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TURKEY'S LEFT VIEW OF THE KURDISH ISSUE IN THE  
CONTEXT OF ETHNIC AND NATIONAL QUESTION: TLP (TİP) CASE

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**ABSTRACT**  
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In this thesis, the approach of the Turkish Left in general, and the Turkish Labour Party, in particular, towards the Kurdish Question that was begun to be expressed in political and intellectual spheres in 1960s will be examined. One characteristic of the Turkish Labor Party is its approach to the Kurdish Question. While some partial organizations could be seen among the other leftist movements of that period, Kurdish politicians and intellectuals attributed a special importance to the Turkish Labour Party and a strong alliance between the Party and the Kurdish movement was established. This thesis aims to examine the nature of this alliance by taking its historical, political, conjunctural and sociological aspects into account. In the first part, ethnic and national question debates in the international literature on the Left from Marx and Engels to Laclau and Mouffe will be examined. In the second part, the approach of the Turkish Left towards the Kurdish issue before the 1960s will be investigated with more historical dimensions. In the third part, the approach of the Turkish Labour Party to the Kurdish Question and the relations between the Kurdish movement and the Party will be analyzed. At the end of this thesis, it will be argued that in Turkish Left, as it also frequently encountered in international literature on the Left, ethnic issues were dealt by a perspective within the context of the development of specific events and driven by instrumental motives, rather than providing a theoretical integrity.

Key Words: Turkish Left, Turkish Labour Party, Kurdish Question

## ÖZET

### ETNİK VE ULUSAL SORUN BAĞLAMINDA TÜRK SOLU'NUN KÜRT SORUNU'NA YAKLAŞIMI: TİP ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu tezde genelde Türk Solu'nun özelde de Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin 1960'larda siyasal ve entelektüel arenada yeni yeni ifade edilmeye başlanan Kürt Meselesi'ne yaklaşımı incelenecektir. Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin bir özelliği Kürt Meselesi'ne yaklaşımında bulunmaktadır. Dönemin diğer sol hareketlerinde de kısmî örgütlenmeleri görülmekle beraber, Kürt siyasetçi ve entelektüelleri Türkiye İşçi Partisi'ne özel bir önem atfetmiş ve parti ile Kürt hareketi arasında güçlü bir ittifak tesis edilmiştir. Bu tez, bu ittifakın mahiyetini, tarihsel, siyasal, konjoktürel ve sosyolojik yönlerini göz önünde tutarak incelemek amacındadır. Birinci bölümde, Marx ve Engels'den Laclau ve Mouffe'a kadar uluslararası sol literatürdeki etnik ve ulusal sorun tartışmaları incelenecek, ikinci bölümde ise 1960 öncesi Türk Solu'nun Kürt meselesine yaklaşımı, daha çok tarihsel boyutlarıyla incelenecektir. Üçüncü bölümde Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nin Kürt Sorunu'na yaklaşımı ve Kürt hareketi ile Türkiye İşçi Partisi arasındaki ilişkiler incelenecektir. Bu tezin sonunda, uluslararası sol literatürde de sıklıkla karşılaşıldığı gibi, Türk Solu'nda etnik meselelerin teorik bir bütünsellik arz etmekten ziyade, spesifik olaylar özelinde gelişen ve daha çok araçsal yönü ağır basan bir perspektifle ele alındığı iddia edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler; Türk Solu, Türkiye İşçi Partisi, Kürt Meselesi.

To My Wife Gülçilem,

To My Son Fatih Mehmet,

&To My Parents...



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEC:	Central Executive Committee
CUP:	The Committee of Union and Progress
CW:	Collected Work
DP:	Democratic Party
GEC:	General Executive Committee
JP:	Justice Party
NDR:	National Democratic Revolution
OSP:	Ottoman Socialist Party (Fırkası)
PDP:	Peoples' Democratic Party
PTSWF:	Party of Turkey Socialist Workers and Farmers
RECH:	Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths
SCA:	Socialist Cultural Association
TCP:	Turkey Communist Party
TLP:	Turkish Labour Party
TPA:	Turkish Peace-loving Association (Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti)
TSP:	Turkey Socialist Party
US:	United States

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Subject and Scope of the Thesis

Debates on the ethnic and national questions have been taking place in Marxist literature from Marx and Engels to the recent times. Within this period, from *classical Marxism* to the *post-Marxism*, the subject has been discussed in different dimensions and the solution proposals have been diversified from time to time. But in this thesis, instead of a detailed examination of all discussions in Marxist literature about the subject, general views and periodical tendencies will be roughly summed up to provide theoretical framework when analyzing the case study's attitude to the subject.

Marx and Engels didn't leave a good legacy to the followers about nationalism, ethnic and national questions. Their writings on this matter are not explicit and their ideas were derived from letters, article and specific issues, such as Poland and Ireland Question. But in this subject, more than Marx and Engels, Lenin and Luxemburg are prominent figures in Marxist literature. The debates between Lenin and Luxemburg reflect theoretical and practical dimensions of Marxism in the face of concrete events. While Luxemburg advocates scientific aspect of Marxism, Lenin takes into consideration the practical cases and strategies. Since Lenin, with Stalin, was the founder of 'real socialism' and he evaluated Marxism in the conditions of the period, Lenin's arguments on ethnic and national questions are very determinative in Marxist literature. However, an internationalist line, advocated by Luxemburg, which does not move from practical and political reasons, has always maintained its existence in the Marxist paradigm.

As one of the example of 'real socialism', Soviets' invasions of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan were criticized in terms of the right of nations to self-determination. But more significantly, from 1980's, identity problems have been on the rise in the post-communist regions because of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the spread of

globalization. Soviet and Yugoslav experiences aren't good examples to deal with ethnic and national questions.

Concentrating on the arguments of Turkey's Left about this crucial matter, we encounter greatly varying historical and theoretical debates. Above all, Turkey's Left relations with nationalism and *Kemalism* specify its position and therefore, while analyzing Turkey's Left's attitude to this subject, we must consider these relations. As an ethnic and national question, Kurdish Question is a specific case for evaluating Turkey's Left approaches. However, because of its relations with nationalism and *Kemalism*, it becomes difficult to evaluate and analyze Turkey's Left approaches to the Kurdish Question.

Before 1960s, Turkey's Left collaborated with *Kemalism* in the Kurdish Question. It is possible to see some debates in the prominent socialist formations, such as *Turkey Communist Party (Türkiye Komünist Parti, TCP)* and *Kadro Movement*, for Kurdish Question and generally for *Eastern (Doğu)*. Throughout the single-party era, there were some parallels with *Kemalism*. On the other hand, there were approaches that regard the Kurdish Question as a national problem. The discussion of the Kurdish Question in the left circles coincides with the 1960s. Even in the 1960s, *Yön Group* and *National Democratic Revolution (Millî Demokratik Devrim, NDR)* maintained parallel arguments with *Kemalism*.

The main problem of the leftist movements, which have been seen in the Turkish intellectual and political life since the late Ottoman era, is its inability for reaching the large masses and is being continuously exposed to investigations and detentions. With the coup d'état of May 27, 1960, for the first time, the possibility of organizing and massing the Left was revealed. In the period before May 27, the Left was organized either illegal or in collaboration with *Kemalism*. However, both the leftist movements in the late Ottoman period and the leftist formations in the single-party era do not offer viable arguments for ethnic problem debates. Nevertheless, a brief history of the Left movement to the 1960s and debates on ethnic issues have been discussed in the second chapter. Discussions on the ethnic direction of the Kurdish Question in the beginning of 1960s, the *Kemalist* influence continued and the issue was dealt more as a development problem in the Left circles.

*The Turkish Labour Party (Türkiye İşçi Partisi, TLP)* may be accepted as an exception on this subject. However, in many areas, TLP's policies resemble to the *Kemalist* arguments. But in terms of ethnic and national policies, it can be said that TLP is more liberal than other socialist formations. So, TLP will be used as a case study and I will focus on TLP's attitude to the Kurdish Question, which especially emerged as an ethnic and national question in the 1960s. Many actors of Kurdish political movement in that period are very effective within the TLP and this situation provides special conditions to the subject. For these reasons, in terms of analyzing Turkey's Left approaches to the ethnic and national questions, relation between TLP and Kurdish Question provided very feasible and practical example. Another reason for the choice of TLP in the approach of the Turkish Left to the Kurdish Question is that lot of Easterner (*Doğulu*) political actor were effective within TLP such as Tarık Ziya Ekinci Naci Kutlay, Kemal Burkay, Mehmet Ali Aslan and Canip Yıldırım. The TLP's approach to the Kurdish Question and its relationship of the Easterner groups will be discussed under two main questions; first question discussed in thesis that what is the real character of the relation between TLP and Kurdish political movement? In other words, is TLP's attitude to the Kurdish Question and Kurdish political movement is a sincere and intrinsic support or a practical and instrumental support? Is Kurdish movement struggle must be a part of Turkey's Left struggle or a separate movement from Turkey's Left?

Before examining the TLP's approach to the Kurdish Question in detail, some information has given on party organization and ideology. More significantly, the intra-party conflicts and the criticisms to the Party from other Left circles were also evaluated to discover the position of the Kurdish Question and the Eastern Groups in these discussions. The theoretical and practical position occupied by the Kurdish Question especially in the separation starting from 1968 in TLP is very significant in terms of understanding the relation between TLP and Kurds. Similarly, the approach of Mehmet Ali Aybar, Behice Boran and Sadun Aren, the leading figures of the party, to the problem and the relations with the Eastern group also provide significant clues to understand the nature of this relationship.

There is a dissertation that examines the relationship between TLP and the Kurdish political movement.<sup>1</sup> However, this study approaches the process of the mobilization of the Kurdish movement and examines how the Kurdish movement, as an ethnoregional movement, is politicized in the TLP. On the other hand, this study examines the subject from the perspective of the Turkish Left and the TLP, not from the perspective of the Kurdish movement.

The reason why I choose TLP is that debates among TLP's prominent figures provides basic arguments for both Turkey's Left experiences and theoretical disputes in socialism. In addition, the nature of the TLP's approach to the Kurdish Question and the collaboration between the TLP and the Kurds will be problematized, not the nature of the Kurdish political movement in the 1960s. One reason for such a problematization is that a similar alliance has recently been experienced in Turkish politics. Moreover, because of the (re)new alliance between Kurdish political movement and Turkey's Left, which represents in *Peoples' Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi, PDP)*, there must be studies which indicate relations between Turkey's Left and Kurdish Question in terms of theoretical and historical perspective.

The aim of this thesis is to reveal the nature of the relationship between the TLP and the Kurds. In this thesis, I will neither provide the history of the Turkish Left and TLP nor examine the emergence of the Kurdish political movement. I will investigate the view of the Turkish Left to the Kurdish issue which is at least as old as the date of the Republic. Within the Turkish left, the TLP is chosen as a case and I have argued that the discussions on the topic within the TLP contained the discussions in both the Turkish Left and the International Left literatures. One of the basic dilemmas of ideologies that claim to be universal, like socialism, is ethnic and national movements. How the Turkish left takes an attitude towards an ethnic problem like the Kurdish issue and how the problem is positioned in the face of international claims provides the basic framework to be discussed in this thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmet Alış, *The Process of The Politicization of the Kurdish Identity in Turkey: The Kurds and the Turkish Labor Party (1961-1971)*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, 2009.

## **1.2. The Methodology of the Study**

In this thesis, I have used memories of Kurdish political actors of 1960s such as Tarık Ziya Ekinci, Kemal Burkay, Canip Yıldırım and TLP's publications such as pamphlets, party programs and writings of TLP are leading actors such as Mehmet Ali Aybar, Sadun Aren, Behice Boran and Nihat Sargın. When examining memoirs, it is possible to encounter some basic problems such as the transfer of some events in different ways. In such cases, I have accepted true situation described in same ways in the different places or mentioned other quotations in the footnotes. In addition to these, TLP's parliamentary minutes was examined to analyze discussions of the Kurds' problems in parliamentary. In addition, local and foreign studies written in the TLP political life are also used in this thesis.

In this thesis, the TLP will be used as a case study in order to demonstrate the approach of the Turkish Left to the Kurdish Question. TLP is a political organization that emerged in the Turkish political life in the 1960s, and I also examined the history of the Left before 1960, when considering the approach of the TLP. However, instead of giving a general history of the Left before 1960, I specifically investigated the texts and attitudes related to the Kurdish issue. In this context, the names and movements such as the last Ottoman Movements, *Kadro* Magazine, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and *Yön* Magazine will be evaluated in terms of approach to the topic in this thesis. I will be revealed that how TLP had a common attitude towards the Kurdish problem with the pre-1960 Left movements and at what points it had separated from these movements.

## **1.3. Organization of the Study**

To illustrate how the issues argued in the Turkish Left are discussed in the international socialist community, in the Chapter I will be showed how debates of ethnic and national questions are discussed in the socialist literature. It is discussed in this chapter that Marx and Engels, who are the founders of socialism, approach the subject, the temporal breaks in Marx and Engels' handling of the issue, and the specific cases that they have developed the main arguments. After examining the ideas of Marx and Engels about the issue, I will focus on the discussion of the issues of V. Lenin, R. Luxemburg, J. Stalin



and O. Bauer, who have a more fundamental position in the socialist literature in terms of ethnic and national problem debates. The views of Lenin and Stalin will be examined in the light of the fact that these two names are the founders and significant leaders of the first socialist state and therefore the practical discussions as well as the theoretical discussions of Lenin and Stalin will be evaluated. In addition, the debate between Lenin and Luxemburg has been elaborated in detail, since this debate is not merely a theoretical discussion, but it reflects the problems faced by socialism in promoting the balance of theory and practice. In terms of Turkey's left, especially in the case of TLP, it will be seen that there is a similar debate and whether socialization is harmonized with local conditions or whether there is a solid commitment to scientific, classical socialism. Also, this section will examine the views of Bauer, one of the pioneers of Austrian socialism, approaching the issue from a very different perspective. Although Bauer is a name that is much more significant than the socialists today for discussing multiculturalism, it is also true that Bauer contributed a lot to the socialist literature in the ethnic and national debate. Finally, in this section, it will be argued in which context ethnic and national problem debates are discussed in the post-1980 socialist environment. In this period when classical socialism harshly criticizes, studies of names such as E. Laclau, C. Mouffe, A. Negri and M. Hardt will be examined.

In the Chapter II, the issue will be approached from the perspective of Turkey Left. When examining the Turkish Left, the problem is mostly handled in its historical context, as it will be seen that the leftist movements in Turkey cannot produce much sound arguments in the ethnic and national problem debates. A short history of the leftist movements that emerged for the first time in the last period of the Ottoman Empire will be given and will focus on the arguments produced in the Kurdish issue in the period after the War of Independence. In the Republican period, until the 1960s, the TCP, connected to the Comintern, dominated the left movements in Turkey. Two exceptions should be mentioned in this period; Hikmet KIVILCIMLI and *Kadro* Magazine. Although he has moved away from his findings in the next cycle of his life, it will be examined how Hikmet KIVILCIMLI approaches to the issue in the case of Kurdish question and how he benefited from his own personal experience by evaluating the problem. The theses developed by the *Kadro* Magazine for the Kurdish question (the Eastern question in that period), which started to come out with the aim of putting Kemalism and Kemalist revolutions on a theoretical basis, is another subject to be

examined in this section. Finally, in this section, I will focus on how to discuss the issue in the *Yön* Magazine, one of the most significant discussion platforms of the 1960 Turkish Left. For Kurdish intellectuals, for the first time, the ability to express themselves at national level is the most prominent feature of the *Yön* in terms of the Kurdish issue. In addition, the writings of Doğan Avcıoğlu, the editor of *Dire* Magazine, which both criticizes the approach of the Turkish socialists to the Kurdish question and that the socialists should pay more attention to the problem are the basic arguments to be examined at the end of this chapter.

In the Chapter III, TLP's approach to the Kurdish problem will be examined. Issues such as the establishment of the TLP, the identity of the party and how it approaches Turkey's problems must be examined in terms of making sense of the context in which the party considers the Kurdish question, and therefore this context has been covered first. Issues such as the land reform and development problem of the 1960s dominated debate on the Turkish Left will be particularly focused on understanding TLP's position. Moreover, the intra-party conflicts that prepared the end of the party were tried to be summarized and the position of the Kurdish problem was examined in these discussions. At first, it is understood that while the Kurdish delegates are about to stand within party discussion, it is later understood that the Kurdish question itself is a cause of disagreement and one of the basic reasons for the intra-party debates. The approach of Aybar and Aren and Boran to the main issues and especially their approach to the Kurdish question will be thoroughly examined and the debate will continue in the framework of this argument; It is possible to consider the debate between the leading names of the party such as Mehmet Ali Aybar, Behice Boran and Sadun Aren, which first started with practical issues but evolved into more theoretical dimensions, as analogous to the debate in classical socialist literature. On the other hand, why the Kurdish movement is organizing within the TLP and why it does not choose to organize in the other left organizations and parties are the main elements explaining the nature of the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish problem. How the Kurdish intellectuals see the party, what kind of activities they are acting outside of the party, their political agendas are the other issues to be examined in this section. I will focus entirely on the *Yeni Akış* magazine and Eastern Meetings, which is an significant part of the development of the Kurdish political movement and which is one of the earliest examples of the Kurdish movement's efforts to organize separately from the Left of

Turkey. Finally, in this section, the nature of the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish political movement will be questioned and the strategies that the representatives of the Kurdish movement are followed, especially after Aybar's departure from the party, will be emphasized.

The end of this thesis, the main claims within TLP about Kurdish Questions is aimed to present. In the conclusion, some determinations were made about the nature of the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish political movement. Moreover, these findings have been problematized in terms of understanding the present alliance, whether it is true for a case, or whether much similar collaboration are experienced in the historical and enthusiastic process that has been put forward.



## CHAPTER I

### 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: THE DEBATES OF ETHNIC AND NATIONAL QUESTIONS FROM MARX AND ENGELS TO 2000s

This part will scrutinize the basic debates about notions such as nationalism, ethnicity and the thoughts of socialist thinkers on the ethnic and national questions.

#### 1.1. Ethnicity, Nationalism and National Question

The ethnicity term is one of the most controversial concepts in social sciences. This concept is often used even in everyday conversation and can have different meanings depending on where it is used. Its definition can be made according to some criteria but since it is within other branches' area of interest it is very difficult to define this term. Steve Fenton, for example, makes a conceptualization by making a comparison between concepts such as ethnicity, race, racism, culture, and by addressing the issue separately in political and economic dimensions, with an emphasis on the modernity of the concept of ethnicity (Fenton, 1999; 4). The concept of ethnicity derives etymologically from *ethno* and the use of *ethno* in history had changed from one context to another. The Ancient Greeks used the term in different shapes; it describes other peoples such as Persians, it was used in the meaning a group of friends, it was used in the *Iliad* in the meaning of bee hive or flight. Similarly, the term was used by New Testament Writers to define all nationalist groups except the Christians (Smith, 2002; 45).

In the modern sense, the ethnicity term was begun to use in the 1950s and firstly it was used in 1953 by David Reisman. As a relatively new concept, ethnicity is evaluated as a form of belonging based on ethnic group, as a founder core of ethnic identity or as a distinction of a group from other groups (Yalçiner, 2014; 190). As Aktürk properly said, the ethnicity is one of the social categories such as religion, sect, language, tribe,

clan and race (Aktürk, 2006; 23). It can be defined that ethnicity is a situation brought by birth, a social organization that provides genetic intergenerational continuity and keeps traditions and languages alive (Yanık, 2013; 231). But ethnicity or ethnic identities are very significant in terms of understanding the character of nation-states.<sup>2</sup> Any nation-state relies on an ethnic or ethnic identity and in the process of formation of this state an ethnic or ethnic identity becomes more dominant than others. Nation-states are divided into categories according to their including ethnic identities. There are mono-ethnic, multi-ethnic and non-ethnic nation-states. In mono-ethnic states any ethnic category is considered identical with nations, in multi-ethnic states it is assumed that several ethnic categories constitute the nations and in the non-ethnic nations the state and the nation are defined on an axis out of ethnicity (Aktürk, 2006; 24).

Thus, the ethnicity term is very critical to define and understand nations and nationalism. Except the modernist approaches, all nationalism theories have centered ethnicity term on their analysis. In the same vein, because of the building of nation-state by giving particular importance a specific identity, ethnicity is very significant to understand evaluate nationalist and separatist movements. Before going on the national question and national movements, we must elaborate on nationalism to clarify relations between nation, nationalism and ethnicity.

The notions of nation, nationalism, national interest, and national identity are concepts that anyone agree on about their explicit meaning or definition. The word of nation is old though the nationalism is relatively new. The nation term is used before the modern era it meant only people linked by place of birth and culture (Calhoun, 1997; 9). Nationalism has no explicit meaning as well as nation. Elie Kedourie describes nationalism as below (quoted in Calhoun, 1997; 11);

Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. ... Briefly, the doctrine holds that humanity is naturally divided into nations that nations are known by certain characteristics which can be ascertained and that the only legitimate type of government is national self-government.

On the other hand, according to Gellner “nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent” (Gellner, 1983; 1). Gellner determines two basic components in his definition; nation and state. The

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<sup>2</sup>Smith regards ethnic identity as antecedent of nation and base of nation-state. See; (Smith, 2002).

natural result of two elements is that there is no nationalism problem in society that has no any state. Gellner suggest two different definitions for nation. These are (Gellner, 1983; 7);

- a) Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.
- b) Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, nations maketh man; nations are the artefacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities.

But, Calhoun rejects concrete criterions to define the nation or nationalism. According to him, "It is impossible to define the commonalities of these diverse forms of nationalism by a single explanatory variable- such as state building, industrialization, unequal economic development, or resentment. What is general is the discourse of nationalism" (Calhoun, 1997; 22). So, what is the nation and nationalism? To answer this question or to look at different answers, we must examine theories of nationalism.

Although the studies of nationalism began to start in the 1960s, after the 1980s nationalism was worked through and main stream approaches to the nationalism was improved in this era. The significant scholars about nationalism such as Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Antony Smith, Tom Nairn roughly pen their works in the same period.

Although nationalism works are quite feasible, one cannot encounter a definition that agreed on it. What is the nationalism? When and how it did firstly emerged? These questions are basic discussion topics in their works. The works of nationalism that try to answer to these questions are called theories of nationalism. As Calhoun said explicitly, "One of the major debates in the literature on nationalism is between those who see it as simply an extension of ancient ethnic identities and those who see it as distinctively modern" (Calhoun, 1997; 7). Theories of nationalism are divided three categories; a) Primordialist approaches, b) Modernist approaches and c) Ethno-symbolist approaches.<sup>3</sup> All three approaches basically have tried to explain the process of nationalism in the pre-modern and modern times. The most influential approach is the modernist approach. Hobsbawm, Gellner, Anderson and Nairn have shared modernist arguments. According

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<sup>3</sup>Umut Özkırmılı's work, *Milliyetçilik Kuramları*, provides comprehensive evaluations and critics these nationalism theories, see, (Özkırmılı, 2008).

to them, nations and nationalism emerged with or product of modern processes such as capitalism, industrialization, the formation of central state and urbanization (Özkırmılı, 2008; 105). It is impossible to think nationalism without these processes. From this perspective, nation is not a naturel and necessary component in the mosaic of society and history; the nation is the product of modern processes and thus it completely modern phenomenon (Smith, 2002; 30). This approach regards the nation as a fact that emerged in the nineteenth century and their motto is that nationalism creates nations, not nations create nationalism. Nations are described as an Imagined Communities (Anderson), as the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm) and as political and cultural changes associated with industrialization (Gellner). The common theme in these entire contexts is the emphasis of modernism and modernization's processes.

The other theory of nationalism is Primordialist approach. From the point of view this perspective, nationalism derives from early, primordial roots and sentiments such as speaking of certain language or having a certain traditions and rituals. Proponents of this view claims that nations and ethnic communities are complementary parts of human experiences and naturel units of history (Smith, 2002; 34). Nations and nationalism are not artificial or product of modern processes; nations and nationalism are constant and naturel phenomenon. The third theory of nationalism is Ethno-symbolist approach. Ethnosymbolism emphasizes the importance of symbols, traditions, values and myths in the formation and maintenance of nations (Majevadia, 2012). It is impossible to explain the modern nations without taking into consideration of its ethnic past. The myths, symbols, conventions that came from the past to the present determine the ingredients of nationalism and constitute the main filler of discourse (Özkırmılı, 2008;210). According to ethno-symbolist scholars, such as Antony Smith, "nations themselves are modern creatures (or that nations were 'consolidated' in the modern, industrial and post-industrial age), but that the pre-modern roots espoused by primordialism are also vital to understanding peoples' relationships to the nation" (Majevadia, 2012).

The process of modernization and the formation of nation-state based on ethnic identities has obliged to oppress some nations under the others rule. Every nations or national identities do not has own state in our time, when considered the age of Imperialism this situations became worse. With the wave of the nationalist movements from the beginning of the 18th century, and especially from the mid-18th century, a

concept entered political literature; national question. Primarily, national question is the product of the process of capitalist development. Following the Westphalia, traditional territorial units, i.e. empires began to vanish and a new form of government began the rise the world history; nation-state. Especially, from the mid-18th, nationalist trends shake the Europa's traditional structure. Although many nations separated from Empires such as Serbia, Greek, others failed to separate and form own nation-states. Poland and Ireland are the first examples that come to mind. Since of Marx' and Engels' exclusive attention to Britain and their basic concerns about Russian Empire, the national question is of interest to these thinkers.

Marx' and Engels' dealing with the national questions, the details of this interest will examine on the following pages. They, firstly, analyzed the process of capitalist mode of production and capitalist world system and they centered on their analysis continental Europe in general and Britain in particular. Especially in Ireland and Poland, the national question started to engage them in Europa. The struggles of Magyars, Serbians and Baltic nations are within Marx' and Engels' field of interest. Since these struggles started to separate Empires and to form own nation-state, the national question is foremost a political question, determined by political conditions of the time in the context of existing social economic structures (Gomez-Quinones, 1982; 63).

Consequently, ethnic and national questions are the obligatory parts of nation-states both in present and past. Marxist attitude from Marx and Engels to Hobsbawm and Laclau does not constitute integrity and their approaches are changeable from one context to another. Now, we can examine the approaches of outstanding Marxist figures on the ethnic and national question.

### **1.2.Marx' and Engels' Writings on Ethnic and National Questions**

The discussions of ethnic and national question take place in Marxist literature from Marx and Engels. But Marx and Engels did not systematically discuss this question and their ideas have derived from specific issues such as Poland and Ireland and a number of disjointed statements. Basically, we cannot say clearly something what Marx and Engels think about this question. Marx on early writings did not focused nationalism and national questions too much. When he touches upon these issues, it is seemed that Marx excessively believed that trade globalization and therefore national



differences will vanish in time. On the other hand, Marx and Engels write about a lot of issue but they did not pen anything on nationalism or national questions. So, why did these thinkers write anything on these matters? For Kasprzak (2012;587), “He (Marx) probably feared that writing on nationalism would not only acknowledge its growing power, but would also highlight the struggle between class and national affiliation”.

Because of the absence of complementary text of these thinker about these issues, it is generally assumed that Marx’ and Engels’ writings don’t provide us theoretical framework. Marx and Engels underestimated national problems or avoid writing these questions. But some scholars, such as Nimni, claims that there is underlying paradigm which makes their seemingly divergent analyses part of a coherent whole. “The main parameters of this paradigm are derived from three conceptions widely considered central to historical materialism: the theory of evolution; the theory of economic determination of the forces of production; the Eurocentric bias in the analysis of concrete case studies” (Nimni, 1989; 297).

In the critique of Nimni’s interpretation, Traverso ve Löwy criticizes Nimni’s claims. According to Traverso ve Löwy, “Marx and Engels formulated an *idea*, more than an accomplished *theory*, of the national question” (Traverso and Löwy, 1990; 135). On the contrast of Nimni’s emphasis on the *economic evolution* and Eurocentric concept of history, Traverso and Löwy contend that, as seen in the Irish example, the criterion that brought them to recognize Ireland as a historical nation was not economic, but essentially *political* ( Traverso and Löwy, 1990; 137).<sup>4</sup>

It is true that Marx’ and Engels’ writings do not form a consistent whole and it can be reasonable to determine their views according to some tangible political and historical events and critical times. As events, Ireland and Poland Questions are basic political and historical examples and on the other hand as time, year of 1848 and uprisings of 1848 are guide us to locate these scattered and incoherent thoughts. For example, according to Avineri there are two distinct analyses of nationalism in Marx, one pre- and one post-1848, which he calls first as the pre- modern paradigm and the latter as the bourgeois paradigm (Avineri, 1991; 639). In pre-1848 paradigm, national differences were taken

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<sup>4</sup> On the other side, Lim determine three parts to analyze Marx’s system of thought on the national question: the materialistic conception of history, the theoretical links- imperialism and the multilineal conception of historical development, phenomenal analyses. That is to say Lim attaches a new area in additon to Nimni’s economism and Traverso’s and Löwy’s politicism (Lim, 1992; 165).

as other pre-modern traits and they will disappear with the development of trade and spread of bourgeoisie's culture; eventually, all these differences integrated into world culture by the proletarian revolution. In post-1848 paradigm, nationalism was evaluated by Marx as a manner used by bourgeois to mobilize masses for larger markets and territorial consolidation.<sup>5</sup>

In early writings, Marx and Engels held a negative attitude toward nationalism and national problems. In this period, a strict anti-patriotism and the idea that development of capitalism, globalization of free trade would vanish national differences dominated Marx and Engels' writings. The *locus classicus* of that time are statements in *The Communist Manifesto* which are accepted Marx and Engels' the most explicit and unrefuted expressions. Because in the ensuing thoughts, the two thinker adhere to these statements and *The Communist Manifesto* is accepted a general framework by both a lot of Marxists and non-Marxists scholars.

Marx and Engels say in *Manifesto* (Marx and Engels, 1977; 124-125);

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the world.

National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world-market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

But Marx' and Engels' these statements have been interpreted different dimensions among following Marxists such as Roman Rosdolsky, whose evaluations is very significant and consistent. Rosdolsky examines how Marx and Engels use the notions of the nation and nationality and he argued that "they used the word 'nation' primarily to designate the populations of a sovereign state and used 'nationality' meant to them: either belonging to a state, specifically, a people having a state or mere ethnic community" (Rosdolsky, 1965; 333). Rosdolsky therefore contended that the phrase of "The working men have no country' refers to the *bourgeois national state*, not to nationality in the ethnical sense" (Rosdolsky, 1965; 336).

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<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Kasprzak identifies three distinct periods for Marx and Engels in this context: the early 1840s to the 1848 Revolutions; the 1850s and the 1860s; the 1870s to the death of the socialist forefathers (Kasprzak, 2012; 587).

Notwithstanding that Rosdolsky's evaluations are very significant; his interpretations not change Marx and Engels' philosophical background. No matter how Marx and Engels saw nations and nationalism, "the idea of progressive centralization as the economy develops from a lower to a higher stage is at the heart of Marx' and Engels' analysis of the national question" (Nimni, 1989; 308, also see Davis; 1994; 69). For Marx and Engels, capitalism means an insignificant economic phase and a world system. All nations and peoples must live through capitalism before transformation to socialism. Therefore, nationalities and national differences were seen as ephemeral things that would disappear simultaneously.

Not only the statements declared in *The Communist Manifesto* but also Marx' and Engels' writings about non-European nations in the pre-1848 provide us some reflections on analyzing Marx' and Engels' thoughts. India, China, Mexico and Algeria are areas on which Marx and Engels states their ideas. But when we look these writings, we see that both thinker's writings are congruent with to *The Communist Manifesto*. For example, in the war between Mexico and America, Engels and Marx supported America, "according to his explanation, 'the active Yankees would be better than indolent Mexicans' in assuring the economic growth of the region (Traverso and Löwy, 1990; 134). Similarly, in 1848, Engels said for invasion of Algeria by the French that "the conquest of Algeria is an significant and fortunate fact for the progress of civilization" (Engels;1848, in Avineri, 1969; 47). Engels' thoughts have Eurocentric point of view and he confirm conquest of France and deaths of Bedouins for the sake of progress of civilization. Moreover, by writing these statements, Engels didn't abstain from insulting Bedouins as saying them "marauding robber", "a nation of robbers". But, it must be stated that 1850 not means an explicit conversion in their ideas. It can be say that Marx' and Engels' started to change attitudes and thoughts but concept of economic steps continue to be basic character in their thoughts. For instance, Marx, in 1853, in which written articles on British rule in India, still maintained that England caused the only *social* revolution in Asia (Marx, 1853, in Avineri, 1969; 93), despite of its negative consequents and destructions on Indian culture and social life.

As for Marx' and Engels' thoughts on the Ireland and Poland Questions, we encounter different ideas that changed from one context to another but especially about Ireland. On the Irish Question, these thinkers have two different and conflicting evaluations.

Firstly, Marx and Engels object to the idea of Ireland's separation from England, because independence of Ireland in particular and the throwing of world from capitalism in general rely on proletarian revolution in England. Furthermore, Marx and Engels saw England as a cornerstone for idea of revolution. According to them, England was heart of capitalism and the conditions that are necessary for revolution matured in this country. For this reason, revolution in England is the key on the solving the freedom of Ireland or anywhere. Marx and Engels want Irish workingmen to joint Chartist movement and to struggle together against England for revolution rather than to form a separate movement.

After the 1850s, and especially after Engels' travel to Ireland in 1856, Marx and Engels subtly changed their ideas and they started to protect Irish Independence from England. In his journey to Ireland, Engels found an opportunity to see the ruined agricultural villages and England's lords who became more and more enrichment at the cost of Ireland's peasants. Engels understood that English colonialism have a negative impact upon both colonies and upon England and he written a letter to Marx that include Engels' impression on this topic. By the end of these experiences and studies, they recognize that British dominance in Ireland not supported envisaging revolution; on the contrary, it forms the biggest obstacle for the revolution. Marx says in a letter to Engels, in 1867, "Previously I thought Ireland's separation from England impossible. Now I think it is inevitable" (Marx and Engels, 1995;228). In the same vein, Marx written a letter to Kugelmann, in which he states "I have become more and more convicted- and the thing now is to drum this conviction into the English working class- that they will never do anything decisive here in England before they separate their attitude towards Ireland quite definitely from that of the ruling classes..." (Marx and Engels, 1995;270). Marx clearly stated these arguments in a letter to Engels (Marx and Engels, 1995;273);

"It is in the direct and the absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. ... For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Iris regime by English working class ascendancy. ... Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will never accomplish anything before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. That is why the Irish question is so significant for the social movement in general."

As seen above quote, the reason behind Marx's support Ireland's separation is the hastening process of revolution in England. Marx and Engels approached this issue in terms of England revolution and regarded the revolution in England as a criterion of judgment. They evaluate the independence of Ireland "not as a matter of sympathy but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat" (Marx and Engels, 1995; 270). Although Marx insisted upon the necessity of Irish independence, it cannot be say that he admitted its intrinsic value completely. Behind his argument, there was an instrumentalist viewpoint, that is to say, the Irish question is dealt with in terms of whether it contributed to the social revolution in England (Lim, 1992;170).

When examining Poland Question, it can be said that Marx and Engels followed a linear path compared to Irish Question. Marx and Engels defend the Poland's Independence from the beginning of the subject. It is interesting that Poland had neither national unity nor advanced national bourgeois to "deserve" independence and Marx and Engels are aware of this situation. Accordingly, there is a situation which not generate from Poland's specific conditions, like Irish example, instead of this, there is a situation which derived from external impetus. On Poland Question, external impetus is Russia, namely Tsar Regime and Marx' and Engels' attitudes on this issue was majorly determined by Tsar. According to Marx and Engels, Tsar Regime is the most reactionary and anti-revolutionary power and protector of these movements in Europa, especially in Eastern Europa. Both in the stopping of Napoleon's Army after the French Revolution and in the suppressing of revolutionary movements in 1848, Russia carried out successfully this 'duty'. So, by evaluating social and political events in Eastern Europa, the basic criterion is the Russia's position for Marx and Engels. In the same vein, Marx and Engels supported Poland's independence "less in the name of the general democratic principle of self-determination of nations than because of the struggle of the Poles against Tsarist Russia" (Löwy, 1976; 83) because "the re-emergence of an independent Poland would be a severe setback to Russia, and- this was central for Marx's thinking- it would set up a buffer state between a weakened Russia and the West, thus making Russian counter- revolutionary intervention more difficult and less likely" (Avineri, 1991; 642). Similarly, these thinker's view on Ottoman

Empire, namely Eastern Question<sup>6</sup>, is determined by Tsar's policy. Marx and Engels supported Turkey against Tsarist Russia and they held same position with British government. "Marx in the 1860s and 1870s supported British policy of propping up the Ottoman Empire: the emergence of Slavonic nation-states in the Balkans would greatly strengthen Russia, and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would also bring Russia to Constantinople and the shores of the Bosphorus (Avineri, 1991;642).

With regards to Engels, Poland Question differ from anywhere because while Engels supported Poland's Independence, he absolutely object to freedom of Slavonic nations such as Czechs and Serbians. While Poles, Czechs, Croats and Hungarians were all oppressed nations, Marx and Engels didn't give support Czechs and Croats in their struggle because the two nations collaborated with Tsarist army against Hungarian. Moreover, "The Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia refused to join the general bourgeois revolutionary movement within the German Confederation and, instead, set up in Prague a Pan-Slav Congress (Hoffman and Mzala, 1990/1991;418). The Czechs and Southern Slavs were prone to Pan-Slavist ideology and for Marx and Engels, Pan-Slavism must be precluded in Europe, therefore, these nations were "reactionary nations" at that time. "Support to the Czechs and the Pan-Slav movement at that time would have meant giving indirect support to tsarism, the most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary movement in Europe" (Hoffman and Mzala, 1990/1991; 419). To legitimize this political and practical argument, Engels made reference to Hegel's conceptualization of "historic nations" and "non-historic nations". For Engels, these nations couldn't be a nation on Hegelian context, which, according to Hegel, a 'people' can only exist as a 'nation', this is the only possible way for a nation to contribute to progress of world history. But every nation doesn't make to contribute equally and the capacity of building a new state that would provide high life standard depend on geographical settlement and also the naturel, ethnic and social characteristics of nations (Quoted in Davis, 1994; 13). According to Engels, neither Bohemia nor Croatia cannot accept as a nation and "their respective nationalities, gradually undermined by the action of historical causes that inevitably absorbs it into a more energetic stock, could only hope to be restored to something like independence by an alliance with other

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<sup>6</sup> The concept of the "Eastern Question" used here is a concept used by the Westerners and expressing the last period of the Ottoman Empire. In the following chapters, it should not be confused with the concept of the "Eastern Question" used to express the Kurdish Question.

Slavonic nations” (Marx and Engels, 1977; 341). Clearly, Engels advocate the assimilations of these ‘non-historic nations’ to another one. It must be said that Marx’ and Engels’ treatment to Poles, Czechs and Slavonic nations are determined by danger of Tsarism. So, both in the maintaining of Poland’s independence and in the rejecting Slavonic nations’ and Czechs’ freedom, Marx and Engels acted upon their relations with Russian Empire and Pan-Slavist movement.

In sum, Marx and Engels didn’t leave a legacy on ethnic and national question. They didn’t form a theoretical framework on this subject, instead, they declared their ideas specific to Poland, Ireland and the other national problems. In general, it can be said that their ideas on these questions are purposeful interpretations and they approached to the issue strategically and instrumentalist. “Marx and Engels saw nationalism as insignificant tactical factor to be manipulated in an ideological and political struggle” (Petrus, 1971; 823). So, what is the legacy that pass to their followers on ethnic and national question? Because of the lack of complementary whole, Marxist follower arrived at different conclusion on this subject. Next section will examine these different conclusions.

### **1.3.V. Lenin and J. Stalin Versus Rosa Luxemburg: Discussions of Self-Determination**

After Marxist founding fathers, discusses of ethnic and national questions increasingly continued. Nationalism and national liberation movements take placed more and more on the debates socialist literature. Lenin<sup>7</sup>, Stalin<sup>8</sup> and Luxemburg<sup>9</sup> are prominent figures who discuss this issue profoundly and their arguments have accepted basic socialist thesis on this subject. The first and the second of these, Lenin and Stalin,

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<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known as Vladimir Lenin, was born on April 22, 1870. He was deeply influenced Marxism with both its theoretical and political dimensions and was been the first socialist president in history, achieving the first socialist revolution. Lenin has become one of the most significant names to update Marxism with conceptualizations such as Imperialism, Self-determination, and Centralized Party mentality. Lenin died in Moscow in 1924, at the age of 53.

<sup>8</sup> Josef Stalin, born in 1878, is the president of the Soviet Union after Lenin. Although not as much as Lenin, Stalin also penned some theoretical texts in Marxism, but he came forward with his notion of statist socialism, which he had practiced from the 1930s rather than theoretically. After 31 years in power, Stalin died in 1953.

<sup>9</sup> Rosa Luxemburg was born in Poland in 1870. He is one of the most significant names in German socialism, and his economic political writings are especially significant in Marxist literature. In Marxism, she was considered the classic representative of the internationalist theses and worked in the First World War to ensure that neither the socialists nor the proletarians were parties to the war. Luxemburg was beaten and killed by German intelligence in 1919.

have same position, at least to some extent, on the other hand, Luxemburg strictly get an opposing position. Whereas Lenin and Stalin advocate the right of self-determination and support national liberation movements, Luxemburg object to the right of self-determination and national liberal movements, even including her own country, that is Poland's national liberal movement.

Since Lenin and Stalin is first socialist statesman, their ideas and arguments have become significant. As well as Lenin and Stalin drew up theoretical studies on this subject, they administered first socialist country in the world history and confronted these problems as an actor. When their theoretical arguments and practical implications are evaluated together, it can be possible to arrive at some conclusions. Thus, both Lenin' and Stalin's ideas must be interpreted by taking into consideration of their implications. On theoretical dimension, firstly Stalin's ideas will examine and later Lenin's ideas.

### **1.3.1. Stalin's Ideas on National Question**

*Marxism and the National Question* is Stalin's well-known article on this subject, written in 1913. It is known that Lenin suggested to Stalin to write this article in Vienna and said "in a letter to Gorky in February 1913 he spoke of the 'marvelous Georgian who has sat down to write a big article'" (Löwy, 1976; 95). Moreover, Lenin described this article as a "very good one" and at the end of 1913 he wrote that Stalin's article "stands out in first place" (Quoted in Davis, 1978; 81). But, in the follower socialist theoretical literature, the arguments of this article and definition of nation didn't hold in high honour, on the contrary, when it is considering in practical dimension, Stalin's thoughts become very effective on program of Bolshevik Party and "Stalin was accepted as the expert on the national question in the Bolshevik Party; he was made Commissar of Nationalities in the first Bolshevik Cabinet" (Davis, 1978; 81).

As for Stalin's arguments on this article, it can be seen that there is a firm and restricted definitions of nation and national movement. Firstly, Stalin explained that why he wrote this article and he tackle notion of nation. Stalin accepted the nation as a concept that depend on the period of the rise of capitalism. According to him, "a nation is primarily a community" but "this community is not racial, nor is it tribal" and thus "a nation is not a racial or tribal, but a historically constituted community of people" (Stalin, 2012; 8). On



the other hand, some great communities in the history, such as Cyrus and Alexander, could not be called nations, they were coincidental and loosely-connected conglomeration of groups which joined together with regard to defeats or victories and thus, a nation is not random or ephemeral group of people but stable community of people (Stalin, 2012;8-9).

But every stable community doesn't form a nation. Stalin pays attention to the language factor and for Stalin a nation cannot be inconceivable without common language among members of that nation. So the language factor is the distinguished characteristic to constitute a nation. On the other hand, this doesn't mean that "different nations always and everywhere speak different languages, or that all who speak one language necessarily constitute one nation" (Stalin, 2012;9) and having a same language also is not enough to regard any community as a nation. For example, Englishmen and Americans speak same language but they don't constitute one nation. To form a nation, that community must live together on the same territory for long time, thus, a common territory is one of the characteristic features of a nation.

But it was not over yet. In addition to common territory, common language, a stable and historical community, there must be a common economic life. Since Stalin accepted nation as a historical category belonging to the epoch of rising capitalism, he saw *common economic life* as a basic characteristic of a nation. Finally, Stalin, adds a category to these, *a common psychological make-up*, which manifests itself in a common culture, is one of the characteristic features of a nation and he describes nation like that "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture." (Stalin, 2012; 11).

Stalin is determined to describe a nation according to these compulsory criteria and moreover, he claim that "it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation" (Stalin, 2012; 12). For example, English and Irish aren't same nation because of lacking of common territory; Georgian, Galician, American Jews don't constitute a nation because of lacking of common economically disunited, inhabit different territories, speak different languages, and so forth. Thus, according to Stalin, "it is only when all these characteristics are present together that we have a nation" (Stalin, 2012;12).

As for Stalin's views on national movements, Stalin says that national liberation movements are concerned with rising of capitalism, such nations, and national liberation struggles started between bourgeoisies of oppressed and oppressing nations, not between nations as a whole. "The struggle is usually conducted by the urban petty bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation against the big bourgeoisie of the dominant nation (Czechs and Germans), or by the rural bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation against the landlords of the dominant nation (Ukrainians in Poland), or by the whole "national" bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations against the ruling nobility of the dominant nation (Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine in Russia)" (Stalin, 2012;19). Hence, national struggle is a struggle between bourgeois classes, oppressed and oppressing. In some cases, it can be seen that national struggle externally assumes a nationwide character but in its essence it is always bourgeois struggle.

Stalin supported the right of the self-determination and absolutely rejected Bauer's national- cultural autonomy. For Stalin, Bauer's formulation means a subtle form of nationalism. According to Stalin, "there is no need to mention the kind of 'socialist principle of nationality' glorified by Bauer, which, in our opinion, substitutes for the socialist principle of the class struggle the bourgeois 'principle of nationality'" (Stalin, 2012; 41-42). Stalin, instead of cultural-national autonomy, suggest regional autonomy to solve problems of national questions. Also, the right of self-determination is a basic factor on the solving of national question. From Stalin's point of view, the right of self-determination means that "only the nation itself has the right to determine its destiny, that no one has the right forcibly to interfere in the life of the nation, to destroy its schools and other institutions, to violate its habits and customs, to repress its language, or curtail its rights" (Stalin, 2012; 23). On the other hand, Stalin clearly said that the support of the right of self-determination doesn't mean that socialists must support all kinds of national movements and demands of self-determination. The basic key criterion in the supporting or not supporting of the right of self- determination depend on whether it is in favor of proletarian movement or not. Moreover, it cannot be said that a decision isn't correct on every conditions, and so "the solution of the national question is possible only in connection with the historical conditions taken in their development" (Stalin, 2012; 26). As a result, the right of self-determination is not an absolute right. It hinges on material conditions and environment in which be shaped national question is determinant factor to support or not support a national liberation

movement rather than deciding as seeing the specific conditions of that national liberal movement. It is possible to see this approach on Lenin's treatments to national liberation movement. But Lenin's arguments are very effective and strong as theoretical than Stalin.

### **1.3.2. Lenin and Self-Determination**

Another effective figure in the Russian context and literature is Lenin who is accepted founding father of the first Socialist state in the history. Lenin excessively dealt with problems of national question on theoretical and practical dimensions. His arguments can accept the most effective and influential ideas in socialist literature in terms of national question. Stalin's article in general and approaches to the national movement, definition of nation don't gain acceptance in Marxist literature and Marxist scholars who are prone to focus Lenin's ideas and arguments instead of focusing Stalin's thoughts. Lenin avoided making definitions of nation and he focused the concept of self-determination. Although predecessors of Marxism, Marx and Engels, didn't use this term, Self-determination is a key word to understand Lenin's approach to the national question. What is the major motivator for Lenin to write a lot of article and brochure on this issue?

To understand Lenin's attitudes to the national problems, the conditions of Russian Empire in the later nineteenth century must take into consideration. "The census of the year 1897 had disclosed that non-Great-Russians constituted the majority of the population of the Tsarist Empire, about 56% of its inhabitants" (Low, 1958; 19). In addition to this data, the administration of Tsar Alexander III is another factor that shape the Lenin's attitudes and encourage him to do more detailed studies on the nationality policy. In this period, some national minorities plunged into a quest to resist Russification policy. For example, the Jewish community in Russian Empire established their own labor organization, called *Bund*, in 1897. Lenin's attention on national question started in this period. Firstly, Lenin briefly touched upon this subject in his article, "*What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*", in 1894. From 1894 to Revolution and death of Lenin, there is a rather striking continuity in his arguments on national questions and to a large extent, he didn't abandon his early ideas and he developed them in regard to specific issues. Lenin's the

most famous and relevant writings on national question are written after 1913. The period between 1913- 1917 is the most feasible era in terms of Lenin's work on this subject.

In contrast with Stalin's strict definitions, one cannot encounter such definitions in Lenin's writings. "While he devotes considerable space to a discussion of the Party's nationality policy and of its meaning and writes abundantly on the Party's tactics and strategy in regard to the national problem, he does not come to grips with the more abstract and theoretical, and less urgent and practical, problem of the character and essence of nationality and nationalism" (Low, 1958; 29). According to Lenin, nationalism is an ephemeral phenomenon and it is a by-product of historical evolutionism of capitalism. He said "since the leaders and masters of this process were the merchant capitalists, the creation of these national ties was nothing else than the creation of bourgeois ties" (Lenin, 1977, Collected Work (CW) Vol 1; 155) Lenin absolutely declared that "Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the "most just", "purest", most refined and civilized brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity" (Lenin, Vol. 20; 33). In the same vein, "the proletariat cannot support any consecration of nationalism; on the contrary, it supports everything that helps to obliterate national distinctions and remove national barriers; it supports everything that makes the ties between nationalities closer and closer, or tends to merge nations" (Lenin, Vol. 20; 35). Lenin makes close contact between capitalism and national bourgeois national state. "... (T)he national state is the rule and the "norm" of capitalism; the multinational state represents backwardness, or is an exception. From the standpoint of national relations, the best conditions for the development of capitalism are undoubtedly provided by the national state" (Lenin, Vol 20; 400). So capitalism is more close stage than feudalism to socialism and proletarian revolution.

Lenin interpreted nationality problems in Western Europa in two stages. Bourgeois-democratic revolutions, as he called, played two edged roles on developing capitalism and national state. In the first one, it was progressive and this encompasses the period approximately from 1789 to 1871. This was the period of national movements and constitution of national state. In the second one, it played reactionary and imperialist role in the non-Europe regions. The system now, Lenin said, "is a handful of imperialist

“Great” Powers (five or six in number), each oppressing other nations: and this oppression is a source for artificially retarding the collapse of capitalism, and artificially supporting opportunism and social-chauvinism in the imperialist nations which dominate the world” (Lenin, Vol. 22;342). So, Marx and Engels did not live to see imperialism and according to Lenin, the problems of national questions must be think in regard to new imperialist conditions. For example, Marx and Engels analyzed Asiatic nations with Eurocentric and orientalist view and they condemn these nations, Lenin says that “... capitalism, having awakened Asia, has called forth national movements everywhere in that continent, too; that the tendency of these movements is towards the creation of national states in Asia; that it is such states that ensure the best conditions for the development of capitalism” (Lenin, Vol. 20; 399).

It is no doubt that self-determination is basic concept to understand and evaluate Lenin’s thoughts on national question. Throughout his life, Lenin absolutely advocated the principle of self-determination and he argued with that everyone who describe himself as a Marxist must support this right. But, what is the meaning of self-determination in Leninist context? Lenin directly and obviously makes a definition of self-determination. For Lenin, self-determination has a concrete meaning and according to him, “if we want to grasp the meaning of self-determination of nations ... we must inevitably reach the conclusion that the self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, and the formation of an independent national state” (Lenin, Vol. 20; 397). In other words, Lenin describes the right of self-determination as a secession of a nation from another one and establishment of own state. Further briefly, for Lenin the right of self-determination means or is equivalent to secession of oppressed nationality. Lenin rigorously denied the accusations, of which he encourages separatism by supporting self-determination. Lenin likens this situation to the right of divorce and he said against charges that “to accuse those who support freedom of self-determination, i.e., freedom to secede, of encouraging separatism, is as foolish and hypocritical as accusing those who advocate freedom of divorce of encouraging the destruction of family ties” (Lenin, Vol.20; 422). Self-determination primarily is a democratic demand that social democrats must support under all conditions. Lenin makes a distinction between demanding the right of self-determination and implication of self-determination. The demand of secession is pertinent right for all nations. But implications of secession might differ from one

context to another. “The categorical requirement of Marxist theory in investigating any social question is that it be examined within definite historical limits, and, if it refers to a particular country (e.g., the national programme for a given country), that account be taken of the specific features distinguishing that country from others in the same historical epoch” (Lenin, Vol. 20; 401-402). The principle of self-determination must be placed within its larger context. The ultimate aim of proletariat is socialist revolution but on the board of revolution, proletariat must support the right of self-determination. When compared with socialist revolution, discussion of self-determination subordinate to the aim of revolution and to support or not support any national struggle or the demand of secession depend on conditions of proletariat revolution. “National self-determination, a democratic demand, must therefore be proclaimed immediately, not only for the sake of the proletarian and socialist revolution, but also for the sake of the more immediate democratic revolution” (Low, 1958; 42).

On the other hand, Lenin uphold larger and centralized states rather than particularistic formations. Does this opinion conflict with the right to self-determination? As Lenin recurrently professed and advocated, the principle of self-determination is backbone of Lenin’s theory and nationality policy of Russian Socialists and it is incompatible with supporting larger state. However, Lenin’s position is clear on supporting larger states. “*Other conditions being equal*, the class-conscious proletariat will always stand for the larger state” (Lenin, Vol. 20; 45). Lenin was convicted that the multinational state is further correct decision for proletarian and it is interest of unity and integration of proletarian against the splitting up of states, disintegration and nationalism. Proletarian and Party must support multinational states on account of its providing advantages for struggle against bourgeois and nationalists and of economic reasons, which leads amalgamation Lenin emphasizes on either larger state or centralized state. He evaluates centralized state as functional in order to form economic amalgamation and to create state’s all proletariat as a conglomerate in fighting against and overthrow of bourgeois. The great centralized state, in the words of Lenin, “is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the future socialist unity of the whole world, and only via such a state (inseparably connected with capitalism), can there be any road to socialism” (Lenin, Vol.20;46).

Lenin had awakened the conflict between in the supporting the right of self-determination and preference of larger centralized state. He improved concept of 'voluntary integration' to harmonize the principle of the right of self-determination and larger state. While the Social Democrats of oppressing nations must insist on separation and fight to imperialism, the Social Democrats of oppressed nations must demand freedom of integrate. Beyond these category, the proletariat must fight for internationalism and amalgamation of nations under all circumstances (Lenin Vol. 22;347);

Social-Democrat from a small nation must emphasise in his agitation the second word of our general formula: "voluntary integration" of nations. He may, without failing in his duties as an internationalist, be in favour of both the political independence of his nation and its integration with the neighbouring state of X, Y, Z, etc. But in all cases he must fight against small-nation narrow-mindedness, seclusion and isolation, consider the whole and the general, subordinate the particular to the general interest.

Lenin thought to solve, in his opinion, this antagonism by means of 'freedom of integration'. But it is clearly seen that freedom of integration did not solve the problem in the rationale and dialectical dimensions because Lenin insist on the right of self-determination for oppressed nations. One reaches naturally at conclusion that the principle of self-determination is not absolute and permanent right which will implement under all circumstances. Lenin seems to accept this dilemma and he wrote in a letter to Shahumyan "the right to self-determination is an *exception* to our general premise of centralization. This exception is absolutely essential in view of reactionary Great-Russian nationalism" (Lenin, Vol. 19;501).

In the same vein, it is not surprising that Lenin sharply rejected federation for national minorities. According to Lenin, federalism weakens economic integration. He did not accept that self-determination means federalism and he contented it does not imply the right to federation. Lenin stated "federation means the association of equals, an association that demands common agreement" and asked this question; "How can one side have a right to demand that the other side should agree with it?" (Lenin, Vol. 19; 500). Federation, for Lenin, mutual agreement and it categorically differ from self-determination. Above all, demand of self-determination is a struggle against imperialists or Tsar Regime and serve for overthrowing of bourgeois. On the other hand, interestingly, Lenin advocated autonomy for national minorities. But the Lenin's using

of the concept of autonomy differ from general meaning of the term. In Lenin's concept, autonomy is a complementary part of centralized nation state because autonomy "facilitates the concentration of capital, the development of the productive forces, the unity of the bourgeoisie and the unity of the proletariat on a country-wide scale" (Lenin, Vol. 20;47). A state that did not grant such autonomy for some regions cannot be truly, modern democratic state.

While sharply criticizing Otto Bauer's theory of cultural-national autonomy, Lenin especially pay attention on an impact of this theory, the principle of 'taking educational affairs out of the hands of the state'. Lenin opposed to cultural-national autonomy in general and sharply rejected the giving educational affairs to the local units in particular. For Lenin, the division of educational affairs in regard to nationalities means clearly to join a harmful propaganda. Lenin consider equal this principle with the giving educational affairs to the hands of clerical school. With regards to Marxists, Lenin said, "no departure from this general programme is anywhere or at any time permissible in a democratic state (the question of introducing any "local" subjects, languages, and so forth into it being decided by the local inhabitants)" (Lenin, Vol. 20;43).

Lenin is not only theoretical prominent figure on national question, but he also is a statesman who has an opportunity to implement his ideas about this issue. When evaluated and analyzed Lenin's ideas, one must take into account his implementations in Soviet experience. During and after Revolution, Lenin shaped Soviet national policy both theoretical and practical dimensions. It is possible to measure Lenin's practical implementations whether they are conformity with his claims or not. The relationship between borders regions and central Soviet government is in accord with the right of self-determination. The separation of Finland from Russia is first implementation of the principle of self-determination and by sending Stalin to the meticulous ceremony as a represent of Soviet government; Soviet government recognized Finland's independence. In the following, other Baltic nations gained independence and separated from Russia. Did this process continue like Finland and other Baltic nations?

Lenin follow two pronged policies toward the border peoples, which, on the one hand, he recognized and supported demand of separation from Russia, like Finland case, on the other hand, he mobilized in each territory the friends of revolution, encouraged them to set up a revolutionary government, and he insure the accession of this government to



power, if it is necessary, with the aid of Red army troops (Davis, 1978; 69). The principle of self-determination was implemented only in Poland, where Red army was defeated, and in Baltics republics, where Western powers had established their military occupation. The demand of self-determination of Georgia and Armenia was refused by giving justification of proletariat' and revolution' interests. Hence, Lenin never implemented the right of self-determination in a way that will damage the interest of the Soviet Union (Kakışım, 2016; 52).

When one examine Lenin's critical essays on national question, it is possible to find the clues of these claims. Primarily, it is emphasized on that Lenin accepted the transience of support to self-determination and he evaluates every national demand, ever national separation from the angle of class struggle of workers. Lenin, clearly, points out this position that "The several demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not an absolute, but only a small part of the general-democratic (now: general-socialist) world movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected" (Lenin, Vol. 22;341). In the same vein, Lenin sums up the characteristic of support to the self-determination, he said "the main *thing* today is for the utilization of *all* national movements against imperialism for the purposes of the socialist revolution" (Lenin, Vol. 22;343).

As can be seen on quotes, Lenin sharply supported the right of self-determination; however, he advocated this principle for the sake of class struggle and proletariat's fight against bourgeois. For Lenin, the idea of Socialist Revolution was never abolished and he did not abandon main Marxists principles and approaches to the national liberation movements. Whereas he strictly advocated the right of self-determination in theory, despite of many conflictive phrases, he did not carry out this principle in practical dimension. He followed ambivalent policy toward borders nation before and after February Revolution. In spite of his fervent phrases to support self-determination, he supported for instrumentalist but not immanent and intrinsic reasons. Therefore, after February Revolution the majority of Russian Empire territory bring together under the same roof of Soviet Union.

### 1.3.3. Rosa Luxemburg and the Defend of Internationalism

Rosa Luxemburg, on the other hand, takes a different position on National Question. She evaluated the problems of national question from economic perspective and the needs of capitalist development are the first factor for her by analyzing the conditions of any question. She wrote her doctorate thesis about economic relations between Poland and Russia and her results that deduce from this study majorly determined her treats on national question in general and on Poland question in particular. As an economist, she elaborated capitalist system and with her results, she is conformity with Marx' and Engels' optimist internationalism. Although, at least in particular cases, Marx and Engels made some concessions from their internationalisms, Rosa Luxemburg uncompromisingly defend international aspect of Socialism through her life.

For Rosa Luxemburg, there is no by means of absolute rights from Marxist perspective, since dialectic materialism does not recognize the existence of rights and dialectic materialism embed in eternity this kind of eternal formulations because historical dialect demonstrates that there is no eternal and correct rights. (Luxemburg, 2010;110). According to her, "words like 'right', 'ethics', 'duties' and 'obligations' were clear evidence of outdated modes of thoughts" (Nettl, 1966; 848). The rights and wrongs of a situation are determined by analysis of the given historical circumstances. To speak of any rights in capitalist society, for example the right of self-determination means that they had to right to eat of gold plates. Or in other example, even if governments are forced to announce right of labor, it can be nothing from being an idiom that is sound nice and not only a single worker waiting on the sidewalk cannot bring a bowl of soup to his home thanks to this right (Luxemburg, 2010; 121). It can only be possible in Socialist society, not in capitalist and class society.

In the same vein, Rosa Luxemburg fervently opposed to the right of self-determination. She elaborated this subject both in polemics with Lenin and Poland's position. For her, the right of self-determination essentially is not a political and problematical suggest containing nationality problem; it is only a devise of glossing over of problem. The right to national self-determination is incompatible with socialist paradigm and developing of capitalist progress. The notion of right cannot be acceptable for Rosa Luxemburg, as

seen above, and as for national self-determination, the notion of 'national' is problematic notion for her because who is that nation?, who have the right and authority of speaking of on the behalf of nation and expressing of the nation's will? According to her, in a class society there is no a nation as a social-political existence. The bourgeois class and proletariat class does not take or cannot take same attitude toward economic, international or juridical matters. For example, in international affairs, whereas bourgeois represent a policy of war and sharing, proletariat is side of peace and free trade policy (Luxemburg, 2010; 133). Finally, from the point of her view, capitalist conditions do not provide any rights to proletariat or interest of proletariat, including the right of self-determination. Socialist regime will realize the nation as a will in a body and concrete conditions of determination of self-determination (Luxemburg, 2010; 136).

Rosa Luxemburg, contrary to Marx, Engels and Lenin, strictly opposed to separation Poland from Russia and to form an independent national state. Marx and Engels support Poland's independence to weaken Tsar Regime and to prevent Russia's expansion to Europa on the basic of Pan-Slavism. Rosa Luxemburg confirms Marx' and Engels' methods by which they used to support the Poland's separation because they improved this attitude by analyzing Russia' and Germany's concrete political conditions. This is a successful and dialectic Marxist analysis but they developed a wrong attitude toward Poland's conditions. Today, in 1900s, international and Europa's, especially Tsar Regime's, conditions radically changed and Poland's separation and form of a national state is a reactionary step in terms of developing capitalist conditions and interests of proletariat. While Luxemburg opposed to separation of Poland, she evaluates Poland's conditions and claimed that socialists do not have a general principle that can implement every time and condition. She paid attention Poland's economic affairs with Russia and "she saw Polish lands as 'organically incorporated' not only with Russia, but with Austria and Germany as well" (Walicki, 1983; 569). Although Marx and Engels supported Poland's independence no theoretical arguments but practical and political concerns, Tsar Regime, she said, gains its internal forces from internal affairs within Russia, not from its yoke on Poland (Luxemburg, 2010; 49). The reason behind supporting Poland's separation to undermine Tsar Regime is not valid in this capitalist stage. In that era, capitalism arrived final stage and socialist not focused only Tsar Regime but also France' and Germany's conditions. Poland's independence not only damage Poland's own interest but also European revolutionary movements as a whole

because “Russia, in its turn, ceased to be the bastion of European reaction, becoming instead of the cradle of a powerful revolutionary movement whose victory was of crucial importance for the fate of socialism in Europe” (Walicki, 1983; 570). Finally, Luxemburg confesses that socialists insist on internationalism “to preserve the purity of proletarian class consciousness as a matter of principle” (Walicki, 1983; 570). She claims that national struggle is bourgeois struggle and it serves interests bourgeois class. A political discrimination that aim specific nationality is the most strong devise in the hands of bourgeois that will to veil class struggle and to deceive its own proletariat (Luxemburg, 2010; 163).

According to Rosa Luxemburg, from the perspective of capitalist development, it is not only required free markets, but also required a whole devise of modern capitalist state. That’s why historical mission of bourgeois is the establishment of modern national state (Luxemburg, 2010:160). As the establishment and progress of modern state is very significant factor, the process of modern state is also very determinant factor to analyze the subject of national problems. The needs and organization of modern state through its territory bring about different formulations. Primarily, the basic character of this state is to provide its centralization and to demolish Feudal borders. Moreover, modern bureaucracy is the most effective weapon in the hands of bourgeois class to set up its free market throughout the country. Rosa Luxemburg considered these aspects of modern state when discussing the matter of autonomy and federation. According to her, bourgeois economy need skillful and efficient administrators for public affairs since, with its stability and monotony, central bureaucracy cannot overcome public affairs (Luxemburg, 2010; 204) and so, to balance the centralization of modern state, it is required locality in modern state.

Despite her opposition of self-determination, in order to improve the modern capitalist state and fulfilment of local needs Luxemburg defends the autonomy in the modern state. On the other hand, she also opposed to federation principle. She accepted the central aspect of modern state as a given situation and modern socialist movement, as a legitimate child of the capitalist development, has the same centralist character with modern bourgeois society and state (Luxemburg, 2010; 181). Thus, social democracy is a strict opponent of federations and particularisms in every country and these are Feudal organizations. She confesses that the remnants of Feudalism stayed protect of monarchy

in Europe. But Rosa Luxemburg, supported Poland's federation as a particular example and she has a simple explanation to reject the demand of federation of others nationalities; they are very small to form a federation.

In 1916 Rosa Luxemburg wrote the Junius pamphlet from prison cell and in this pamphlet she again tackled the problems of national questions. She seemed to moderate her thoughts on national question and the principle of self-determination. She said "it is true that Socialism recognizes for every nation the right of independence and the freedom of independent control of its own destinies" (Hudis and Anderson, 2010; 482). But at the same time she recurrently claim that self-determination is impossible under the capitalist conditions. National wars are by means of impossible not only the context of expansion dimension but also dimension of the defending own country in today's (in 1916) imperialist environment. "As long as capitalist state exists, that is to say, as long as eternal and external policies of any nation are determined and organized by imperialist policies; the right of self-determination is not even a matter of discussion on peace or war." (Hudis and Anderson, 2010; 484).

Contrary to Lenin and Stalin, Rosa Luxemburg opposed to the right of self-determination. Rosa Luxemburg, instead of approaching the issue with political and periodical concerns, tackle the subject in the large context. For her, Socialist revolution means the world socialist revolution and any attempt to localize revolution idea is not a Marxist attitude. The future of Poland or any country can only evaluate by considering the whole socialist movement. Luxemburg, to legitimize her ideas, majorly make reference to Marx' and Engels' early writings. She used the formulation of non-historic nation when explaining why she support Poland's federation and why she rejected others, such as Lithuania and Georgia. But, when compared with Lenin and Stalin arguments and implementations, Luxemburg's thoughts follow a linear line. Throughout her life, she remains loyal to Orthodox Marxism.<sup>10</sup>

#### **1.4.Otto Bauer and Cultural- National Autonomy**

In Austrian-Marxist context, problems of ethnic and national questions are taken place in a different dimension than Russian or Poland context. In the earlier of twenty

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<sup>10</sup> Orthodox Marxism is a static Marxist teaching, shaped around the themes of Marx's estrangement, proletarian accent, revolution, and more often systematized, even been doctrine, after his death.

centuries, Austria was a multinational state and Vienna in particular, empire in general contain in themselves different ethnic and national groups such as Germans, Magyars, Poles, Croats. Vienna, in that time, was a metropolitan city such as London or Paris and with rapid industrialization, migrations from rural areas to urban districts give rise to increase the population of capital more than four times in fifty-three years (Bauer, 2000; Introduction)<sup>11</sup>. The basic concern for Austrian Marxists, particularly Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, is how these different nationalities go on to coexist in the Empire. National problems in polyglot empire threatened not only damage the state but also weaken international proletarian solidarity. “A most significant discussion of the nationality question took place at the Bruenn Congress of the Austrian Social Democratic Party” (Low, 1958; 23). This Congress was in 1899 and they offered a suggestion to solve this problem, called cultural-national autonomy.

Cultural-national autonomy is the specific solution proposed by Otto Bauer and Karl Renner. Especially Bauer’s famous work, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, summed up basic arguments about cultural-national autonomy. Bauer’s definitions and emphasizes on cultural-national autonomy are the most prominent components. How Bauer does describe the concept of nation? According to him, nation, above all, is a relative community of character. The nation has a national character and there is a range of characteristics that are peculiar to each nation and distinguish it from other nations (Bauer, 2000; 22). The individual members of nation have individual characteristics that distinguish them from another. The community of character is the basic components of Bauer’s definition and he adds to this ‘community of fate’. Although it is very questionable how the notions of character and fate are accommodated to materialistic view, Bauer’s definition basically rely on two elements; national character and community of fate. Thus, the definition of Bauer is that “the nation is the totality of human beings bound together through a common destiny into a community of character” (Bauer, 2000; 117). The nation is seen as a community of fate, as Munck said, “its character resulted from the long history of the conditions under which people labored to survive” (Munck, 2010; 49).

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<sup>11</sup>The version of Bauer’s book used in this study was published in English in 2000. The editor of this publish is Ephraim Nimni and Nimni wrote an enlightening introduction to this work.

Bauer regards nations as a product of history and historical and social constructs. There are two reasons why he define nations as a historical phenomenon; firstly, in terms of its material determination it is a historical phenomenon, since “the national character actively manifested in every member of the nation is the precipitate of a historical development”; second, it is a historical phenomenon from the point of view of its formal structure, “because spheres of different dimensions are bound together to form a nation by different means and in different ways at the various stages of historical development” (Bauer, 2000; 119). In short, the community of character is formed by historical conditions.

Another basic element is cultural-national autonomy in Bauer’s approach. Bauer, primarily, does not reject territorial demarcations of nations and he accepted that this principle can be implemented in some areas but “the territorial principle in its pure form leaves these minorities everywhere at the mercy of the majority” (Bauer, 2000; 270). Bauer advocates that one must see national question not from a narrow local point of view, instead of this, one must see national question in terms of the whole empire. When looked general conditions in Empire, it can be observable that “national self-determination on the basis of the territorial principle would simply provoke renewed national struggles” and because of this reason, “the territorial principle cannot satisfy the demands of the working class” (Bauer, 2000; 271).

Bauer defended cultural autonomy in the solving of national problems instead of regional self-determination or federation. He formulated his theory on the basis of personality principle. “The aim of the personality principle is to constitute the nation not as a territorial corporation, but as an association of persons” (Bauer, 2000; 281) and national autonomy can be founded purely on the personality principle. National autonomy is valid for every nation, including Jews and Bund in Russia was benefited from the Bauer’s theories. Bauer explained what they must do in order to organize the rights of different nationalities; “We would only need to constitute the members of a nation within the parish, within the district or canton, within the crown land, and ultimately within the empire as a whole as a public body with the task of attending to the cultural needs of the nation, of establishing schools, libraries, theaters, museums, and institutions of popular education and of providing the nation’s members with legal assistance when dealing with the authorities, insofar as they require this due to a lack of

command of the language employed by state departments and courts” (Bauer, 2000; 283).

Bauer’s theory is criticized in terms of several points. First of all, He griped with the subject Austria’s case and he generalized his conclusion to implement in anywhere. Every national state does not identical with each other from the point of eternal policies. Secondly, Bauer did not include enough class struggle and basic Marxist arguments such proletariat revolution. Moreover, Bauer almost completely excluded classes from the sphere of national culture and national question (Löwy, 1976; 93). Finally, the concept of cultural-national autonomy was accused of inspiring Fascist ideology. However, Bauer makes great contribution to the Marxist literature on the national question. Although, he does not gain recognition in Marxist follower as Lenin, his contributions and arguments have used in liberal scholars on the multiculturalism discusses.

### **1.5.Socialist Paradigm on Ethnic and Identity Problems After 1980s**

After Soviet Revolution and the First World War, the Marxist internationalism started to vanish in Marxist literature and especially in the following of the 1930s Stalinism started to rise. From 1930s to the ends of 1970s, two basic approaches dominate relation between nationalism and Marxism. First of these, the rise of Stalinism in the 1930s, and second, Third Worldism that start popularization after the Second World War (Doğan, 2011; 138). With the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviets and with discussions opened on the grounds of *New Left Review* the dilemma between nationalism and Marxism and problematique of national question again started to discuss. Marxist scholars became concerned with the nationalism and influential Marxist writers, such as Tom Nairn and Benedict Anderson, wrote their famous book at the beginning of 1980s.<sup>12</sup> Benedict Anderson came into prominence with his explanation of nation and national developing process, on the other hand, Nairn sharply criticized Marxist approaches to the nationalism and national question. His provoking argument is that ‘Nationalism is Marxism’s great historical failure’ (quoted in Glenn, 1997; 79) and he rejects the idea of contradiction between Marxism and Nationalism.

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<sup>12</sup> Benedict Anderson’s famous book is *Imagined Communities*, published in 1983 and Tom Nairn’s book is *The Break up of Britain*, published in 1981.



He accepts the nations as an insignificant factor and he argues with that Marxists must include national struggle in their analyzes. According to them, nationalism is a protest of periphery countries against uneven and combined development (Quoted in Keucheyan, 2016; 159). He regards nationalism as a positive phenomenon. Globalization, according to him, by no means finish nation-states and nations are indispensable actors of globalization.

Nairn's attacks to Marxism about nationality problems triggered a discussion in Marxist grounds. Hobsbawm penned an article in order to clarify and answer to Nairn's claims. Hobsbawm, in his article wrote in 1977, manifested his ideas about nationality problems. He started to this article by describing nationalism as an ideology that is devoid of any discernible rational theory (Hobsbawm, 1977; 3). Hobsbawm distinguishes makes a distinction between nationalism of the nineteenth century and present. "... (T)he crux of nationalist movements in the nineteenth century was not so much state independence as such, but rather the construction of viable states, in short unification rather than separatism", on the other hand, the characteristic of national movements in present time is separatist and they aim the break-up of existing states (Hobsbawm, 1977; 5). But on the other hands, the rise of ethnic and separatist agitations is partly due the fact that the principle of state-creation since World War II, these movements do not demand the right of self-determination (Hobsbawm, 1992; 178). The significant of nation-state has decreased since the international bourgeois society does not need the structures of nation-state. According to him, "the rise of transnational corporation and international economic management have transformed both the international division of labour and its mechanism" (Hobsbawm, 1977; 6). Hobsbawm accepted that the attitudes of Marxist to the national questions have been a matter not of theoretical principle but of pragmatic judgment in changing circumstances. Hobsbawm also reject the right of national self-determination because of the different conditions in Lenin's and present time. Marxism is the great enemies of great-nation chauvinism and nobody, he says, has given good reasons why classical Marxist attitudes should change. He clearly states that "the fundamental criterion of Marxist pragmatic judgment has always been whether nationalism as such, or any specific case of it, advances the cause of socialism; or conversely, how to prevent it from inhibiting its progress; or alternatively, how to mobilize it as a force to assist its progress" (Hobsbawm, 1977; 10).

Hobsbawm's attitude to nationality problems reflects the classical Marxism arguments. Especially, he shares with Luxemburg's internationalism and he underestimated the influence of nationalism. To a large extent, he references to developing of capitalism and globalization process and he claimed that with globalization the significance of nation-states will decline and instead of forming national dependent states, globalization need to large entities. According to him, "small states are today economically no less viable than larger states, given the decline of 'national economy' before the transnational one" and in short, "... in the classic Wilsonian-Leninist form, the slogan of self-determination up to and including secession as a general program can offer no solution for the twenty-first century" (Hobsbawm, 1992; 185-186). Thus, Munck's statements summarized Hobsbawm's situation; "From a rather economic perspective, Marxists could view globalization as a progressive expansion of capitalist relations across the globe, more or less as Marx had predicted" (Munck, 2010; 51).

However, it cannot be said that Hobsbawm represents the dominant Marxist attitude toward nationality problems post-1980 era. He is a representative of Orthodox Marxism on national questions but after the 1980s this classic attitude has criticized sharply and these criticisms did not limit with nationality problems, but they have widened to the basic arguments and elements of Marxist ideology. At this stage, nationality problems handled in larger context and as a part of large theory. The main Marxist components such as class, revolution, proletariat dictatorship discussed in detail and these notions problematized. Are the classic Marxist notions adequate to evaluate the problems of globalization problems and to find solutions?

The answer of Laclau and Mouffe to this question is by no means negative. Laclau and Mouffe are two significant figure that problematize the classic Marxist concept and notions. In their words, "Many social antagonisms, many issues which are crucial to the understanding of contemporary societies, belong to fields of discursivity which are external to Marxism, and cannot be reconceptualized in terms of Marxist categories" (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; IX). According to them, class relations as a main political factor in classic Marxism has radically changed and it cannot carry out role of its

political subject. Moreover, in the multiple and multicultural conditions of globalization class or class struggle cannot be a unique subject to transform power relations.<sup>13</sup>

Laclau and Mouffe identified a crisis in Marxism in the late of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Marx' and Engels' envisioned revolution in Europe did not realized and some questionings started to rise to the Marxism. What Gramsci, Lenin and Bernstein, proponent of Revolutionary Syndicalism make is to suggest some solutions to this crisis. Laclau and Mouffe accept this crisis and they choose Gramsci and his concept of hegemony to formulate their formulations. But they used Gramsci's formulation to some extent and they said that "we will thus retain from the Gramscian view the logic of articulation and the political centrality of the frontier effects, but we will eliminate the assumption of a single political space as the necessary framework for those phenomena to arise" (Laclau and Maouffe, 2001; 131). They reject the determination of the class on the being of social and political relations. They clearly state that "It is no longer possible to maintain the conception of subjectivity and classes elaborated by Marxism, nor its vision of the historical course of capitalist development, nor, of course, the conception of communism as a transparent society from which antagonisms have disappeared" (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001;4). They do not limit themselves from class and include ethnicity problems, gender debates in their analysis.

Another crux of Laclau' and Mouffe's work is their emphasis of articulation of different subject. They do not accept any central subject on political dimension and the center of political struggle is blank. There are diverse political actors in that area but none of this singlehandedly complete. Class is just one of them and ethnicity demands, gender debates; regional problems must take into consideration. They correlate between the rejecting of class dominance and the accepting of diverse political subject as follow; "Once the conception of the working class as a 'universal class' is rejected, it becomes possible to recognize the plurality of the antagonisms which take place in the field of what is arbitrarily grouped under the label of 'workers' struggles', and the inestimable

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<sup>13</sup>Lenin and, especially Gramsci, tried to update the unrealized prediction of Marx and Engels. Lenin formulated imperialism theory and advocated the right of self-determination; Gramsci problematized the victory and continuation of capitalism, despite of the terrible conditions of proletariat in Europe and he formulated the concept of hegemony to explain his problematiques. Both in the Lenin' and Gramsci's context, the main political actor is class and other factors situated grounds of proletariat. Laclau and Mouffe have maintained the attitude of Gramsci but they went beyond to Gramsci.

importance of the great majority of them for the deepening of the democratic process” (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001;167).

Since Laclau and Mouffe reject the dominance of class as a main political subject and they care about identity problems, they are accused of non-Marxist, afterwards, their radical democracy theory named Post-Marxism. Against this accusation, they do not feel necessary to explain their theory and they seemed to accept this claim. If their intellectual project is accepted as *Post-Marxist*, they are ready to accept *Post-Marxist*. Because, they said, “It has been through the development of certain intuitions and discursive forms constituted within Marxism, and the inhibition or elimination of certain others, that we have constructed a concept of hegemony which, in our view, may be a useful instrument in the struggle for a radical, libertarian and plural democracy” (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; 4). Thus Laclau and Mouffe are insistent on their theory at the cost of being non-Marxist. Whatever they are accepted Marxist or non-Marxist, they had a great influential on Marxist grounds and they open a way in Marxism. After Laclau and Mouffe, identity and national problems began to gain more attention.

Another significant work that discusses the relations between classical Marxism and Postmodern arguments is Hardt’ and Negri’s studies. Hardt and Negri are Italian thinkers and they attempt to adapt Marxist arguments to the conditions of postmodern era. The position of class, i.e. labor class, is the basic theme in the debates of Post-Marxist scholars.<sup>14</sup> Hardt and Negri definite the contemporary capitalist conditions as an Empire age (Hardt and Negri, 2000) and they claimed that circumstance of capitalism in the Postmodern era becomes universalization and in this age the notion of Imperialism is not enough to comprehend capitalism given situation. According to them, one must include in the supra-national establishments and companies, NGOs an analysis that evaluates the circumstance of capitalism as well as nation-states.

In the *Empire*, Negri and Hardt claimed that they reveal how capitalist relations process in the whole world. On the other hand, in the *Multitude*, they have completed their theories and they suggest a way for the struggle against capitalism. First, the multitude is a concrete political subject and project and “political action aimed at

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<sup>14</sup>The concept of *Post-Marxist* majorly is used to describe Laclau and Mouffe’s thesis. But I use it to describe works that problematize basic Marxist arguments and attempts that try to evaluate contemporary social and political problems from contemporary perspective.

transformation and liberation can only be conducted based on the multitude” (Hardt and Negri, 2004; 99). While Laclau and Mouffe suggest any explicit political subject and they envisage the articulating of different subject candidates, Negri and Hardt directly suggest the multitude as a main political subject. Multitude is not working class or any discernible class, as well as any nation or people. “The multitude is composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity or a singly identity –different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations, different form of labor; different ways of living; different views of the world; and different desires” (Hardt and Negri, 2004; xiv). In other words, the multitude is the multiplicity of these singular differences. In the multitude, there is no hierarchical relation between the parts of it and any component constitutes different fronts of struggle against Empire. The multitude is not an identity or uniform and “the internal differences of the multitude must discover the common that allows them communicate and act together” (Hardt and Negri, 2004; xv). The multitude includes race, gender and sexual differences.

But, it can be seen that there is a problem in Hardt’ and Negri’s theory; How do they associate their theory with Marxism? They accept that they abandoned the Marxist essence and they do not think as Marx did about the primacy of proletariat and revolutionary process. But they claimed that their method is a rather Marxist method. According to them, the core of Marx’s method of historical materialism is that “social theory must be molded to the contours of contemporary social reality” (Hardt and Negri, 2004; 140). In other words, it requires new theories for the new social realities and they act upon to contemporary capitalist conditions. For example, the *immaterial labor* has become hegemonic labor in the present instead of industrial labor. In other words, “immaterial labor is today in the same position that industrial labor was 150 years ago, when it accounted for only a small fraction of global production and was concentrated in a small part of the world but nonetheless exerted hegemony over all other forms of production” (Hardt and Negri, 2004; 109).

The components of the multitude are the laborers, peasants and poor. Laborers are not only industrial proletariat and immaterial labor substitute for industrial labor. The peasants and poor, and also other social and political movements, constitute the multitude as a whole. There is no a core element in this multiplicity and there is common ground between these different components. Sum up, Hardt and Negri think

that the present conditions of capitalism, i.e. Empire, oblige the existence of the multitude and it must organize as a political actor against Empire. Contrary to Laclau and Mouffe, Hardt and Negri did not discuss whether identity over class or class over identity and they do not say that they are no Marxist. They care identity politics but not up to its first level or they accept the importance of class struggle but state that the character of class struggle has radically changed from the Marx' or Lenin's time.

After the 1980s, the identity politics or attempts that try to reconceptualize the classic Marxist thesis are on the rise in the Marxist literature. Two prominent approaches are presented in this department and these are the most influential approaches to the topic being talked about. These arguments are criticized by scholars because of abandoning the main Marxist themes. In Laclau' and Mouffe's context, the position of laborers are subordinated and in Hardt' and Negri's context, the political and social project, i.e. the multitude, is closer to the anarchist arguments rather than Marxist attitudes. But the attempts of Laclau-Mouffe and Hardt-Negri are very significant in terms of the creating awareness in the debates of identity and sub-identity that start to rise in Marxist grounds.

## CHAPTER II

### 1. THE APPROACH OF TURKEY'S LEFT TO THE ETHNICITY PROBLEMS

#### 1.1. Early Years of Turkey's Left

The origins of socialist movements in the Turkey can be taken back to the Ottoman Empire but the questions of how and when did socialism emerge in the Ottoman Empire are cannot easily answered. Some scholars, such as Ahmet Cerrahoğlu (Kerim Sadi), in his famous work, he quoted some passages from the Namık Kemal and Reşat Bey and he shows the Namık Kemal' and Reşat Bey's positive association with socialist movements in Paris (Cerrahoğlu, 1994; 36). According to him, in the essays of the newspapers, like *İbret*, *Hakayik-uk Vakayi* and *Takvim-î Vakayi*, two authors and others used the positive statements about *Paris Commune* in particular and socialist movements of European continent in general. Eventually, writer claimed that Namık Kemal and Reşad Bey are the first and core examples of socialism in the Empire.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, Mete Tunçay and Fethi Tevetoğlu, on the history of socialist movements, began to their examination with *II. Meşrutiyet*. Tunçay and Tevetoğlu more focused Muslim people (tebaa) but the activities of non-Muslim communities started before *II. Meşrutiyet*. So, it is very difficult to say that Namık Kemal and Reşad Bey are the first socialists, but, in the same vein, it is very difficult to say that socialist movements started after the *II. Meşrutiyet*. However, there is a problem that needs to be explained at this point. The character of socialist movements before *II. Meşrutiyet* are different from after following movements. The basic feature of these early movements, if we put Cerrahoğlu's claims to one side, is that they were started by non-Muslim

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<sup>15</sup>For this arguments and summary of these articles see;(Cerrahoğlu, 1994; 13-93).

communities. For example, *The Communist Manifest* was firstly pressed in the Empire as Armenian in 1894 (Babalık, 2003; 9). Similarly, Bulgarian Social Democrat Workers' Party joined Second International in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; shortly after that, Armenian Dashnaksuttyun Revolutionary Party accepted a Marxist-oriented program and joined Second International (Harris, 1976; 21-22). In the pre-1908 period socialist movements, Bulgarians and especially the Jews in the Thessaloniki region, draw attention (Yıldırım, 2014; 103).<sup>16</sup> But the movements of non-Muslim communities must evaluate within their national struggle against Ottoman. Especially Armenian and Greek nationalist movements associate intensely with socialist ideas. In this period, nationalism is the ideology of that time and nationalities began to suggest the claims of formation of their own nation-states (Ahmad, 1995; 17). Similarly, according to Tunçay, the activities of non-Muslim socialist groups, such as Macedonian, Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian, could summed up in the these sentence; "Socialism and Communism were used as an instrument for the conflicting nationalisms of various groups in the last years of Ottoman Empire" (Tunçay, 1995; 256).

In the theoretical meaning, the emerging of the *socialist* ideas coincides with the period of *II. Meşrutiyet*. Socialists benefited the circumstances of libertarian environment and they started to publish their ideas. The main problem of this period is the same issue; how was Ottoman Empire saved from demolition? Such as Islamism and Turkism, socialism was also thought only solution on this subject by socialists. But it must be said that, compared to movements of idea such as Islamism and Turkism, socialism did not became widespread in the intellectual circles. According to Tunaya, socialism is the weakest movements within the political movements of ideas of *II. Meşrutiyet* (Tunaya, 2010; 82). Socialist formation that emerged after the *II. Meşrutiyet* does not reflect *socialist* character and they more present liberal appearance. So, to evaluate the attitudes of these movements toward nationalism or national movements do not rightly look and, instead of doing this, general views of that movements presented.

After *II. Meşrutiyet*, Hüseyin Hilmi Bey is the first leading socialist figure in the Ottoman Empire. Hilmi Bey is accepted first socialist and he formed a socialist party,

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<sup>16</sup>Thessaloniki is very significant city for both Young Turks' Movement and socialist movement because prominent Turk socialists such as Şefik Hüsnü, Nazım Hikmet, Sabiha Sertel came from this city (Tunçay, 1995; 252). Also the activities of Macedonian, Bulgarian, Greek, Armenian socialist movements profoundly examine in this work; (Tunçay and Zurcher, 1995).



published a socialist newspaper<sup>17</sup>. There are some controversial points about the personality of Hilmi Bey and the character of his socialist activities. Hüseyin Hilmi Bey started to publish *İştirak Magazine* in 26 February 1910 and the magazine was published 16 issues until 11 June 1910 (Tunaya, 1967; 26). After a short break, in 1 September 1910, *İştirak* started to re-publish and it was published more 3 issue. At the 15 September, in its 20<sup>th</sup> issue, it published Ottoman Socialist Party's (Osmanlı Sosyalist Fırkası, OSP) declaration and program and so *İştirak* was banned by the Martial Law (Tunaya, 1967; 27).

In the articles published in *İştirak*, the writings had been talking about the working class from the beginning but in the following, it confined itself with conveying news about workers and these materials were not evaluated within a framework of conscious theory (Tunaya, 1967; 30). Similarly, *İştirak* did same evaluation about the concept of Socialism, Communism, Marxism and Social Democracy without making any distinction between these concepts (Tekin, 2002; 178). There is a rare article about nations or nationalism in the magazine. One of those writings belonged to Ruşen Zeki, according to him, nationality's attachment is a disaster for mankind because it will make crawl the humanity for centuries (Quoted Tekin, 2002; 180). Another feature of *İştirak*'s articles is that it tried to reconcile socialism with Islam. On this matter, Hüseyin Hilmi and Abdülaziz Mecdi, who is Karesi's deputy and one person from the *ulema*, penned an article. In these articles, Hüseyin Hilmi tried to use Islam for socialist aims but Abdulaziz Mecdi tried to articulate socialism with Islam (Tunaya, 1967; 32).

*İştirak* circle founded a party in the leadership of Hüseyin Hilmi in September 1910.<sup>18</sup> Structurally, OSP is not socialist party and no one was found as a worker among the founders and the rulers of the OSP (Tunaya, 1988; 253). The party seems to be a liberal organization rather than a socialist (Tunçay, 1967; 30). OSP's declaration began with this statement; "One-fortieth of wealth of the riches is the right of poor persons"<sup>19</sup> (OSP

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<sup>17</sup>Hüseyin Hilmi (1885-1923) was born in İzmir and he worked here for a while as a secret police and published *Serbest İzmir Gazetesi* with Baha Tevfik. It is estimated that he meet with socialism in Romania and, according to Tevetoğlu, Hüseyin Hilmi seemed socialist to make reputation and he looked upon the party (Ottoman Socialist Party) as a source of income (Tevetoğlu, 1967; 19-20). Tunçay precisely reject these claims about Hüseyin Hilmi. In 1923, Hüseyin Hilmi was a victim of mysterious murder. Because of his close association with English, he may be killed by the French agents.

<sup>18</sup> The exact date of establishment of this party is unknown. Tunaya gives as September 1910, (Tunaya, 1988; 247); Tunçay gives as first week of Sementember in 1910 (Tunçay, 1967; 30); Kaygusuz gives this date as 15 September 1910 (Quoted in Tevetoğlu, 1967; 16).

<sup>19</sup>"Ağniyanın servetinin kırkta biri fikaranın hakkıdır."

Declaration, in Tunaya, 1988; 256). OSP never was strong enough to have representative in the Parliament but it displays a more active image on the international scene (Tekin, 2002; 175). OSP is a member of Second International and prominent figure of French socialist, Jean Jaurés, wrote a letter to Hüseyin Hilmi and *İştirak* Circle. This letter was published in the 6<sup>th</sup> issue of the *İştirak* on March 20, 1910 (Tevetoğlu, 1967; 21. Tevetoğlu gives full text of this letter).

Another effective figure is Dr. Refik Nevzad in the *İştirak* Circle. Nevzad founded OSP's Paris Branch in September 1911 (Tunaya, 1988; 253). There are no close affiliations between OSP and Paris Branch but the program of this branch is more detailed, depends on the principle of Marxism and explicitly states that it is based on scientific socialism (Tunaya, 1988; 254). Apart from the *İştirak*, this circle also published some magazines, these are '*İnsaniyet*', '*Medeniyet*', '*Sosyalist*' (Tekin, 2002; 174). OSP closed after the assassination of Mahmud Şevket Pasha and circle could return activities after World War I. In February 1910, Hüseyin Hilmi and others founded new party; Turkey Socialist Party (TSP), (Türkiye Sosyalist Fırkası) (Tunaya, 1988, Volume II, 398). The program of TSP is more detailed and more conscious than OSB. Also, this circle published new magazine in this period, named *İdrak*, organized effective strikes in the capital of Empire. Although with these strikes, the popularity of Hüseyin Hilmi raised, he was killed in 1922.

Another effective figure in the socialist movement is Mustafa Suphi in the 1920s.<sup>20</sup> After returning from Paris, Suphi wrote articles in some magazines and newspaper such as *Tanin*, *Servet-i Fünun*, *Hak*, *Vazife* and *İfham*. In these writings, Suphi was not socialist and his arguments had much more liberal character. He joined secret congress of The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1911 but aftermath of this congress he separated from CUP and he vehemently criticized the policies of CUP. When examined his writings in this period, it seems that Suphi's activities and intellectual structure are Turkist and nationalist rather than socialist (Yıldırım, 2014; 109). Moreover, Suphi criticized socialist arguments and socialism as whole. In an article in

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<sup>20</sup>Mustafa Suphi was born in Giresun in 1883. Suphi went to Paris for high education and worked as a journalist in 1910s. After 1911, he separated from The Committee of Union and Progress and he was exiled to Sinop in 1913. During the exile life in Sinop, he escaped to Russia with a group of friends. Suphi became a socialist in Russia's years and he chaired in the Turkey's department of Stalin's nationalities commissariat and joined Komintern's first congress as Turkey's representative (Tunçay and Zurcher, 1995;241). He returned to Turkey in order to organize a socialist movement in Anatolia but he and fourteen friends were killed in Trabzon by Kâhya Yahya in 28-29 January 1921.

1911, he wrote about strikes; “socialists look upon strikes as a huge component with good or bad results for their own history philosophies but the right to strike should not harm the general interest and order” (Quoted in Yıldırım, 2014; 108).

Suphi met socialism in Russia and with the Russian Revolution he started trying to spread socialism to Muslim regions in general and Anatolia in particular. According to him, the liberation of Anatolian and Turkish people could only take place with a revolution similar to the Russian Revolution (Yıldırım, 2014; 111). In order to put into practice of his aims, he attempted to set a strong and solid army against the future challenge of the nationalist leadership (Harris, 1976; 81). Beside of Turkey, Iran and India’s liberation could realize within socialism and thanks to helps of Soviet Russia. But even in this period of thought, Suphi’s thought did not reflect pure socialist arguments. Instead of this, Suphi was advocating a kind of anti-imperialism thought. In the Suphi’s call to the people of Anatolia, theoretically, we see that the call of struggle against anti-imperialism is more severe than socialism (Yıldırım, 2014; 113).

However, Suphi’s effectiveness in socialist movements showed itself as an activist rather than his theoretical work in the socialist movement. With support of Soviet Russia, he tried to organize socialist movements in the Middle Asia and Turk-Islam world. Accordingly he gathered around himself former soldiers and prisoner of war and he made some congress. Eventually, after the Congress of People of Socialist, Muslim and Eastern, he established Turkey Communist Party (TCP) along with the soldiers in the exile and the groups from Turkey in the 10 September 1920 in Baku (Aykol, 2010; 17).<sup>21</sup> Following the congress, Suphi began to seek for ways to pass to Anatolia and to organize this struggle in Anatolia. Suphi wrote letters to Mustafa Kemal, which stated that he would support national struggle. Also, he communicated with Kazım Karabekir and met him in Erzurum. As a result of these efforts, he succeeded to pass Anatolia and to contact with some persons in Eskişehir and Ankara. However, he did not go towards to Anatolia and he was killed in Trabzon.

There is a distinctive part in the General Regulation Turkey Communist Party (Umumi Nizamnamesi). As been different other socialist movements in this period, TCP

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<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, Tevetoğlu makes a different evaluation about this congress. He, with referring to Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, claimed that those who joined this congress are Turkish soldiers who are captured in Russia and seek the opportunities to turn the Anatolia (Tevetoğlu, 1967; 201).

included self-determination in the program. According to article 15 of the program; “Turkish communists recognize free development of nationalities and consign the issue of destiny of every nation to that nation”.<sup>22</sup> This article, compared other socialist program, is very detailed and socialist attitudes in the circumstances of 1920s. This program was written by Mustafa Suphi and in the acceptance of this article, two reasons may play insignificant role in the acceptance of this substance. Firstly, we can see Soviet effect in general and Lenin’s thesis in particular because Suphi saw himself ‘Lenin of the Turks’ and he worked with Stalin within commiserate of nationalities. Secondly, Suphi shared Lenin’s imperialism theory. According to Suphi, if the head of French-British capitalism is in Europe, the body and the midsides were also in the vast territory of Asia. So, the most urgent task of Turkish socialists, the capitalist roots were to be dismantled in the east (Yıldırım, 2014; 111).

During the national struggle, Mustafa Suphi was not the only socialist movement that operated outside Anatolia. There are some foundations and associations in Berlin after the World War I. These groups consist of those who came to Germany in order to intern, came to work as a laborer and came for high school education.<sup>23</sup> With the end of the war, these people witnessed the post-war atmosphere of Germany and they started to found some organizations to contribute the saving of Anatolia. This circle founded the Party of Turkey Workers and Farmers (Türkiye İşçi ve Çiftçi Partisi) and published the *Kurtuluş* Magazine (Tunçay, 1967; 144). *Kurtuluş* published only one issue in Berlin and the majority of this circle moved to İstanbul to join national struggle. In İstanbul, *Kurtuluş* continued to publish and party re-found with a little attachment. The name of party in İstanbul is the Party of Turkey *Socialist* Workers and Farmers (PTSWF). After a short time, the movement divided two parts; First group stayed in İstanbul and continue to publish *Kurtuluş* Magazine, and second group passed to Anatolia to join national struggle (Tunaya, 1986 Volume II; 495). By the way, there is insignificant development in the İstanbul group and Şefik Hüsnü (Deymer) joined this movement.<sup>24</sup> Şefik Hüsnü tried to gather under the roof of PTSWF. The party has nominated four

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<sup>22</sup> “Türkiye komünistleri milletlerin serbest-i inkişafını tanır ve her milletin mukadderatını tayin meselesini o millete tevdi eder.”

<sup>23</sup> Vedat Nedim Tör, Ethem Nejat, Lemi Nihat, Namık İsmail are the prominent names of this circle.

<sup>24</sup>Şefik Hüsnü was born in Selanik in 1887 and he died in Manisa in 1959. He studied medicine in Paris. Şefik Hüsnü is one of the most prominent figures of socialist movement from 1920s to 1960s. He jailed several times from TCP cases. (This TCP is not Suphis’s TCP, first; Türkiye Komünist Partisi, second; Türkiye Komünist Fırkası).

candidates in the 1919 elections; in İstanbul, İzmir, Eskişehir, Niğde and the candidate of İzmir, Mehmet Vehbi received 14 votes, other candidates showed any success (Tunçay, 1967; 150).

The remaining group in İstanbul, included Şefik Hüsnü, started to publish *Aydınlık* Magazine. In the first issue, Şefik Hüsnü said that the theme of this organization is the spirit of class problems (Gürel and Acar, 2008; 120). Şefik Hüsnü, as a sign of a more conscious socialism, translated the Communist Manifest in the Turkish and published in *Aydınlık*, in 1923 (Tunçay, 1967; 164). Generally, *Aydınlık* movement under the leadership of Şefik Hüsnü supported Kemalist movement and looked for it as a kind of public Soviet administration (Tunçay, 1967; 171). The most significant points that *Aydınlık* circles supported Kemalist policies are the abolition of the Caliphate and the policies against Kurdish rebellions. On the abolition of the Caliphate, party sent to Ankara a greeting telegraph.

Another point that *Aydınlık* circle supported doubtlessly Kemalist movement in the Kurdish Rebellion. In the magazine of *Orak Çekiç*<sup>25</sup> we see first contact between Turkey's left and Kurdish Question. Actually, the debates on the transition to the nation-state did not begin with the foundation of the Republic (Çaylak and Çelik, 2010; 176); in the same vein, the history of Kurdish Rebellions can be taken until the 1880s and we can see that the nationalist themes emerged only with the revolt of 1880 Sheikh Ubeydullah, the last of the 19th century Kurdish rebellions (Bozarlan, 2003; 844). But until 1925, Sheikh Said Rebellion, there is no any interest or comment in the socialist literature. For example, 1921 was the date of the first Kurdish rebellion, Koçgiri Rebellion, in the period of national struggle and we do not come across any comment about this rebellion in socialist circle in the meaning of positive or negative. It is first time, a socialist magazine, *Orak Çekiç*, provided some comments about a Kurdish Rebellion but this interest was compatible with the Kemalist policies of the time. In the sixth and seventh issues of the *Orak Çekiç* allocates a considerable amount of space to the Sheikh Said Rebellion.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>*Orak Çekiç* magazine was also published by *Aydınlık* circle. Since *Aydınlık* appealed more intellectuals rather than workers or farmers, *Orak Çekiç* magazine started to publish for workers and farmers.

<sup>26</sup> Sheikh Said rebellion is the first large-scale rebellion that emerged soon after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey (Koç, 2013; 154).

*Orak Çekiç*, by aggressively attaching to the rebels, described Sheikh Said Rebellion as a reactionary feudal movement (Harris, 1976; 199). According to *Orak Çekiç*, there are feudal chiefs behind the uprising and the Republican government will abolish feudalism (*derebeyliği*) in the East. If so, rebellion described as common enemy of TCP and bourgeois, and before everything else, we should defeat this ‘black power’ (Tunçay, 1967; 187). Moreover, TCP’s support for Kemalist policies against Kurdish Rebellion was approved by Comintern. “Reports and articles appearing in *Inprekorr*<sup>27</sup>, the organization’s ‘official’ publication at the time, also portrayed the Kurdish rebellion of 1925 as a reaction of backward feudal, incited by British imperialists, against a progressive bourgeoisie” (Quoted in Yeğen, 2016; 5).

Towards the 1930s, TCP started to change attitudes to the Kurdish Question. In 1926, TCP gathered a congress in Vienna and this congress accepted a Work Schedule. According to this schedule, TCP unconditionally recognizes the right of determination for destiny of every national minority, including the right of separation from Turkey (Gürses, 1994; 258). This article means that TCP accept the right of self-determination. Along with accepting the principle of self-determination, TCP circle in particular and Turkey’s left in general in that time did not differ themselves from Kemalist policies and arguments. There is one name within TCP, which evaluates Kurdish Question and Kurds with sociological and realities of Kurds. This name is Hikmet Kıvılcımlı. From now onward, we can examine Kıvılcımlı’s thesis about Kurds and Kurdish Question, which shaped majorly in 1930s.

## 1.2. Hikmet Kıvılcımlı’s Contrarian Theses

Hikmet Kıvılcımlı<sup>28</sup> is one of the most effective figures in 1930s’ TCP and socialist movement. Kıvılcımlı met the socialist movements, Aydınlık Circle in İstanbul when he was a student in 1922 and in the 1925s he started to take high positions in this group (Ünsal, 1996; 21).<sup>29</sup> Kıvılcımlı is one of the most productive names in terms of theoretical meaning not only in 1920s but also in the history of Turkish socialist

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<sup>27</sup> *Inprekorr* was the publication of the Comintern.

<sup>28</sup> Hikmet Kıvılcımlı was born in Prishtine in 1902. He joined Aydınlık Circles in İstanbul and aftermath he was an effective political actor in TCP in general. He jailed both 1927’ and 1929’ Detentions (*Tevkifat*) and he was committed 4.5 years. Also in 1938, he was jailed for 15 years in a case on which he was trial with Kemal Tahir and Nazım Hikmet. He left the TCP and he founded The Homeland Party in 1954.

<sup>29</sup> Ünsal’s thesis is the most detailed bibliography of Hikmet in Turkish.

movement. He wrote hundreds of pages of books and articles and he developed a 'history thesis'. Although he had very active political experiences, he split up from TCP Circle in 1938 and after this date, he cannot form a broad-base political movement. It seems to be more reasonable to evaluate KIVILCIMLI with his theoretical aspects. But, instead of a whole evaluation of KIVILCIMLI's writings, we will examine his studies on Kurdish Question.

When KIVILCIMLI was jailed in 1929 Detention, he, firstly, was carried to Diyarbakır and from here; he was transferred to Elazığ Prison. KIVILCIMLI wrote the program and history of TCP during this sentence and he published the studies under the name of 'Road'. Prudential Force: Nationality (Eastern) (İhtiyat Kuvvet: Milliyet (Şark)) is one of the these studies and KIVILCIMLI focused on Kurdish Question in this part. KIVILCIMLI tried to detect different aspects and dimensions of question and he offered some policies that must be followed by the party.

Firstly, KIVILCIMLI made a general assessment about Turkish independence struggle and current social and political situations. According to KIVILCIMLI, Turkey is unquestionably one of the oppressed nations of the East. But on the other hand, Turkey itself insuppressibly is the oppressing nation of the East (KIVILCIMLI, 2016; 20). KIVILCIMLI here makes a distinction between inside and outside. Turkey, as a nation that had a successful national liberation struggle, is a cruel nation in its external relations. But since this liberation movement is under the power and dictatorship of the Kemalist bourgeoisie, it is a cruel nation in the inner relation (KIVILCIMLI, 2016; 29). In this distinction, we understand that KIVILCIMLI knows Lenin's distinction between oppressed and oppressing nations. From the point of view of KIVILCIMLI, there are two significant national entities in Turkish society; Turkishness and Kurdishness. Because political and economic sovereignty and superiority are in the Turkish bourgeoisie, Kurdish people, under the name of 'mystical' and ambiguous "Eastern Provinces", were subjected to a violent assimilation and destruction policy (KIVILCIMLI, 2016; 29). Consequently, the Eastern Question in Turkey is a national question in general, the Kurdish national question in particular (KIVILCIMLI, 2016; 31).

KIVILCIMLI substantially followed Stalin-Lenin perspective in describing and positioning of national question. Like Lenin and Stalin, KIVILCIMLI, claims that the national question must be investigated with historical and economic analyses and it can only be solved

with a revolution. In Turkish case, it is a peasant issue that is the essence of the national question. Moreover, K1v1lc1ml1 accepts the national question as a world revolution problem and he arrived at this conclusion that the positive and negative aspects of the national question could only appear compared to the world revolution (K1v1lc1ml1, 2016; 31). But, significantly, to be able to speak of the national question, it must be a nation. So, the question is; is the Kurdish people a nation?

We see that K1v1lc1ml1 majorly uses the criteria that were developed by Stalin to define the notion of nation. K1v1lc1ml1 thinks that there is a hierarchical relationship between the concepts Stalin defines. Primarily, according to him, it must be remembered that the nation is a historical and stable phenomenon. In the same vein, he made a distinction between the concept of race and nation. Accordingly, while nation is a historical and social concept; race is a natural and environmental quality (K1v1lc1ml1, 2016; 47). Another criterion to describe a nation are these; homeland, the linguistic unity, the cultural union and economic unity. As it could be clearly seen, all of these concepts are taken from Stalin's definition. According to K1v1lc1ml1, Kurds is a stable and historical nation and they have economic, cultural, linguistic unity and share a common homeland. Within these criteria, the economic unity plays a central role because, in the words of K1v1lc1ml1, the emergence of the historical nation's reality implies the emergence of capitalism in a particular country (K1v1lc1ml1, 2016; 52). As for Kurdishness case, there are two phenomenon that show us Kurdistan's independence from Anatolia with its own independent market relations: Smuggling (Kaçakçılık) and Silver Currency (Gümüş Para) (K1v1lc1ml1, 2016; 53).

In the analysis of K1v1lc1ml1, a Kurdish nationality is portrayed with economic and historical aspects. Hikmet K1v1lc1ml1 stands in a very different position, as early as the 1930s, with his discourse on the Kurdish Question. This different position is not only due to the discourses of the Kurdish Question, but also to the criticism he brings to Kemalism. However, in the following years, and especially after 1950, it seems that the views of K1v1lc1ml1 about Kemalism have changed a great deal. He was anymore consistent with Kemalism. This situation is also understood from the fact that the party that he set up was given the name of the *Vatan Partisi*. Actually, for the Homeland Party, in the light of its constitution and program, it was evaluated to be nationalist and even corporatist party (Bilgiç, 2008; 590). Moreover, on the day after May 27, Hikmet



Kıvılcımlı draws a celebration telegram to Cemal Gürsel, the leader of the military coup (Ünsal, 1996; 94). After the 1960s to his death, in the *YÖN* and NDR (National Democratic Revolution) circles, he had received little acceptance and he died in 1971 in Belgrade when he exiled.

Kıvılcımlı's statements about Kemalism<sup>30</sup> and the Kurdish Question, when the conditions of the time are taken into consideration, are very significant, however, the real motives behind these discourses are somewhat doubtful. In this regard, two main factors affecting Hikmet Kıvılcımlı can be mentioned. The first reason for this is that he stayed with Kurdish prisoners in Diyarbakir and then Elazığ prisons. Another reason is that he is generally committed to the Comintern, in particular to the Lenin-Stalin socialism. As a result, it can be argued that he applied the criterion from Lenin and Stalin and the conceptualization of the national question to the Kurdish Question from his observations. However, it is difficult to say that he remained loyal to his evaluations and his attitude towards the Kurdish Question until the end of his life. Also, it is worth mentioning that the views of Kıvılcımlı in this regard cannot be accepted as a party vision. Already, Kıvılcımlı himself does not offer any policy other than abstract proposals, together with making some determinations in this regard.

No new remarks were made until the 1960s on the findings and proposals made by Kıvılcımlı regarding the Kurdish Question in 1930s. It should be kept in mind that, in this period, the Turkish Left was illegal and did not develop a fundamental movement. At the very beginning of this period, a movement can be mentioned; *Kadro Movement*. The *Kadro* Movement is a conceptualization expressing the theses of a group of intellectuals gathered around the *Kadro* Magazine. Whether or not theses developed in the *Kadro* Magazine are socialist is a bit controversial. The socialist past of the prominent names of the movement before the *Kadro*, especially Şevket Süreyya Aydemir and Vedat Nedim Tör, makes it necessary to examine this movement in socialist movements. However, this movement has been accused of being a rightist or even a fascist from time to time in the socialist movement (Tekeli and İlkin, 2008; 600).

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<sup>30</sup> Kemalism is an ideology that emerged after the War of Independence. It is possible to define Kemalism as an ideology, but the pragmatic and enlightening aspect of Kemalism is stronger. Kemalism is a modernist and positivist ideology based on secular, Turkish nationalism. Building a state based on a single ethnic structure from the multinational Ottoman Empire is the most obvious feature of Kemalism. Especially in the eyes of the defenders, Kemalism is anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist; and has led many other countries and nations in this direction. However, it is possible to say the principles of laicism, nationalism and enlightenment as the most characteristic features of Kemalism.

From the point of view of our examination area, it is possible to say that the *Kadro* Movement has not left much discussion on the subject. Nevertheless, since it represents an original period on the Turkey's Left, it is beneficial to look at the *Kadro* Movement briefly and generally.

### 1.3. *Kadro* Magazine and Partial Evaluations

*Kadro* Magazine started to public in January 1932 and published 36 issues for a total of 3 years (Yanardağ, 2012; 113). The ideologue of the magazine is Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, the holder of concession (*imtiyaz sahibi*) is Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, magazine editor in chief is Vedat Nedim Tör and Burhan Asaf Belge and İsmail Hüsrev Tökin is among the founding authors (Türkeş, 1999; 48).<sup>31</sup> Two founder of Magazine in intellectual sense are Şevket Süreyya Aydemir and Vedat Nedim Tör. The only person who did not have a socialist past among these founders was Yakup Kadri. Burhan Asaf is the person who introduced this team with Yakup Kadri<sup>32</sup>.

The *Kadro* Movement was subject to different evaluations from both the inside and outside of the left. It seems that the *Kadro* Movement is generally approached in three ways. The first of these is the approach seen in the book of Fethi Tevetoğlu as a movement that makes propaganda of destructive communism. According to Tevetoğlu, there is a scientific advocacy of communism in the *Kadro*, and the Turkish economy is tried to establish a Marxist basis (Tevetoğlu, 1967; 443). Tevetoğlu tries to base his thesis by drawing attention on the Marxist past of Şevket Süreyya and Vedat Nedim and their works on Lenin. Another approach is to consider the *Kadro* as a movement of the 'traitors' and 'renegade' leftists. Especially, the fact that Vedat Nedim gave the TCP documents to the police in 1927 and caused many arrests of the leftists is the main source of this point of view. The work of Merdan Yanardağ reflects such a perspective between the lines, although the relationship between the *Kadro* and the Galiyev Movement is focused in this work. In this respect, it is useful to mention the letter of Şefik Hüsnü, was sent from Austria to Şevket Süreyya in the first period of the

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<sup>31</sup>The whole writers of the *Kadro* consist of the following names; Ahmet Hamdi Başar, Falih Rıfkı Atay, Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Elatun Cem Güney, Muhlis Etem Ete, İbrahim Necmi Dilmen, Abdurrahman Şefik, Münir İriboz, Mümtaz Ziya Şakir Hazım, Neşet Halil Atay, Mehmet İlhan Tahir Hayrettin and Mansur Tekin. The Prime Minister İsmet İnönü of that period wrote an article in *Kadro* Magazine.

On the other side, Yanardağ counts Şevki Yazman as one of the founding cadres.

<sup>32</sup>Yakup Kadri married to Burhan Asaf's sister, Lamia Hanım, in 1923.

publication of the *Kadro*. Şefik Hüsnü did not abstain from insulting his ex-comrades, whom he described as a “revolt” in his letter, and this part of the letter was scorned by Şevket Süreyya himself (Küçük, 1980; 206-207). A third approach is to take the *Kadro* as a national leftist movement. According to this approach, the *Kadro* represents a nationalist leftist movement, not a complete third road movement. The work of Mustafa Türkeş is also an example in this sense. Türkeş emphasizes that the *Kadro* develops ‘third way’ rhetoric at the level of discourse, but this is not an alternative third way against socialism and capitalism (Türkeş, 1999; 44). Apart from these three approaches, there is another view put forward by Mete Tunçay. According to this view, the people who formed the *Kadro* continued their understanding of socialism. From the 1925s to the Kadro Movement, the views of TCP and TCP, not the opinions of Şevket Süreyya and Vedat Nedim, changed (Quoted in Türkeş, 1999; 55-56).

The purpose of the magazine is best explained in the presentation on the 1st issue. According to *Kadro*, Turkey is in a revolution and this revolution has not stopped. Turkey has undergone a change but this change is a part of the revolution. This continuation of the revolution must be put into a theoretical framework and transferred to the next generations under the leadership of a leading cadre. Therefore, the main aim of the *Kadro* is to set the Turkish Revolution on an ideological basis. Their purpose, briefly, was to form the ideology of revolution. This is the historical mission of the movement they try to develop (Yanardağ, 2012; 126).

If we look briefly at the basic theses developed at Kadro Magazine, as Şevket Süreyya also pointed out in an article (1933; 5-6), it should be pointed out that *Kadro* was subjected to accusations such as communist, fascist, nationalist, anarchist, national socialist since the first issue of magazine. The articles describing the intellectual position of the magazine were mostly penned by Şevket Süreyya, who is the theoretician of *Kadro*. Şevket Süreyya, while highly influenced by Marxism, rejects criticism that they are Marxists. According to him, Marxism is not enough to explain the age of imperialism in the 20th century. He brings some criticism to Marx about the class struggle that he said constituted the essential element of Marxism. Şevket Süreyya argues that the class struggle can be in industrialized countries like Europe and that it can be accepted as the basic struggle in these countries, but, he argues that the conceptualization of class struggle cannot be valid in these countries since there is no

such class in non-industrialized countries. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the struggle between the industrialized countries and the non-industrialized countries beside and even more than the class struggle. The form of this struggle in the 20th century is the National Liberation Movements. This contradiction between the countries is in front of all the contradictions and the national liberation movements are the unique power to create the true revolution of the world (Şevket Süreyya, 1933; 16). Of course, among the national liberation movements, the most significant movement in the nature to be an example to others is the Turkish Revolution, and this revolution is not over yet.

The similarities of the discussion presented above in a section were also made by Şevket Süreyya and other authors. The outcome of the discussions made is that *Kadro* writers have really embarked on an effort to create an ideology. In these efforts, it is observed to be highly influenced by Marxism, and the main criticisms they bring to Marxism are the first roots of the Third World Movements. This movement, which states that socialism and fascism do not take as a model, tried to reconcile the anti-imperialist dimension of socialism and the authoritarian nature of fascism in their nationalist discourse (Türkeş, 1999; 159). However, despite the fact that it is a rather original trial compared to the period, it is doubtful how successful this attempt of the *Kadro* Movement is. However, the work done in *Kadro* Magazine did not go beyond Kemalism's ideological legitimacy.

There seems to be no debate on the Kurdish Question in *Kadro* Magazine. The reason for not having such a debate is probably that there was not any Kurdish rebellion in the years when *Kadro* Magazine was published. It should not be forgotten that neither the socialist literature nor the Turkish Socialist Movement constitute a theoretical framework for ethnic and national problems and that more specific evaluations of specific events are determinative. Nonetheless, we can say that the evaluations that can be accepted in the context of the Kurdish Question are partly included in the *Kadro* Magazine. In this respect, first of all, it is necessary to mention the writing of Şevket Süreyya's "Derebeyi and Dersim" published in the 6th issue of the magazine.

Şevket Süreyya received this essay as a review article for the book of Naşit Hakkı Bey's *Derebeyi and Dersim*.<sup>33</sup> In this article, Şevket Süreyya, in general, makes a feudal assessment. According to him, feudalism (*derebeylik*) is one of the subjects inherited from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic and is one of the issues that the Republic should deal with. Despite emphasis on Dersim in the book, according to Süreyya, the order of feudalism is not limited only to Dersim, and it is the cause of the destruction of the whole Eastern people. According to Şevket Süreyya, who sees Kurdishness identical to the feudalism, Kurdishness is an economic regime, in fact, before everything else, it is based on dark land slavery, that is, the landlessness and disrespect of the producer (Süreyya, 1932; 43). According to Süreyya, the greatest supporter of feudalism is Sheikdom. In his words, both the *Derebeyi* and the Sheikh benefit from the slavery of the earth and it is seen that these two power structures, one of which is the material and the other spiritual, are gathered in the same person (Süreyya, 1932; 43). The liquidation of the feudal order is a natural matter of Turkish Revolution and for this to happen, according to Şevket Süreyya, we need an idealist and adult youth group who will be good manager, good instructor, and will lead the economic, legal and cultural principles represented by the Turkish Revolution to these remote parts of the country and for the citizens of the East who saw nothing other than Bey, Sheikh and the bandit against since centuries (Süreyya, 1932; 45).

Another article that can be evaluated in this regard is the writing of the *Şark Vilayetlerinde Derebeylik* written by İsmail Hüsrev. This article was published in the 12th edition of the magazine. In this article, İsmail Hüsrev analyzed the regime of Feudalism. However, İsmail Hüsrev's evaluations had a wider range of determinations than Şevket Süreyya, and they were not only based on economic determinations but also on some ethnic analyzes. İsmail Hüsrev, who regards the system of the eastern provinces as a system established with economic and legal ties, had a definite result about the nature of the Kurdish issue. According to him, the Kurdish Issue is not a national movement but a class struggle because, a national movement can only come from an economic and national interest participation before everything else (Hüsrev, 1932; 19). However, it is not possible to talk about the participation of economic

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<sup>33</sup> This book consists of observations published by Naşit Hakkı Bey, republican periodical journalists, as a result of his visits to the Eastern provinces. It can be assumed that this work is a good work that summarizes the approach of the Republican era's elite to the Eastern Question.

interests in the eastern provinces, which are self-contained, unable to produce for the market, and which are closed to themselves by not making contact with the outside world. Because all tribes and tribal chiefs are struggling against each other, İsmail Hüsrev claims that it cannot talk about a national interest partnership among the Kurds. After these determinations, is there a Kurdish nation in the eastern provinces? İsmail Hüsrev responded negatively to this question. In the eastern provinces, there are not yet shaped Kurdish nations, but Kurdish-speaking tribes and Turkish components that were enforced to speak Kurdish (Hüsrev, 1932; 21). According to İsmail Hüsrev, it is not possible to speak of these Kurdish-speaking tribes as a nation because the nation is a high social category. In his words, the nation category can only be found in the community, where there is a close co-operation, economic, political, cultural and historical interest among individuals (Hüsrev, 1932; 21).

İsmail Hüsrev claims that, like Şevket Süreyya, the liquidation of the Feudalism order is one of the missions of the Turkish Revolution and that this imposition is necessary for the solution of the matter. As can be seen in the above analyzes Şevket Süreyya, İsmail Hüsrev consider the problem in Eastern provinces to be basically a question of feudalism and backwardness. Especially, Şevket Süreyya did not mention the ethnic based emphasis and evaluated the matter more in the triangle of *Ağalık-Şeyhlik-Derebeyi*. İsmail Hüsrev, on the other hand, made some determinations about the Kurdish ethnicity, although he placed the feudal system and the landless issue of the villagers on the basis of his analysis. In his definition of nation, it is possible to say that Lenin and Stalin's influence on the nation is quite influential. In particular, seeking the condition of economic partnership to speak of the nation is a reflection of the conception which, in a typical sense, is the result of a nation's capitalist development. Both of these thinkers, uncompromisingly, suggest the destruction of the system of the feudal system is like a pre-narrator of the methodology of the Dersim revolt. However, on the other hand, it should be noted that there is no analysis of any cultural elements while the issue is being evaluated.

#### **1.4. The Exceptional Years of Turkey's Left; 1940- 1960**

The *Kadro* Magazine was closed in 1934 and the leaders of the magazine were assigned to senior government positions and were quietly liquidated in a sense. It is possible to say that the closing of the *Kadro* Magazine symbolizes the beginning of a

certain period of partial silence for the Left. In this period, Şefik Hüsnü was in Germany and prominent figures such as Kemal Tahir, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and Nazım Hikmet were sentenced to heavy imprisonment in 1938, which is publicly known as the Navy Case (Donanma Davası). If we look at the TCP circles in the 1930's, we see that the TCP was beginning to take an attitude towards Kemalism in its media. Based on the program it adopted in Vienna, the TCP criticized Kemalism for its policies against the Kurds.

In the middle of the 1940s, we see that there were some new intellectual initiatives on the Left. The magazines and the works of the sociology professors working at the Faculty of Language and History-Geography strikes as the basic Left studies that symbolizes this period. Niyazi Berkes, P. Naili Boratav, Muzaffer Şerif Başoğlu and Behice Boran, who are teachers in this faculty, are the left-wing formations of the period. The first magazine published on this group's premises is *Yurt ve Dünya*. Later, Muzaffer Şerif Başoğlu and Behice Boran left this magazine and published a magazine called *Adımlar*. Along with the left or socialist characters of these journals being controversial<sup>34</sup>, the intellectual writings of significant figures in the post-1960 movement such as Behice Boran and Niyazi Berkes make these journals significant to the Left. In these journals, it is possible to say that sociological analyzes of the Turkish society and the peasantries in Turkey are more involved. Niyazi Berkes' "*Bazı Ankara Köyleri Üzerinde Çalışmalar*" and Behice Boran's "*Toplumsal Yapı Araştırmaları*" are the main works of art in this period.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, it is also highly debated among the intellectuals of the era of Humanism(Hümanizma) debate initiated in the *Adımlar*.<sup>36</sup> Other left/socialist publications of this period are magazines and newspapers such as *Gün, Zincirli Hürriyet, Hür, Tan, Görüşler*.

During the war, TCP occupied the 'front' politics, which was created mainly for the defense of the socialist motherland, Soviet Union. Another front that TCP was fighting during the war was attacks from right politics. However, on the understanding of

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<sup>34</sup>For example, about the *Yurt ve Dünya*, P. Naili Boratav said 'a little Atatürkist, a little socialist; Adnan Cemgil said 'left but literally non-Marxist' (Quoted in Atılğan, 2007; 41). Baskın Oran, on the other hand, makes the following assessment about the magazine; in the today's atmosphere and understanding, the insignificant publication of the Left, *Yurt ve Dünya*, the most significant leftist magazine of the period. This can be counted as an advanced socialism when the printing laws of the time, the fascist atmosphere and the pressures of the leftists in Turkey are taken into consideration (Quoted in Atılğan, 2007; 41, 22. footnote).

<sup>35</sup>For a comprehensive analysis of these authors' works in the 1940's, look at this source; (Kayalı, 2003).

<sup>36</sup>All the articles of *Adımlar* Magazine can be accessed by the following address; <http://www.tustav.org/adimlar-1943-1944/>

Germany would be defeated in the war, the government suppressed the right/pan-Turkist trends and began to seek ways to approach the Western bloc. After the war, especially America and democratic systems in general declared victory and Turkey thought that it was more right for its security to act in the direction of democratic systems because the Soviets had some requests that violated the Turkish sovereignty. Turkish leaders understood that it would be beneficial for Turkey to adapt to the political and economic interests (democracy and free enterprise) that Americans attach great importance in order to provide American political and military support and to fully benefit from the Marshall Plan (Zürcher, 2014; 308). When it came to 1946, Turkey had already begun the initiative to move to a pluralistic democratic system with the directives of President İsmet İnönü himself. However, when İnönü passed through a multi-party life, he also wanted to solve the issues within the party. İsmet İnönü realized that a multi-party system would be a good solution to both escape from external pressures and to liquidate the opposing wing against itself in the party. In other words, İnönü was in favor of a multiparty system, but not an internal party democracy that would put his government in danger (Çaylak and Nişancı, 2009; 308).

The Turkish Left also thought that this relatively autonomous pluralistic environment offered an opportunity to organize itself again at the legal level. In legal seeking of organization, former TCP members seem to be quite active. However, even though the left parties wanted to 'legalize' by organizing the various parties, the limits of the allowed political action were kept in a narrow range and the left was excluded from this frame (Tunçay, 1984; 1954). During this period, the Left movement attempted to form about 9-10 parties, two of them serious. Among these parties, two of which are seriously considered are the Turkish Socialist Party of Esad Adil Müstecaplıoğlu<sup>37</sup>, founded on 14 May 1946, and Turkish Socialist Worker and Peasant Party of Şefik

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<sup>37</sup>Esad Adil Müstecaplıoğlu was born in Balıkesir in 1904. He studied law and served a long term in different units of the Ministry of Justice. He released daily '*Gerçek*' newspaper, the weekly '*Gün*' magazine. The writings of Mehmet Ali Aybar in the *Gün* magazine, which will be the most influential figure of the Turkish Left after 1960, were published. Esad Adil is a figure that was excluded from the TCP circle and was not accepted as socialist by the Comintern. The first representative of the concept of 'indigenous socialism' to be developed by Mehmet Ali Aybar after the 1960s can be considered as Esad Adil. The view that socialism is viewed as a national issue, the position of the working class, which is accepted as the basic assumption of orthodox Marxism, should be revised while adapting socialism to Turkey will be defended for the first time by Esad Adil. The following source can be seen about the party Esad Adil founded; (Gökmen, 1998; 161-186).



Hüsni Değmer, founded on 19 June 1946 (Tunçay, 1984; 1954, also see Aykol, 2010;31-40).

Şefik Hüsni's party is a party approved by the Comintern and a continuation of TCP to a large extent. But, it is possible to say that the program of the Şefik Hüsni's party also depends on both the Comintern and the TCP line. The fate of this party, like Esat Adil's party, was shortly afterwards. The article accepted in the program of TCP on the subject of minorities and directly translated from the Comintern was also found in this party program. In the 44th and 45th items of the program, "National Minorities (Millî Azlıklar)" is covered. Article 44 generally sets out principles such as equality, non-discrimination among citizens, rights and duties of every member of the society. In Article 45, regulations concerning the recognition of direct political and cultural rights are included. Article 45 is regulated as follows; "collective minorities should be given the right to freely develop their national cultures, local administrations and national assemblies should be provided with proportional representation, at least in proportion to their population" (Gürses, 1994; 299). Although the program text does not include the principle of self-determination, general arrangements are made in the direction of the Comintern. However, there is no arrangement in the program regarding how to provide the matters specified in articles 44 and 45. Already the party could only operate for 6 months and has not been very effective, except to organize a few strikes (Aykol, 2010; 35).<sup>38</sup>

Before moving to the 1960s, I thought it was necessary to give basic information about the main left movements of the 1940s and 1950s. As can be seen, during this period the left movement was subjected to a serious intimidation operation. The May 27, 1960 coup d'état, in the sense of the left, was emerged as a new hope of breath. As a matter of fact, *Yön* Magazine will start to publish following the 1960 coup and will be a news

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<sup>38</sup> Another effective organization in this period is Turkish Peace-loving Association (TPA) (Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti), which is more influential in the 1950s. TPA was founded on July 14, 1950 under the leadership and presidency of Behice Boran. TPA was an organization linked to TCP and Behice Boran, president of the Association, was a member of TCP. During the Korean War, this association, which stands out with its work against the sending of troops to Korea, was long-lasting. As a matter of fact, their attitude towards the Korean War can be regarded as the most significant activity of the Association because, shortly after these workshops, community leaders were arrested and many managers were sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

reporter for the new period. It is a period that starts with great hopes and runs after the coup, and prepares itself after searching for alliances with different entities.

### 1.5. *Yön* Magazine

The relatively pluralistic and democratic environment that emerged after the May 27th coup meant an appropriate environment in terms of the organization and publication activity for the left. *Yön* Magazine was published in this environment on December 20, 1961 and published the *Yön* Declaration in its first issue.<sup>39</sup> *Yön* Magazine is a weekly journal and 222 issues are published in total. The circulation of the *Yön* went to 30,000, up to the 78th number that was marialed but then dropped considerably (Özdemir, 1986; 54 and Karpat, 1966; 185). The magazine also discussed almost all political and social issues at the time and the magazine became a platform for many different line writers. It is not possible to examine all the discussions in the magazine here; instead, some information about the journal's ideological structure will be given and will be focused on the evaluations of the Kurdish Issue.<sup>40</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu, who wrote the editorials in the magazine, presents a perspective on the Kurdish issue, while writings from the East and writings written by the East writers will form a separate perspective. But firstly, it will be appropriate to make some assessments about the general editorial opinion of the Journal to frame the issue into context.

The first issue to be discussed when discussing the ideological map of *Yön* Magazine is that the *Yön* Movement is a continuation of the *Kadro*. It is possible to see such a part in many studies on *Yön* and *Kadro* in the literature.<sup>41</sup> The fact that Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), the theoretician of *Kadro* movement, is one of the leading writers of the *Yön* Journal also legitimizes this debate. Kemalism is extremely dominant both in the *Kadro* and *Yön* Movements, but the position of Kemalism among the other ideological approaches in the *Kadro* and *Yön* differ from each other. The central theme in the *Yön* is development and socialism, the whole issue of the *Kadro* is trying to place Kemalism on an ideological basis. As Hikmet Özdemir rightly said, “the biggest difference

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<sup>39</sup>At first, 164 people signed the declaration and then 878 others signed it. Look for the list of signers; (Özdemir, 1986; 301-327).

<sup>40</sup>Undoubtedly the best source about *Yön* Magazine is the work of Hikmet Özdemir. See for a study that evaluates the ideas developed in the magazine as a Kemalist interpretation of modernization and approaches the subject more critically; (Altun, 2004; 551-575). For a more recent and up-to-date study on *Yön*, the following source can be looked at: (Çiçek, 2016).

<sup>41</sup> Such examples can be found in relevant sections of the following sources; (Yanardağ, 2012; 195-216); (Özdemir, 1986; 273-275);

between them is; the *Kadro* is the spokesman of the government, and the *Yön* is the spokesman of a group targeting the government” (Özdemir, 1986; 274). While the *Kadro* uses Marxism for Kemalism that they wanted to develop, *Yön* uses Kemalism for Socialism, which they want to interpret in line with their own understanding.

When we look at the debate in the *Yön*, we see that there is a debate around concepts such as socialism, nationalism and development.<sup>42</sup> The concepts of socialism and nationalism are often used interchangeably and to complement each other. On the other hand, it is possible to understand easily how the concept of development is central to this movement from the text of the Declaration.<sup>43</sup> According to this Declaration, today, Turkey is in a serious economic and social crisis; the social crisis has emerged as a natural consequence of the economic crisis, and moreover, from the democracy to the land reform, the solution of almost all problems is linked to the development principle. A new application of statism is needed in order to be realized appropriately for the purpose of rapid development. But in this statist system, there is no centralized economic system in Marxist sense; instead of this, it will be a system that coexists with private enterprise and state enterprise. Therefore, “statism is the most suitable system in order to eliminate inequalities in income distribution, to realize social security, to prevent the producer and consumer from being crushed by a comprador group, to remove the imbalances between the regions” (Yön, 1961; 13). If the development objective is achieved, social problems such as rapid population growth, migration, slums, unemployment and hunger, which come to the fore as a direct result of the economic crisis in the country, will be overcome (Altun, 2004; 556). In the most general sense, it is possible to make the following evaluation for the intellectual content of *Yön* Magazine; “as a socialist-nationalist movement that prioritizes development, *Yön* is an intellectual movement that advocates that Turkey should implement a model of “socialism” peculiar to its history in order to be able to develop” (Çiçek, 2016; 41).

As for the debate on the Kurdish issue, the most prominent aspect of *Yön* Magazine at the point of the Kurdish issue is the opening of the pages of those who will later become

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<sup>42</sup> Look at the topics and frequency distribution in the *Yön*; (Özdemir, 1986; 334-336). The categorization of Özdemir is a category that is mostly based on a literal examination. Socialism, Nationalism and development, on the other hand, stand out as the parameters on which the basic philosophy of the magazine is based on. It is not a coincidence that Özdemir, which is accepted as the best work on the magazine, gives his work the entitle of “Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı: Yön Hareketi”.

<sup>43</sup>According to Landau, this declaration was translated into English by Professor Frank Tachau and French by Professor René Giraud (Landau, 1979; 75).

significant figures of the national Kurdish movement. “The journal played a pioneer role in the 1960s to break the Kurdish taboo in Turkey by opening its pages to news and analysis about Kurds and the Kurdish question” (Doğan, 2010; 172). In *Yön* magazine, it is possible to evaluate the articles related to the Kurdish issue in three categories. The first composes of unsigned articles that published under the titles of “East”, “Eastern Question”, “*Ağalık*”, “Kurdish Issue”. The second category consists of memorials written by writers of the East, such as Said Kırmızıtoprak and quoted from the East, Muzaffer Erdost. And the third category consists of writings written by names, such as Doğan Avcıoğlu, thought to represent the views of the Magazine.

In the *Yön* magazine, the Kurdish issue is understood as a development problem in terms of opinions developed in unsigned writings. A good example of these unsigned writings is the article entitled “*Sosyolog Gözüyle Doğu Meselemiz*” published on the 90th issue of the magazine. At the beginning of this article, the writer complains about the difficulty of reaching full and accurate information about the East. The lack of adequate solutions to the problems of the East stems from both lack of information and inadequate examinations of the region. The region (East) is declared as an administrative forbidden zone and the entry of foreigners into the region is officially prohibited. According to the author, these prohibitions do not work and German and British sources have many publications that contain very detailed information about this region, although the Turkish sources which give information about these sections are very limited. Therefore, the realities of this region have not been known by the Turkish intellectual, and therefore successful solutions to the problems cannot be expected.

According to the author, it is always said that Turkey is an inseparable whole. It is a bit difficult to say that this discourse reflects the truth, and this discourse is not a reality but a goal to be achieved. The integration between East and West is not fully realized and it is possible to identify some chronic differences between the two geographies. The author identifies the following points of difference that make the integration between East and West impossible; Language Problem, Differentiation of religion, Tribes in the East, Ages and Sheikhs. It should be noted that in elaborating these points of diversity, the sociological characteristics of the East have been correctly identified at large. The language problem also has a specific importance for the author, because, in the words of the author, “the language is considered to be a very significant tool in providing the

integrity of the nations” (Yön, 1964a; 8). According to the author, it is necessary to get rid of these issues that cause the disintegration and continue to disintegrate. The fundamental change that must be made in this way is the creation of non-agricultural jobs that will enable the peasant to break from the soil. It should be noted, however, that the control mechanism of these possibilities is excluded from the controlling sectors of the present. Applicability of such a policy is only possible with industrialization (Yön, 1964a; 10). It would be useful to have an education policy and plan within the framework of this policy; otherwise, it would not be possible to achieve success through education even if all the villagers are equipped with the school.

It is possible to find cultural and sociological evaluations and determinations which can be regarded as quite advanced in the period of the text. However, on the other hand, when it comes to the suggesting of the solution proposal, it is understood that the text is regarded as the only solution to the industrialization and development strategies. Especially in cultural issues, the population ratios that do not speak Turkish are given on the basis of provinces and a kind of linguistic assimilation is advocated. Therefore, in spite of all sociological and cultural determinations, it seems that the Eastern Question is regarded as a development and integration problem. The proposed solution is also in accordance with the perception of the problem. The consideration of the ethnic and cultural dimension of the Kurdish / Eastern Question in *Yön* Magazine will be through texts in the second category.<sup>44</sup>

The second category consists of writings written from the Eastern region and written by Easterners. Said Kırmızıtoprak<sup>45</sup> is the first of the Easterner names whose writings published in the *Yön*. The writings of Kırmızıtoprak go well beyond the approach of the *Yön* towards development-oriented subject. One of the most famous writings published by Said Kırmızıtoprak, in *Yön*, is the article of “*Doğulu Gençler Barış Dünyası’na Cevap Veriyor*” (Yön, 1962a; 12-13).<sup>46</sup> In this article<sup>47</sup>, some criticisms about an article

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<sup>44</sup> As in this article to be summarized, see these unsigned writings that consider the Eastern Question as a problem of economic progress and development; (Yön, 1962b; 5),(Yön, 1962c; 12-13).

<sup>45</sup>Said Kırmızıtoprak was born in 1935 in Tunceli. He was involved in the Kurdish political movement since his student days and he could finish his medical education only in 1962.Since 1961, he started to write articles in the left magazines and published a total of 6 articles in the *Yön* magazine.He spent the following years mostly in northern Iraq and with the armed struggle. In 1971 he was shot and killed.

<sup>46</sup> This article is written by a young group of easterner people. These are; Said Kırmızıtoprak, Mehmet Ali Aslan, who will also be party leader for a short term in TLP, Selahattin Kemaloğlu, Kahraman Aytaç, Sait Kelekçi, Gıyasettin Eroğlu, Hasan Kocademir, Yusuf Karagül, Vefa Alpaslan, Mehmet Ali Dinler, Tahsin Binici, Ali Ekber Eren, Hamdi Turanlı, Süleyman Bayramoğlu, Haydar Kaya (Yön, 1962a; 12).

that is apparently published in the *Barış Dünyası*<sup>48</sup> are presented. As it is understood from the writing in the *Yön*, in the article of *Barış Dünyası*, there are suggestions that can be positively considered about the Kurds regarding the solution of the Kurdish Question. How can a Kurdish youth object to an article that advocates education in the mother tongue, permission to publish books and articles in Kurdish? The reason for these requests to be included in the article, according to the easterner youths, is nothing but a masked assimilation effort. Easterner Youths oppose this masked assimilation policy and in their answers they expressed that the people defend the brotherhood of the nations instead of transferring the mother tongue into one language and culture.

In his other writings, Said Kırmızıtoprak argues that the solution of the Eastern Question is passed from socialism, but this is not possible with pure development policies. In response (Kırmızıtoprak, 1962; 14-15) to Avni Doğan's article that remarks on the developments in the Kurdish region of Iraq and that these developments are not limited to Iraq but that they will spread to Turkey as well and that the authorities should take measures against this danger, Kırmızıtoprak says that it is not right to approach the issue. There is no real danger and the Kurdish people living in the East want to live together with the Turks in Anatolia. To regard racial and linguistic differences, which Kurds possess, as a dangerous element, constitutes the greatest danger for future years. Moreover, the greatest illusion of the Kurdish issue is that it is supposed to be solved by policies of pure development or assimilation. Kırmızıtoprak also opposed to the idea that the Eastern Question, which other authors insistently suggest, can be resolved by a radical land reform. The issue of land reform is not only an issue of interest to the Eastern regions, but an issue that must be resolved in all of Turkey. The implementation of land reform in the pure East will only serve to strengthen the existing privileged classes in the East.

Another point that draws attention in the writings of Said Kırmızıtoprak is that he frequently expresses his commitment to Atatürk's principles (Yön, 1963; 12-13). According to him, the reading and writing of Kurdish should be free because we can best explain the Atatürk Revolutions to Kurdish societies in their own language. It does

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<sup>47</sup> The article that criticized in this article is later published in the first issue of the journal of *Yeni Akış*, which will be discussed in detail below.

<sup>48</sup>*Barış Dünyası* is a famous magazine of that period and some of the numbers can be accessed online by this address; <http://www.tustav.org/baris-dunyasi/>

not seem possible to fully understand this point that whether Kırmızıtoprak says this argument in keeping with the conditions of the time, or did he really defend such a thing? However, it is possible to say that, given the subsequent political experiences of Kırmızıtoprak, he must have said these opinions with due consideration of the environment and the general outline of the magazine.

Said Kırmızıtoprak spent the rest of his life following a national Kurdish nationalism policy. Said Kırmızıtoprak did not hesitate to try all sorts of methods ranging from demanding cultural rights for the Kurds to armed struggle very long. The separation of the Kurdish Movement from the left of Turkey and the establishment of a separate organization was largely due to the influence of Kırmızıtoprak. However, in one of the most influential journals in the 1960s and in the era, the defense of highly radical arguments about the Kurdish Question is an insignificant case to be noted.

In *Yön* Magazine, a contradictory article series written by Muzaffer Erdost, under the title of *Şemdinli Röportajı*<sup>49</sup>, on the Eastern Question was published. As Yeğen clearly said, “published in 17 consecutive issues of *Yön* between July and November 1966, *Şemdinli Röportajı* is particularly significant in that catalogued ethnic, historical and social aspects of the Kurdish question” (Yeğen, 2016; 7).<sup>50</sup> In this article series, both the Kurdish socio-economic situations were directly told and the reaction of the Kurds to the political and social events of that period was evaluated. In addition, the views of the people of the region were reflected on events such as Sheikh Said Rebellion and Mustafa Barzani incidents. This article series received considerable attention in terms of elaborating the contact the state established with the East and reflecting the perspective of the Eastern people towards the state and Turkey.

The third category consists of the writings written by the names reflecting the general publication principle of the magazine like Doğan Avcıoğlu<sup>51</sup>. The clearest and most controversial article (Avcıoğlu, 1966; 3) about the Kurdish Issue in *Yön* Magazine was penned by Doğan Avcıoğlu, the founding father of the magazine. In this article, Doğan

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<sup>49</sup> This article series was later published by the author as a book, (Erdost, 1993).

<sup>50</sup> *Şemdinli Röportajları* began to be published on the 172th issue of the magazine and continued until 189th. In this interval, it is not published only in 184th issue.

<sup>51</sup> Doğan Avcıoğlu was born in Bursa in 1926. He studied in France and England for a while and returned to Turkey and then wrote many magazines and newspapers. He is one of the most significant names of the 1960s' and 1970s' Left and can be regarded as the architecture of the Kemalist Left movement. Avcıoğlu has significant works such as *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* and the *Türklerin Tarihi*. He died in 1983.

Avcioğlu deals with the issue in the most crucial form. Avcioğlu, who stated that many taboos were destroyed with May 27, but that a taboo was not touched, says that the name of this taboo is 'Kurdish Issue'. The Kurdish issue is both an existing and a neglected issue. This issue is sometimes expressed at the meetings of the Council of Ministers, but according to the official doctrine there is no such issue because there is no Kurd anyway. However, the radio stations established in the eastern provinces, the issue of the development of the East, the arrest of some people on charges of *Kurdishism*, all of which are indicative of the existence of such issue. In the words of Avcioğlu, "regardless of the official thesis, all this shows that there is a Kurdish Question and the policy applied for many years has not been enough to find a solution to the issue" (Avcioğlu, 1966; 3). This policy was aimed at an absolute integration. It was aimed to make an ethnic group forget the language and culture and integrate it with the dominant ethnic group. However, this policy has not been successful because the population of the East who do not speak Turkish is still quite high. No results were obtained from the development movements to the East and it is still 'East is Old East'.

According to Avcioğlu, how will this matter be resolved? Avcioğlu himself does not say anything other than to point out the existence of matter and to say that no realistic solution has been proposed until now. While Avcioğlu assessed the experience until the 1960s, he does not exclude socialists from these criticisms. According to him, the socialists have not been able to seriously examine the issue and have roughly slurred over it. They looked at the matter only in terms of *Derebeylik* and thought that this matter would be solved by the liquidation of institutions such as *Ağalık* and sheikdom. Avcioğlu considers the liquidation of the institutions as well as the issue of land reform more generally as a precondition for the solution of the problem. However, Avcioğlu thinks that the following question should be asked; "Is it possible to solve a problem with an ethnical aspect only with measures to be taken in terms of class and economy?". Avcioğlu thinks that solutions that do not add to the ethnical direction of the matter cannot be successful. He also criticized the reactions of the leftist movements of the foundation of the Republic to the Sheikh Said Rebellion (These reactions were mentioned above).

However, on the other hand, in spite of all these radical and contradictory evaluations, Avcioğlu does not forget to add that the socialists will fight at first to protect the



Republic of Turkey against separatist and destructive activities. He reminds them of being nationalists, but claims that their own nationalism does not mean racism or the superiority of a race. He explains that his understanding of nationalism has no meaning beyond the concept of Turkishness as explained in the Constitution. It is apparent that the reason why he writes such a critical article about the Kurdish Issue is to invite the socialists to think and criticize this significant issue.<sup>52</sup>

In *Yön* Magazine, in general, it is seen that the Kurdish issue is regarded as a problem of development and economic backwardness. But for the first time, the Eastern authors have the opportunity to express themselves and hear their voices thanks to *Yön* Magazine. Among the names criticized by the Eastern authors, like Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, are the authors of the magazine. The greatest contribution of these authors is to be showed that this question does not originate from purely economic or developmental problems and that it has ethnic and cultural dimensions. The writing of Avcıoğlu, however, is an article far ahead of his time as regards the findings he made. However, he does not say anything about the ethnic and cultural dimension of the issue, only to criticize the practices that applied until that time and the attitude of the socialists. The fact that the Kurds with the Socialists have a close alliance relationship and the Turkish Left's more stances on the Kurdish issue will take place together with TLP. Now, we can examine the TLP's view of the Kurdish Question and the nature of its relation to the Kurds.

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<sup>52</sup> However, in this call of Avcıoğlu, it seems that he is not very credible in the direction of *Yön*, because he will not touch upon this issue too much in the magazine pages.

## CHAPTER III

### 1. TLP'S APPROACH TO THE KURDISH QUESTION

#### 1.1. The Foundation and Ideology of TLP

TLP has been a party with a very specific and special position in the eyes of the Turkish Left. The most significant reason why such special importance is attached is that TLP is a party founded by workers themselves. TLP was founded by 12 trade unionists on February 13, 1961.<sup>53</sup> The establishment of the party by the workers and the lack of affiliation with traditional leftist movements is an its prominent feature. It is seen that this issue is frequently emphasized by Aybar in particular. Aybar, who claims that all the left parties established since the Ottoman Empire were founded by the *Beyler* or *Bey Takımı*<sup>54</sup>, wants to draw attention to the fact that a left-wing party was first founded by the workers in the history of the Left (Mumcu, 1993: 24-25). However, it should be noted that the workers who founded the TLP were trade unionists, in a sense, representing the "worker's elite", although Aybar frequently mentioned this issue in his memoirs. As a party formed by the unionists, the TLP is a party which is predominantly trade unionist than its socialist or socialist identity. According to Sadun Aren, TLP was not initially established as a socialist or socialist-oriented party (Aren, 1993: 35). This is also called the innate sin of TLP (İlke, 1974: 82).<sup>55</sup> Despite claims that the workers and laborers of the Party are pioneers and superiors, none of the representatives who entered the Assembly in 1965 are workers or laborers. Workers

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<sup>53</sup> 12 founding trade unionists are; Kemal Türkler, Avni Erakalın, Şaban Yıldız, İbrahim Güzelce, Ahmet Muşlu, Rıza Kuas, Kemal Nebioğlu, Hüseyin Uslubaş, Saffet Göksüzoğlu, Salih Özkarabay, İbrahim Denizci, Adnan Arkın,

According to the quotation of Sadun Aren, Adnan Arkın is not a trade unionist but Kemal Türkler's driver (Aren, 1993: 31).

<sup>54</sup> Aybar uses the concepts of "Beyler" or "Bey Takımı" to describe the political elites that have dominated the state since the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>55</sup> The founders of TLP's adventure in the party can be seen here; (İlke, 1974: 83).

represented 3 of 15 deputies entering the Assembly, and these were trade union leaders. (Rıza Kuas, Şaban Erik, Kemal Nebioğlu).<sup>56</sup>

Until Mehmet Ali Aybar was brought to the presidency, TLP became a party that outweighed the trade union. From the establishment of the party until the election of Aybar as the general president, TLP was not able to show much presence and it was decided that the party should be opened to the intellectuals. Among the intellectuals thought to be brought to the party, Ziyaettin Fahri Fındıkoğlu, Orhan Tuna, Nadir Nadi and Cahit Tanyol were mentioned but after long debates they agreed on Aybar. On February 8, 1962, the founders announced that they had elected Aybar as the general chairman and Aybar announced this development on 9 February with a press statement.<sup>57</sup> According to Aren, “thus, a year after its establishment, TLP was become a brand-new Marxist-socialist identity, completely separated from its former identity and of no interest to it” (Aren, 1993: 44). This determination of Aren has a partial truthfulness in terms of the discourse of the party and the new profiles of the party staffs, but the fact remains that TLP always protects the share of the workers according to article 53 of the Regulation until it is closed. One of the contributions of Aybar’s participation in the party is the participation of the socialist intellectuals, who are kept away from the party until that day, with Aybar.<sup>58</sup> As a matter of fact, Aybar accepted the presidency proposal with the condition of preparing a new regulation and program. With the participation of Aybar, a comprehensive regulation and program was prepared and it becomes possible to say more clearly about the identity of the party.

The party regulation and program, which was influenced by Aybar in great measure, was accepted in 1964 in the first Grand Congress held in İzmir, and it was preserved until the party was closed. In the purpose part of the regulation, the character of the party is defined as follows; “TLP is political organization walking to power legislatively and is a political organization of the Turkish working class and of all working classes and strata (of laborer and small peasants, of salaried workers and wage earners, of

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<sup>56</sup> In fact, according to Tarık Ziya Ekinci, the people of Urfa demanded that the deputy to be taken by TLP in Urfa should be given to dentist Hüseyin Kiraz, the presidential candidate for preselection (Ekinci, 2010: 547). The party, however, regarded Behice Boran as suitable for this deputy.

<sup>57</sup> Look for the founders’ press release (Aybar, 1968: 191-194) and Aybar explanation text (Aybar, 1968: 195-196).

<sup>58</sup> Behice Boran, Nihat Sargın, Sadun Aren, Minnetullah Haydaroğlu are some of these intellectuals. In 1968, when the intra-party discussions were turned into divergence, it was quite meaningful that these names started an opposition against Aybar. See similar expressions of Aybar on this subject; (Aybar, 2014: 170).

craftsman, of small tradesmen and self-employed person with low income, of progressive youth and *toplumcu*<sup>59</sup> intellectuals) gathered around its democratic leadership” (Regulation, 1962: 5).<sup>60</sup> As can be seen from the expressions declaring the character of the party, TLP does not position itself as a socialist party that based only on working class and advocating working class power. As Landau clearly pointed out “From the TLP’s foundation, the official policy of the party was to achieve power in Turkey by parliamentary means” (Landau, 1979: 185). In the same vein, the program emphasized the pioneering of the working class in the areas where the working class was analyzed, and although the working class was shown as the sole force to make radical reforms and to achieve the country’s development, it was pointed out that the working class has any superiority and privileged status against other popular classes and strata (Program, 1964: 54). At the end of article 3 of the Regulation, it is stated that TLP, which comes to power by means of law, will also be withdrawn from power by means of law (Regulation, 1962, 8).<sup>61</sup>

The emphasis on TLP’s program, which is interesting for a socialist party, is on issues of Kemalism and Nationalism. In the program, “Turkish nationalism is the ideological expression of our people’s, which has lived as a semi-colonized society for centuries, reaction to foreign slavery, colonialism, and exploitation”<sup>62</sup> (Program, 1964: 79). For the 1960s left-wing movements, the emphasis on nationalism is not, in fact, a questionable thing. However, it is possible to say that the TLP is different from the others, and that the emphasis of nationalism will come to light when considered together with the thesis of ‘Socialism specific to Turkey (*Türkiye’ye Özgü Sosyalizm*)’<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> TLP executives, like Aybar and Behice Boran, avoided the use of the word socialist and used *toplumcu* term until 1966.

<sup>60</sup>“Türkiye İşçi Partisi Türk işçi sınıfının ve onun demokratik öncülüğü etrafında toplanmış bütün emekçi sınıf ve tabakaların (ırgat ve küçük köylülerin, zanaatkarların, küçük esnaf ve dar gelirli serbest meslek sahipleri ile ileri gençliğin ve toplumcu aydınların) kanun yolundan iktidara yürüyen, siyasi teşkilatıdır”.

<sup>61</sup> These emphasizes can be seen as usual for a socialist party founded in the 1960s. It should not be forgotten, however, that the discussions within the party will come out of such matters as the determination of the relations between the working class and the other strata, or the leadership of working class. It was described as a parliamentary deviation that the TLP thus emerged by drawing a struggle completely within the parliamentary system, and in the following years, especially with Aybar, this situation became more evident. See for these arguments; (İlke, 1974: 81-121) and (İlke, 1974a: 43-95).

<sup>62</sup>“Türk milliyetçiliği, yüzyıllardır bir yarı sömürge olarak yaşamış halkımızın yabancı boyunduruğuna, sömürgeciliğine ve sömürücülüğe karşı tepkisinin ideolojik planda ifadesidir.”

<sup>63</sup> Socialism specific to Turkey that was theorized by Aybar criticizes Soviet socialism, emphasizes the importance of freedom, individuality, and draws attention to the original conditions of Turkey. Look for an assessment of Aybar’s thesis of ‘socialism specific to Turkey’ within the framework of the New Left understanding that emerged after the 1960s in the world; (Özman, 2000: 75-87).

which will set the weight of the party. Aybar developed a discourse that put the US and Soviet Union in the same equation and declared that the socialism of Turkey would be built by the children of Turkey. As Aybar's words, "as children of Turkey, we first consider socialism as Turkish socialism" (Aybar, 1968: 496). It should be noted that the conceptualizations that was used by Aybar in those days and the attitude of anti-Soviet are immanent, at least intuitively, in Aybar's thoughts since the beginning (Ünlü, 2001: 252). At the point of independence of Turkish socialism, it is possible to see similar expressions of Boran. According to Boran, the Turkish socialist movement is as rigorous and careful about the independence of the Turkish state as well as the independence of the Turkish socialist movement (Boran, 1992: 168-169). Therefore, for both Aybar and Boran, nationalism stands out as more emphasis on independence.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, in a party brochure published in 1963, it was said that "real nationalism prevents the exploitation of the Turkish nation both inside and outside" (Amacımız, Yolumuz, Yöntemimiz, 1963: 13).

If we look at TLP's assessment of Kemalism, it is possible to see that an anti-imperialist theme is dominant. It should be immediately noted that the words of Atatürk in 1921, which emphasized the themes of populism (*halkçılık*) and anti-imperialism, were both put into the introduction of the Program and the Regulation.<sup>65</sup> It is frequently emphasized in the party program that the Turkish nation won the first national liberation struggle in history and is a model nation for other nations. It should also be noted that both Aybar and Boran have statements in the positive meanings to Kemalism. According to Aybar, Kemalism is a left ideology. "It does not matter whether Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his friends are aware of the left wing. Their path is a way that is on the left and to the left" (Aybar, 2014: 114). Regarding the identity of the party, Aybar makes the following definition: "TLP, since it moved from Atatürkism and took its inspiration from the realities of our days, is a hundred percent local doctrine party that rescues the *Atatürkism* from the stereotypes"<sup>66</sup> (Aybar, 1968: 222). Boran, another significant name after Aybar in the party, has similar findings about Kemalism, or

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<sup>64</sup> As a matter of fact that, Aybar's book, which consists of selected texts and speeches in 1968, is called "Independence, Democracy and Socialism" is an example of this situation.

<sup>65</sup> Atatürk's words are also at the entrance of the first regulation drafted by the founding unionists. Aybar says that this is what he himself recommends and that his only contribution to the first regulation is this. (Aybar, 2014: 143-144).

<sup>66</sup> "Türkiye İşçi Partisi, Atatürkçülükten hareket ettiği ve ilhamını günümüzün gerçeklerinden aldığı için, Atatürkçülüğü de kalıplaşmaktan kurtaran, yüzde yüz yerli bir doktrin partisidir."

Ataturkism. According to Boran, the Kemalist senior staff struggled against, outside, imperialism - and therefore capitalism -, inside, and the Ottoman heritage administration and traditional social order, until the death of Ataturk. As a result of this struggle, Kemalism came to the most advanced ideological point it could get, and put forward principles such as evolutionism, populism, statism and secularism. According to Boran, “if these principles were systematized in relation to each other, an ideological frame that will extend the way socialism could happen” (Boran, 1992: 39).<sup>67</sup>

TLP expressed its commitment to the current constitutional regime at every turn. This was done not only due to separate itself from the traditional Marxist organizations and emphasize the legal direction, but also because it had a positive outlook on both the May 27 Movement and the Constitution prepared afterwards. Above all, socialism was, for the first time, given the opportunity to emerge and express itself as a legitimate movement of ideas and political action within the legal framework (Boran, 1968: 76). According to Aybar, May 27 May transform into the spirit of the *Kuvayı Milliye*. It is the rebirth of Ataturksim. “May 27 is the day when the Turkish Social Democracy is in a state of legitimacy” (Quoted in Ünsal, 2002: 119). Aybar formalized his relationship with May 27 by proposing a parliament to Muzaffer Karan<sup>68</sup>, one of the leading figures in the movement.<sup>69</sup>

One of the fundamental issues that shaped TLP’s ideology was its theses on Cyprus, NATO and America. The key criterion for TLP in foreign affairs is independence, emphasis on national independence. TLP exemplifies the foreign policy that Ataturk pursued in the field of foreign policy and clearly advocates its return to this policy. According to this, “in the Ataturk era, Turkey was absolutely opposed to imperialism, colonialism, carried the honorable responsibility of having fought the first national liberation struggle” (Program, 1964: 159). TLP declared that it will pursue peaceful foreign policy basing on War of Independence, based on the principles of the United Nations, jealousy independence and against imperialism and colonialism (Program, 1964: 161). As for the Cyprus issue, in the words of Aybar, TLP’s Cyprus thesis is the

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<sup>67</sup> It can be argued that this emphasis on Kemalism is for legitimacy and tactical purposes. Such a motivation is also a reason, but it is not possible to say that it is done for purely tactical purposes. According to Ünsal, an approach reminiscent of the December 1961 Declaration of *Yön* is a matter and it is a line closer to Left Kemalism than to socialism in appearance (Ünsal, 2002: 119).

<sup>68</sup> Karan resigned from the party in March 1966.

<sup>69</sup> In his work, in which Mehmet Ali Aybar wrote his memoirs, he never mentions the case about Muzaffer Karan.

independent, unconnected, without exponent, two-sided Federal State (Aybar, 2014:189).<sup>70</sup> In both Cyprus and the United States and on the Common Market, TLP followed a policy that mostly emphasizes financial dependency relations and bilateral agreements. Therefore, TLP saw the cancellation of financial aid agreements with the US and the Common Market and the closure of all military bases as essential preconditions for a fully independent Turkey.<sup>71</sup>

As in the other left movements in the 1960s, the development issue for TLP was the most significant problem in Turkey. At the heart of the party's theses on economics, there was the problem of the development of Turkey. In 1963, the TLP, in a pamphlet it published, said: "The main problem of Turkey is the development of the homeland from all sides and the closure of the big distance between Turkey and contemporary civilization" (Amacımız, Yolumuz, Yöntemimiz, 1963: 7).<sup>72</sup> According to the party, private sector, capitalist development is not possible for Turkey. The proposed method for development thought to be extremely vital is a statist, non-capitalist developmental path. The non-capitalist development path can be defined as a planned statism in favor of labor and participating in the execution and control of the laborers (Program, 1964: 64). It was clear that socialism was meant to be the path of non-capitalist development. However, according to the conditions of the period, such a prudent language was considered to be used.

Another theme that is decisive in both TLP's general policies and the program is land and agrarian reform. In the program, this situation is expressed as follows: "Both land reform and agrarian reform is equally significant, generally in terms of development and in the development of agriculture" (Program, 1964: 87). The real aim of land reform emerges in the context of a solution to the Eastern Question. The party, like many leftist movements of that period, assessed the Eastern Question in its most general sense under two main headings: Feudal relations (*Ağalık*) and Development. The land reform that is

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<sup>70</sup> Aybar explained his views on this issue for the first time in his speech in Gaziantep and following his speech which expressed this thesis, names such as Esat Çağa, TLP's only representative in the senate, Demir Özlü and Necla Sungurbey resigned partly.

<sup>71</sup> This theme, especially emphasized by Aybar, was criticized after years by Tarık Ziya Ekinci, one of the closest names. According to Ekinci, Aybar, especially in relation to the Common Market (EU), was taking the issue from purely economic perspective. However, given the legal structure, peaceful and democratic situation of the states that enter the Common Market, it is necessary to say that this attitude of general TLP, especially Aybar, is not realistic (Ekinci, 2010: 458).

<sup>72</sup> "Türkiye'nin en başta gelen sorunu yurdun her bakımdan kalkınması ve çağdaş uygarlıkla arasındaki büyük mesafenin kapanmasıdır".

thought on all over the country had its true meaning in the Eastern Question. The Eastern Question was examined under the heading East Development in the program and underlined that East is economically backward from the rest of the country. Apart from the analysis of conditions and developmental perspectives, it is stated that people living in this region are speaking languages such as Kurdish and Arabic, and are exposed to discrimination because of these situations. Aybar also summarized the party's thesis on this issue in a speech he made in the Gaziantep Provincial Organization as early as 12 May 1963.<sup>73</sup> Aybar states that the issue is not merely an economic aspect, but that the historical and ethnic aspects of the problem must be accepted. First of all, the citizens of the East should have equal citizenship treatment. At this point, Aybar reminds more of the 12th article of the Constitution and states that the Constitution is applied to the perfectly (*tastamam*) and that the citizens of the East also benefit from the possibilities provided by this article (Aybar, 1968: 282). In addition, Aybar stated that priority should be given to industrial investments and development plans in this region and Eastern must be rescued from being hardship area. He also added that TLP is tied to the principle of indivisible integrity by the nation and the state of Turkey, and that it will not accept any territorialism or division.<sup>74</sup>

These evaluations of Aybar had substantially the official vision of the party on this issue. However, a further aspect of the discussions that emerged within the party in the following years will be the differences in opinion. Before moving on to the Eastern Question and the ideas of Eastern intellectuals within the party, a summary of the intra-party debates will need to be given.

## **1.2. Intra-Party Conflicts and Party Congresses**

It has explained above that TLP was founded by the workers but the formation of party's socialist identity was eventually formed along with chosen of Mehmet Ali Aybar as a party leader and with the intellectuals becoming effective at the party. However, after the intellectuals penetrated the party in large numbers, some of the founding unionists continued actively at the party. Finally, a group called the

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<sup>73</sup> As a matter of fact, the related article of the program is a repetition of Aybar's speech in a large extend.

<sup>74</sup> Another feature that distinguishes TLP from other left parties is that it frequently publishes brochures to promote and explain it to the public. For the other views on the Turkish society of TLP, this brochure can be seen; (TİP. li'nin EL KİTABI, 1969).



Easterners(*Doğulular*) was added to these groups, which consisted of the intellectuals and the unionists. TLP, in a sense, constitutes the consortium of these three groups. Within these three groups, both the intellectuals and the Easterners did not have a homogenize structure, but in the first years of the party there seemed to be a great harmony among these groups. However, it does not mean that there are no disagreements within the party.

Conflicts that will be seen within each party have also begun to appear within the TLP even at varying degrees. Intra-party discussions have two significant characteristics for TLP; first, the difference of the first opinion was due to article 53 of the Regulation, which the party is always proud of; the second is that the disagreements in the party turned into personal challenges and prepared the end of the party.

In this context, the initial separation of opinion occurred when the party regulation was being prepared. The reason for this disagreement is article 53 of the regulation, which regulates the superiority of party workers in preparing party organs. The famous article 53 of the regulation was as follows: “It shall be observed that half of the members of all the organs of the party have been elected from members who are union directors or registered on the list kept on the workplace basis referred to in article 38 of the regulation. The candidate lists to be presented to the congresses by the governing bodies are arranged according to this principal. In the Congresses also delegates and organs are selected in harmony with this essential principal” (Regulation, 1962: 32).<sup>75</sup> It was alleged that this article was granted privilege to the party workers, or rather to the unionists, and it was alleged that the party was made *uvriyerizm* (*dar işçicilik*).

However, it should be noted that the objection to this matter has a theoretical background. One of the main points of discussion for the left movements at that time is whether there is an adequate working class in Turkey and whether or not it can lead to the socialist movement. The group, headed by Behice Boran, advocated working class leadership, while the other group suggested that there was no working class that could lead in Turkey and that it would cooperate with the *national bourgeoisie*. What is at stake here is the democratic predecessor of the working class. Neither the working class

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<sup>75</sup>“Partinin bütün organlarında görevli bulunanlardan yarısının, tüzüğün 38. maddesinde sözü edilen işyeri esasına göre tutulmuş listeye kayıtlı veya sendika yöneticisi olan üyeler arasından seçilmiş olması gözetilir, Yönetim organlarınca kongrelere sunulacak aday listeleri, bu esasa göre tertiplenir; Kongreler de delege ve organları bu esastan ilham alarak seçerler.”

alone nor the alliance with the peasants talked about by marching power (Aybar, 2014: 455). In the end, the arguments thrown by Boran would be the official vision of the party, and the regulation would be reflected as article 53. The discussions on article 53 continued after the grand congress held in İzmir and afterwards, and resulted in those who opposed the article to leave the party.<sup>76</sup>

Another disagreement in the TLP was experienced during the Malatya Congress in 1966. Before the Malatya Congress, the name that started a debate about TLP was Doğan Avcıoğlu. Avcıoğlu, in the writing he wrote in *Yön* Magazine, conceded that TLP was an honorary task under difficult circumstances, but that it would not mean that TLP could not be criticized either. Avcıoğlu declared that his intention was to initiate a well-intentioned debate in the socialist circles about TLP (Avcıoğlu, 1966: 3). The criticism from other authors of *Yön* and Avcıoğlu represented the TLP's criticism from the outside, while there was also the opposition movement initiated by the National Democratic Revolution(NDR) line rising from within the party. The NDR line advocated the strategy of achieving power as a result of alliance with the national bourgeoisie, as opposed to the parliamentary method of TLP. NDR group, "considered Turkey a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country greatly dependent on the west, primarily the United States, and one in which capitalist relations were only then beginning to emerge. Thus the first problems were those of the national-democratic rather than the socialist revolution, that is, the struggle for Turkish independence against imperialism and feudalism" (Lipovsky, 1991: 101). This group accused the significant names of the party, such as Aybar and Boran, of deviating of socialism and defending of parliamentarism. The NDR group also included names such as Rasih Nuri İleri who could also join the party organs.<sup>77</sup> At the Malatya Congress, this group did lobbying activities and made a list against Aybar-Boran duo.

The most significant group that the NDR tried to include in its ranks against the party center was the Easterners. However, with Tarık Ziya Ekinci's domination of the Eastern groups and these delegates standing beside the party center, these efforts will be

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<sup>76</sup> The names that ended up leaving the party were: İsmet Sungurbey, Demir Özlü, Doğan Özgüden, Fethi Naci, Edip Cansever, Ali Yaşar, Nurettin Akan, Ömür Candaş, Muzaffer Buyrukçu, Mustafa Çiçek, Mehmet Demir, Orhan Arsal and İhsan Güngör (Ünsal, 2002: 295).

<sup>77</sup> For a profound examination of the differences in the perspective of the Turkish Left on Turkish society and the different strategies for achieving power among the different factions of the Left in Turkey; (Şener, 2010).

inconclusive.<sup>78</sup> The NDR line within the party would result in liquidation and 76 people, including Rasih Nuri İleri, Sevinç Özgüner, Vahap Erdoğan, Halit Çelenk, would be exported from the party. This fact makes it clear that a large part of the party organizations is in Eastern provinces. Hence, trying to win the Eastern delegates in the struggle for power within the party will begin to be seen constantly.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the fact that the Congress was held in Malatya instead of in Ankara or Istanbul cities was also a matter of debate at that time. It would be easier for the eastern delegates to reach Malatya while the strongest names of the opposition were in cities like Ankara and İstanbul. Therefore, this displacement was interpreted both as a concession to the easterner delegates and as an obstacle to the easier access of the opposition to the congress (İlke, 1974: 93).<sup>80</sup>

The main debates in the TLP emerged in the process leading to the 1968 congress. The unsuccessful results of the 1968 elections were a complete disappointment, especially by Aybar. There was new seeking in the party, but it was not clear what it was going to happen. The occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact countries was another development that triggered off the debates in the TLP in 1968. Before the occupation of Czechoslovakia, Aybar said, “The Soviet Union should give up its habit of acting with the supremacy of socialist states being ‘great states’” (quoted in Aybar, 2014: 495).<sup>81</sup> After the occupation, Aybar further aggravated his criticism and declared that, in any country, neither American nor Soviet Russia’s claims of sovereignty were unacceptable. In this context, Aybar put Soviet Russia and American imperialism in the same equation and emphasized the independence of Turkish Socialism. In fact, Behice Boran, who was in the anti-Aybar wing of the debate, also condemned and criticized the occupation of Czechoslovakia. In an article written by the *Milliyet* newspaper in August 1968, Boran evaluated the events of Czechoslovakia as follows: “The system applied in the Soviet Union and its surrounding countries is not an exemplary prototype of the socialist order, and the current system is destined to undergo drastic changes, whether the current

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<sup>78</sup> At this congress, it was claimed that Tarık Ziya Ekinci directed the Easterners delegates and behaved like an *Ağa* by controlling these delegates. See for these claims and for Ekinci’s refutations: (Ekinci, 2010: 615-619).

<sup>79</sup> See the course of this debate and a summary of what happened in the Şişli Organization of the Party; (Ant, 1967: 6).

<sup>80</sup> Tarık Ziya Ekinci denies this claim and explains it for financial reasons as the reason for the choice of Malatya (Ekinci, 2010: 615-616).

<sup>81</sup> “Sovyetler Birliği, sosyalist devletlerin de ‘büyük devlet’ olmanın üstünlüğü ile hareket etme alışkanlığından vazgeçmelidir.”

administrators want it. ... In the Soviet Union and the People's Republics, the 'working class dictatorship' gradually taken the form of an arbitrary administration and despotic administration of a party, even a certain person in the party" (Boran, 1968, quoted in Aybar, 2014: 544). In the following years, Boran interprets these words differently. Boran stated that these words should not be understood in an anti-Soviet sense, but merely a situation assessment for that period (Mumcu, 1993: 64). Along with the Czechoslovakian debates, it was seen that Aybar had begun to express more 'friendly socialism'(güteryüzlü sosyalizm), 'socialism specific to Turkey', 'emancipatory socialism'(özgürlükçü sosyalizm).

From this date, the main theme of the discussions within the TLP would be the question of unity/diversity of socialism. The sequence of events that triggered off the debates within the TLP began with a proposal(5'li takdir) at the Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting held on October 16-17, 1968, of the five names of the CEC.<sup>82</sup> On the proposal, it was stated that Aybar was out of the party discipline, gave speeches contrary to the party program, evaluated socialism without basing on party principles. It was emphasized that these statements would not be connected to the party, and it was demanded that such disclosures require approval from the CEC. In addition, the complaints that was uncomfortable with Aybar's personal practices in party management was also expressed. Aybar described this proposal as a 'conspiracy' against him and argued that the demands on the proposal would bring the party leader into a position of ineffectiveness. However, by issuing a competence proposal (yeterlik önergesi) from the CEC, the debate was carried to the General Executive Committee (GEC). Aybar attained his aim by carrying the debate to the GEC and succeed in to achieve the decision from GEC, in which acknowledging that Aybar acts in accordance with the party statute and program, accepting that the statements and discourses condemning the occupation of Czechoslovakia are the views of the party. The competence proposal supporting Aybar was accepted in for 29 favorable, against 4 and with 4 abstentions (Aybar, 2014: 568). Interestingly, Behice Boran and Nihat Sargin also voted for Aybar.

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<sup>82</sup> This proposal was signed by the following five names; Behice Boran, Sadun Aren, Nihat Sargin, Minnetullah Haydaroglu, Şaban Erik.

However, the discussions within the party did not end despite the competence proposal and the debate moved to the third largest congress. In the Congress, all opposing names such as Sadun Aren, Behice Boran, Nihat Sargin made a speech and criticized Aybar and Aybar also responded to these criticisms. Ultimately, Aybar was again elected party leader with the support of the unionists and the Easterners. The opponents took the action for the extraordinary congress just after congress, and an extraordinary congress was held a month and a half later. However, Aybar also won this congress. In these congresses two basic facts about the state of the party emerged. First, no opposition group had a chance to succeed without getting the Easterners to their side.<sup>83</sup> In both congresses, Easterners supported Aybar uncompromisingly. In fact, in the extraordinary congress, Mehmet Ali Aslan, one of the leading names of the Eastern countries, gave a speech criticizing Behice Boran on the grounds that she postponed the solution of the Kurdish Question after the revolution. The second fact emerged in these congresses was that the intra-party discussions were often a discussion among the executives and in the theoretical dimension, and the party's alignments was demanding that more concrete problems be concentrated instead of dealing with these discussions. The timing of the criticisms of the names such as Aren and Boran towards Aybar is also interesting, because Aybar expressed the issues he emphasized for years and these were not a problem. Hence, with the theoretical dimensions of intra-party struggles, it is also possible to see this conflict as a party leadership struggle. As a matter of fact, Gün Zileli, who wrote the memoirs between 1954 and 1972 and examines the divisions on the Left in Turkey, claims that all divisions derived essentially from intra-organization power struggles of organizations' leaders or leadership circles (Zileli, 2000: 337). It is possible to say that the detection of Zileli is partly true. It is possible to say that the detection of Zileli is also true of TLP case. Particularly in the extraordinary congress, serious criticism was directed at the party executives and it has been expressed that the party has no connection with local problems. For example, Ramazan Işıktaş, one of the delegates, said: "Always theoretical words, Vietnam or something ... Vietnam, I am Vietnam!" (Ant, 1968: 9).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> As a matter of fact, Ekinici stated that he had seen Boran before the congress and Boran said that Aybar had made a mistake and she offered to be on their side against Aybar. When Ekinici responded negatively to Boran's offer, he conveys that Boran gave the following answer; "I knew you would not oppose Aybar anyway, but I thought it was okay to learn your thoughts" (Ekinici, 2010: 701).

<sup>84</sup> "Hep teorik laflar, Vietnam falan... Vietnam, asıl Vietnam benim!"

### 1.3. Easterners, *Yeni Akış* and Eastern Meetings

#### 1.3.1. Easterners

In Turkish political life, Kurdish political movements manifested themselves further armed actions in the first years of the Republic. After the Dersim Rebellion, the last of the armed revolts, stagnation was observed in the Kurdish political movement until the 1960s. Together with the 1960 Constitution, the Kurdish intellectuals wanted to take advantage of the mobility seen in the Left, and these intellectuals began to make their voices heard in magazines such as *Yön*. Before the 1960s, Easterner intellectuals were in political life; the more conservative one was in the Democratic Party (DP), and the one closer to the left was in the Republican People's Party. From the 1960s onwards, the left parties and movements would begin to attract more attention from Kurdish intellectuals.

Just before the 1960 coup, there was an incident known as the *49'lar Davası* in the public, and the *49'lar Davası* could be regarded as the initiator of the Kurdish Political Movement after 1950. The visible reason of *49'lar* case is the writings of Musa Anter, the prominent Kurdish intellectual of that time, on the *İleri Yurt* newspaper was published in Diyarbakır. The *49'lar* case is an arrest of Kurdish intellectuals, the majority of whom are students across the country.<sup>85</sup> In these arrests there is no mention of any organizational accusation, nor of an organization. The only charge against the *49'lar* was *Kürtçülük*, and they were acquitted after long trials.<sup>86</sup> Anter thinks that the *49'lar* case was initiated in the direction of this report.

The 1960 coup meant a dual development in terms of the Kurdish movement (Bozarıslan, 2003: 853). The atmosphere of freedom that emerged on May 27 was considered as an opportunity for the Kurdish movement as well as for other political

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<sup>85</sup> In this case, a total of 50 people were taken into custody. However, the reason for being known as the *49'lar* is that Emin Batu, a student at the Law Faculty of Ankara University, died in the cell.

<sup>86</sup> There is an allegation that Musa Anter told in the memoirs. According to this claim, before the 1960 military coup, National Intelligence prepared a report on the Kurdish Question for the DP government and stated that the following points should be made in this report; a-) If one thousand Kurdish intellectuals are destroyed in Turkey, the Kurdish Question in Turkey would regress at least thirty years, b-) We should say communist to the Kurds who we will choose in operation because the Kurds don't like communists and c-) They should not have strong relatives in political parties (Anter, 1991: 149). Again, according to the claim, these proposals were not accepted; instead, the operation of groups of 50 people was determined. Such a claim is also mentioned in the 70th edition of *Yön* Magazine. Although the names are a little different than Anter's, see for a summary of the report; (Yön, 1964: 4).

and social movements. But it will be understood that this atmosphere of freedom will not be valid for the Kurdish movement. However, after the coup, in an article that wrote in the book of *Doğu İlleri ve Varto Tarihi*, Cemal Gürsel, the leader of junta, said that “the Kurds are actually Turkish, and there are no people called Kurds” (Firat, 1961: 3). According to Doğan Özgüden’s memoirs, Muzaffer Özdağ, the youngest member of the coup, said to the intellectuals; “We made 27 May coup to prevent a Kurdish rebellion in eastern Anatolia. Otherwise the homeland will be divided. Do you know that we arrested Kurdish leaders (*ağaları*) before the DP leaders?” (Özgüden, 2010: 243). Another act of coup plotter for the Kurds was that 550 Kurdish *Ağa* and intellectual were gathered in a camp in Sivas. In addition, while many criminals were forgiven with the coup, the *49’lar* was not benefited from this. Canip Yıldırım who is one of the *49’lar* describes this situation as follows; “By the way, May 27, freedom or whatever else; they have forgiven everyone, but the Kurds have not forgiven. Even thieves were forgiven. They left us a year later or a little less” (Miroğlu, 2010: 150)<sup>87</sup>. Therefore, it is not possible for the Kurdish movement, which encountered such an opposition reaction even if there is not even a formation in organizational meaning yet, to establish a political and social organization on its own. One of the most significant priorities of the coup administration that began to be understood by its first actions was the Kurdish issue.

The Kurdish movement, on the other hand, chose to establish the organizations within the leftist parties and organizations. In this sense, we first see Kurdish intellectuals as signatories of the *Yön* Declaration. For example, Tarık Ziya Ekinci, one of the significant political figures, is one of the signers of the *Yön* Declaration. In addition, the Diyarbakır Branch of Socialist Cultural Association (*Sosyalist Kültür Derneği, SCA*)<sup>88</sup>, which was founded by the intellectual staff who published *Yön* Magazine and was converted into a party in the future, was opened by Tarık Ziya Ekinci. In the same way Tarık Ziya Ekinci made the presidency of SCA’s Diyarbakır branch. (Easterner names’, such as Said Kırmızıtoprak, writings in the *Yön* have examined above.) However, both the SCA disappeared being without a party, and the ideals of the *Yön* circle began to become clear in time. The *Yön* circle was aimed at a political power in the military-civil

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<sup>87</sup> Orhan Miroğlu publishes as a book the interview he made with Canip Yıldırım. The references to Miroğlu are based entirely on Yıldırım’s words.

<sup>88</sup> See for an up-to-date and comprehensive study of the Socialist Cultural Association; (Gürel, 2016).

partnership, and eventually it was a consequent military coup. However, it was not possible for the Kurdish intellectuals to rely on a military coup, regardless of its nature. In the words of Tarık Ziya Ekinçi, it is clear that “even if a military coup is leftist, it will delay the democratization of the society and further aggravate its policy of violence, oppression and assimilation against the Kurds” (Ekinçi, 2004: 270). However, TLP declared that it would act in a completely legal framework in its program, as it did not foresee a military coup. TLP is an significant opportunity for the Kurdish intellectuals who are in a search of and seeking a basis for expressing their legitimate wishes.

For these reasons, the place where the Kurdish political movement is most effective and where it can best express itself is undoubtedly TLP. The party meant the right opportunity for the Kurdish intellectuals to find the left and legitimate ground. There was a close acquaintance with the socialist intellectuals who joined to the party with the participation of Aybar and the Kurdish intellectuals. Many of the intellectuals who constitute the Kurdish political movement were educated in universities such as Ankara and İstanbul, and Aybar, for example, was a university teacher of some Kurdish intellectuals, such as Faik Bucak and Mustafa Subaşı (Miroğlu, 2010:159). Moreover, like Musa Anter, Kurdish intellectuals living in İstanbul were also acquainted with the socialist circles under the TLP leadership.

The origins of Kurdish leftist and right-wingers are, in a sense, based on the *49'lar* case (Kutlay, 1998: 84). Naci Kutlay, Canip Yıldırım, Musa Anter and Sait Kırmızıtoprak were the leftists, while Ziya Şerefhanoglu, Ali Karahan and partially Sait Elçi were the names on the right. The names on the right are politics in parties like the DP, Justice Party (JP) and Democratic Party of Kurdistan, which founded by Barzani the northern Iraq, while the left-wing names began to organize in TLP. In the Kurdish intellectuals, there is a sensitivity to the Kurdish issue by the rise of the *49'lar* incident and the education level. It is possible to say that the approach to the Kurdish Question is more effective than the emphasis on the left or socialism in many Kurdish intellectuals opening TLP's eastern branches. With Canip Yıldırım's words, “while we are doing politics, here is our point: how much is beneficial this party for the Kurdish issue, what can we do with this party? We have such an account between us” (Miroğlu, 2010: 125). TLP was regarded by the Kurdish intellectuals as a channel in which the national struggle would mature and the feudal relations in the East would be liquidated. The



presence of the Kurdish Question as an Eastern Question in the regulation and program of the party was sufficient for the Kurds to turn to TLP. According to Easterner intellectuals, the main problem of Turkey was the Kurdish problem and it was not possible to solve any other problems without solving this problem (Anter, 1991: 214). At the same time, they claimed that the dynamic Kurdish national potential could not be won without the Kurdish problem being solved.

TLP, in contrast to other left-wing parties and organizations, neither dictated a workers' dictatorship nor hoped for a military coup d'état. The fact that the TLP did not relate to the traditional leftist organizations, that stated it would act entirely within parliamentary boundaries, and that the program specifically addressed the Eastern Question was the main reason for its adoption by the Kurdish intellectuals. In addition, the fact that some Kurdish intellectuals had such aims as being a deputy is a reason for the organization of TLP as it is in other parties. The drawback of the Kurds to military bureaucracies is another factor of TLP's differentiation. In the words of Ekinçi, "Kurdish intellectuals, who perceive the Kurdish hostility and authoritarian government in the nature of ideologies based on the military bureaucracy, prefer TLP in the struggle for democracy and the spread of enlightened thoughts" (Ekinçi, 2004: 271). It should be noted that the implementation of article 53 of TLP's regulation in Eastern organizations was not very realistic because almost all of the TLP organizers in the East had professions such as lawyers and physicians. For example, Tarık Ziya Ekinçi is a doctor and Canip Yıldırım and Tahsin Ekinçi are lawyers, who are the founder of Diyarbakır organ of party.

### **1.3.2. Yeni Akış**

*Yeni Akış* is a magazine published by Kurdish intellectuals in the TLP. Mehmet Ali Aslan was owner and studies of director of the magazine. *Yeni Akış* was a magazine that expressed the Kurdish question and was seeking a solution to the Kurdish Question from Marxist perspective, which discusses ethnic and cultural issues in addition to the development problem of the Eastern. Although the *Yeni Akış* is a magazine that draws attention with its approach to the problem from the standpoint of the Marxist, and the Kurds' ethnic rights and Kurdish publishing, before this magazine, Kurds' youths published a magazine called *Deng*. However, *Deng* magazine was a magazine trying not to look Left. For example, a short story that Naci Kutlay translated from Maksim Gorki

was not published on the grounds that it was “a left-handed smell” (Kutlay, 1998: 150). However, *Yeni Akış* both approached from a totally Marxist perspective, and for the first time, it expressed thoroughly the Eastern Question as Kurdish Question. Another factor that made the *Yeni Akış* unique was the fact that Mehmet Ali Aslan, owner of the magazine, and Kemal Burkay, who was prominent in his poems and writings, became an active member of TLP’s Easterner group. Mehmet Ali Aslan and Kemal Burkay, chairman of the party Tunceli province, were among the leading names of the easterner group as young lawyers. Eastern parliaments such Tarık Ziya Ekinçi and Ali Karahan gave support to the magazine with their writings. It is possible to say that the magazine to a large extent carries the signature of Mehmet Ali Aslan, who was going to be a party leader in TLP for a short while. Apart from his own writings, Mehmet Ali Aslan also writes with different names such as Baran, Serdar, Abdulkadir Yıldırım. Therefore, we must examine *Yeni Akış* more comprehensively and we need to take a closer look at the discussions held in the magazine.

*Yeni Akış* began to be published in August 1966, and four issues were published in August-September-October-November. The magazine was closed after the 4th issue and Abbas İzol, who appeared as the owner and director of the last issue, Mehmet Ali Aslan and Kemal Burkay were arrested. In the first issue of the magazine, articles which are about the Kurds and Kurdish issues from different ideological perspectives were published. The first issue that started with the words “The Eastern is the most significant problem of Turkey” (*Yeni Akış*, August 1966: 3) was emphasized that the problem became to be made worse from day to day and it was aimed to start discussion with writings of various opinion writers. It appears that the writings of nationalist writers such as Nihal Atsız and İsmet Tümtürk and leftist writers such as İlhan Selçuk took place in the 1st issue. Especially the solution that İsmet Tümtürk found for the Eastern problem is interesting; “To place there (to the East) Kazakh-Kyrgyz immigrants with their weapons and tribal organizations as they are” (*Yeni Akış*, August 1966: 4). Atsız also counts Kurds as one of the three enemies of Turkishness in the article titled “*Kürtler ve Komünistler*”. İlhan Selçuk, one of the most significant socialist figures of the period, was also included in the first issue in two articles published in *Cumhuriyet* on April 25-26. However, unlike Atsız and Tümtürk, Selçuk does not offer a suggestion and Selçuk is only satisfied with making some determinations.

In the second issue, it seems that the criticisms of the articles published in the first issue are made. It is stated that such names as Atsız and Tümtürk suggested a Kurdish problem politics in accordance with their ideology, but socialists did not demonstrate enough interest in this issue and it is emphasized that Turkish socialists cannot clearly express their views on Eastern and Kurdish issues. Therefore, it is claimed the idea that socialism cannot deal with its own problems is widespread among the people of the East. It is stated that the Turkish socialists often evaluate the issue from the perspective of economic backwardness, but it is not sufficient to resolve the issue thoroughly. The economic causes play a big role, but they cannot have the ability to be the only condition. Economic laws and measures alone cannot solve the nation problem (Yeni Akış, September 1966: 9). Under the name of Baran, Mehmet Ali Aslan's writing evaluating the writings of Atsız and Tümtürk is interesting articles of this issue. According to Aslan, Turkey is a composition(*halita*) of various ethnic groups. Racist views are met with reaction; minority racism develops in the face of Turkish racism (Yeni Akış, September 1966: 8). Also in this issue, on the last page of the magazine, a statement declaring that the magazine's activities are carried out in the legal framework is published. It is understood that the most significant claim regarding the Kurdish issue of the magazine is the complete and perfectly(*tastamam*) application of the Constitution (Yeni Akış, September 1966: 20). As mentioned above, this is one of the significant slogans of the TLP.

It can be said that the themes that reflect the original identity of the magazine and cause it to be closed are the articles published in the 3rd and 4th issue. The third issue is "Socialism and the Kurds" and this issue deals with the view of Turkish socialists on the issue. After examining how socialism approaches nationalism, it is claimed that socialism does not deny the existence of any national formation. Instead, it is emphasized that socialism is against all kinds of exploitation, and abuse of a nation or a region is said to have the same meaning as class abuse. According to Aslan, Socialism is not against 'certain forms of exploitation' but against 'all kinds of exploitation' (Yeni Akış, October 1966: 14). Melting, destroying, oppressing others of an ethnic group is against social understanding of the nation. Socialism demands that ethnic groups and peoples are given the opportunity and possibility in order to improve their language, culture, and ethnicity. In Turkey, the most specific differentiation is between classes and regions. In this differentiation, focusing only on the class size, and counting the inter-

regional differentiation as secondary, will push the socialist movement to failure. It is extremely misleading for the Turkish socialists to understand the problem of inter-regional differentiation over the mere *ağalık* and the sheikhdom. Therefore, it would not be possible to solve the problem by advocating the abolition of the order of the sheikhdom and *Ağalık*. After these determinations and warnings, Aslan declares that he has the following result; “It should be known that the socialist movement in Turkey will succeed not only with the power of the working class, but also with members of religious sects under pressure and with the support of the Kurdish people<sup>89</sup>” (Yeni Akış, October 1966: 14). In addition, Aslan claims that the views of many of the socialists in Turkey are close to racist views and that they are not real socialists. One of the names claimed by Aslan as not being a true socialist is İlhan Selçuk, who is among the founding and significant writers of *Yön* Magazine.

This article, which was penned by Mehmet Ali Aslan, makes sense in order to understand the relationship that the socialist intellectuals of the Eastern in general and the Easterners in the TLP in particular established between socialism and the Eastern question. In this connection, it is better understood from the writings of Aslan that socialism or Kurdish national claims are more prominent. In addition, Aslan emphasizes that the Kurds must establish their own political organizations and, in a sense, signals the Kurdish movement, which will be separated from the TLP in the following years. The last edition of the magazine is mainly devoted to Kurdish publishing. It has been claimed that radio broadcasts should be broadcast in Kurdish and that the Kurdish media-broadcasting activities should be free, and this right has been claimed in the constitution. However, according to the conditions of the period, the reactions to these requests in 3rd and 4th issue, which can be regarded as very radical, was not delayed and the journal was closed.

The significance of the *Yeni Akış* magazine comes from the search for a solution to the Kurdish Question with socialist arguments for the first time. At the same vein, for the first time, the idea of separate organization from the Turkish Socialists began to be expressed. It should not be forgotten that Mehmet Ali Aslan is insignificant position in the TLP as a party leader for a short period. Therefore, the criticism of the *Yeni Akış*

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<sup>89</sup>“Türkiye’deki sosyalist hareketin yalnız işçi sınıfının gücü ile değil, -onun kadar, belki ondan da önemli- baskı altındaki dini mezhep mensupları ve Kürt halkının desteği ile başarıya ulaşacağı bilinmelidir.”

towards the Turkish socialists about the Kurdish issue can also be interpreted as a critique of TLP. As a matter of fact, in the discussions of the party, there will not be much time for the problematicization of the mainstream approach of the party's leaders. However, before addressing the in-party debate, mentioning the Eastern Meetings in the Eastern regions will be helpful in understanding the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish question.

### **1.3.3. Eastern Meetings**

Another significant development for the 1960s Kurdish movement was the Eastern Meetings. These meetings, which started in the summer of 1967, have a fundamental role in shaping the Kurdish movement. One feature of these rallies is that the advocates of the developing Kurdish demands in different lines are helping to form and participate in the rallies (Kutlay, 1998: 177). Therefore, the TLP is not the sole organizer of these meetings, but one of the groups organizing these rallies together with the other groups. In addition to TLP, the more nationalist and rightist wing of the Kurdish movement took an active role in regulating these organizations. Within the TLP, the party Diyarbakır Deputy Tarık Ziya Ekinci participated in all the meetings; Aybar, Boran, Sargin from the party administration joined some of these meetings and made speeches. The places where the meetings were made are mostly the ones that the Kurds make up the most of the population.

The first of these meetings was held in Silvan on 3 August 1967. These meetings would continue in Diyarbakır on 3 September, in Siverek on 24 September, in Batman on 8 October, in Tunceli on 15 October, in Ağrı on 22 October, in Lice on 5 November and on November 18th in Ankara (Ekinci, 2004:306). Although the TLP administrators also participated in these meetings, the characteristic aspect of these organizations is largely the result of the Easterners' own efforts. As was frequently discussed in the *Yeni Akış* magazine, the Kurds had agendas that were different from the basic political priorities of the Turkish Left, which was quite natural. As Gündoğan pointed out, "it was a moment for the Kurds to voice the problems and demands exclusive to the Kurdish region and population instead of the class-based politics of Turkish left which remained indifferent to the ethnic dimension of Kurdish problem" (Gündoğan, 2011: 392).

We must mention two examples to show that the relationship between the TLP and the Eastern Meetings is not a one-sided positive sense. The first of these was the first meeting attended by Nihat Sargin. Sargin was also scheduled to make a speech at the meeting, but the rightist and nationalist wing, one of the organizers of the meetings, opposed Sargin's speech by claiming that it would not be right to make a speech for a socialist and non-Kurdish one. However, this crisis was resolved by Mehmet Ali Aslan's efforts and Sargin made a speech (Kutlay, 1998: 177).

Another example is the discomfort that Behice Boran feels about Eastern Meetings. Although Boran attended only the meetings of Siverek and Batman, Boran arrive at the conclusion that bourgeois nationalism had been made at these meetings from the speeches and conversations after the meetings. Boran brought this concern to the CEC. According to Boran, it is clear that bourgeois nationalism was held at these meetings, and it is not right for the party to support these actions. Tarık Ziya Ekinci responded to Boran's allegations and Aybar evaluated that Ekinci's answers were satisfactory and he dropped the subject (Ekinci, 2010: 671-672). However, on the other hand, party leader Aybar, in his speech in the Parliament, supported joining of TLP's party members' participation to the Eastern Meetings and said that this was the most essential right. Aybar also stated that it was not constitutional contradiction in the meetings to claim the demands of the removal of the deprivation of the Eastern and the demands the change of the corrupt order (Aybar, 2014: 413).

As can be seen, the *Yeni Akış* magazine and the Eastern Meetings are the first tactical and practical actions of the Eastern group in the TLP, outside the discourses and policies of the TLP. Both events may be related to the TLP, but in both cases it is understood that Kurdish intellectuals and politicians demand more than the promises of the TLP. This is in the sense that the alliance between the TLP and the Eastern group shows the limits, since both sides began to feel uncomfortable with each other's demands. Undoubtedly, this process would accelerate even more with the establishment of the Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths (RECH), and so would the eventual breakdown.

#### **1.4. TLP's Approach to the Kurdish Question**

It is necessary to follow a gradual process when examining TLP's approach to the Kurdish Question. It is not possible to mention a total approach when the program is examined and when the differences between the leaders of the parties are considered in relation to the Kurdish issue. Aybar's approach to the Eastern Question and the approach of other party leaders are not the same. Canip Yıldırım, who says that Aybar is an insignificant factor in his entering the party, expressed this point. Aybar had a certain independence of thought, rejected the other left models and gave great importance to legality. Moreover, Aybar did not regard the Eastern Question as an economic problem, but also on the ethnic character of the issue. Thus, while TLP's approach to the Kurdish Question is examined, it is possible to analyze it from three different points; Party program, Aybar's approach and the approach of the Aren-Boran group. It is possible to find common points between the party program and Aybar's views and Aybar followed the same line until the end. First the party program, then the views of Aybar and the Aren-Boran group will be examined.

In the party program, the Eastern Question is as follows (Program, 1964:110-111);

The eastern development will be one of the services that TLP will see immediately and meticulously when it undertakes the development of the country. .... Moreover, those who speak Kurdish and Arabic or those from the Alawite sect are exposed to discrimination because of these situations.... These citizens will benefit from the rights and freedoms recognized in the Constitution. Article 12 of the Constitution states that there is no discrimination of religion, language, race, class and division among the citizens; this order of the Constitution will follow through. ... As stated in Article 3 of the Constitution, TLP expresses that Turkey is an indivisible whole with its country and nation, and rejects all divisiveness and regionalism.

The language used in the program is very prudent because of the circumstances of the period. In addition, the term of Kurd is never included in the program and the problem is considered as the Eastern problem. It can be said that there is not much difference in noting the problem and suggesting solutions offered in the other left movements approach. Indeed, as seen in the other left movements, the Eastern question is mainly dealt with as a problem of development and economic backwardness. It is promised that

Eastern will be given priority in investments such as factories and schools, and that Eastern will be recovered from being a deprived area. In addition, the fact that the citizens living in the Eastern are exposed to discrimination since they speak languages such as Kurdish and Arabic, or since they are from the Alawite sect are the main points that distinguish the TLP's approach from the others. By emphasizing the constitutionality of the indivisible integrity of the country, attempts wanted to prevent reactions to the party.

The presence of the Eastern question in the party program was enough reason for the party to gain sympathy and organize in the Eastern provinces. Moreover, as soon as Aybar came to leadership, he made his first nationwide tour to the Southeastern provinces. Aybar's speech in Gaziantep during this tour is another significant part of the party's approach to the Eastern question. Since Aybar's speech was before the acceptance of the party program, the relevant article of the party program was largely based on this speech. In his speech, Aybar expressed the following points which were accepted in the party program as follows; in the eastern and southeastern Anatolian regions, millions of citizens that speak Kurdish and Arabic live and we are faced with the tough questions that it raises. There are many aspects of this matter, historical aspect, ethnical aspect and legal aspect. Moreover, Aybar, who draws attention to the economic situation of the region and the problem of development, emphasized the aspect of economic development (Aybar, 1968: 281-282).

It was mentioned above that TLP could not show much presence around the country during the one year period when Aybar came to party leadership and the party was trying to revive with Aybar. Aybar, aware of this situation of the Party, was made an intensive nationwide tour program to promote and to become popularization the party. The organizing Aybar's first tour to the eastern and southeastern provinces and the emphasizing the ethnic aspect of the Eastern question his talk in Gaziantep is an effort directed towards popularizing and publicizing the party. However, according to the information given by Karpat "by September 1963 the party has established organizations only in seven provinces and twelve towns, whereas the next smallest party had about 150 branches and it also adopted a rather friendly attitude towards Kurdish communists and socialists, many of whom were striving to acquire national rights for their own group" (Karpat, 1967: 161).



One of the first organizations that the Party established in the stage of introducing itself was Diyarbakir and Gaziantep organizations. Aybar personally stated that organizing the TLP on Diyarbakir, which feudal relations are still very strong is very significant in terms of the future of the party. Indeed, both Gaziantep and Diyarbakir were two of the most significant organizations of the TLP, both in terms of votes and party organizations. It is also revealed in a survey of members of the TLP that the party had wider acceptance in the eastern and southeastern provinces than the other regions. Considering the number of members and the ratio of these numbers to the population, it is possible to make a table like this;

**Table 1:**

Regions	Number of Members	Rate	The rate of Total Population
Marmara-Ege-Akdeniz	7.986	62,91	38,86
İç Anadolu	2.019	15,90	25,62
Karadeniz	1.094	8,62	15,35
Doğu, Güneydoğu Anadolu	1.596	12,57	20,17

**Source; (Perinçek, 1969: 208).**

According to the table, the most populous member of the party and the most intense proportion to the general population are in the Western regions. However, given the situation of workers and trade unionism in the Western provinces, this situation can be regarded as unnatural. What is surprising is that the East and Southeast regions have a higher proportion of members than the other regions. The closeness of the Eastern people and intellectuals to TLP was derived from TLP's relatives with regions, which they do not see from any kind of other leftist party or movement. Eastern people and intellectuals saw a hope and expectation in TLP for themselves.

This closeness to the TLP in the Eastern and Southeastern regions, where mostly feudal relations still existed and where the worker was a lot of peasantry, was in line with Aybar's thesis of 'socialism specific to Turkey'. According to Aybar, the real dynamism of change in Turkey could be 'the masses of peasants, the greatest mass that

have been oppressed for years'. Therefore, the interest of the peasants in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia to TLP could be interpreted as the confirmation of Aybar's theses. One example of Aybar's insistence in his theses was before the 1969 elections. Aybar demanded change the TLP's party emblem, which is a "sickle-hammer" that adopts the workers-peasant alliance universally used by the socialist parties. Instead, the human symbol, representing a peasant, with a head hat, was accepted as a party emblem. Moreover, according to Aybar, concentrating such a strategy in a country where the peasants are so many, concentrating on the issue of liberty, could not be described as an anti-socialist situation. Because, the Turkish socialists had to determine a strategy required by the conditions specific to Turkey, as Lenin set a strategy according to the conditions of Tsarist Russia in Tsarist Russia and made a revolution. In Aybar's words, "Marxism is a scientific history and economics theory. Leninism is a revolutionary recipe for Russia". (Aybar, 2014: 481). Aybar also claimed that a Turkish socialist prescriptive should be prepared and that it was the peasants of the main key. Therefore, the interest that the Easterners showed to TLP was the life degree for Aybar. Aybar also visited writers of *Yeni Akış* magazine when they were arrested and gave them his support as a manifestation of this close. In response to all this closeness of Aybar, Eastern delegates would plump for Aybar during the all critical congresses. Furthermore, some significant Easterners intellectuals such as Canip Yıldırım left the party with the separation of Aybar.

It should be noted that the fact that Aybar attaches so much importance to the Eastern question and that the close relationship established with the Eastern delegates is not shared by all party leaders and does not represent a party opinion. Behice Boran was mentioned above, which she was uncomfortable with the Eastern Meetings. In a similar vein, Boran examined the numbers of the *Yeni Akış* magazine and arrived at the following conclusion; our friends who published this magazine clearly made bourgeois nationalism and this is incompatible with this Marxist ideology and party program (Ekinçi, 2010: 611). Boran's reaction to the *Yeni Akış* and Eastern Meetings was not due to her view of individual events but to her understanding and comprehension of socialism. Boran, in the party, with Sadun Aren, represented with scientific socialism and she was strictly bound to the Marxist-Leninist line. It was a socialist revolution to be carried out under the leadership of an organized and disciplined party, which was primarily for Boran, and such issues as the Kurdish problem were more secondary

problems to be resolved spontaneously with this revolution. In the words of Ekinçi “while Turkish intellectuals with a socialist revolution perspective accused the Kurds of nationalism, Kurdish intellectuals accused them of social chauvinism” (Ekinçi, 2004: 289). Therefore, all the actions that would deflect the aim of the socialist revolution are unacceptable behaviors from Boran’s perspective. Boran, in her own words, explains this situation as follows (Boran, 1968a: 9);

Our precise opinion is that Eastern Question, both with economic and social-ethnic aspects, would arrive only at solution on the socialist order and all citizens would access to democratic equality and freedom without discrimination of language, religion, race, sect, or sex, and would have the opportunity to develop their material and spiritual personality. To think of oppositely is to divide the power of the working-class and strata against the ruling classes and to sacrifice the fate of the working people in the Eastern to the political ambitions of local bourgeois and petit-bourgeois intellectuals and politicians. Socialism and socialists are opposed to all forms of exploitation, oppression and violence, but they oppose the tendencies of divisive petty-bourgeois nationalism within the socialist movement at the same time.

Boran and Aren described Easterners’ emphasize on Kurdish question as divisiveness and bourgeois nationalism. According to them, the Kurdish Question was a superstructure problem and could only be resolved after the socialist revolution. After the revolution, ethnic and religious exploitation, along with labor exploitation, would come to an end because the working class is against any kind of exploitation. The difference in the approach of the Kurdish issue between Boran-Aren and Aybar was also expressed in the congresses when the intra-party debate took place. In particular, the support of the Eastern delegates to Aybar forced Boran-Aren to take a stand against the Kurdish question. Both Boran and Aren’s approach to the Kurdish question and the Eastern delegates would be extremely negative, as it is by force of both scientific socialism and the Easterners supported Aybar in the congresses.

The Kurdish issue was also a debate matter at the II. Extraordinary Grand Congress on December 28-29, 1968, for the first time, and the Eastern delegates such as Kemal Burkay and Mehmet Ali Aslan had criticized the opposition, especially Boran. Aslan took the subject of Boran’s article in the *Tüm* magazine, which is summarized relevant part above, and he criticized her attitude to leave the Kurdish question after the socialist

revolution. Boran also felt the need to elaborate on her views on the Kurdish issue, and she made the following long statement about it (Ekinici, 2010a: 75);

As for the Eastern Question... The problem of the Eastern and Southeastern provinces is one of the most significant issues of Turkey today, and this issue is not just a regional backwardness, a matter of backwardness in development. It has a socio-psychological aspect. ... But as socialists, as I am a Turkish socialist; I am only inclined to consider the economic, social and psychological problems of the East within the understanding and movement of socialism that is pervasive throughout Turkey. The subjects of superstructure are significant; but if superstructure issues are not systematically and consciously dealt with in relation to infrastructure issues, they can lead to very wrong and dangerous directions.... It is necessary to consider the Eastern Question in its true perspective, its real weight; this issue should be considered as the whole of Turkey's socialism. If we remove it from this perspective and give it more weight, we would get the opposite results.

Repeating her ideas that stated against all kinds of exploitation, against the exploitation of ethnic differences, against the exploitation of regional differentiations, Boran concluded (Ekinici, 2010a: 76);

But the socialists – it is my opinion, whether you like it or not - are also against discriminatory ideologies and tendencies that will break the power of the working class in the socialist movement. This is not to serve both the problem of the region that we want to defend and the socialist problems. ... If the wrong tactics is used, if the differentiation of the superstructure will lead to a differentiation between the working classes, this will serve the dominant class because the unity and integrity and power of the laborers and the working class are divided and diminished in the face of the ruling classes. This is my opinion.

Clearly, Boran explicitly expressed the views of the wing advocating scientific socialism on this subject. Aren, the greatest supporter of Boran's advocacy of scientific socialism, said on this subject (Ekinici, 2010a: 76-77):

There are ethnic groups in Turkey. There are Kurds, there are Turks, there is Laz, etc. All of these have their issues. There is no doubt on this. But these issues are solved only in a socialist environment, and this solution is in the framework of the territorial integrity of the Turkey, but in the way of fulfilling the aspirations of these minorities. And this only happens in a socialist environment. And this only happens in a socialist environment.

Despite all the explanations of Aren and Boran, the Eastern delegates continued to support Aybar. However, after Aybar left the party, the Eastern delegates followed a three-step line. Firstly, an Easterner name, Mehmet Ali Aslan, was elected party

chairman after Aybar. Mehmet Ali Aslan and Kemal Burkay were among the leading names of the Eastern delegates and both were lawyers. Mehmet Ali Aslan was nominated by Aybar wing in the party and Nihat Sargin was the candidate of Aren-Boran wing.<sup>90</sup> However, Mehmet Ali Aslan could not take an active role in the party and his leadership lasted only 35 days.

After Mehmet Ali Aslan's resignation, any eastern delegate was not appointed to the top management of party bodies. With Aybar's resignation, the party was completely under the control of the Boran-Aren wing. Before the Fourth Grand Congress that made on October 29-31 in 1970, the eastern group made one final move to seize the party. Apart from the Eastern ones, there was another group called the NDR within the party, mostly led by Mihri Belli, which had 15-20 delegates.<sup>91</sup> The Eastern group offered an alliance to the NDR movement in order to seize the party against the Boran-Aren wing, although they advocated a quite different strategy from NDR. An significant matter that should be noted at this point is that even after 10 years from the foundation of the party, quite different cliques were involved in the TLP. Undoubtedly, this can be seen as a sociological mosaic and can be regarded as the organization of different understandings around a common party. This mosaic, expressed by the diverse tendencies, would be reflected in the party politics in the most negative way (Aydınoglu, 1992: 86).

One of the most significant factors in choosing TLP for Easterners to organize, not the other left parties, was the desire of the other left movements to achieving power with the military coup. The Kurdish intellectuals remained far away from the leftist movements advocating such a strategy, as the military coup was bad memories for the Kurds. However, the NDR movement was advocating a complete military coup, and it was unclear what such a strategy would cost the Kurds. For the sake of not lose control of the TLP, the Kurdish intellectuals held a meeting with Mihri Belli, the leader of the NDR movement outside the party, and offered an alliance to this view.<sup>92</sup> More

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<sup>90</sup> Tarrk Ziya Ekinci, one of the significant names of Aybar's side and of the two secretaries of the party, says that he offered Kemal Burkay a nomination instead of Mehmet Ali Aslan, but Burkay does not accept the offer by asserting of being very young age and inexperience (Ekinci, 2010: 766-767).

<sup>91</sup> Naci Kutlay and Nihat Sargin gave different figures regarding the number of delegates of the wing of the NDR.

<sup>92</sup> This interview is somewhat different from each other in the parts of Sargin's quotation from Belli's memoirs and in Naci Kutlay's memoirs. Especially the numbers and the names and figures of the Eastern delegates participating in the discussion are different. However, as far as it is understood from these studies, two of these names are Kemal Burkay and Naci Kutlay. Cf: (Kutlay, 1998:135-136) and (Sargin, 2001: 965-966).

interestingly, however, the Eastern delegates demanded from the CEC the liquidation of the NDR movement from the party 3-4 months before the meeting (Sargın, 2011: 964). An alliance that would be unclear about what would be the outcome for the Kurds was quite meaningful as it showed how vital TLP was for the Kurdish political movement.

The group of Easterners, who realized that they lost control of the party, tried taking advantage of the Marxist-Leninist line of the party. For this, in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist scientific Marxism on the line, they wanted to defend the right of self-determination for the Kurds. Yet, as discussed above, one of the most prominent principles of Leninist Marxism was recognition of the right of self-determination to the oppressed nation, at least at the theoretical dimension. Aside from the debate over whether or not Kurds are oppressed nations, the acceptance of such claims was impossible for a legal organization under the conditions of that period. However, the younger members of the RECH of the Eastern delegates were actively working, and in the 4th Grand Congress, they made great efforts to make a decision in this direction.

In the 4th Congress, Kemal Burkay was the spokesman of the Eastern delegates. At the leadership of Muş' delegate Ruşen Aslan, a proposal that have the radical expressions about the Kurdish Issue wanted to was presented by the Eastern delegates to the Congress, but Kemal Burkay and Tarık Ziya Ekinçi opposed it. Then, the proposal was presented to Congress with some changes and was accepted as the Congress's decision on the Kurdish question. With the pressure of the RECH youths, a decision was taken to determine the final attitude of the TLP on the Kurdish Question, which caused the party to close down. Some striking statements about the issue like Kurdish people lives in the East, this people was exposed to assimilation and terrorism since the very beginning, the issue of dealing with a development problem is the chauvinistic view of the dominant classes were accepted in this decision.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup>“Türkiye İşçi Partisi 4. Büyük Kongresi,

Türkiye'nin doğusunda Kürt halkının yaşamakta olduğunu,

Kürt halkı üzerinde, baştan beri, hâkim sınıfların faşist iktidarların, zaman zaman kanlı zulüm hareketleri niteliğine bürünen, baskı, terör ve asimilasyon politikasını uyguladıkları,

Kürt halkının yaşadığı bölgenin, Türkiye'nin öteki bölgelerine oranla, geri kalmış olmasının temel nedenlerinden birinin, kapitalizmin eşitsiz gelişme kanununa ek olarak, bu bölgede Kürt halkının yaşadığı gerçeğini göz önüne alan hâkim sınıf iktidarlarının, güttükleri ekonomik ve sosyal politikanın bir sonucu olduğunu,

Bu nedenle, “Doğu Sorununu” bir bölgesel kalkınma sorunu olarak ele almanın, hâkim sınıf iktidarlarının şoven-milliyetçi görüşlerinin ve tutumunun uzantısından başka bir şey olmadığını,

It is very interesting to be taken such radical decisions at a Congress where Behice Boran, who is always stand aloof from Kurdish issue and the Easterners, was elected general president. This is difficult situation to explain at the theoretical dimension, but it can be only explained in terms of intra-party alliances and balances. It is claimed that Congress made such a decision as a result of some alliances of Easterners' delegates, especially Muş's delegate Ruşen Aslan. Kemal Burkay, one of the senior delegates of the party, opposed this decision by foreseeing that the party would be closed. Ekinci also went to Boran with Canip Yıldırım and stated that they warned that "the party is going to be closed and that we can explain this to the other Kurdish friends" but that their warnings have not been taken into consideration (quoted in Ünsal, 2002: 16).

However, the acceptance of such a proposal was not enough to solve the troubles between the Boran-Aren group and the Easterners. The Eastern delegates gradually left the congress hall, not voting, to prevent Boran from being elected party leader. Before the results of the voting, Kemal Burkay's speech had already revealed the point of view of the two groups to each other. Burkay, in his speech, contacted two basic points, one theoretical and the other practical. In the theoretical dimension, Burkay claimed that the class which was oppressed and had revolutionary potential in Turkey was not only a working class. In Burkay's words, "Today some of our regions are carrying a revolutionary potential despite being weak in terms of the working class and this potential is very strong" (Sargın, 2001: 969). Emphasizing the socialist potential of East, Burkay, in a sense, was calling the Party administration not to lose the Easterner delegates. The second controversial point in Burkay's speech was the following; TLP is our guarantee. And we are fighting for this, Eastern group wanted use the party as an umbrella or screen.

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Kürt halkının anayasal vatandaşlık haklarını kullanmak ve diğer tüm demokratik özlem ve isteklerini gerçekleştirmek yolundaki mücadelesinin, bütün anti-demokratik, faşist, baskıcı, şoven milliyetçi akımların düşmanı olan Partimiz tarafından desteklenmesinin olağan ve zorunlu bir devrimci görev olduğunu,

Kürt halkının gelişen demokratik özlem ve isteklerinin ifade ve gerçekleştirme mücadelesi ile, işçi sınıfının ve onun öncü örgütü Partimizin öncülüğünde yürütülen sosyalist devrim mücadelesini tek bir devrimci mücadele halinde bütünleştirmek için, Kürt ve Türk sosyalistlerinin Parti içinde omuz omuza çalışmaları gerektiğini,

Kürt halkına karşı uygulanan ırkçı-milliyetçi şoven burjuva ideolojinin; Partiler, sosyalistler ve bütün işçi ve diğer emekçi yığınlar arasında yerle edilmesini sağlamanın, Parti ideolojik mücadelesinin ve gelişmesinin temel ve devamlı bir davası olduğunu,

Partinin, Kürt sorununa, işçi sınıfının sosyalist devrim mücadelesinin gerekleri açısından baktığını kabul ve ilan eder" (Aren, 1993 :71-72).

In fact, Burkay's words were stating the known facts. Since the establishment of the TLP, many Kurdish intellectuals have spoken in their own words as to why Kurdish intellectuals are interested in TLP because of their search for a legal ground for the Kurdish political movement. Factors such as TLP's acting in a legal framework, expressing compliance with parliamentary borders, lack of a goal to reach workers' dictatorship, or lack of progressive military imagination were the main reasons for Kurdish intellectuals to choose the organizing within the TLP.

In terms of TLP, the Eastern problem and the eastern provinces have been evaluated from a similar perspective. In the 1960s, when the working class in Turkey was rather weak, the inclusion of the eastern question provided insignificant advantage in terms of promoting the party itself and supporting the peasantry. Especially the importance of Aybar to the peasants was insignificant factor in speeding up the convergence of the TLP and the Easterner groups. When the rapprochement of Aybar came to an end and the party adopted a socialist party line based largely on the working class from the peasant masses, the alliance between the TLP and the Easterners ended.

As a result, the nature of the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish political movement has been revealed. Above all, the TLP approaches the Kurdish question in terms of the problem of massing and publicizing, which is the chronic problem of all the left movements. The TLP, although advocating that it was founded by workers, has not received enough acceptances even from the working class. The vast majority of the TLP's deputies of the Parliament agents are intellectuals/elites, and the party statute is not very effective at the point of representation of the working class. As a leader aware of the chronic problems of the Left, Aybar has evolved into a position that advocates that the party should be based on the peasant class, beside and even more than the working class. The Kurdish people, who could not hear their own voice and demands in the East, had a potential to answer Aybar's theses, and thus, as mentioned above, when Aybar was elected chairman, he organized his first homeland tour to eastern provinces. In addition, Aybar stood behind the New Stream magazine and Eastern Meetings and came up with sympathy for such movements in order to not to lose the Kurds despite the in-party opposition.

One of the points of disagreement between the Aren-Boran and Aybar wing, which deepened the views on both the theoretical and the singular events in the Party, was the



Kurdish issue and the attitudes of the Kurdish delegates within the party. While Aybar was approaching events within the framework of the socialism theory based on the peasants, the Aren-Boran wing was an advocate of a firm view of scientific socialism. The Kurdish question for Aren and Boran was a spurious question that had to be settled after the socialist revolution, that is to say, spontaneously, and they accused the Kurds' activities of *Kürtçülük* within the party. According to Aren and Boran, the Kurdish national movement is an act that divides the struggle of the Turkish working class. But the interesting point is that; the decision that led to the closure of the party by accusing *Kürtçülük* was taken at a congress in which Boran was elected party leader. Aren and Boran's thoughts on the Kurdish question have not changed since the party was shut down and it is possible to see in the congress that such a decision is the result of the alliance with some Kurdish groups. The alliance of Aren and Boran with the Kurdish movement that they have opposed theoretically since the beginning in order to provide party control is a key point that explains the nature of the TLP's approach to the Kurdish issue and the relationship between the TLP and the Kurdish political movement.

It should be noted that there is no one-sided attitude towards the Kurdish problem within the party, since it is possible to see that the representatives of the Kurdish movement have a similar attitude in their party approaches. The party is the most significant institution in the country that offers legitimate and legal policy for them. Other possibilities were left in other parties and movements, but the party's more moderate approach to the Kurdish question made it attractive to the party Kurdish politicians and intellectuals. Moreover, even in the understanding of socialism, Aybar's influence in the party, which differs from the other left fractions, was another reason for organizing the Kurds in TLP. Therefore, it can be said that the relationship between the TLP and the Kurds is a mutual relationship, and that TLP benefited from the Kurdish question to explain its policies and to open to the public, and that the Kurds approached the party as a legal ground to express themselves. As a matter of fact, for both sides, the alliance deteriorated with the start of these opportunities and disengagement between the Turkish Left and the Kurdish political movement took place.

## CONCLUSION

The Kurdish question has been a major issue since the founding of the Republic of Turkey, which has not yet been fully resolved and has been regarded as the main reason for many problems. The Kurdish question can be said about the paradigm shifts that have changed over time, but the final course of the matter is largely shaped by the policy preferences of the state. Therefore, the works on the Kurdish question has been based largely on the state attitudes and policies and on the reflexes of the Kurdish movement against these policies. On the other hand, it is not very common in the academic literature to examine the approach of the Islamist/Islamic or Left/Socialist wing of the society in terms of intellectual and practical dimensions.

In this thesis, I have examined how TLP is approached to the issue from the point of view of socialist view. One of the main objectives of this thesis is to examine how the Turkey's left approached the issue, centering the TLP case. Until 1961, when TLP was established, there was a Kurdish problem in Turkey. Hence, it was tried to be roughly summarized in order to put the TLP's approach in the historical context of how the Turkish Left movement until 1960s approached to the issue. However, as far as we have seen, there is no significant argument developed by the Left in Turkey until 1960, in a tactical and practical sense, about the Kurdish question. In the period up to 1960, three types of fractions can be mentioned for the Turkish Left, and the approach to the Kurdish question is directly related to the nature of these three fractions.

The first fraction that can be said for this period is the left fraction, known as the orthodox wing, directly linked to Soviet Socialism. Mustafa Suphi, Şefik Hüsnü, partly Mihri Belli in the early period and the parties/organizations established under the leadership of these persons can be considered as representatives of this fraction. This line has been seen as a result of Leninist-Stalinist stereotypes putting in the party programs decisions that can be regarded as 'radical', including the right of national self-determination. Apart from the early years of the Republic in which the Soviets

attempted to withdraw to the newly established Kemalist government, the orthodox wing generally followed a line called scientific Marxism. Representatives of this wing have been with Kemalism in the early years of the Republic against the Kurdish rebellions, because they thought Kemalists were doing bourgeois revolution and because they regarded co-operation with bourgeois values as a more Marxist attitude towards feudal structures.

As the second wing of the period until 1960, we can say the thesis of Hikmet Kıvılcımlı. As early as the 1930s, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı talked about the existence of the Kurdish question and tried to reveal the nature of the matter in the direction of his own understanding. According to Kıvılcımlı, Kurds are a nation with economic, historical and ethnic backgrounds and the Kurdish question is a national question. It will be better understood in the following years that Kıvılcımlı has not developed his thesis which can be regarded as quite ambitious both in terms of the Left of Turkey and of the period he wrote, considering Turkey's realities and he is not very loyal to his thesis. Kıvılcımlı adopted Lenin's and Stalin's debates around the national question and nation concept and adapted the arguments of Stalin and Lenin to the Kurdish question. However, Kıvılcımlı did not give any place to the Kurdish question in later practical and intellectual experiences. On the contrary, he had a very peaceful image with Kemalism, especially with the experience of the Motherland Party and the reflexes he showed after May 27.

Another fraction of the Left, which is seen in the pre-1960 period and after 1960, is the wing to be called the Kemalist left. The typical prototype of Kemalist Left forms the *Kadro* magazine and its surroundings. As the *Kadro* is a movement that is based on the mission of placing Kemalism on an ideological basis, the views on the Kurdish issue are also in full accord with the Kemalist paradigm. One other point that distinguishes the *Kadro* from the leftist movements in the first years of the Republic is that no Kurdish rebellion occurred in the period of publication of the magazine. Therefore, the *Kadro* writers are content with referring to the Kurdish question with only a few texts, which deny the existence of the Kurds and evaluate the Kurdish question and the problems of Eastern in the light of the Kemalist practices.

The *Yön*, which is considered as a continuation of some aspects of the *Kadro* movement but which is an exclusive movement in many ways, is like a transition period between

the pre-1960 paradigm and the TLP for the Kurdish question. In the *Yön*, the Kurdish question was first understood as a development problem, in line with the national and international atmosphere for the 1960s. It is necessary to mention two basic features that distinguish *Yön* from other left movements. First, for the first time, the young writers of the Eastern found an atmosphere in which they can express themselves. Earlier, there were articles, books and publications published by Kurdish intellectuals, but for the first time, Eastern intelligentsia and Turkish socialists met on a same platform. Secondly, the Kurdish issue, even if the expressions were weak, was mentioned for the first time, taking its ethnic character into account. It is particularly significant that the outstanding socialist figure of the time, such as Doğan Avcıoğlu, writes an independent article under the heading of the Kurdish issue and criticizes Turkish socialists because of neglecting this issue, and points out Turkish socialists must need to discuss this issue further. Although Avcıoğlu did not discuss this issue later, it was a sign that such an article was followed more carefully by the socialist circles. However, if we need to make a holistic assessment of the *Yön* movement, it is the general theme that dominates the movement in which the Kurdish issue is understood more as a development problem and the solution will be achieved together with the whole country's development.

With regard to the Kurdish question, the most significant interest and relevance from the socialist circles was ever shown by the TLP. A co-operation and rapprochement between the TLP and the Kurdish political movement, seen neither before nor after, was seen, except for the PDP example in recent years. There are two main reasons for this rapprochement, one being the TLP front and the other being the front of the Kurdish movement. In this thesis, the nature of this relationship and the reasons for this nature in terms of both sides are examined.

First of all, if we look at the issue in terms of TLP, it should first be emphasized. In Turkey's intellectual and political life, the Left movement has always held in the context of a certain circle in terms of quantity. In other words, the fact that the Left movement cannot grant the support of the masses massed and permeate into the society is one of its biggest problems. For example, the number of persons arrested in the 1951 withholding, which is known as one of the large withholdings facing Left, is only 151. So this handicap, which applies to almost all fractions of Left, is also valid for TLP. The fact that the number of workers and the education rates are higher in Western regions is

less interesting than expected, which is a case in point. In order for the party to become massive and to promote itself, it has become inevitable to be opened to other deprived areas of society from the outside working class, on which is not very popular. For the Party, Eastern voters and Easterner intellectuals expressed insignificant opportunity both in the name of self-promotion and in the name of mass mobilization. In order to use this opportunity in favor of TLP, TLP has included both in the program for the Kurdish question from the first day, and the issue was not abstain from emphasizing ethnical direction besides economic direction. The proximity of the TLP to the eastern provinces, which are welcomed and responded to by the Eastern public and the Kurdish intellectuals in the same way, is understood by the proportion of party delegates and the number of party members. The number of Easterner intellectuals in the party had a decisive power in the congresses, and the number of members in the eastern provinces of the party was higher than the average of the other regions according to the population.

If we look at the Kurdish movement for the sake of it, TLP is above all a platform for Kurds to express themselves and to hear their problems easily in Turkish public opinion. The fact that TLP's policy making on a legal basis and within parliamentary borders and not foreseeing a military coup in the ruling strategy constituted the main reasons for the Kurds to choose TLP to organize. Compared to other leftist parties and movements, TLP's approach to the Kurdish problem is of course the most significant reason in this situation. Easterner intellectuals, even when they were active in the party, took some initiatives that far exceeded party boundaries. The publishing of the *Yeni Akiş* magazine and the Eastern meetings are some of their best-known examples, and the party administration was also suffered some crises at the point of supporting or not supporting these movements. As a result, understanding differences on the Kurdish question are one of the reasons for the conflicts between the party leaders, and the Eastern's delegates took positions in the intra-party discussions according to the attitudes developed against the Kurdish question. What is more interesting is that the closure of the party will be based on the accusation of separatism in the light of the emphasis on the Kurdish question, which will place the party into a privileged position in the perspective of the Turkish Left and the Kurdish question.

The closure of the TLP meant that the partnership between the leftist movements and the Kurdish problem had come to an end. With the establishment of RECH, the Kurdish movement, which experienced for the first time a separate organization from the left of Turkey, maintained this stance throughout the '70s, and in 1984 the process of disintegration with the beginning of the PKK's armed actions reached its final stage. Although some of the armed left groups in the '70s continued their relations with the Kurdish movement, the September 12 coup d'état made this relationship impossible. In the '90s and the first half of the 2000s, the relationship between the Turkish left and the Kurdish movement was often remote. After 2010, however, a renewed rapprochement and alliance between the Turkish left and the Kurdish movement began to take place. It should be noted that political allegations play an insignificant role in the formation of this alliance, for periodic reasons as well as the re-discovery of the ethnic issues that the Turkish Left has insisted to keep away entering the international left-wing literature from the '80s.

One of the main triggering motivations for writing this thesis was the alliance that some of the Turkey's left and the Kurdish political movement experienced in the PDP. The PDP project is aimed at bringing the left and the Kurds together and creating a common political/social movement. Undoubtedly, it is not alleged that the PDP has gathered all the factions of the Left and all the Kurdish people, but it is a fact that both sides receive a serious acceptance. In particular, the results of the June 7th elections put the PDP in a position to be the most significant actor in both the Left circles and the Kurdish political movement. However, the conflict process that occurred after 7 June caused the PDP to fade again, and the alliance between the left and the Kurds began to be seriously debated.

*Birikim* Magazine, one of the most significant magazines of the Turkey's left, published an issue in the title of 'PDP and Left Policy' (*HDP ve Sol Politika*), '50 Years Later TLP' (*50 Yıl Sonra TİP*) after 7 June election results. In this issue, the history of the alliance of the left and the Kurdish movement that developed in the PDP is based on the experience of living in the TLP. As a matter of fact, the most obvious example of the Turkish left's view of the Kurdish issue in terms of many left figures, not of *Birikim*, is that the relationship between TLP and Kurd and the TLP are closed with

*Kürtçülük*(separatist Kurdish nationalism) accusation. The alliance established in the PDP is trying to gain legitimacy through TLP experience.

In this thesis, the nature and motives of the alliance in TLP were tried to be revealed. As a result of the examinations, it has been seen that the debate about the ethnic and national problems in the international left literature is similar in the Turkish Left and TLP. TLP and the Turkish Left's view of the Kurdish issue have been examined and it is aimed to present a point of view for the works of the post-1970s. Particularly interesting results can be reached, especially after the period of long separation, when a new alliance for the PDP has been re-established and evaluated within the framework of searches and references in the international left literature. Here, based on an understanding of the perspective analyzing the understanding of the Left, will be very useful in testing the theses we have developed in our work.

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