration of almost hysteric proportions. On the night of 2 October, a small group of ten people gathered in the Kızılay Square in Ankara in order to march silently, though without permission, and carry placards that criticized the new regime: “An open regime was promised, but the generals meet secretly!”, “You said

³⁸⁹ “*Ya ilim ya ölüm!*”, “*Okumak istiyoruz!*”, “*Arapları vurun!*”, “*Biz Arap değiliz!*” *Vatan*, 7 November 1961.

³⁹⁰ “*Olur mu böyle olur mu?/ Ordu milleti vurur mu?*” *Cumhuriyet*, 8 May 1962.

freedom, where is it?”, “İsmet Paşa, resign!”, “You make plans but don’t execute them!”³⁹¹ Thousands of people gathered in a matter of hours and staged a demonstration against the initial demonstrators, throwing rocks at the *Tercüman* building, attacking the JP headquarters and shouted slogans in favor of İsmet İnönü. The crowd then gathered around the smaller group and attempted to beat them. The police could not intervene, but the group of ten managed to escape and take refuge in a newspaper kiosk. The governor and the head of the police department arrived at the scene soon thereafter, but the crowd threatened them, too, and only additional military units, headed by senior officers, saved the group from being lynched. The crowd was not to be appeased – they marched to the building of the daily *Yeni İstanbul* and demanded that the Turkish flag be raised. When it was not, they attacked the building and inflicted serious damage. Next in line was the *Cumhuriyet* building, but this time for cheers.

The next two days witnessed similar protest demonstrations in Ankara. The Justice party came under attack because it was believed to be supporting the initial anti-regime demonstration and the underlying sentiments. Right-wing papers continued to receive threats. On 4 October, the governor asked the demonstrators to disperse, on the account that the NATO chief of general staff was there. The crowd refused, saying “The youth in NATO countries do the same thing, it’s nothing to be ashamed of.”³⁹²

The Cyprus issue, as discussed in previous chapters, offered one of the main causes of collective political action, leading to overt violence at times of acute

³⁹¹ “Açık rejim dediniz, kumandanlar gizli görüşüyor”, “Hürriyet dediniz, nerde hürriyet?”, “İsmet Paşa istifa”, “Plam yapıyorsunuz, tatbik etmiyorsunuz”. *Cumhuriyet*, 3 October 1962.

³⁹² “NATO ülkelerindeki gençler de aynı şeyi yapıyor, yaptığımız ayıp değil.” *Cumhuriyet*, 5 October 1962.

aggravation. During the second half of 1964, for example, when the United States was roundly criticized for its Cyprus policy, demonstrators occasionally found it difficult to restrain themselves and attacked people, vehicles, and buildings. In İzmir, youths attacked the American, Russian and Egyptian stands at the İzmir Fair on 29 August, after midnight. Six people were wounded, one hundred were arrested. Meanwhile in Ankara, a big crowd gathered in front of the American Embassy and clashed with military troops, later attacking the Greek embassy.

Religious sentiments also led to violent action. On 16 January 1965, a group of zealots in the Karakurt village of Manisa attacked the village teachers after listening to the sermon of a *vaiz* (preacher) who was known to be a *Nurcu*. The gendarme stopped them, but the villagers did not let anyone from the Ministry of Education enter the village. They circulated a petition, complaining about the teachers, and beat up those who refused to sign it. The teachers themselves were badly beaten, and the Ministry was forced to assign them to other villages. On 18 January, Minister of State Omay confirmed that the cause of the incident was indeed the work of *Nurcus*. The people of Karakurt apologized.

Right- and left-wing youths began to clash on the streets of various cities around this time. On 7 June 1965, those selling the socialist *Dönüşüm* (Transformation) and those selling the conservative *Kuvayi Milliye* (Nationalist Forces) first verbally abused each other in Kızılay, Ankara, and then took to fist-fighting. thirteen people were taken into custody, among whom were Cevdet Sezer, Ataol Behramoğlu, Alper Aktan, Tuncay Bökesoy, Hüseyin Ergün, Erdal Türkkan, İrfan Gelen, Uğur Mumcu, Veli Kasımoğlu, and Aktan Ataoğlu. Fights continued on the next day between the two groups, and the TNSF found it necessary to announce

that “The members of both groups that have attacked each other work for political parties; they do not represent university students, nor do they derive their power from them.”³⁹³

This declaration underlines one of the important issues pertaining to the involvement of university students in collective political action: agency. Stated simply, the agency problem questions the level of responsibility of an actor for his action. The statement that an action has been undertaken by certain students who are members of a political party implies that these actors were not autonomous in their decisions but were influenced –or even steered- by party executives. Party membership is used as a trump card to annul the legitimacy of any political action; conversely, only those students who are not members of any political party can be regarded as legitimate, autonomous actors. This of course is an overstatement of the effect of ideology on party members; even if one assumes party indoctrination to be very powerful (which was probably true for many individuals of the time), this still does not necessarily render collective action by party members less legitimate. Many organizations can and often do wield as strong an influence on their own members. Nonetheless, this line of argument, i.e. attempting to discount collective action on the basis of political party affiliation would become very popular in the 1970s, and eventually constitute the basis of the “institutionalized politics” paranoia of the regime after 1980.

As 1968 approached, student protests throughout the world became increasingly common, which made it easier for some of them to take on a more radical form. In Turkey, a similar trend could be observed. 1967 saw a larger number

³⁹³ “*Hürriyet Meydanında birbirine en acı ve çirkin isnatlarla hücum eden her iki grup da bazı siyasi partilerin bünyesinde çalışan kişilerdir. Yüksek öğrenim gençliğini temsil etmedikleri gibi, güçlerini de ondan almamaktadırlar.*” *Cumhuriyet*, 10 June 1965.

of violent action cases than 1966, and 1968 surpassed 1967. In January 1967, members of the NTSU clashed with members of the TNSF, wrecking the dormitories at İTÜ. Two big demonstrations were held in Taksim and Dolmabahçe during the next few days, and on 19 January members of the TNSF clashed with the police over the ownership of the federation building; the building was handed over to Associate Professor Nevzat Yalçıntaş who acted as sequestrator. The next day, one hundred fifty students clashed with the police in front of the building; on 21 January, another demonstration was held in Ankara, where fourteen people were taken into custody and five TNSF administrators were arrested.

The USS Missouri has had a special place in recent Turkish history. Each of its visits has solicited considerable reaction since the 1960s, some of which have already been discussed. These reactions have occasionally turned violent, as they did in 1968, when students attacked the American marines in Gümüşsuyu, throwing rocks and paint, and clashing with the police.

The new academic year started in the Fall of 1968 with similar incidents in İstanbul. During the inauguration ceremonies, members of the NTSU clashed with members of the University Occupation and Boycott Committee on 1 November, both sides taking heavy blows. The incidents continued through the month, in the form of boycotts and sit-ins. 1969 started off with an attack, bigger perhaps in its repercussions: on 6 January, American Ambassador Commer visited METU. While he was there, students overturned his car and put the vehicle on fire, protesting American imperialism. Eighteen students were held responsible for the organization and execution of the attack, but the METU student body refused to hand them over to the authorities, claiming that inviting Commer to the campus had been blatant provocation. A statement was issued, signed by five hundred students, asserting that

the ones who put the car on fire were not only the eighteen named, but the whole student body.³⁹⁴ A large group of students staged a demonstration, shouting, “Even if they come with tanks and cannons, the land of Turks will remain independent!” and “Go Home Commer, Go Home Kurdaş!”³⁹⁵

Meanwhile, security forces determined that seven of the students sought for the attack were hiding in the METU dormitory. On 9 January, the police started to search for these seven students in their home towns. METU was closed down until 10 February, which was strongly protested by the students, who called on Kurdaş to resign his post as rector of the university. On 11 January, METU was re-opened by the decision of the Council of State. Nine student bodies issued a stern statement on 23 January, criticizing “commando” attacks and American imperialism vis-à-vis Turkey. On the next day, Commer was recalled by U.S. President Nixon, and except for five hundred students who went on with the boycott, the majority of the students returned to their classes.

When the Sixth Fleet arrived in İstanbul on 10 February, it was met with the usual array of protests and demonstrations in Dolmabahçe, but also in İzmir, Ankara, Adana and Bursa. In Ankara, a group of students, members of the Federation of Idea Clubs burned the American flag in front of the Atatürk statue in Zafer Square. On 12 February, the police started a student hunt in Ankara, İzmir and Bursa; the number of detained students was over fifty. On the next day, nine students who had gone on a hunger strike in İzmir’s Konak Square were arrested, but they refused to speak to the police. On 14 February, heavy clashes ensued in Ankara in which the police severely beat students who had gathered around the Victory Monument. In Adana, the

³⁹⁴ *Vatan*, 9 January 1969.

³⁹⁵ “*Tankları ile topları ile gelseler dahi, bağımsız olacak Türk ülkesi.*” Ibid.

Revolutionist Construction Workers' Union's (*Devrimci İnşaat İşçileri Sendikası*) southern branch organized a demonstration on 16 February, but as its members got ready to burn the American flag they were attacked by the people and chased down the streets. The incidents reached a climax on 16-17 February when demonstrators in Taksim, İstanbul, were injured by security forces and went into a coma. Students who had gathered to protest the arrival of the 6th Fleet were attacked by a group of Islamists who had performed the “*cihad namazı*” (jihad prayer) and were armed with guns, knives, rocks and sticks. The government was called on to resign, and a motion of interpellation was submitted for the Minister of Interior, Faruk Sükan.

When İstanbul University came under police control in June 1969, violence rapidly escalated. On 9 June, students who boycotting exams clashed with the police, attacking them with rocks. On the next day, the students were joined by faculty members, and the police by soldiers. One student was shot dead with four bullets. In Ankara, the police attacked demonstrating students by shouting “Allah Allah!”; the students responded by throwing Molotov cocktails at them. Buildings that belonged to Americans also came under attack, and Americans escaped being lynched with the help of soldiers.

In İzmir, a similar restlessness was evident among university students. On 20 June 1969, students of Ege University engaged in armed clashes, leaving fifteen wounded. They were dispersed by the joint efforts of the police and soldiers. On 8 July, 15 thousand people in Kayseri gathered at night to protest the congress of Turkish Teachers' Union (*Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası*). Various buildings, among them the Alemdar Theater where the congress was held, the city headquarters of Turkish Workers' Party, the Kayseri branch of the Union, and bookstores came

under attack. One “bar-girl”³⁹⁶ was dragged through the streets naked. Police and soldiers were brought in from neighboring provinces to protect the teachers attending the congress, which itself was postponed indefinitely by the governor. On 12 July, the TTU wanted to hold a silent march in İzmit, but the governor of the province did not give permission.

During these tense times, even the security forces came under attack. In Pehlivanköy, Kırklareli, new conscripts were being sent off to the military on 28 July in the customary fashion, with drums and *zurnas*, when the police attempted to interrupt the celebrations on the grounds that they had had complaints. A mob immediately assembled to lynch them; the policemen barely escaped, and six were injured.

On the same day, in Antalya, the Revolutionist Idea Club had issued a statement criticizing the US, in response to which the Association for Fighting Communism (*Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*) issued a counter-statement on 1 August. That night, a big crowd went to the Paşa mosque for evening prayers; leaflets were handed out, calls for *ihad* were delivered, and after the prayers the congregation joined the 3,000 people gathered in Cumhuriyet Square, shouting slogans, carrying guns – even one of the imams was found to be armed. The police and the gendarme took extraordinary security measures. The crowd finally dispersed around two a.m..

When the Sixth Fleet visited İzmir in December, it was met with heavy protests on the brink of vandalism, not only in İzmir, but in İstanbul and Ankara as well. The Federation of Social Democracy Associations organized a demonstration in Tandoğan, Ankara, where the crowd attacked the Mobil gas station and set its flag on

³⁹⁶ Hostess working in a *gazzino* (Turkish bar with live music).

fire. The protest demonstrations in İzmir were attended by a big number of students coming in from other parts of the country; among them were socialists, social democrats and *ülküciüs*.³⁹⁷

1970 started off with a conflict between students and the mayor of Ankara. The municipal administration cancelled the bus passes of students having any kind of employment, which caused ire among the students, who, on 2 January, halted buses on the streets, brought out the passengers, and blocked public transportation for nearly two hours. Some buses were taken to the campus of the School of Political Sciences, and the crowd shouted slogans against the mayor. A similar protest was staged on 5 January. This time the police and the students clashed; some were injured when the police entered the dormitories in Gazi Education Institute. On the next day the clashes became bloodier, with seventeen injured as a result of the clashes in front of the School of Agriculture.

The 1970s were full of even more violent clashes, and the decade has gone down in Turkish history as the years of terrorism and anarchy. The main antagonists were para-military groups on the extreme right and left, and these often worked with sympathizing student groups. The extreme Islamists also found a place for themselves in this panoply. On 18 March 1970, four hundred theology students attacked Ankara University's higher school of education; four students were wounded by gunshots, while the police stood by. The "commando"s of the NMP, led by Alparslan Türkeş, also participated in the fight that took place in the square. The school was closed for an indefinite period, and a large number of other schools went on boycott.

³⁹⁷ Er, p. 35.

Another clash between leftist and rightist student groups took place in İstanbul University on 6 April. About two hundred rightist students went to the president to complain about revolutionist students who did not let them into classrooms. When they saw a big group of leftists approaching, they jumped out of the windows and engaged them in fighting. The social police arrived at the scene, but could not do much. Amidst shouts of “Allahüekber!”, “Freemason president!” and “Death to communists!”,³⁹⁸ seven people were wounded, three of them students. The minister of interior ordered the school to be closed down until 15 April, and offered a monetary prize to the policeman to catch the instigators of the incidents. Thirty-nine institutions came under investigation, and seven students were arrested. The minister announced that he was determined to set up a body of university police. In İTÜ, eight students went on hunger strike on 10 April. On 13 April, twelve “commando”s attacked Ankara University’s School of Medicine, and killed a military doctor.

The Turkish Revolutionist Youth Federation had organized a Medicine Week, demanding an end to “medical exploitation.” Posters were hung at the entrance of the Morphology Building, and a press conference was held. Right after the conference was over, rightist students in military outfits came in trucks and opened fire on the crowd. After the incident, a protest march was organized – students walked to the officer’s club and shouted, “We want the murderers!”, “The army and the youth, hand in hand!”³⁹⁹ A smaller group went to Sıhhiye and broke down the plate glass windows of the Pan-American Company. On the next day, the Turco-American Bank came under attack, with sporadic clashes.

³⁹⁸ “*Mason Başkan!*”, “*Komünistlere ölüm!*” *Tercüman*, 7 April 1970.

³⁹⁹ “*Katilleri isteriz!*”, “*Ordu gençlik elele!*” *Cumhuriyet*, 13 April 1970.

In İzmir, on 21 April, two groups clashed, leaving one university student injured and some vehicles belonging to Americans damaged. On the next day, in Erzurum, “commando”s attacked the School of Medicine, injuring five, and beating up the dean. The attackers were upset about the university reform bill and the placards in the school concerning Cyprus Week. On 23 April, more incidents took place in İstanbul, Kayseri, and Karaman. Students clashed with the police, some teachers were beaten up, a placard that read “Turkish women are revolutionists!” was destroyed.⁴⁰⁰

The tendency of whole populations to take part in uprisings and riots became most evident in the killing of the mayor of Söke, a JP member. Ömer Koyuncuoğlu was killed on 7 May by a watchman called Osman Çimen. The police then took him away in a gendarmerie uniform. People took to the streets, and the mob attacked the police station, along with the houses of the judge and the police chief. Army troops had to be brought in. The riots continued the next day, and all shops, theaters and restaurants remained closed.

On 20 May 1970, a gunfight in the Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences heavily wounded one student named Hamdi Gür. The school was duly occupied by students, until 29 May, when army troops evacuated the campus. Students demanded soldiers to protect the campus by cordoning it off, and they clashed with civilians during protest demonstrations.

Events took on such violent proportions that the “social police” was often left helpless in the face of the violence, and they often had to refrain from intervening for fear for their own lives. On 30 May, they finally went on strike in İstanbul to protest the new draft law concerning state employees. For the same reason, the wives of

⁴⁰⁰ “*Türk kadını devrimcidir!*” *Cumhuriyet*, 24 April 1970.

noncommissioned officers clashed with the police in İzmir, where children and pregnant women were kicked, and some police officers were seen to cry. As life-threatening violence escalated, demonstrations and protests against this extreme form of collective action, which often claimed random victims, also increased. On 1 June, for example, tens of thousands of students and faculty members in Ankara participated in the Constitution March, declaring their allegiance to the 1961 Constitution. The march had been organized by Ankara University in the aftermath of the Mustafa Kuseyri killing (see “Funerals”, below). The huge group walked from the university to Kurtuluş Square, Kızılay, Maltepe, Tandoğan, and finally stopped at the Anıtkabir, where vows were taken to protect the “revolution.” At that point, the members of the Social Democracy Association split from the crowd. Only the faculty members were let in to the mausoleum, and following a two minutes’ silence they joined the others waiting outside. The national anthem was sung.

Violent means were employed for matters not strictly political as well, and involved massive numbers. On 4 June, a female bank employee was attacked on her way back from lunch break by three hundred people who tried to lynch her because she was wearing a mini-skirt. The local paper later reported that she was from İzmir, having come to the Manisa branch of the bank on a temporary assignment. The mob soon numbered ten thousand, and only the gendarme could stop them from attacking the bank. At night the incidents continued. Youths with long hair were attacked with scissors and knives and their hair was cut; crowds sang religious songs and shouted “*Allahüekber!*” One group attacked the local golf club.

The second half of June witnessed state employees and workers in İstanbul and İzmit marching in the thousands, protesting the government. They were later joined by students, teachers, and the social police.

1971 witnessed the legendary incident of violent political action. In January, the country as a whole became immersed in an unprecedented chain of events, which started off with a seemingly ordinary bank robbery. On 12 January, the Emek, Ankara, branch of İş Bank was robbed by four people. The police suspected them to be METU students who were also members of the Revolutionist Youth group. Known as *Dev-Genç*, this group had the proclaimed aim of “having fought against imperialism in the sixties, we fight against fascism in the seventies.”⁴⁰¹ All the METU dormitories were swiftly closed down and the whole campus was searched for the suspects. The next day the search was extended to universities in İstanbul. The identity of two of the suspects was determined, and the car they used was identified. On 16 January, the Ministry of the Interior officially announced that Deniz Gezmiş, a student of İstanbul University Law School, and Yusuf Arslan, a METU student, were involved in the robbery. Gezmiş had spent two of the last three years in prison. He had been on the police black list since February 1968, when he had booed minister Seyfi Öztürk during an international student conference in İstanbul University, and had been arrested after participating in protest demonstrations against American Ambassador Commer in November 1968. He had been arrested once again after the occupation of the president’s office in İstanbul University in September 1969.

University students lent their support to the fugitives. In İstanbul, İTÜ students clashed with the police in Maçka. After they held a forum to debate what to do about Deniz Gezmiş, a large group marched to Gümüşsuyu and threw rocks at the Philips and Türk-İş buildings. twelve students were taken into custody. At METU,

⁴⁰¹ “*Altmışlarda emperyalizmle savaşıyorduk, yetmişlerde faşizmle savaşıyoruz.*” Tayfun Koç, ed., *Devrimci Gençlik – Seçme Yazılar* (İstanbul: Okyanus, 1995), p. 32.

students held another forum and decided to boycott classes until the gendarme left the campus. As the academic council met to discuss the boycott decision, bombs went off, and the university was indefinitely closed down.

On 19 January, one of the alleged fugitives, İrfan Uçar, released a statement, saying he and Gezmiş were not the ones who had robbed the bank. He then succeeded in escaping from the gendarme at METU for a second time. The fourth suspect was a young woman named Olca Altınay. On 24 January, students of Ankara University's School of Political Science and Law School clashed in the streets. Twent-two were wounded and the dean asked for President Sunay's help. Two days later, "commando"s attempted to attack İstanbul University's Law School, and one student was wounded by a gun shot.

The Deniz Gezmiş incident continued into February. On the 13th, the Küçükesat, Ankara, branch of Ziraat Bank was robbed, and the robbers once again managed to escape. The police said they had identified Deniz Gezmiş, İrfan Uçar, and Sinan Cemgil. On the next day, the police discovered that an American sergeant named Finley had been kidnapped in Ankara and taken from the American military base in Balgat to an unidentified location at 3:30 a.m.. He was found by the police in a car. Protests, clashes and dormitory raids continued in the following days, and various universities and schools were closed down in İstanbul and Ankara.

The *coup de grace* came on 4 March. The Turkish People's Salvation Army (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu*) sent a press release to the Anatolian Agency and other news agencies, stating that they had kidnapped four American soldiers in Gölbaşı, and asking for a \$400,000 ransom. They also demanded the release of all the revolutionists under custody. The next day METU was turned into a battlefield.

Security forces raided the campus at 4 a.m., acting on circumstantial evidence that the kidnappers were in the METU dormitory. One student was killed during the clashes, one gendarme ended up in coma, thirty-two were injured. On 6 March, two thousand students were interrogated, but the whereabouts of the four American soldiers could not be determined. Three days later, on 9 March, they were found in an apartment on Güvenlik Street – Deniz Gezmiş and his accomplices had evidently left the place in a great hurry. The police searched Ankara in extraordinary detail. At METU, the Academic Council was abrogated, and its president, Erdal İnönü, resigned. Deniz Gezmiş and Yusuf Arslan were caught in Şarkışla, Kayseri, on 16 March, four days after the 12 March memorandum delivered by the military to the government, which led to the resignation of Süleyman Demirel.

Clashes continued and even escalated throughout the 1970s, to such a degree that bloodshed and casualties became a staple of daily life, averaging about twenty deaths per day by the end of the decade. The rift between groups on the far left and far right became deeply entrenched, reflecting the calcified political climate where political leaders treated each other literally as enemies. As far as “collective political action” repertoire is concerned, these years offered little, if any, variation on the theme of the use of violence for political means. Violence became as senseless as politics itself.

Some milestones must nevertheless be mentioned. The meeting organized by Revolutionist Workers’ Unions Confederation (RWUC) in Taksim on 1 May 1977 turned into a bloodbath, with thirty-seven dead and hundreds wounded. More than half a million people had gathered in Taksim; folk dances had been performed, plays had been staged, poems had been recited; hundreds of thousands of people had shouted anti-fascist, anti-imperialist slogans. The RWUC had determined what these

slogans would be and what the placards would read days before the meeting. Around 7 p.m., just as RWUC president Kemal Türkler was about to finish his speech, guns were fired. This led to panic, and most of the people who died were trampled to death. Even though the authorities claimed this to be an intra-left fight and blamed the RWUC for it, some police officers made declarations in later years, corroborated by the transcriptions of radio messages, to the effect that this might have been an organized provocation.⁴⁰²

On 16 March 1978, seven students were killed in a bomb attack at İstanbul University. After the blast, several people opened fire on the students, wounding over one hundred of them. Five *ülkücüs*, among them Mehmet Gül, Orhan Çakıroğlu, and Kazım Ayvazoğlu, were acquitted after a long series of trials, due to insufficient evidence. When the case was reopened in 1988, a complex web of relations surfaced, involving various state authorities, but no one was convicted.

The last days of 1978 were a nightmare: between 22-26 December, one hundred and five people died in Kahramanmaraş as a result of clashes, and 176 were wounded. Most of those who died were Alawis.⁴⁰³ The incidents were sparked off by rumors that Alawi communists had bombed a movie theater on the night of 19 December. In the following days a manhunt ensued, leaving security forces helpless and necessitating troops to be brought in from Bolu, Nevşehir, and Diyarbakır. Even martial law could not completely stop the attacks against the Alawi neighborhoods. Two hundred ten houses and seventy stores were burnt down in the process. In the aftermath, martial law was declared in thirteen provinces; 803 people were brought

⁴⁰² *Cumhuriyetin 75 Yılı* (İstanbul: YKY, 1998), p.734.

⁴⁰³ A sect of Shi'ite Muslims living mainly in Turkey and Syria.

to trial; 330 of them were tried for crimes punishable by capital sentence; thirteen people were sentenced to death in 1988.

One further aspect of necropolitics that needs to be mentioned is the inclusion of funerals in the repertoire.

Funerals

A sadly natural outcome of violent action is funerals, which lend themselves to other forms of collective action such as marches and protests, especially in the Muslim tradition where the congregation at the mosque usually walks to the cemetery. Such post-funeral activities were themselves usually violent, because the deceased had been usually murdered by violent activists in the first place and the air would be heavily charged with hatred and a longing for vengeance. An early example to such funerals was that of Lütfü Kırdar, who was buried on 19 February 1961 amid disturbing incidents. Kırdar had served as governor and mayor of İstanbul between 1938 and 1949, implementing the Prost plan in restructuring the city. He had also been one of the members of the first Wealth Commission in 1942, succeeding in obtaining a ten percent reduction for the most affluent group and for doctors. In response to the incidents, the government announced that it would severely punish all those responsible for “harming the country.”⁴⁰⁴

On 3 May 1969, another funeral made the headlines when Supreme Court Justice İmran Öktem’s funeral was attacked by a group of six hundred fundamentalists who claimed that performing the *cenaze namazı* (funeral prayers) for

⁴⁰⁴ Ercan Yavuz, “Varlık Vergisi Gerçeği,” *Yeni Şafak*, available [online] at <http://www.yenisafak.com/diziler/varlik/index.html>

him was sacrilegious. İsmet İnönü was present at the funeral, and was saved from the attacks by a general who took out his gun. The police did not intervene, and soldiers had to be brought in for rescue. On the next day, 100,000 people marched in protest of the government and of *irtica*. This was the first instance in Turkish history of members of the judiciary protesting against the executive power.

On 24 March 1970, a funeral was held for Süleyman Özmen, a student of the School of Agriculture killed during clashes between “commando”s like him and leftists in front of Ankara University a week earlier. The funeral was more political than religious. The coffin was taken from Maltepe mosque to the university, and after a short ceremony was sent to İstanbul. During the process of transportation and the ceremony, students shouted slogans like “Commando Süleyman is not dead!”, “Süleyman was killed by communists!”, “Greywolf Süleyman is not dead!”, “I die once to be reborn a thousand times!”⁴⁰⁵

After military doctor Necdet Güçlü was killed in Ankara University’s School of Medicine by “commando”s on 13 April, serious clashes took place during and after the funeral. The coffin was taken from the university morgue by a group of five thousand students, carrying his pictures and flags, shouting, “Blood for blood!”, “The government is the murderer”, “The army and the youth, hand in hand, walking towards the national front”.⁴⁰⁶ Officers and students engaged in fights in front of the Maltepe Mosque. After the military ceremony, students marched to Kızılay and clashed there with the police. A big group gathered in Zafer Square and marched towards the Turco-American Bank, inflicting damage on the building.

⁴⁰⁵ *Komando Süleyman ölmedi!*, “Süleyman’ı komünistler öldürdü!”, “Bozkurt Süleyman ölmedi!”, “Bir Ölür Bin Dirilirim!” *Vatan*, 25 March 1970.

⁴⁰⁶ “Kana kan!”, “Kaatil iktidar!”, “Ordu gençlik elele, milli cephede!” *Vatan*, 15 April 1970.

As the military began to be increasingly drawn into the quagmire of clashes between the left and the right, the National Security Council, headed by President Sunay, deemed it necessary to announce that army forces would no longer participate in the precautionary measures taken for the maintenance of order.⁴⁰⁷

On 22 May 1970, a student named Mustafa Kuseyri was killed during a night raid on the School of Journalism in Ankara. Close to ten thousand students and faculty members attended the funeral, strongly condemning the killing. An American car was set on fire, and Ankara University was closed down for three days. The coffin was brought to the Law School, carried on shoulders, and then to Zafer Square, where the government was protested. On 24 May, the faculty of the Law School closed down the school, demanding security and protection and calling on the government to resign, in a declaration they addressed to the “Turkish nation.”

In İstanbul, on 8 June, a rightist group from Çapa Higher School of Education entered İstanbul University’s School of Literature. What began as verbal abuse soon turned into a physical clash – guns were fired, dynamite sticks were thrown, and a Yusuf İmamoğlu, one of the Çapa students, was killed. On the next day, the “commando”s forced the Law School, the School of Economics and of Medicine to close down for three days. They burned books and shouted, “*Başbuğ Türkeş!*”, “Blood, blood, blood, and revenge for Yusuf!”⁴⁰⁸ The funeral was held on 10 June. The body was taken from the Beyazıt Mosque by the “commando”s of the NMP, in a ceremony closely resembling the military in its discipline. The TNSF was one of the organizers of the funeral. The coffin was carried to Sirkeci, where it was put on a

⁴⁰⁷ “Silahlı Kuvvetlerin, düzenin muhafazası tedbirlerine karıştırılmamasına karar verildi.” *Vatan*, 17 April 1970.

⁴⁰⁸ “*Başbuğ Türkeş!*”, “*Kan, kan ,kan, Yusuf için intikam!*” *Cumhuriyet*, 10 Haziran 1970.

train to Bursa, Yusuf's hometown. The ships in the harbor sounded their sirens, and students went to the TNSF headquarters to take an oath of revenge.

On 5 December 1970, leftist and rightist student groups clashed at Çapa Higher School of Education. Two students were seriously wounded, and one of them, Hüseyin Aslantaş, died two days later. The school was closed down indefinitely. Revolutionist students kidnapped Aslantaş's coffin from the Cerrahpaşa Hospital, brought to the amphitheater at the Law School, and oaths were taken to avenge his death. All security forces were put on high alert for the funeral on 11 December, which was attended by masses; 5,000 students took the "independence oath."⁴⁰⁹ The coffin was sent to Sivas, and during the demonstration that followed, the crowd shouted anti-JP slogans and condemned American imperialism. In Ankara, too, ceremonies were organized in memory of Aslantaş, where students clashed with the police and dozens were taken into custody.

The last days of 1970 were filled with shootings and dynamite bombings on university campuses, both in Ankara and İstanbul. All the Minister of the Interior Menteşeoğlu could do was to threaten "unruly students" with conscription.⁴¹⁰

On 24 January 1975, the corpse of Kerim Yaman, who had been killed by the "commando"s raiding the Vatan Higher School of Engineering and Architecture, was kidnapped by his friends and taken to İstanbul University. They blocked all the entrances of the campus, calling on revolutionist students to support them. Twenty thousand students had gathered by nightfall. Female students were allowed to go out, on account of worried parents. The remaining students lit bonfires, sang marches, wrote anti-fascist graffiti on the walls, and collected donations for Yaman's family.

⁴⁰⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 12 December 1970.

⁴¹⁰ "Huysuz öğrenciler askere alınıyor." *Cumhuriyet*, 25 December 1970.

Authorities announced that thirty-two people had been taken into custody, and that the gun-wielding “commando”s had been identified and two of them already arrested. On the next day, Kerim Yaman’s coffin was sent to his hometown of Akhisar, accompanied from İstanbul University to Sirkeci by a crowd of fifty thousand. During the ceremony held at İstanbul University, people shouted slogans such as “Kerims don’t die!”, “End Fascism!”, and “Türkeş the Murderer!”⁴¹¹

The most extreme example of funerals turning into violent action took place in Kahramanmaraş in 1978. On 23 December, the funeral of two teachers turned into civil war, with thirty-one dead and one hundred fifty wounded on the first day, and over five hundred shops destroyed. By 25 December, the death toll had risen to 136; parts of the city were cut off.

One of the symbolically most significant funerals took place in 1979. On 4 February, one of the most famous journalists of Turkey, Abdi İpekçi, was sent off by masses to his final journey. The chairmen of the Senate and the Parliament, the prime minister, members of the cabinet, diplomats, professors, union leaders, and thousands of citizens attended the funeral. A ceremony was held in front of the *Milliyet* building, which was followed by prayers at Teşvikiye mosque and a burial at Zincirlikuyu Cemetery. The Union of Newspaper Owners (*Gazete Sahipleri Sendikası*) announced a reward of five million liras for the identity of the killer.

Violent political action in Turkey provides the student of contentious politics a laboratory of possible actions and outcomes. It also shows how violence can become a deadlock for politics, and thus turn into the very negation of what it set out to be.

⁴¹¹ “Kerimler ölmez!”, “Faşizme son!”, “Katil Türkeş!” *Cumhuriyet*, 26 January 1975.

Various studies have shown that those collective actions that have violence at their disposal usually have a higher chance at succeeding; what those studies overlook is the possibility that both the state and/or other collective actors may decide to respond in kind, causing an escalation of violence, which in turn upsets the dynamic equilibrium of the public sphere. Depending on the delicacy or stability of that equilibrium, societies experience violent political action as something ranging from distressing news to havoc. The Turkish experience, as this chapter attests to, swiftly moved towards the latter, so much so that the end of the 1970s have been regarded as the time when the social fabric came apart. This has also been used to justify the military coup of 1980, and the concomitant fear of “politics in the streets.” The legacy of extreme action has ironically been extreme inaction; collective political actors in Turkey have only recently begun to shed off that lethargy.

CHAPTER 9:

CONCLUSION: "IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER"

Collective political action in Turkey has found ample representation in the press during the three decades between 1950 and 1980. To analyze the incidents discussed in this study in a more quantitative fashion, Table 3 reports the number of reports in the press of collective political action from 1950-1980.

Table 3. Number of Reports in the Press of Collective Political Action, 1950-1980

Year	Assocnl. activities	Marches	Demonst. meetings	Action in writing	Symbolic action	Protests boycotts, sit-ins	Total
1950	6	3	6	1	0	0	16
1951	11	0	9	10	19	1	50
1952	4	1	2	4	4	2	17
1953	3	1	3	8	1	1	17
1954	4	0	4	1	0	1	11
1955	3	3	2	3	2	3	16
1956	2	1	0	5	2	7	17
1957	0	1	1	4	5	1	12
1958	0	3	13	2	3	3	24
1959	0	1	0	6	2	7	16
1960	3	10	3	7	1	5	29
1961	3	8	2	7	2	7	29
1962	3	18	10	12	1	1	45
1963	1	13	5	4	0	0	23
1964	0	3	7	6	2	1	19
1965	0	2	3	4	2	1	12
1966	0	3	5	3	6	3	20
1967	0	5	23	3	0	4	35
1968	0	6	4	3	0	22	35
1969	0	6	4	3	2	29	44
1970	2	7	10	2	4	31	56
1971	1	3	3	3	0	6	16
1972	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
1973	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
1974	0	1	2	2	0	5	10
1975	0	2	1	0	0	2	5
1976	0	6	2	1	1	8	18
1977	0	1	3	0	0	4	8
1978	0	2	2	0	0	1	5
1979	0	1	3	4	0	1	9
Total	47	115	132	108	59	157	619

The three charts below depict the distribution of collective action in the three decades under study, making it easier to pick out general trends. One of the more striking differences between the three charts occurs with respect to the share of associational activities— one of the more popular modes of collective political action in the 1950s- association formation and congregations have found decreasing coverage in the press, even though their absolute number increased steadily (except for the period between 1971-1974)⁴¹². Similarly, symbolic action had its heyday in the 1950s, but became outmoded in the following decades. The number of marches more than tripled from the 1950s to the 1960s, and remained at a high level throughout the 1970s. The percentage of demonstrations depicted in the press remained more or less constant, but action in writing, forming approximately one-fifth of all reports on collective action in the first two decades, decreased by about fifty percent in the 1970s. Student protests reach their highest percentage in this decade, even though a comparison with the figures in Table 3 shows that the highest number of such incidents took place in the 1960s, or more accurately between 1968 and 1971. The same table allows us to compare the total number of collective action and to conclude that the 1960s provided the highest level of such action. The 1970s are underrepresented because the incidents of violent political action were not included in this table. The main reason for this is the difficulty in deciding what to count as political action and what as outright terrorism. Including these would have drastically changed the percentages and would have made comparisons between decades inaccurate.

⁴¹² Ahmet N. Yücekök, “1946-1971 Yılları Arasında İstanbul’da Sivil Toplum Örgütleri,” in A.N. Yücekök, İ. Turan, and M.Ö. Alkan, eds., *Tanzimattan Günümüze İstanbul’da STK’lar* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1998), pp.161-196, and Ilter Turan, “1972-1996 Döneminde İstanbul’da Derneksel Hayat,” *ibid.*, pp.197-227.

Figure 1. Collective political action in the 1950s.

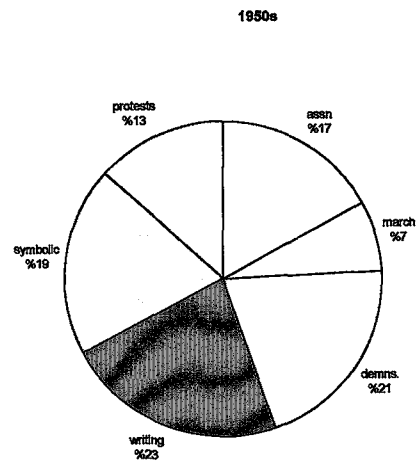


Figure 2. Collective political action in the 1960s.

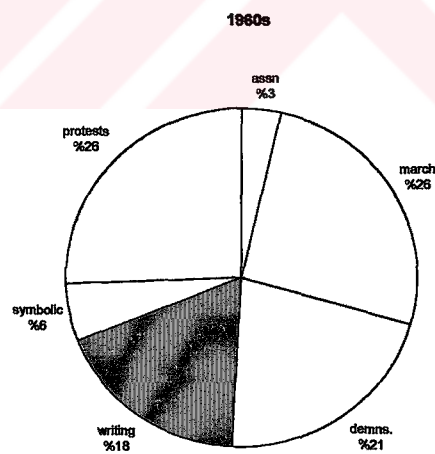
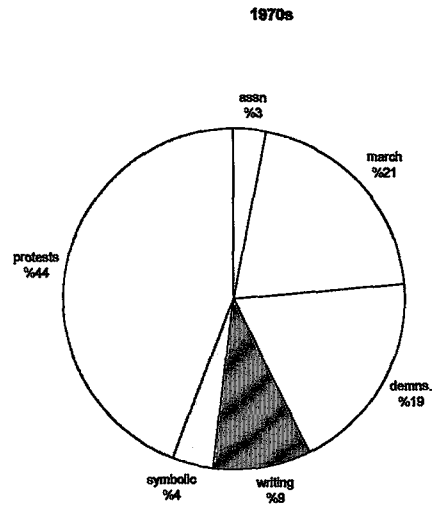


Figure 3. Collective political action in the 1970s.



The graphs for each group of action make it easier to visualize the individual changes.

Figure 4. Associational activities.

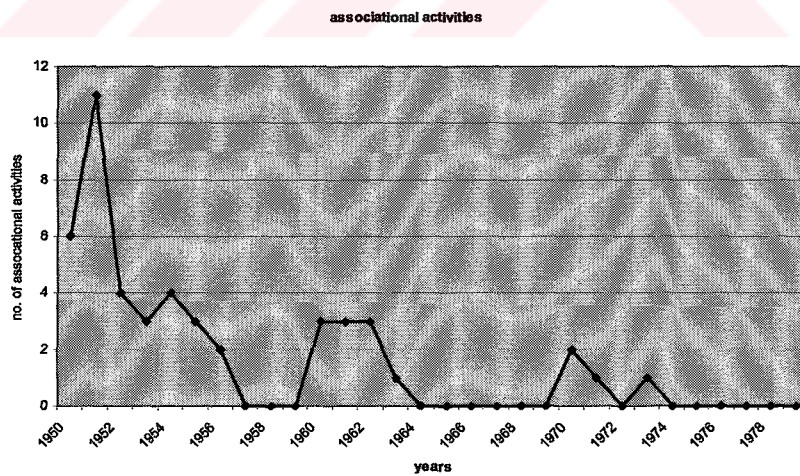


Figure 5. Marches.

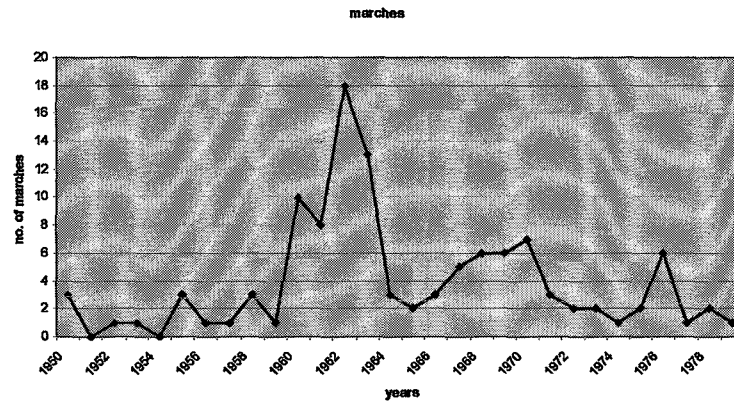


Figure 6. Demonstrations and meetings.

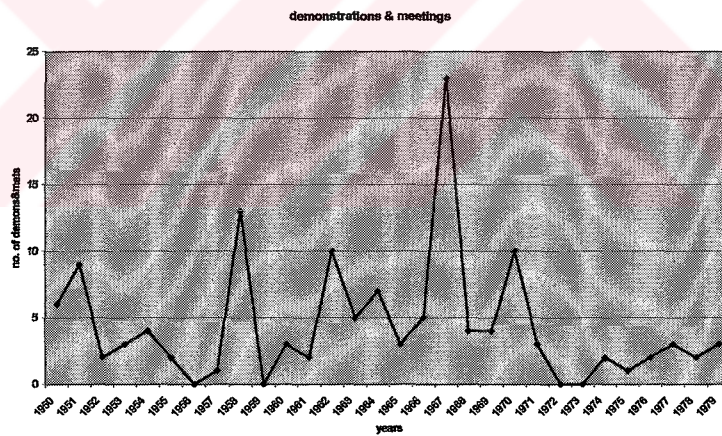


Figure 7. Written action.

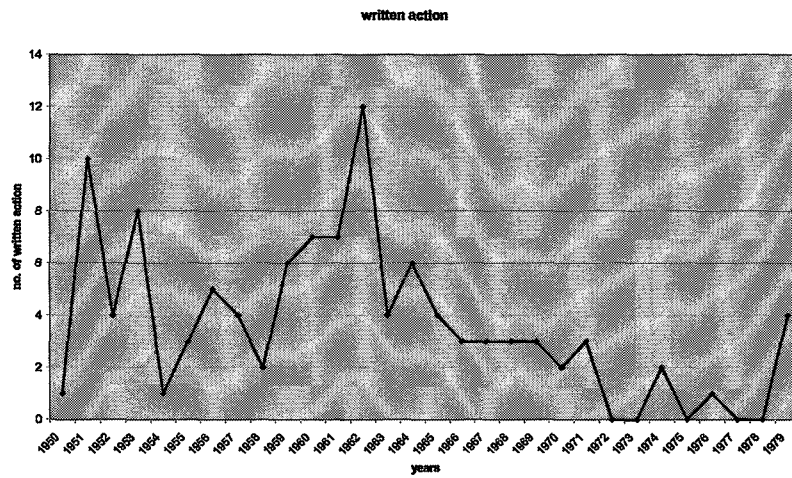


Figure 8. Symbolic action.

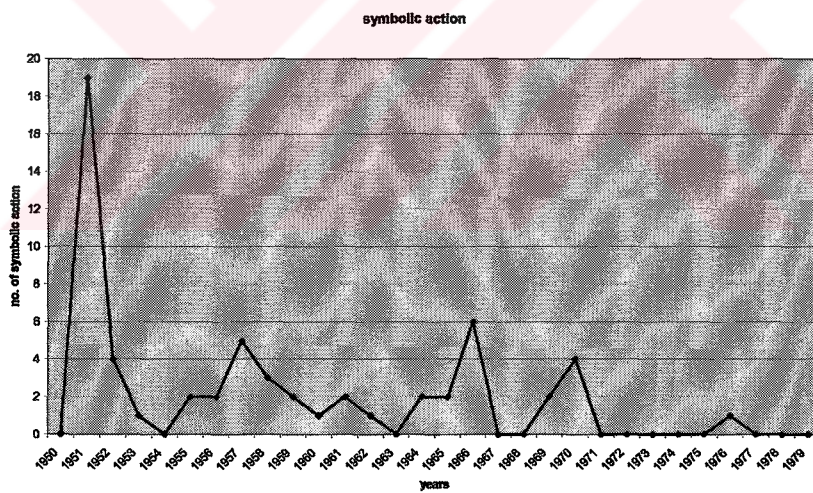


Figure 9. Protests, boycotts, sit-ins.

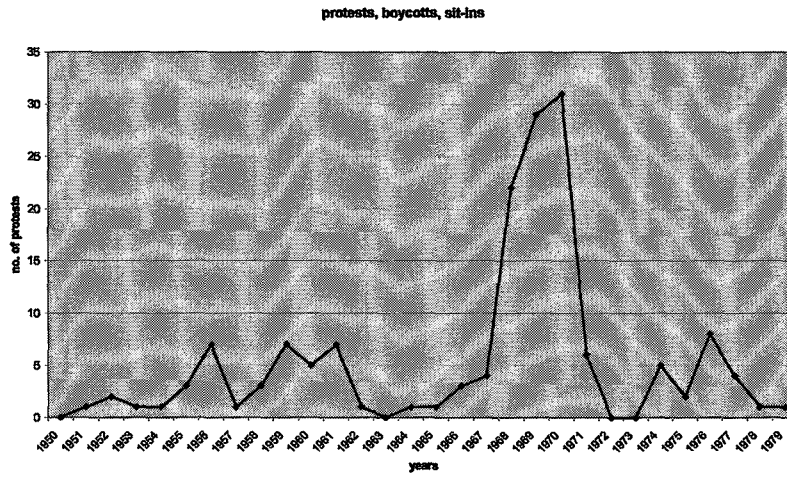
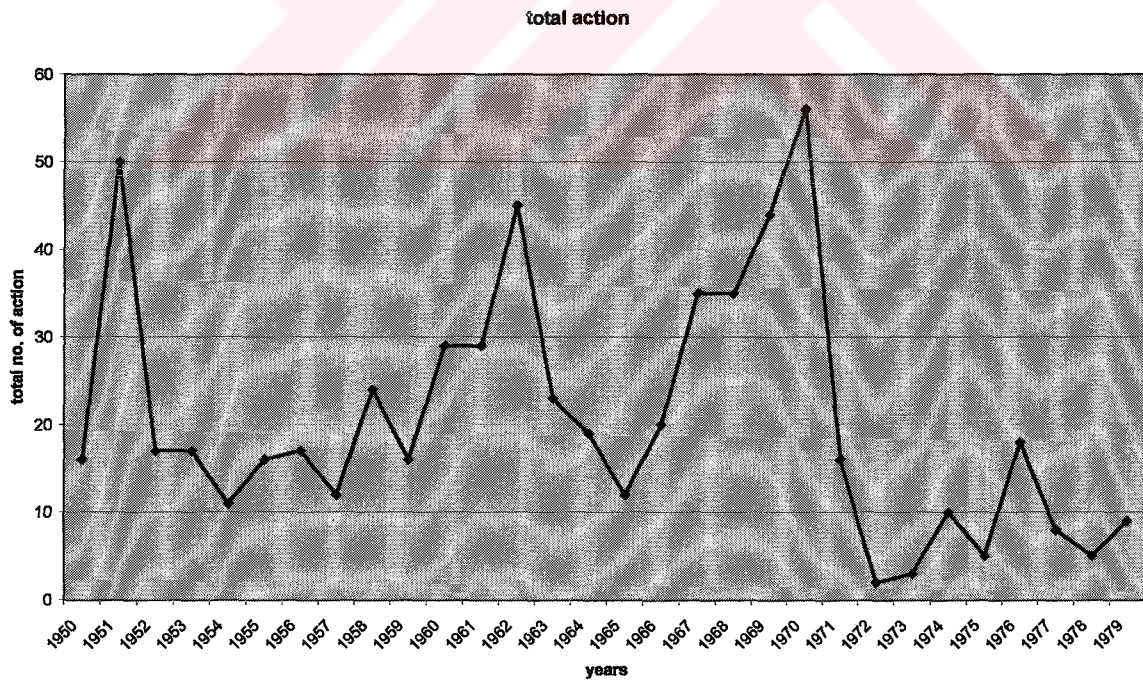


Figure 10. Total action.



Thus, associational activity was popular in the early 1950s and 1960s, as was action in writing; marches were favored between 1960-1963 and 1966-1971.

Demonstrations were especially popular between 1966-1970, but also in 1951 and 1958. The year for symbolic action was 1951, with the late 1950s and mid-1960s coming in second. Protests and boycotts, though popular in the period 1956-1961, peaked during 1968-1971. As for the total number of actions, the highest frequencies was seen in 1951, 1959-1971, with a peak in 1970.

* * *

Collective political action in Turkey has its universal characteristics as well as idiosyncrasies. Taken together, these form, as well as emerge from, a matrix of lingual relations that articulate certain key aspects of Turkish political culture. It is, of course, the idiosyncrasies that set the Turkish democratic experience apart from that of other countries; these are, therefore, of primary interest to the researcher. The universal features shared by other democracies are, however, just as revealing for the researcher interested in understanding the structure, functioning, and interrelations of Turkish politics. Studying collective political action and the modulations it has undergone through the years provides ample opportunities for such an understanding.

What, then, are the relevant characteristics of this political culture? First, the “Project”; second, a state-centered approach to politics, where the state was the locus of power and money; third, suspicion regarding political participation; fourth, the repression of certain modes of identity and definitions of the “good life”; and finally, the class structure of society.

These characteristics are played out in a social and political milieu characterized by problem areas laden with strong feelings of nationalism such as

Cyprus, the deadlock of the political system in the 1970s, the influx of population to the big cities, growing social injustice, and lagging economic growth. These had a direct effect on the way collective political action was carried out in Turkey. Student movements, for example, though superficially similar in shape and content to movements in the United States, were the result of a very different perception of the role of youth in national politics. This difference can be accounted for if one remembers Atatürk's legacy with respect to the Project and the role of the youth vis-à-vis that Project. State-centered politics meant that collective political action would be directed to the state both as the major actor and the audience. Even when international actors were addressed, such as the British or Greek governments during the numerous Cyprus crises, it was still the government rather than the people, and all the while direct references were made to the Turkish government about the courses of action to be taken.

Only in the 1970s did various groups begin to direct their activities at other groups in the form of violence. During the period in question, very few instances of "identity politics" were seen. Activists were very involved with state policies, and a politics of inclusion (in the political system) was preferred to a politics of defining one's identity through action, acting from the outside, and retaining independence from the political system. Because the state approached politics made by non-politicians suspiciously, clandestine action, along with semi-collective modes of action, was preferred.

In a political environment where freedom of expression and of gathering is accepted as the norm, most types of collective action so popular in Turkey would be regarded as unnecessarily cowardly. Since the Project repressed identity-formation on religious or ethnic bases, and opposed even the discussion of other possibilities

with respect to what constitutes the “good life” –i.e., the Islamic ideal or the federalist state- action which supported such agendas found little, if any, leeway. Class action, in other words, action by workers addressing class issues, almost did not exist until the mid-1960s because Turkish society was construed as a “classless society.” Only in the 1970s did the labor unions come into their own and began exerting influence on governments.

Nationalism colored a significant part of collective political action in Turkey. The feeling of isolation so well expressed in the adage “Turks have no friends other than Turks” (“*Türkün Türkten başka dostu yoktur*”) found its way into many of the instances of collective action cited in this study. Turkish nationalism undersigned many of the problems of intolerance concerning Greek and Armenian citizens and Turkish Jews, as well as the Cyprus issue.

The deadlock, which the political system faced in the second part of the 1970s, provided another incentive for specialists of violence to bypass the state and, instead of making demands on it, to start seeking ways to solve their own problems. The spiraling violence of the era was not only the result of the inability or the unwillingness of the state to handle it; it was also the result of willingness on the part of these politically violent groups to eschew the old definition of making politics. Changing social conditions had a major impact on the type, content, and rhetoric of collective action undertaken. The few universities in Istanbul and Ankara could no longer meet the demand for higher education by an avalanche of young people trying to find a way out of poverty and backwardness, and the papers of the 1950s and 1960s are filled with reports of high school graduates staging demonstrations at university gates for admission. It is much easier to recruit the disenfranchised or the disillusioned for one cause or another, and that is what critics of collective action

have in mind when they question the autonomous decision-making process of participants.

In turn, collective political action molded the political culture of Turkish society. The most pronounced effect was a fear of terrorism, which was translated in the hands of the coup leaders in 1980 into an aversion to politics in general; hence, the *en masse* “depoliticization” of society in the early 1980s. The transformed and imposed political culture deemed political participation not as a virtue but as a threat, thus shrinking the very domain of public sphere in the Aristotelean sense. Thirty years of collective political action did not result in a more tolerant approach, on the part of the state, to such venues of participation; indeed, police measures were more stringent in the 1990s than they were in the 1950s.

As for the public sphere, however, it can be safely ventured that even though there was a break in the way politics was made as a result of the coup in 1980, and even though a new generation of political actors found themselves on the scene, faced with a whole new set of ground rules regarding how politics was to be made, three decades of collective political action provided an invaluable source of experience. The very construction of what is political and belongs to the political sphere came to be questioned and reformulated as a result of these learnings. It is important to stress continuity in the face of the cleavage mentioned above, and to remember that the effects of the cleavage were confounded by a wider change in *weltanschauung* experienced in many parts of the world. Today people still march in the streets of cities, voicing demands that may or may not be similar to those voiced in earlier decades. The songs they sing may be different, the routes they take to march may be different, but what remains, what results in continuity, is the fact that people make demands, and in the very making of these demands formulate (perhaps

more consciously now than before) their identities not only vis-à-vis the state but also vis-à-vis other people. These learnings are adapted to changing circumstances, and produce new learnings. It is a certain belief in the political sphere, a certain holding back of cynicism, a kind of hope that things can be changed, which constitutes the chore of the legacy of collective political action.

As for the state, “nominalism” was another result – the guardians of the Project gave up expecting active participation and settled for nominal support for the basic tenets of the Republic. This eventually created a political culture in which conspiracy theories abound, for no one is as he seems to be– everyone is to be suspected of having a hidden agenda. This situation has of course been coupled with the worldwide advent of “globalization”, and the focus of politics has shifted significantly. The concerns of the guardians, however, remain intact, if modified to suit the new conditions of the new age. From the point of view of collective political action, the Project still offers the greatest insight, and a closer look at it is in order.

It is no great feat to observe that for decades after Atatürk’s death, Turkish politics continued to carry his mark, if not as a source of inspiration, then at least as a source of legitimation. The political rhetoric began to outgrow this over-dependence only in the 1990s, and intelligent debate without having to cite Atatürk’s authority (similar to one of the standard modes of religious argumentation, where either a sacred text or a holy person is invoked to “prove” a point – “Why?” “Because the Koran says so!”) or without having to position oneself *contra* Atatürk has only recently become possible, and that only occasionally. Collective political action carried this mark for much of the period under discussion, but showed signs of shedding it earlier than the rhetoric.

Indeed, most of the collective actions of the 1950s and 1960s involved Atatürk directly or indirectly. The attacks on his statues, busts, pictures, and photographs constituted the symbolic rebellion of long-repressed fundamentalists, still acting clandestinely, and either individually or in small groups for fear of persecution. This action created its counter-action: student organizations as well as groups of citizens and even the media took it upon themselves to erect more of those statues, in order to show the iconoclasts that the symbol they attacked would remain as the symbol of the country. Visits to the Anıtkabir also served to symbolically stress allegiance to Atatürk's reforms.

The indirect involvement of Atatürk in the collective actions of these two decades, and a portion of the 1970s, was both more intricate and in a sense more fundamental. Atatürk's most pertinent legacy in the case of collective action, for better or for worse, has been his designation of the guardians of the regime: the youth and the military. When the political power, having come into office as a result of democratic elections, grew ever more repressive to the degree of being authoritarian, stifling all dissent and criticism, and even attempting to hold the judiciary in its sway, the guardians stepped in. It was quite an unprecedented event: university students risked their lives to protest the government, and were backed by the military in many cases where they came into conflict with the security forces of the government. The papers announcing the coup ran headlines that stressed this coalition, and had photographs to prove it. The leaders of the coup themselves found it necessary to stress that Atatürk's regime had been saved by the youth and the military acting together.

This experience, i.e. the fact that university students could actually play a big role in affecting regime change, or at least in toppling a government, had a huge

effect on the student movements of the 1960s. Such success was rare in those years, and was never coupled with such a heavy-duty responsibility as guarding the republic. The whole era was marked by a Leftist rhetoric, and the possibility of a socialist revolution was much talked about. The 1961 Constitution was seen by many to allow for such a change. Naturally it was the university students who saw themselves as the advance guard of this revolution, and saw it as their duty to carry their nation forward towards a more just and liberated society. It was Atatürk again, cast as the first “socialist”, who lent legitimacy to this project.

At least the students thought so, and sought the alliance of the working class, in whose name they professed to be acting. This view, however, did not arouse much enthusiasm and sympathy among the other group of guardians, the military, and the beginning of the 1970s marked a major fallout of the two. Demonstrations, protests, and marches of the era often featured calls to the military to support the cause of – mostly- Leftist student groups. One of the most influential student organizations had lined out a strategy of bringing on a socialist revolution not through democratic means, but through joining forces with the military to overthrow the regime – it had been done once, why should it not be done again?

It was not to be. The realization that the military no longer regarded the university students as “coalition partners” came as a rude shock. Left to their own means, with the “powers that be” growing increasingly weary and wary of them, radical youth organizations began to get involved in violent contentious action. This was a natural continuation of the persuasion that revolution was possible only by force. In the meantime, the radical youth on the Right had gotten organized in a paramilitary fashion and was ready to take on the “commies.” Indications exist that

clashes between the two groups were sponsored by political parties, and even by some echelons of the state.

Such escalation in violence was not unique to Turkey. In Spain, for example, a similar trajectory had been followed during the mid-1960s. The regime, faced with increased violence, tightened its grip and responded with increased repression, curtailing freedom of press and personal liberties, but could not succeed in containing contention. Violence escalated even further, and strikes spread like hay fire. At that stage, the political elites in Spain succeeded in doing something their Turkish counterparts would utterly fail at: in this environment, which provided “pressure of transgressive politics in the streets, in the factories, and in the mining regions”, Spain’s elites and counter-elites “managed the transition through a measured process of negotiation in conference rooms.”⁴¹³

As in Europe, the student movement in Turkey sought another ally in its collective action: the workers. Throughout much of the 1960s, the respective places of the two groups were hotly debated. Some theorists held that the student movement was meaningful only to the extent that it served the class struggle of the workers and that the students should not follow an agenda of their own. Others maintained that students could exist as a separate entity in the struggle against fascism and imperialism, although collaborating with workers was also necessary. Such class awareness gradually changed the nature of student protests and demonstrations. What began as voicing demands about schooling (tuition fees, conditions for passing courses and graduation, entrance into universities, etc.) became pronouncedly political with the introduction of the Cyprus issue, the minorities issue, the hunt for communists, and the frequent visits of the US 6th Fleet.

⁴¹³ McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, p. 181.

The forms of action undertaken by student organizations were not very original on the whole, involving the usual array of demonstrations, protests, marches, boycotts, and occupations. Some leitmotifs did emerge, however; the routes for marches took on a customary quality, both in İstanbul and Ankara; a number of squares were earmarked for demonstrations. The “Osmanpaşa” march was adapted to various occasions throughout the three decades, and became a staple of student actions. The national anthem was another staple, and often provided the activists a temporary sanctuary in the rush of events, because the police would stop upon hearing the anthem being sung.

The 1960s were also marked by the outburst of organization formation. In time, the multiplicity of organizations, often serving a similar clientele with similar aims, came to undermine those aims. Student associations kept discussing joining their organizations, but rarely succeeded. In fact, organization politics became so important that they took precedence over national politics, and intra-organizational power struggle often caused organizations to lose touch with the greater population and their priorities.

During the 1950s, actions with low-level organization were more prominent. The attacks on the symbols of the Republic, or more specifically on Atatürk’s statues, were a novel form of “negative collective action”, in the sense that they aimed to destroy rather than build. Implicitly, of course, most of these attacks were committed by religious fundamentalists who preferred a non-secular state. The extensive use of symbols, while serving the purposes of evading security forces, nonetheless predate the “new social movements” of the 1980s.

“Passive action”, while seemingly an oxymoron, could be considered as a novel contribution of the Turkish experience to the collective action literature. The

“Radio Non-Listeners Association” and all the serious debate that followed its closing down is not only amusing, but it also offers a beautiful example of stretching the conventional modes of action to accommodate repressive measures. It is of course also telling that the regime could not tolerate even that, and chose to persecute an “inaction”, whose counterpart action was not mandatory. The heavy-handedness of governments with respect to freedom of expression, when coupled with an inability or disinclination to stop violent action, formed a peculiar political environment in Turkey after 1971.

Students and workers are the leading actors everywhere when it comes to collective action. Some disenfranchised segments of the middle classes, like shop owners or self-employed taxi drivers, may occasionally also be seen in demonstrations, usually for economic reasons. It is, however, less customary for the press and businessmen to engage in collective action - both groups usually prefer to wield indirect or covert influence. One of the main actors of the process leading to the coup in 1960 was the press, as acknowledged later by numerous politicians of the time, now retired. A number of newspapers, some local, some national, some individually, some together with other newspapers, actively protested the government, or organized campaigns, enlisting the support of the masses for their purposes. The paid advertisements of the TBIA exerted so much pressure on the Ecevit government in 1979 that the prime minister, though nonchalant at first, eventually had to resign.

Some issues had a recurring significance for collective action in Turkey; others proved to be specific for certain periods. Attacks on Atatürk’s statues, for example, were almost strictly the specialty of the 1950s; murdering columnists, that of the 1970s. The Cyprus issue kept coming up time and again, as did communism

and *irtica*. Labor issues were almost never translated to collective action in the 1950s, but gained increasing salience in the next two decades.

After “politics as usual” was resumed in the second half of the 1980s, discussions of “civil society” gained prominence in Turkey, as elsewhere. Collective action until the end of the millennium showed a marked difference from the collective action of the preceding decades; issues, actors and types of action underwent considerable change. The Susurluk Incident of 1996 brought on a type of protest that was once again a unique contribution to the literature: almost without any formal organization, thousands of households participated in, and eventually improvised, a collective action for an extended period of time. The collective actions of the 1990s had qualities that reflected the characteristics of their decade, as did their forerunners. Most noticeably, they were no longer performed in the name of the father, but rather in the name of the actors themselves. Studying these would offer the students of Turkish politics a deeper insight which may not be gleaned through the study of party politics.

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