

MUHAMMED CİHAD KUBAT

A GODLY PROGRESSIVE NATION: THE KOREAN WAR AND TURKEY'S COLD WAR

REORDERING

Bilkent University 2024

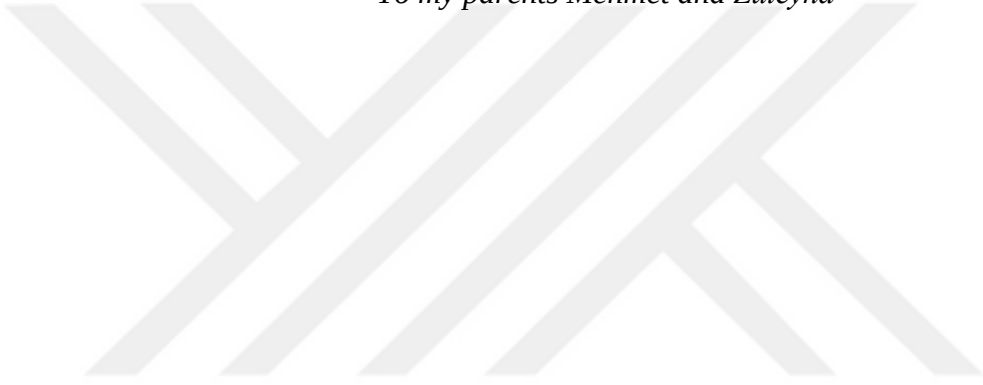
A GODLY PROGRESSIVE NATION: THE KOREAN WAR AND TURKEY'S COLD WAR REORDERING

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
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Department of History
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Ankara
February 2024

To my parents Mehmet and Züleyha



A GODLY PROGRESSIVE NATION: THE KOREAN WAR AND TURKEY'S COLD
WAR REORDERING

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

MUHAMMED CİHAD KUBAT

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

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ANKARA

February 2024

A GODLY PROGRESSIVE NATION: THE KOREAN WAR AND TURKEY'S COLD WAR
REORDERING

By Muhammed Cihad Kubat

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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ABSTRACT

A GODLY PROGRESSIVE NATION: THE KOREAN WAR AND TURKEY'S COLD WAR REORDERING

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February 2024

On June 25, 1950, North Korea attacked South Korea and started the Korean War. The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 82, which urged North Korea to withdraw from South Korea's soil. North Korea's failure to abide by the United Nations' call prompted Security Council Resolution 83, which called all member states to support South Korea. The newly elected Democrat Party in Turkey elaborated on this issue very carefully. Eventually, Turkey became the second country after the U.S. to positively respond to the Security Council Resolution 83 and committed a brigade of 6092. Relying extensively on American, Korean and Turkish declassified archival materials, this dissertation brings the impact of foreign policy decisions on the inner politics to the forefront of Turkey's Korean War experience. It argues that Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War its spillover effects not only

changed Turkish diplomacy but also altered Turkey's international perception and its society in a fundamentally different way than the period preceding the Korean War.

Keywords: Korean War, Turkey, pro-Americanism, Revival of Islam, Internationalist Nationalism.



ÖZET

İMANLI TERAKKİPERVER BİR MİLLET: KORE SAVAŞI VE TÜRKİYE’NİN SOĞUK SAVAŞ DÖNEMİ YENİDEN YAPILANMASI

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Şubat 2024

25 Haziran 1950 tarihinde Kuzey Kore, Güney Kore'ye saldırarak Kore Savaşı'nı başlattı. Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi, Kuzey Kore'yi Güney Kore'nin topraklarından çekilmeye çağıran 82 sayılı kararı kabul etti. Kuzey Kore'nin Birleşmiş Milletler'in çağrısına uymaması üzerine Güvenlik Konseyi, tüm üye devletleri Güney Kore'yi desteklemeye çağıran 83 sayılı kararı aldı. Türkiye’de iktidara yeni gelen Demokrat Parti hükümeti Kore Savaşı’nı çok dikkatli bir şekilde takip etti. Sonunda Türkiye, Güvenlik Konseyi’nin 83 sayılı kararına Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nin hemen ardından olumlu yanıt vererek 6022 kişilik bir tugayı Kore’ye gönderme kararı aldı. Büyük ölçüde gizliliği kaldırılmış Amerikan, Kore ve Türk arşiv belgelerine dayanan bu tez, Türkiye’nin Kore Savaşı deneyiminde dış politika kararlarının iç politikaya olan etkisini ön planına çıkartmaktadır. Bu tez, Türkiye'nin Kore Savaşı'na müdahale kararının sadece Türk

diplomasisini deęil, aynı zamanda Türkiye'nin uluslararası toplumdaki yerini ve Türk toplumunu, Kore Savaşı öncesindeki dönemden temelde farklı bir şekilde deęiştirdięi savını işlemektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kore Savaşı, Türkiye, Amerikancılık, İslami Diriliş, Enternasyonalist Milliyetçilik.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We did not know who was right at that time, whether the Left was right or whether the Right was right. It was only after the war was over that we were taught that communism was wrong ... Both the Right and the Left were wrong. Each side claimed that only their side was right. Looking back, it occurred to me that both sides were wrong. They both were wrong in what they had done to us.

An elder from the Korean village of Gamgol¹

When I talk a bit about this war [the Korean War], I cannot sleep at all during the night.

Abdullah Temizkan, a Korean War veteran from the city of Elazığ²

The outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, marked a point of significant changes for the whole world. First and foremost, the nature of the Cold War was changed. Instead of cold wars, “hot” wars started to be observed, in which major geopolitical players waged proxy wars against each other.³ Similar societal changes occurred across borders worldwide. These changes sometimes followed a pattern; at

¹ Heonik Kwon, *After the Korean War: An Intimate History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 34.

² “Koreliler Belgeseli [Documentary Koreans],” accessed January 6, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvhQj5a9zdM>.

³ Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Cold War's Killing Fields: Rethinking the Long Peace* (London: Harper, 2018).

different times, they occurred due to the particular conditions of the societies. These changes and their importance for the modern world have occupied historians' minds for a long time.

Bringing the impact of foreign policy decisions on the inner politics to the forefront of Turkey's Korean War experience, this dissertation suggests that Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War and its spillover effects not only changed Turkish diplomacy but also altered Turkey's international perception and its society in a fundamentally different way than the period preceding the Korean War. First and foremost, this dissertation puts forward the idea that Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War was the price of its World War II-era neutrality. In addition, the dissertation asserts that Turkey underwent a number of social and political changes during the Korean War period between 1950 and 1960. These changes were generally the result of Turkey's Cold War experience, and this experience was domesticated and intensified at home, similar to other countries experiencing the Cold War. The outbreak of the Korean War and Turkey's participation in it played an important role in the making of these changes. The changes occurred in four major areas: Turkish diplomacy, the emergence of pro-American progressivism and anti-communism, the revival of Islam in the Turkish political sphere, and the birth of internationalist nationalism. This dissertation argues that, during the Democrat Party's rule between 1950 and 1960, Turkey entered a unique period, primarily influenced by the impact of the Cold War on the country's politics and the subsequent ripple effects felt by society in the form of domestication of the Cold War. Furthermore, the Korean War was the most crucial catalyst in domesticating the Cold War in Turkey and fostering the creation of a "godly progressive nation." The process of Turkey's Cold War reordering started immediately after the end of World War II, with Turkey diplomatically tilting

to the Western alliance. The outbreak of the Korean War and Turkey's participation in it created a need for the government, as well as local people, to make sense of the conflict by creating justifications specific to their own context. These justifications helped ease the revival of Islam in Turkey's political sphere, created a specific form of nationalism aligned with internationalism, and finally formed a pro-American and anti-communist form of progressivism.

This dissertation puts forward the idea that the origins of Turkey's involvement in the Korean War date further back in time; they stem from Turkey's World War II era foreign policy and its consequences. During World War II, Turkey decided to follow neutrality after a brief alliance with Britain and France.⁴ This stance continued until the end of World War II despite continuous requests, especially from the Allied side, to join the war. Even before the end of World War II, Stalin started a hostile attitude toward the Soviet Union's foreign relations with Turkey. His requests were simple: a change in the Montreux Convention regarding Turkey's rights in the straits and a redefinition of Turkey's eastern border. These requests were unacceptable to the Turkish side, which was taken aback by the demands of the Soviet Union.⁵ After a brief shock, Turkey's President İsmet İnönü and his right-hand man realized that they were pushed into a corner, and they could not follow the neutrality policy of World

⁴ Brock Millman, *Ill-Made Alliance: Anglo-Turkish Relations, 1934-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1998).

⁵ Onur İsci, *Turkey and the Soviet Union During World War II: Diplomacy, Discord and International Relations* (London: IB Tauris, 2019), 62–67.

War II period.⁶ Therefore, Turkey began to engage with the U.S., primarily seeking security commitments through Turkey's membership in NATO. Turkey's attempts at becoming a member of NATO proved in vain after the U.S. repeatedly refused to make any concession regarding the issue of Turkey's NATO membership.

After the end of World War II, Turkey's then President İsmet İnönü realized that one of the preconditions of becoming a member of the European security apparatus was to be a democratic country. Therefore, following the footsteps of other European nations, Turkey decided to democratize and had the first free election in May 1950.⁷ Democrat Party, the main opposition by that point, won the election. Democrat Party's victory meant the end of one-party rule dating back to the foundation of Turkey in 1923. This bloodless transition from an authoritarian one-party rule influenced the opinions of not only diplomats in Turkey but also various Western countries, which saw Turkey as the epitome of the revival of democracy naturally.⁸ The success of Turkey would mean other countries in various places around the world could also transform into democracies without any bloodshed. Democrat Party's liberal policies intensified Turkey's outlook as a potential Western-style democracy. The first

⁶ "İsmet İnönü, Metin Toker'e İkinci Dünya Savaşını Anlatıyor [İsmet İnönü Talks About World War II with Metin Toker] -YouTube," accessed May 19, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPw7MXwF_ec.

⁷ John M. VanderLippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy: İsmet İnönü and the Formation of the Multi-Party System, 1938-1950* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2012), 5.

⁸ Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to the President, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), 1263.

international challenge the Democrat Party faced was the emergence of the Korean War.

The leaders of the Democrat Party intently elaborated on Turkey's options at the time. Turkey's leaders immediately grasped the seriousness of the situation after U.S. President Truman sent ground troops to help South Koreans. At that time, it appeared that the Soviet Union, Turkey's historical rival in the region, was exerting influence. Consequently, Turkey's course of action became clear-cut. After the UN's official request for ground troops, Turkey immediately approved the request and became the second nation after the U.S. to accept fighting side-by-side with South Koreans. While Turkey initially wanted to send a full division consisting of around 15,000 troops to demonstrate Turkey's commitment to the UN, the U.S. side asked Turkey to downgrade the number to a brigade level. Turkey eventually sent 6,092 troops as part of its first brigade to Korea.⁹ Therefore, Turkey's adventure in the Korean War started. At the time, nobody would imagine that soldiers from Turkey would stay in South Korea until 1971.¹⁰

Korean War is generally recognized as an important step in Turkey's relations with the Western security bloc.¹¹ After North Korea's unprovoked attack against South

⁹ "Kore Harbi'ne Türk Kuvvetlerinin Katılmasının Hatırasına Kore'de Dikilecek Abide İçin Hazırlanan Anket... [Survey Prepared for the Monument to Be Erected in Korea in Memory of the Participation of Turkish Forces in the Korean War..]," August 17, 1973, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBI (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

¹⁰ Mehmet Ali Tuğtan, ed., *Kore Savaşı: Uzak Savaşın Askerleri* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2013), 31–48.

¹¹ While it is true that the Korean War was a significant turning point in Turkey's relations with the West, it was also a crucial turning point in Turkey's relations with East Asian nations. Historical records

show that Turkey's predecessors Göktürks (552-745) and Korea's Goguryeo (BC 37- AD 668) formed diplomatic relations and an alliance against China's Sui (581-618) see: Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 47. While Göktürks and Goguryeo sometimes fought as well, Korean historians believe that the cooperative attitude between these states mattered much more historically. See: 김지영, “6 세기 후반-7 세기 초반 고구려·돌궐 관계의 변화 [The Relationship Changes between Goguryeo and Dölul from the Late 6th Century to the Early 7th Century],” *인문학연구* [The Journal of Humanities Studies], no. 28 (2015): 215–38; Hee-chul Lee, *Siyasi, Ekonomik, Askeri ve Kültürel Açısından Türkiye-Kore İlişkileri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), 2–5. It seems that Turkish-Korean relations kept growing during the Goryeo (918-1392) period as well. One of the most popular folk songs during the Goryeo period was about a Turkish bakery, which reflects the social status of Turks in Goryeo society: “I go to the Turkish shop, buy a bun, An old Turk grasps me by the hand. If this story is spread abroad, taroro kodiyo, you alone are to blame, little actor!” See: Peter H. Lee, *A History of Korean Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103. Turkish-Korean relations during the Goryeo period is still an understudied topic that needs attention. When the Joseon period is analyzed, it is observed that after King Sejong's infamous edict banning Islamic dress in the court, Turks were rarely mentioned in the official records. This situation continued until the early 20th century. Abdürreşid İbrahim, an Ottoman citizen originally from Russia, visited his close contacts from Japan in 1907. While returning to the Ottoman Empire, he stayed in Korea for about a week. İbrahim's visit to Korea is a Muslim's only documented excursion to Korea in the 20th century. Abdürreşid İbrahim's original aim in visiting Japan was to convince the leaders of the Black Dragon Society, who were Pan-Asianists, to ally with Pan-Islamists like himself. İbrahim stayed in Japan for about two months and managed to convince quite a bit few Japanese leaders of his aim of allying Imperial Japan with Pan-Islamism. İbrahim considered Japan as a potential leader of the “Eastern civilization.” However, during his visit to Korea, İbrahim also observed a variety of aspects of Korean culture that further convinced him of the Eastern civility thesis. İbrahim became particularly sympathetic to Koreans because he saw their position in a world of imperial hierarchies as analogous to Muslims in the Russian Empire. İbrahim tried to convince ordinary Koreans not to lose their self-consciousness and gave examples of his own as a Muslim living in Russia. İbrahim left Korea feeling

Korea on June 25, 1950, Turkey decided to send a brigade of 6092 soldiers to Korea to block North Korea's aggression. Between 1950 and 1953, Turkey sent around 21,000 soldiers who directly fought in the Korean War. Afterward, Turkey continued sending brigades to Korea until 1966, and then the brigades were reduced to an honor guard level that stayed in Korea until 1971 and retreated from Korea with one of the last UN troops. In 1971, when the last group of Turkish soldiers retreated from Korea, Turkey had already sent 60,266 soldiers to protect South Korea.¹² Turkey's intervention in the Korean War created a special bond between the two countries that continues even today. After Turkey participated in the Korean War, Koreans started to use the term "brother country" to refer to Turkey, while Turkey started to use "blood brother" in its official documents referring to South Korea.¹³

Apart from its contribution to Turkish-Korean relations, Turkey's participation in the Korean War helped Turkey reinvent itself in a fundamentally different way from previous attempts at reinventing and redesigning the country. The primary difference during and after the Korean War was the participation and contribution of ordinary

quite saddened by the situation he observed but hoped that Koreans could cooperate with the Japanese for a better future. See: Muhammed Cihad Kubat, "A Muslim Intellectual in Korea: Abdürreşid İbrahim (1857–1944) and Situating Korea in the Pan-Asian World Order," *Korea Journal* 62, no. 3 (2022): 178–203. After Abdürreşid İbrahim's visit in 1907, the first substantial connection between Korea and Turkey emerged during the UN's plans to unite both Koreas through an election. Dr. Kamil İdil was assigned as a representative of Turkey for the United Nations Commission on Korea (UNCOK). See: Chi Young Pak, *Korea and the United Nations*, vol. 45 (Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000), 214.

¹² "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

¹³ For Turkish and Korean perceptions see: Hyerim Choi, "Mutual Perceptions of Korean and Turkish Societies: Prospects for Development of Political, Economic and Cultural Relations" (Master's Thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2014), <https://open.metu.edu.tr/handle/11511/23713>.

people's ideas into the framework. It should be noted that Turkey had been ruled by one party since its inception in 1923. The reforms that followed the Republic's inception were highly influenced by French-style idealism and a certain amount of belief in the superiority of positivism.¹⁴ These suppositions have led to the pursuit of top-down reforms, which seemed to be the only viable option for the powerful ruling elite. While some of these reforms were rather easily applied, others were met with certain criticism, even upheaval. The opposition to reforms was harshly suppressed by using the state's power.¹⁵ This situation continued until World War II's end when Turkey found itself in a somewhat different kind of world that forced it to make specific changes.

The first major change was in terms of Turkey's foreign policy. After an initial alliance with Britain and France, Turkey followed a neutrality policy throughout World War II and did not join the war on either side despite various requests from both sides. Even before the end of World War II, the Soviet Union demanded a change of Turkey's rights in the straits and a reconfiguration of its eastern border. This threatening attitude of the Soviet Union forced Turkey to become closer to the Western bloc and request a membership status for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). While Turkey applied for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, it was gently rejected several times. Some of the main reasons were that

¹⁴ See: Şerif A. Mardin, "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, no. 3 (1971): 197–211; Gavin D. Brockett, "Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923–1938: Secular Reform and Religious 'Reaction,'" *History Compass* 4, no. 6 (November 2006): 1060–72.

¹⁵ See: Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923–38*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Turkey was not a part of the North Atlantic or that Turkey was not a Western country culturally.¹⁶ One of the primary reasons for rejection, as realized by Turkish leaders, was that Turkey looked much more like the Soviet Union than a democratic Western country. To change this situation, İsmet İnönü, the President of Turkey at the time, decided to implement democracy. The first free and fair elections were held on May 14, 1950, and the main opposition, the Democrat Party, was elected to rule Turkey for four years. This bloodless change of power affected Western countries' perception of Turkey as an emerging democracy, which helped its accession into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. During the Democrat Party period, Turkey followed a pro-American foreign policy since the Soviet Union left it with no other choice. This dissertation argues that Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War was the price of its World War II era neutrality. During World War II, Turkey followed a neutrality policy and did not join the war on the side of its then allies Britain and France despite all of their efforts. Therefore, after the end of World War II, Turkey was increasingly perceived as an evasive country that could not be fully trusted. That is one of the primary reasons why Turkey was not accepted into NATO after the organization's foundation. The emergence of the Korean War provided Turkey a chance to showcase its commitment to the Western security apparatus that it failed to do during World War II. In this sense, this period was an anomalous time in Turkish diplomatic history since the country found itself in a situation where it could not implement strategies such as neutrality or playing one side against the other that Turkey masterfully implemented in previous periods.

¹⁶ Saban Halis Çalis, *Turkey's Cold War: Foreign Policy and Western Alignment in the Modern Republic* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), 91–93.

In addition to following a pro-American foreign policy, Turkey under the Democrat Party's rule also followed liberal progressive policies such as following a free market-based economy, passing laws that respected religious freedoms in the country, and supporting the aims of international organizations. During the Korean War period, progressivism in Turkey seems to be equated with being pro-American. Therefore, pro-American progressivism almost became an ideology of its own. This dissertation suggests that during the Korean War period, pro-American progressivism coupled with anti-communism became a leading ideological perspective. Anti-communism was supported by the ruling Democrat Party and it was institutionalized almost as a state ideology. The Democrat Party's anti-communist policies also led to the accumulation of a significant number of leftist adversaries. Using dichotomies such as ours and others, the Democrat Party managed to create a mutual enemy in leftist/communist cadres that were against Turkey's participation in the Korean War. This was in line with the worldly trends such as McCarthyism in the U.S.¹⁷

One of the major changes Democrat Party rule brought was regarding religious freedoms. For example, immediately after its election, the Democrat Party changed the constitution and removed the law banning the Arabic adhan. The ban on the Arabic adhan was one of the reforms that received an intense backlash. The removal of the ban on the Arabic adhan won over many supporters of the Democrat Party. With the removal of the ban on the Arabic adhan, Democrat Party won over quite a lot of religious people's hearts. However, the Korean War created a new situation in which large segments of the society's agreement with the cause was needed. Ottoman Empire,

¹⁷ See: Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

Turkey's predecessor, created a form of religious justification for its military ventures in the name of *ghaza*.¹⁸ However, as a self-declared secular country, Turkey was not supposed to use religion for the benefit of state affairs. Still, the Democrat Party did not shy away from finding a religious meaning in the Korean War. Democrat Party's rule saw an unprecedented amount of freedom given to the religious community in Turkey. This undeniably helped the growth of the public presence of religion to the extent that the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, who was previously largely ignored, suddenly found himself on the front pages of newspapers. The resurrection of Islam during the Korean War and its continuation throughout the Democrat Party rule signifies a major change in terms of societal dynamics. This dissertation suggests that during the Korean War, Turkey experienced the resurrection of Islam in public and especially political sphere. This was purposely done by the ruling Democrat Party to manufacture consent of the people in Turkey for participation the Korean War.

Nationalism and its practice were significantly changed during the Korean War. As is known, Turkish nationalism originates from the late Ottoman Empire period. After the emergence of the Republic of Turkey, an official version of Turkish nationalism was produced by the state.¹⁹ The official version was mainly concerned with the origins of the Turkish nation and its closeness with other Western nations. However, it specifically rejected two aspects that were previously acceptable: Ottoman tradition and Islam. Major history books written to promote the official version of

¹⁸ Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire: Studies in the History of Turkey, Thirteenth–Fifteenth Centuries* (London: Routledge, 2013).

¹⁹ A. Afetinan and Recep Peker, *Vatandaş İçin Medenî Bilgiler*, vol. 1 (Milliyet Matbaası, 1930); Büşra Ersanlı, *İktidar ve Tarih: Türkiye'de "Resmî Tarih" Tezinin Oluşumu (1929-1937)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2018).

nationalism specifically avoided providing a positive image of the Ottoman Empire or Islam. Rather, the Central Asian origins of the Turks were mentioned in large detail, and the Ottoman Empire was bypassed or roughly covered. Pan-Turkist nationalism that emerged during World War II followed the path of official nationalism with a few modifications. Instead of Islam, Central Asian religions were promoted, and an inward-looking form of nationalism that was supported by some leading figures in Germany was developed. On the other hand, during the Korean War, a largely different form of nationalism was developed. Korean War proved that top-down theoretical formations of nationalism were somewhat effective in infusing an awareness of Central Asian origins. On the other hand, these theoretical forms of nationalism and their effects on restricting the influence of Ottoman tradition as well as Islam were rather limited. Lastly, this dissertation posits that during the Korean War, Turkish nationalism was affected by Turkey's strategic alliance with NATO and transformed into an internationalist form which stressed Turkey's international responsibilities and duties. Therefore, Turkey's participation in the Korean War was perceived a natural duty of every Turk.

1.1. Literature Review

The literature regarding the Korean War and Turkey's intervention can be classified into three major areas of focus. The first major area is the place of the Korean War in international history. Next, the Korean War and its effect on Turkish foreign relations. Finally, the Korean War's impact on the development of nationalism and Islam in the Turkish political sphere.

Historical studies related to the Korean War gained traction around the 1980s with the declassification of Korean War-related material in the U.S. In general, the

literature regarding the Korean War can be classified into three major categories: orthodox/traditional, revisionist, and post-revisionist. The traditional perspective mainly perceives the Korean War as an attempt by the communist states to enlarge their area of influence. David Rees' book entitled *Korea: The Limited War* suggests that the Korean War was the first war in which the U.S. took part, which was not perceived as a crusade. Rees admires Truman, who kept the war a limited one and criticizes MacArthur for not being able to comprehend the bigger picture in Truman's Korean War strategy.²⁰ James Irving Matray, in his book *Reluctant Crusade: American Foreign Policy in Korea, 1941-1950* depicts the Korean War as a test for the U.S. strategy of containment in the Asian continent. Matray suggests that the U.S. had to alter its Korean policy significantly due to the eruption of hostilities and kept helping South Korea during and after the Korean War to ensure its survival.²¹ William Stueck, another historian with a traditional perspective, argues in his book *The Korean War: An International History* that without Chinese and Soviet help, North Korea would not have been able to start a war in the first place. Therefore, the Korean War was first and foremost an international war and a substitute for World War III.²²

Revisionist view places more importance on the internal factors rather than the international factors. Bruce Cumings' *Origins of the Korean War Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945-1947* is one of the most impactful works written about the Korean War. In this book, Cumings puts forward the idea that Korean society was on the verge of revolution after the end of Japan's colonial period, which lasted

²⁰ David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 117.

²¹ James Irving Matray, *The Reluctant Crusade American Foreign Policy in Korea, 1941-1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 254.

²² William Stueck, *The Korean War as International History* (Princeton University Press, 1997), 3.

for thirty-five years. Accordingly, “land conditions and relationships, especially in the south, augured revolution.”²³ Cumings’ main argument that emphasized the internal factors contributing to the emergence of the Korean War created a revisionist line in the historiography followed by many. One of the most prominent followers of the revisionist line is Pak- Myōng-nim, who wrote the book entitled *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* [The Outbreak and the Origins of the Korean War]. Just like Cumings, Pak also based his study primarily on the North Korean captured documents along with the declassified U.S. documents and suggested that complex internal conditions led to the emergence of the Korean War. Pak proved that the North Korean army attacked the South first, and some prominent figures in North Korea, such as Defense Minister Ch’oe Yonggōn, did not support the idea of attacking South Korea.²⁴

The declassification of foreign archives, especially Russian and Chinese, allowed scholars to integrate the perspectives of the actors who participated in the Korean War. This literature can be referred to as the post-revisionist literature on the Korean War. Shen Zhihua’s book *Mao, Stalin, and the Korean War: Trilateral Communist Relations in the 1950s* primarily relies on declassified Chinese and Soviet archival sources and suggests that the Soviet Union betted against the U.S.

²³ Bruce Cumings, *Origins of the Korean War Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945-1947* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981).xxvi.

²⁴ 박명림 [Pak- Myōng-nim], *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* [The Outbreak and the Origins of the Korean War] (서울 [Seoul]: 나남 [Nanam], 1996), 409–15.

involvement in the Korean War.²⁵ In addition, he contends that the Chinese government under the leadership of Mao made an idealist decision instead of a realist one by sending ground troops to Korea.²⁶ Wada Haruki in his book entitled *The Korean War: An International History* mainly focuses on reconstructing the Korean War as a Northeast Asian War since, according to him, the war and its legacy fundamentally changed the region. He also challenges the revisionist view by suggesting that the North Korean side not only saw the Korean War as a primarily civil war, but the government under the leadership of Kim Il Sung recognized the war as a continuation of the Chinese Revolution.²⁷ Last but not least, Samuel F. Wells' book *Fearing the Worst: How Korea Transformed the Cold War* combined the abovementioned primary and secondary sources to rewrite the history of the Korean War from the point of view of the Cold War. Wells suggested that "a series of decisions made by the Truman administration during the first six months of the Korean War transformed the Cold War into a militarized competition between the two superpowers."²⁸ According to Wells, the Korean War caused a militarized competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and totally transformed the nature of the Cold War.

²⁵ Shen Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin, and the Korean War: Trilateral Communist Relations in the 1950s* (London: Routledge, 2012), 114.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 164.

²⁷ Wada Haruki, *The Korean War: An International History* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 84.

²⁸ Samuel F. Wells, *Fearing the Worst: How Korea Transformed the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), 472.

In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the effects of the Korean War on the local populations of the participating countries. The most prominent work is Masuda Hajimu's book *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* that aimed to rewrite the formation of the Cold War in different societies around the world by synthesizing social and diplomatic history and local and global history. He suggests that people from different parts of the world "interpreted the meaning of the Korean War through the lenses of their local contexts and participated in a multilayered politics of knowledge production in their hometowns, eventually paving the way toward maintaining a particular Cold War world."²⁹ He placed a special emphasis on the World War II period and emphasized that the memories of World War II formed the basis for the period between 1945 to 1950. Next, Masuda focuses on what he calls the "truth-making campaigns" where ordinary people shaped the narratives of the Korean War.³⁰ For instance, the American public viewed China as a tool of the Soviet Union, while the Chinese saw the U.S. through the lens of imperialist Japan during the World War II period. Last but not least, Masuda focuses on how local criticisms were oppressed in various societies, such as the suppression of counterrevolutionaries in China, the Red Purge in Japan, and anti-communist activities in various Western countries.³¹ Grace Huxford, in her book titled *The Korean War in Britain Citizenship, Selfhood and Forgetting* explored the social and cultural impact of the Korean War on Britain. Huxford argued that many people in Britain drew parallels between World War II and the Korean War since the memoirs of British

²⁹ Masuda Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 145–70.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 222–58.

participation were vivid in the mindset of the common people.³² In addition, Huxford suggested that “the Korean War made both the government and the British people consider what constituted reasonable and good citizenship in the early days of the Cold War” and citizens began to contemplate about the concepts “citizenship” and “selfhood.”³³ Accordingly, the discussions regarding selfhood especially involved around brainwashing, which was largely seen as a communist concept foreign to the British society. Last but not least, Huxford delved into the idea of forgetting and posited that the legacy of the Korean War was overshadowed by the legacy of World War II in Britain.³⁴ Laurent Quisefit’s article entitled “The Korean War as Seen from France: Public Opinion and Political Perception” provides insights about French participation in the Korean War. The article suggests that the most exponent reaction came from the communists who, in line with the Stockholm Call, launched a propaganda campaign to stop the usage of atomic bombs in Korea.³⁵ Lily Ann Polo’s article “Philippine Involvement in the Korean War: A Footnote to R.P.-U.S. Relations” deals with the diplomatic and social impact of Philippine’s involvement in the Korean War. Polo suggests that five days after the start of the Korean War, an anti-communist league was formed in Manila.³⁶ The public was predominantly in favour of sending

³² Grace Huxford, *The Korean War in Britain Citizenship, Selfhood and Forgetting* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 2.

³³ Ibid., 128.

³⁴ Ibid., 180–81.

³⁵ Laurent Quisefit, “The Korean War as Seen from France: Public Opinion and Political Perception,” *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 1, no. 24 (June 2011): 157.

³⁶ Lily Ann Polo, “Philippine Involvement in the Korean War: A Footnote to RP-US Relations,” *Asia Studies* 20, no. 1 (1982): 89.

ground troops to Korea “to fight once more for the democracies headed by America.”³⁷

Criticism regarding Philippine involvement in the Korean War mainly by Congress of Labor Organization (CLO) and workers unions were labelled as “radicals” by the mass media.³⁸

Masuda Hajimu’s abovementioned work influenced the conceptualization of this dissertation since it combines social and diplomatic history to come up with a new understanding of the effects of the Korean War on a variety of nations. This dissertation follows Hajimu’s work in using social and diplomatic history to explore the effects of Turkey’s intervention in the Korean War. As it will be introduced, in Turkey’s context, religious and nationalist truth-making campaigns took place to make sense of the Korean War. In addition, as suggested by Grace Huxford, the concepts of citizenship and selfhood were also rediscovered in Turkey primarily by making connections with the Ottoman Empire’s *ghazas* and Turkish nationalism. Last but not least, as it was observed in the Philippines, a pro-American anti-communist movement emerged in Turkey as well.

The second major area of literature on the Korean War is regarding foreign policy. To this day, Turkey’s participation in the Korean War is generally viewed through the lens of foreign policy and considered as the first step in Turkey’s entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. William Hale, in his book entitled *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774*, posited that Turkey’s decision to intervene in the Korean

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 90.

conflict was “a clear sign of its commitment to the Western camp.”³⁹ Şaban Halis Çalış, on the other hand, put forward the idea that Turkey’s decision to send ground troops to the Korean War was taken “to demonstrate its dedication to UN decisions.” Çalış added that the decision “was primarily intended to demonstrate their support for a policy that was formulated by the US.”⁴⁰

Articles that focus on Turkey’s intervention in the Korean War also primarily focus on the security aspect of Turkey’s foreign policy decisions. For example, in his article entitled “Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War: Turkey’s Participation in the Korean War.” John M. Vander Lippe suggests that “Turkish leaders saw participation in the war as a means of acquiring Western aid and of proving Turkey’s continuing importance in changing strategic situations.” Lippe adds: “Turkey’s contribution has impressed the West with the strategic value of Turkey... one result has been increased aid and investment from the United States and Europe.”⁴¹ The perspective that the Korean War was a catalyst for Turkey’s admission into NATO is generally shared. For example, Cameron S. Brown’s article “The one coalition they craved to join: Turkey in the Korean War” is mainly focuses on Turkey’s NATO admission and the Korean War’s effect on it. Brown suggests: “In 1950, there was a very real fear of an external invasion of Turkey by the Soviets or a Soviet satellite.”⁴² Füsün Türkmen, following

³⁹ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 117–18.

⁴⁰ Çalış, *Turkey’s Cold War*, 94.

⁴¹ John M. Vander Lippe, “Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War: Turkey’s Participation in the Korean War,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 1 (2000): 101.

⁴² Cameron S. Brown, “The One Coalition They Craved to Join: Turkey in the Korean War,” *Review of International Studies* 34, no. 1 (2008): 107–8.

the importance of foreign policy topics, argues that Turkey became isolated after World War II and this aspect was especially used by the Soviet Union to exert influence on Turkey.⁴³ Metin Tamkoç also highlighted the security threat the Soviet Union posed at the time and suggested that Turkey had to form security alliances with other nations to stay afloat in its region.⁴⁴ As it can be deduced from the abovementioned works, major scholarly publications focused on foreign policy, generally evaluate Turkey's participation in the Korean War as an attempt to keep its borders secure by an allegiance with the Western powers, mainly the U.S. This dissertation agrees with the perspective that Turkey's decision to participate in the Korean War was mainly motivated by its desire to become a member of the North Atlantic Organization. However, it brings forth an equally important and underexplored aspect of Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War: the legacy of Turkey's World War II era neutrality.

The last major area of literature regarding Turkey's participation in the Korean War is on the development of nationalism and Islam in the Turkish political sphere. It should be noted that the literature generally treats the rise of Islam and Turkish nationalism as fluid and simultaneous developments during the Democrat Party era and evaluates them altogether. Literature regarding nationalism during the Democrat Party period is rather scarce. The reason, as Tanıl Bora pointed out, was "Turkey joined the Western Alliance with 'urgent haste' and the Turkish movement was

⁴³ Füsun Türkmen, "Turkey and the Korean War," *Turkish Studies* 3, no. 2 (2002): 162.

⁴⁴ Metin Tamkoç, "Turkey's Quest for Security through Defensive Alliances," *Milletlerarası Münasebetler Türk Yıllığı* 1, no. 2 (1961): 1–39.

reduced to an intellectual movement that could be considered marginal.”⁴⁵ Kemal Karpaz, in his book entitled *Turkey's Politics The Transition to a Multi-Party System* suggested that during the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, expansionist ideas such as Pan-Turanism was rejected by the founders. Accordingly, nationalism, only when it was cleared of Islamic influences would be a part of Turkish national culture. Karpaz suggests that Turkish nationalism during early years of the Republic was only acceptable to a small intellectual group.⁴⁶ “The masses, although affected by its cultural aspects, accepted nationalism by identifying it with religion.” Karpaz argued that nationalism in 1950s was “in danger of becoming identified with Islam” and “losing its secular character and becoming an outlet for the expression of religious ideas.”⁴⁷ As Tanıl Bora and Kemal Karpaz's works suggest, there is a tendency in the literature in treating nationalism along with Islam during 1950s.

Pro-Americanism and anti-communism are the common aspects that both nationalists and Islamists showcased during the Korean War era. Since pro-Americanism is largely considered a result of Turkey's foreign policy decisions detailed above, only anti-communism and its influence on nationalism in Turkey will be analyzed. The most detailed work regarding anti-communism in Turkey is Ertuğrul Meşe's book titled *Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri Türk Sağında Antikomünizmin İnşası* [Anti-Communism Construction in Turkish Right through Associations for the Struggle with Communism], Meşe suggests that the spread of anti-communism in

⁴⁵ Tanıl Bora, “Nationalist Discourses in Turkey,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 2 (2003): 445.

⁴⁶ Kemal H. Karpaz, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 251–52.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 262.

Turkey was supported by a variety of factors such as Soviet Union's hostile attitude, the U.S.' rather friendly policies, the rise of ethnic nationalism as a challenge against leftist organizations.⁴⁸ Accordingly, anti-communism was used as a unifying element, especially in nationalist circles. Mehmet Güldal's book *Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye'deki Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri* [Associations for the Struggle with Communism in Turkey during the Cold War Period], on the other hand, focuses mainly on Turkey's transformation during the 1950s with Democrat Party's election and how through good relations with the U.S., a cultural change occurred in favor of anti-communism in Turkey.⁴⁹ Güldal posits that anti-communism was one of the primary aspects that helped develop nationalist movements in Turkey during the Democrat Party period and Associations for the Struggle with Communism served as the center of influence for nationalists. Another important work regarding nationalism during the Democrat Party period is Murat Kılıç's book *Allah, Vatan, Soy, Milli Mukaddesat" Türk Milliyetçiler Derneği (1951-1953)* [Allah, Homeland, Lineage, National Sanctities Turkish Nationalists Association (1951-1953)] that focuses on the influential Turkish Nationalists Association and its activities. Kılıç puts forward the notion that the Turkish Nationalists Association integrated various nationalist factions during the period between 1950 and 1953, and formalized some of the main tenets of nationalism prevalent, especially during the Democrat Party period. Regarding the Korean War, it is stated that the Turkish Nationalists Association mainly supported the decision of the Democrat Party government because it would hamper the influence of

⁴⁸ Ertuğrul Meşe, *Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri: Türk Sağında Antikomünizmin İnşası* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 53–65.

⁴⁹ Mehmet Güldal, *Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye'deki Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri* (İstanbul: Libra, 2018).

leftist factions in the country. Therefore, the Association openly supported Turkey's intervention in the Korean War and organized rallies in support of the decision in various cities.⁵⁰ Gavin D. Brockett produced the only academic work that delves into the issue of the production of a particular form of nationalism especially during the period of the Korean War in Turkey. Brockett, in his book entitled *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim Identity*, points out that the Korean War provided the Turks an opportunity "to resolve the uncertainty and vulnerability they associated with their country's place in the world, and to define their nation in concrete terms."⁵¹ In addition, Brockett suggested that "Turkish print media played a crucial role in the formation of national identity after 1945" and "the press provided an outlet for Turks to express both their support and dissatisfaction" towards the construction of the new Turkish national identity.⁵² Accordingly, the "legend of Turk" discourse started during the Korean War and defined the main tenets of the Turkish imagined community. Aligning with Brockett's study, this dissertation suggests that a new form of nationalism, compatible with internationalism was developed in Turkey during the Korean War period which stressed the importance of being a responsible member of the international community.

The revival of Islam in the public sphere during the Korean War period is the other aspect covered in this dissertation. The first mention of this phenomenon in the

⁵⁰ Murat Kılıç, "Allah, Vatan, Soy, Milli Mukaddesat" *Türk Milliyetçiler Derneği (1951-1953)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2016), 123–25.

⁵¹ Gavin D. Brockett, *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 162.

⁵² Gavin D. Brockett, "The Legend of 'The Turk' in Korea: Popular Perceptions of the Korean War and Their Importance to a Turkish National Identity," *War & Society* 22, no. 2 (2004): 140.

literature was made by historian Bernard Lewis in his article entitled “Islamic Revival in Turkey.” Lewis posited that “the deepest Islamic roots of Turkish life and culture are still alive, and the ultimate identity of Turk and Muslim in Turkey is still unchallenged. The resurgence of Islam after a long interval responds to a profound national need.”⁵³ Howard A. Reed, in his 1954 article titled “Revival of Islam in Secular Turkey,” followed Bernard Lewis’ argument. Reed suggested that there was a “genuine revival of Islamic feeling in Turkey” and noted that “In dealing with this problem of Islam in its new political and social life, Turkey is answering a crucial question of its modern history.” Reed then added: “In so doing, it may point a way for other Islamic countries and may contribute toward the creation of a new, vital Islam which can add substantially to its already great heritage and contributions to world culture.”⁵⁴ İlkey Sunar and Binnaz Toprak also agreed that the period between 1950 and 1960 marked “a time of Islamic ‘resurgence’ or ‘revival’”. In part, what this ‘revival’ amounted to was the redefinition of laicism.” Sunar and Toprak suggested that “the ‘revival’ was an attempt to reinstate- religion as civic ethics to fill in the ethical void created, especially among those born under the Republic, by the erosion of religious beliefs.”⁵⁵ Feroz Ahmad put forward the idea that during the Democrat Party’s rule “Turkey had experienced a thorough transformation in virtually every sphere of life except politics.”⁵⁶ M. Hakan Yavuz, in his book entitled *Islamic Political*

⁵³ Bernard Lewis, “Islamic Revival in Turkey,” *International Affairs*, 1952, 48.

⁵⁴ Howard A. Reed, “Revival of Islam in Secular Turkey,” *Middle East Journal* 8, no. 3 (1954): 280–82.

⁵⁵ İlkey Sunar and Binnaz Toprak, “Islam in Politics: The Case of Turkey,” *Government and Opposition* 18, no. 4 (1979): 429–30.

⁵⁶ Feroz Ahmad, “Politics and Islam in Modern Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, no. 1 (January 1991): 12.

Identity in Turkey argued that the Democrat Party's "liberal policies toward Islam prevented the radicalization of religious groups and expanded the social basis of the state by integrating religious groups into the system." Yavuz added that in Turkey during the Cold War period, "Islamic movements acquired nationalistic, anticommunist, and conservative features. Thus, Islamic movements fully integrated into the center-right of the Turkish political spectrum."⁵⁷

The most comprehensive study regarding Islam's revival during Democrat Party era was done by Nicholas Danforth, in his book entitled *The Remaking of Republican Turkey Memory and Modernity, since the Fall of the Ottoman Empire*. Challenging the arguments that Islam's revival was due to anti-communism or Turkey's intention to become a NATO ally, Danforth suggested that starting from late Republican People's Party era until early Democrat Party period, there was a shared national vision which was thought to be one of the central tenets of Turkish modernity.⁵⁸ Accordingly, Democrat Party's Islam friendly policies such as lifting the ban on Arabic adhan, expanding preacher schools etc. were a continuation of reforms implemented by Atatürk who, according to this perspective, was reflected as a "defender of true Islamic faith."⁵⁹ As it can be deduced from the abovementioned literature, there is a consensus that an Islamic revival movement took place during the Democrat Party's rule. However, none of the above sources directly engaged with the Korean War. Nadav Solomonovich's article focused primarily on the Korean War and

⁵⁷ M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 62.

⁵⁸ Nicholas L. Danforth, *The Remaking of Republican Turkey Memory and Modernity Since the Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 195.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 212.

posited that “the Korean War contributed to the wider process of legitimization of religion in the public sphere; it is impossible to determine its exact impact on contemporary Turkish society.” Solomonovich added: “It is safe to say, however, that the war contributed to the re-emergence and legitimacy of the role of Islam in the Turkish armed forces during the early 1950s.”⁶⁰

The most detailed work regarding the Korean War’s influence on Turkish culture and society was published by Nadav Solomonovich. In his book entitled “*The Korean War in Turkish Culture and Society*,” Nadav Solomonovich delved into Turkey’s experience of the Korean War. Solomonovich deliberately departed from convention by choosing to undertake a comprehensive examination of the cultural and political impacts of the Korean War on Turkish society. He argued that the war helped with “the bridging, or at least the calming, of some of the inner ideological rivalries and conflicts within Turkish society.”⁶¹ In addition, he suggested that the state used religion as a “spiritual weapon to strengthen the soldiers and the public against Communism.”⁶² Solomonovich also analyzed the Korean War in contemporary Turkish literature. What is particularly striking are the dichotomies that emerge between the pro-war literature and the anti-war literature. For example, while the vast pro-war literature revered the Turkish soldier, anti-war literature such as Nazım Hikmet’s poems described the Turkish soldier as a “murder weapon towards the local

⁶⁰ Nadav Solomonovich, “The Turkish Republic’s Jihad? Religious Symbols, Terminology and Ceremonies in Turkey during the Korean War 1950–1953,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 54, no. 4 (2018): 608.

⁶¹ Nadav Solomonovich, *The Korean War in Turkish Culture and Society* (New York: Palgrave, 2021), 61.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 93.

population.”⁶³ Departing away from the studies of Danforth and Solomonovich, this study argues that Turkey’s participation in the Korean War was the most crucial catalyst that helped the revival of political Islam in Turkey’s public sphere.

1.2. Contribution and Aim of the Dissertation

Turkey’s participation in the Korean War is generally viewed from the perspective of diplomatic or military history. The diplomatic history perspective generally connects Turkey’s decision to intervene in the Korean War with its desire to become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the security challenges it faced after World War II. Military histories of the Korean War, on the other hand, mainly focus on two major battles: Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ni. Viewing the Korean War as the most crucial transformative moment in the Cold War, this dissertation aims to explore the diplomatic and societal developments that were the direct result of Turkey’s intervention in the Korean War.

As we have seen so far, scholars have neglected to write a comprehensive international history of Turkey’s Korean War experience, focusing not only on military or diplomatic history but also on social history, linking social changes that occurred during the Cold War with Turkey’s individual Korean War experience. Here, the lacuna in the literature regarding the connection between societal developments occurred during the Democrat Party period and their relation to Turkey’s Korean War experience requires attention. Most of the existing literature treats Turkey’s Korean War experience as a trivial aspect in the larger Cold War historiography and primarily focus on other events to make sense of Turkey’s Cold War experience. This study brings Turkey’s Korean War experience to the center of Turkey’s Cold War era

⁶³ Ibid., 119.

reordering and argues that the Korean War was the most crucial catalyst that helped domesticate the Cold War in Turkey. The outbreak of the Korean War and Turkey's participation in it created a need for the government, as well as local people, to make sense of the conflict by creating justifications specific to their own context. These justifications that were the direct result of Turkey's Korean War experience helped ease the revival of Islam in Turkey's political sphere, created a specific form of nationalism aligned with internationalism, and finally formed a pro-American and anti-communist form of progressivism.

Apart from the abovementioned societal developments, this study also focuses on the diplomatic decision process, employing the recently declassified Turkish Diplomatic Archives, and suggest that Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War was the price of its World War II-era neutrality. In addition, a chapter is devoted to Turkish Brigade's two major battles, namely Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ri Battles, in the Korean War. There are differing viewpoints between American and Turkish official military histories regarding these battles. By adding the Korean official military history to the perspective, this study aims to provide a balanced view regarding the differences of opinion concerning the abovementioned battles.

All in all, the following chapters of this dissertation aim to show that Turkey's involvement in the Korean War was a turning point in its post-World War II history, having a significant impact on its foreign policy, internal politics, and sense of national identity. Turkey's credibility on the world scene declined after it initially took a neutral position during World War II. This led to a change in direction toward a more assertive engagement in its international affairs, which culminated in its intervention in the Korean War. The Turkish Brigade's gallantry in battles such as Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ni restored Turkey's untrustworthy reputation derived from its World

War II neutrality and underlined Turkey's commitment to Western block. This commitment altered Turkish foreign policy and brought it more in line with Western democracies. This change in Turkish foreign policy was immediately reflected in Turkish society through Turkey's Korean War experience. During the Korean War period, pro-Americanism started spread to the large segments of Turkish society, while anti-communism was institutionalized. As pro-American and anti-communist sentiments grew, the ruling Democrat Part decided to employ the Directorate of Religious Affairs [*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*] to garner the support from the majority of the population for Turkey's participation in the Korean War. As a result, the political debate over Turkey's involvement in the Korean War partially shifted to a religious one, which helped Islam resurface in Turkish public and political life. After the revival of Islam in Turkey's political and public spheres, a reconsideration of Turkish nationalism and what constituted a Turk began among large segments of the society. This dissertation suggest that the Korean War acted as a crucial catalyst and propelled Turkish nationalism into a more internationalist phase. All in all, Turkey's Korean War experience was the one of the most crucial developments during the Cold War, as it paved the way for Turkey to reorder itself from a neutral state to a rightful NATO member with an emerging democracy.

1.3. Structural Organization

This thesis is composed of seven chapters. The second chapter concerns Turkish diplomacy from World War II until Turkey entered the NATO. Diplomacy was the first area that was being transformed with the emergence of the Korean War in Turkey. To understand the main tenets of the transformation, one needs to look into

Turkey's World War II era foreign policy and its negative impact that continued for a long time. With the emergence of World War II, Turkey initially signed an alliance with Britain and France. However, after Italy attacked Malta, Turkey refused to go into the war as promised in the alliance. In essence, Turkey decided not to follow the Treaty of Mutual Assistance line-by-line. This was essentially the start of Turkey being seen as an untrustworthy ally, primarily by Britain. In 1944, Britain and the U.S. again asked Turkey to join the war. However, Turkey again decided not to join the war. Turkey's refusal to join the war on the side of its allies created an untrustworthy Turkey image that proved hard to break. Even before the end of World War II, the Soviet Union started to openly threaten Turkey's territorial integrity. This chapter will show how the Democrat Party used the Korean War as the price of Turkey's neutrality during World War II and regained the trust of the Western countries.

The third chapter of this thesis focuses on Turkish Brigade in Korea and its two major battles namely the Battle of Kunu-ri and the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni. These battles are specifically chosen since they received the most amount of attention not only in Turkish, but also in American and Korean military history writing. Regarding the Battle of Kunu-ri, there are a couple of points of contention between Turkish and American accounts of the battle. The first issue of contention is regarding friendly fire. American official military history of the Korean War, as well as some other military histories from the U.S., suggest that Turkish Brigade mistakenly killed some South Korean forces that were withdrawing due to the Chinese Offensive in 1950. Next, the U.S. official history posit that Turkish Brigade in Kunu-ri did not always follow the orders given to them line-by-line. Regarding the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni, there is a contention regarding the number of casualties on the side of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army. Through consulting American, Korean and Turkish official accounts

for the first time, this dissertation aims to provide a balanced view regarding Turkish Brigade's most famous two battles in the Korean War.

The fourth chapter of this thesis is concerned with the birth of pro-American progressivism and anti-communism. With the election of the Democrat Party on May 14, 1950, Turkey continued its pro-American policy that was left by İnönü administration. Turkey's pro-Americanism after World War II was not a choice but a necessity. Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War did not immediately unite the nation behind the cause. Far-leftist factions aimed to take advantage of this foggy atmosphere and organized to stop the government's decision. The leading movement was the Peace-lover's Association, founded by Behice Boran. Leaders of the Democrat Party immediately attacked the Peace-lover's Association's supposed links to the Soviet Union, and soon after the Peace-lover's Association's flyer handouts in the middle of İstanbul, more or less all of the main organizers of Peace-lover's Association were imprisoned. While the Peace-lover's Association was closed, the organization and activities of Anti-communist Associations were supported. By the late 1950s, Anti-communist Associations were acting as a bulwark against communism, which was regarded as an evil ideology. This chapter will demonstrate how the Democrat Party blocked criticisms against the government's decision to intervene in the Korean War by creating a dichotomy between pro-American progressives and communists.

The fifth chapter focuses on the revival of Islam in the Turkish political sphere during the Korean War. After the Democrat Party's election win in 1950, it followed religious freedom policies. During the election process, leaders of the Democrat Party hinted at their aim to change Turkish adhan reform and reinstate Arabic adhan. Indeed, after its election, the Democrat Party passed a law in the parliament that removed the official ban against reciting the Arabic version of adhan. Korean War became the

turning point for Islam's public presence in Turkey. To rally the nation behind the Korean War cause, the Democrat Party government decided to use the power of religion. The Directorate of Religious Affairs, which was not at all prominent after its foundation, suddenly became the center of attention. The head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs was suddenly on the front page of newspapers explaining religious necessities for Turkey's participation in the Korean War. Accordingly, the Korean War was a fight between truth and falsehood. Turkey was fighting against non-religious communists in Korea, and this just cause must be defended. This chapter will show how Islam was revived during the Korean War period by the Democrat Party to rally the nation behind the cause of the Korean War.

The sixth chapter of this dissertation regards the internationalist form of nationalism that was developed during the Korean War. When the Korean War started in 1950, suddenly, the general population's perspective on nationalism became much more important than the theoretical constructions of the past. Here, a new form of nationalism, which can be defined as the common people's nationalism, was formed. From literature written primarily by common people, we can gather the main tenets of the common people's nationalism. The primary tenet, unlike the abovementioned theoretical forms of nationalisms, was Islam. Accordingly, the Turk fighting in Korea was primarily a Muslim fighting for the benefit of his nation. In addition, the Turk in Korea was proud of the Ottoman tradition and fought just as Mehmet, the conqueror of other famous Ottoman sultans. Last but not least, the Turk in Korea was also attached to his Central Asian bonds as well. Here, it is clear that the imagined Turk that was formed primarily during the Korean War was a hybrid version that embraced not only Islam and Ottoman tradition but also the Central Asian past. In addition, this new form of nationalism had an internationalist side that suggested Turks had duties

for the well-being of the whole world. Fulfilling these duties in return helped protect the Turks and Turkey. This chapter will demonstrate that a new form of nationalism with internationalist characteristics emerged during the Korean War.

1.4. Methodology

This dissertation generally relies on primary archival sources representing, American, British, Korean and Turkish perspectives to construct the narrative outlined above. These sources include British Foreign Office archival sources, Korean sources found in National Archives (국가기록원), Turkish Diplomatic Archives, Turkish Armed Forces Archives (ATASE), Turkish Presidential Archives (*Küllîye Arşivleri*), Turkish Presidential Archives (formerly known as Prime Ministerial Archives), the U.S. State Department's Archives (Foreign Relations of the U.S. volumes). Most of the documents found in Turkish Diplomatic Archives were recently declassified. In addition, most of the documents in Turkish Armed Forces Archives (ATASE) regarding the Korean War was also recently completed the declassification process. Apart from the abovementioned archival material, personal memoirs, papers, and memoranda of, American, British, Korean and Turkish political/military actors such as İsmet İnönü, Winston Churchill, George McGhee, Feridun Cemal Erkin, Tahsin Yazıcı, Syngman Rhee. In addition to their memoirs and reports, the minutes of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNA), statistical data obtained from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), and newspaper articles and cartoons from Turkish newspapers and magazines such as *Cumhuriyet*, *Ulus*, *Tan*, *Zafer*, *Orkun* and *Bozkurt* were also consulted. In addition, oral history accounts that were personally done by the author or accounts from other sources such as the Korean

Legacy Foundation were also employed. Last but not least, literature such as poems and songs regarding the Korean War were also used in this dissertation.



CHAPTER 2

THE PRICE OF NEUTRALITY: TURKEY'S DECISION TO INTERVENE IN THE KOREAN WAR AND THE LEGACY OF WORLD WAR II NEUTRALITY

In that event the war would move westwards and Turkey would lose the chance of coming in and of reaping the advantages which entry into the war would promise her... the Alliance would cease to have any value for war purposes. The moment would have gone when Turkey could render the great service we asked for. Turkey would stay where she was. Friendship would remain, but as an effective ally in the war, Turkey would count for nothing. We should win, but without Turkey. Turkey's entry into the war was important for us as it gave a chance of including Turkey with the Allies in the future.⁶⁴

Churchill

Neutrality during the war was very beneficial for you. I hope it continues to be equally beneficial in the future.⁶⁵

A State Department Official

On 25 June 1950, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) launched its blitzkrieg attack on the Republic of Korea (South Korea) by crossing the 38th parallel with seven divisions of the Korean People's Army (KPA). The United States (US) immediately responded by mobilizing its troops for a counterattack. In the

⁶⁴ United Kingdom Minutes *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), 756–57.

⁶⁵ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 23597 - 102732 - 33," March 28, 1949.

meantime, the US prompted the United Nations (UN) to pass resolution 82, which urged North Korea to withdraw from South Korea's soil. North Korea's failure to abide by the UN's call prompted resolution 83, which called all member states to support South Korea. The newly elected Democrat Party (DP) in Turkey elaborated on this issue very carefully. An open acceptance of the UN's call might anger Turkey's then neighbour Soviet Union. On the other hand, Turkey's support of the UN's mission in Korea would clearly show Turkey's foreign policy priorities to the whole world. Eventually, Turkey decided to commit a brigade of 6092 men and became one of the sixteen nations that sent ground troops to Korea. Turkey subsequently sent 60,266 soldiers, medical personnel, teachers, imams, etc. until 1971 when most of the UN troops withdrew from Korea.⁶⁶

The period between World War II and the Korean War received a lot of attention from scholars who focused on Turkish diplomatic history. The literature often emphasizes the importance of Turkey's security concerns and their impact on foreign policy decisions.⁶⁷ In addition, Turkey's foreign policy decisions during World War II

⁶⁶ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

⁶⁷ For example see: Tamkoç, "Turkey's Quest for Security through Defensive Alliances"; Melvyn P. Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952," *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 4 (1985): 807-25; George McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990); Ekavi Athanassopoulou, "Western Defence Developments and Turkey's Search for Security in 1948," *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no. 2 (1996): 77-108; Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, "Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and Its Admission to NATO, 1950-52," *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no. 4 (1999): 70-102; Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Turkey's Quest for NATO Membership: The Institutionalization of the Turkish-American Alliance," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12, no. 4 (2012): 481-95.

and the Korean War are generally considered separately, without any direct relation to one another.⁶⁸ This dissertation intervenes precisely in this regard and stresses the aspect of continuity in Turkish foreign policy. It suggests that an unintended consequence of Turkey's neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II was the loss of credibility. The literature often bypasses the loss of credibility prevalent in archival documents during and after World War II and jumps straight to Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War, legitimizing it by highlighting Turkey's security concerns at the time. While this dissertation agrees that Turkey's security concerns played a significant role in the decision-making process, it argues that an equally important concern for Turkish policymakers at the time was Western distrust towards Turkey, resulting from its neutrality policy during World War II. Therefore, when the Korean War started, Turkish leaders used it as an opportunity to dispel their country's untrustworthy image and demonstrate Turkey's potential as a reliable ally, especially to the U.S.

Until very recently, scholars researching Turkish diplomatic history were primarily reliant on foreign archival sources, as the Turkish Diplomatic Archives had

⁶⁸ For Turkish foreign policy during World War II see: Frank G. Weber, *The Evasive Neutral: Germany, Britain, and the Quest for a Turkish Alliance in the Second World War* (Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1979); Bruce Robellet Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, vol. 732 (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980); Brock Millman, "Turkish Foreign and Strategic Policy 1934–42," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 3 (1995): 483–508; John M. Vanderlippe, "A Cautious Balance: The Question of Turkey in World War II," *The Historian* 64, no. 1 (2001): 63–80; Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War: An 'active' Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Lippe, "Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War"; Fusun Turkmen, "Turkey and the Korean War," *Turkish Studies* 3, no. 2 (2002): 161–80; Brown, "The One Coalition They Craved to Join."

not yet completed the declassification process. In early 2022, a large number of documents related to World War II and the Korean War were finally declassified, making it possible to include official Turkish perspectives in the overall analysis. Besides Turkish archival sources, this study mainly draws on American, British, and German sources. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part provides a brief diplomatic history of Turkey's neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II and its implications on Allied perception. The second part details the total collapse of Allied confidence and Turkey's attempts at rapprochement with the U.S. The last part focuses on how Turkish policymakers decided to intervene in the Korean War.

2.1. Foot Dragging and Losing Confidence: Implications of Neutrality

“Was it possible to avoid the war altogether? Or could we have delayed our entry? It is worth reflecting on these questions.”⁶⁹ This was the answer Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of Turkey, gave when asked about the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I. Regarding this issue, Atatürk told İsmet İnönü, the Prime Minister at the time who would later become Atatürk's successor, that the Committee of Union and Progress leaders lacked experience and ability, but the founders of the Republic were different from them since they had the experience of a world war.⁷⁰ There is little doubt that when World War II erupted on September 1, 1939, the newly elected President İnönü and the ruling elite of Turkey were reminded of the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I. Taking into account his bitter experience, İnönü decided to do what the Ottoman Empire could not in World War I: avoid it at all costs.

⁶⁹ Kemal Atatürk, *Atatürk'ün Bütün Eserleri*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1998), 205.

⁷⁰ Sabahattin Selek, *İsmet İnönü: Hatıralar I* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1992), 141.

Neutrality-based foreign policy seemed to be the only viable solution to avoid the war. However, the execution of such foreign policy proved difficult since both Axis powers and Allies expected Turkey to join the war on their side to exploit the other's weaknesses. The first side to exert pressure on Turkey was its allies.⁷¹ On October 19, 1939, Turkey signed a fully-fledged alliance treaty with Britain and France, commonly referred to as the "Tripartite Alliance." The signing of this treaty was significant as it marked Turkey's inclusion into the Western security apparatus for the first time in history.⁷² Following Italy's declaration of war and its air raid on Malta, Britain and France demanded that Turkey enter the war.⁷³ According to the second article of the Tripartite Alliance, Turkey was expected to join the war on the side of its allies.⁷⁴ However, the Turkish government announced that it would preserve its "present attitude of non-belligerency for the security and defense" of Turkey.⁷⁵ This statement was seen as a clear defection by Britain, especially after it requested a revised announcement that mentions a collective decision taken in consultation with the British regarding Turkish inactivity.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Yücel Güçlü, "Turco-British Relations on the Eve of the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 4 (2003): 200.

⁷² For more information regarding the context and importance of the Tripartite Alliance see: William Hale, "Turkey and Britain in World War II: Origins and Results of the Tripartite Alliance, 1935-40," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 23, no. 6 (2021): 824-44.

⁷³ Millman, *Ill-Made Alliance*, 370.

⁷⁴ Foreign Office, "371/424/283,T6131/436/384 Halifax Curricular," May 2, 1939; "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37148 - 149266 - 25," January 10, 1939.

⁷⁵ Millman, *Ill-Made Alliance*, 372.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 371.

After Turkey decided not to follow the Tripartite Alliance of 1939 line by line, Germany started its pressure campaign. Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, sent a telegram in May 1941 to his Ambassador in Ankara, Franz von Papen, and instructed him to make certain steps regarding a treaty between Turkey and Germany that would “unloose the country [Turkey] from its present tie with Britain and more or less lead it into our camp.”⁷⁷ Ribbentrop also told the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin that “the Führer would welcome it if he could have all Germany’s old allies at our side at this time.”⁷⁸ The result of this attempt was the conclusion of the German-Turkish Treaty of Friendship signed by Franz von Papen and Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Şükrü Saracoğlu on June 18, 1941. While Turkey guaranteed not to attack German territories, it also did not promise any assistance to Germany during the war.⁷⁹ Especially after the German defeat in Stalingrad, the Turkish government became much more cautious about a possible pro-Axis rapprochement. Throughout the war, Germany’s expectation of a pro-Axis Turkey proved vain.

Allies started to reevaluate Turkey’s entrance to the war in late 1942. The U.S. already agreed to extend weaponry, supplies, and technical assistance in July 1942

⁷⁷ *German Foreign Office Documents German Policy in Turkey (1941-1943)* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1948), 9. There seems to be a difference of opinion between Ribbentrop and Papen. While Ribbentrop wished Turkey to become an active ally of the Axis alliance, Papen thought that a neutral Turkey would serve the German interests better. For Papen’s thoughts during this period see: Franz von Papen, *Memoirs* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1952), 478–80.

⁷⁸ Onur İsci, “The Massigli Affair and Its Context: Turkish Foreign Policy after the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 55, no. 2 (2020): 25.

⁷⁹ “Treaty of Friendship Between Germany and Turkey,” June 18, 1941, <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/turger41.asp#art1>.

under the Lend-Lease Act of 1941.⁸⁰ On the other hand, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill began floating the idea that the Turkish Army would be useful in defending the Balkans against Germany.⁸¹ In January 1943, at the Casablanca Conference, he discussed this issue with the President of the U.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt. According to American documents, President Roosevelt agreed on the need for Turkey's "entry to the war without delay."⁸² Therefore, Churchill asked Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, his Ambassador in Ankara, to prepare "a most secret rendezvous" with his counterparts in Turkey.⁸³ On January 30, 1943, Churchill arrived in Turkey and took part in the Adana Conference with Turkish President İsmet İnönü. In the conference, Churchill asked for Turkey's entrance to the war as early as the summer and promised air support as well as skilled personnel in return. He suggested that Turkey "should be closely associated with the two great Western democracies not only during the concluding stages of the war but in the general work of world rehabilitation which [would] follow."⁸⁴ This, in essence, was an offer to Turkey. If Turkey wanted to be in a position of strength after the world war, it would have to commit to a more active foreign policy regarding German presence in the Balkans. İnönü, on the other hand, conveyed that Turkey was concerned about the Soviet's place

⁸⁰ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation by George V. Allen of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 29 January 1943 *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1943, The Near East and Africa, Volume IV* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 1091.

⁸¹ Winston S. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 1950, vol. 4 (London: Rosetta Books, 2014), 624–26.

⁸² *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1958), 772.

⁸³ Knatchbull-Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Diplomat in Peace and War* (London: John Murray, 1949), 177–78.

⁸⁴ Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, 1950, 4:860.

in Europe after Germany's defeat and asked for more military equipment.⁸⁵ Churchill and the British Ambassador Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen declared that the conference resulted in "distinct success."⁸⁶ Alexander Cadogan, Under-Secretary of British Foreign Office, transmitted the nature of the meeting to Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, as: "PM tried to hint to them that...they must not hesitate too long to join the ranks of the victorious powers. PM does not doubt that they saw the point of this."⁸⁷ Rauf Orbay, Turkey's Ambassador to the U.K., reported that his contacts from the British Foreign Office conveyed to him that "Churchill left -Adana- with very positive impressions."⁸⁸ However, the Turkish Diplomatic Archives revealed that after the conference, senior Turkish leaders believed that Churchill maintained his support for Turkey's policy of neutrality while also providing it with the necessary equipment.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İkinci Adam* (Ankara: Remzi Kitabevi, 1993), 259.

⁸⁶ The Ambassador in Turkey (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1943, The Near East and Africa, Volume IV*, 1061.

⁸⁷ Foreign Office, "800/403, Cadogan to Eden," February 2, 1943.

⁸⁸ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 88100 - 320606 - 79," November 1, 1943.

⁸⁹ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37398 - 150257 - 105," February 7, 1943.



Figure 1. Churchill and İnönü in Adana.⁹⁰

The difference of opinions regarding the Adana Conference surfaced when a team of British negotiators under the leadership of General Henry Maitland Wilson arrived in Turkey to start executing “Operation Hardihood” which aimed to prepare Turkey for a war against Germany. General Wilson’s mission was received with a great deal of skepticism, and their Turkish counterparts were not at all cooperative regarding the execution of such a plan.⁹¹ When the Tehran Conference convened on November 28, 1943, Churchill was still of the opinion that Turkey should enter the conflict as soon as possible and the Allies should provide Turkey a shield from air raids.⁹² In Tehran, Churchill and Roosevelt agreed to invite İnönü to Cairo after the

⁹⁰ “Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President of Turkey.,” 1946, 2017696450, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA.

⁹¹ Vanderlippe, “A Cautious Balance,” 70.

⁹² Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War, Vol. 5, Closing the Ring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), 355.

Tehran Conference to discuss Turkey's entrance to the war. Two planes sent by both Churchill and Roosevelt flew to Turkey to take the Turkish President to Cairo. İnönü chose the American plane for his travel. At the Cairo Conference, Churchill and Roosevelt essentially laid siege to İnönü for Turkey's entrance to the war on the 15th of February at the latest. Churchill argued that this was the moment for Turkey, and if it did not act, it would "find herself alone, not on the Bench, but wandering about in Court" after the conclusion of the war.⁹³ Roosevelt also told İnönü that Turkey would find itself alone after the war if it did not align itself with the Allies by the 15th of February. İnönü replied that Turkey needed more time and equipment to prepare for the war but "remained faithful to the principles which she had embraced from the first moment."⁹⁴ Just before İnönü left Cairo on December 7, 1943, Churchill had a one-on-one meeting with him and disclosed that on the 15th of February, Allies would ask permission to fly in, and if the answer were negative, then all Allied resources would be directed elsewhere. Churchill again warned İnönü about the consequences of non-belligerency: "In that event, the war would move westwards and Turkey would lose the chance of coming in and of reaping the advantages which entry into the war would promise her." Churchill added:

The Alliance would cease to have any value for war purposes. The moment would have gone when Turkey could render the great service we asked for. Turkey would stay where she was. Friendship would remain, but as an effective ally in the war, Turkey would count for nothing. We should win, but without

⁹³ United States—United Kingdom Agreed Minutes *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943*, 691.

⁹⁴ United States—United Kingdom Agreed Minutes *Ibid.*, 693.

Turkey. Turkey's entry into the war was important for us as it gave a chance of including Turkey with the Allies in the future.⁹⁵

After the Cairo Conference, it was apparent that Turkey would no longer be able to keep foot-dragging regarding its entrance to the war on the Allies' side. However, the Turkish side still believed that it could preserve its neutral status despite the crystal-clear warnings from Churchill and Roosevelt. Rauf Orbay, Turkey's Ambassador to the U.K., reported about some Western media coverage which essentially suggested that the "Cairo Conference marked a new phase in Turkey's neutrality policy, with Turkey's entrance into the war being deemed a non-issue."⁹⁶ The prevalence of such wishful thinking within the Turkish diplomatic sphere at that time ultimately resulted in enduring consequences for Turkish diplomacy.

⁹⁵ United Kingdom Minutes Ibid., 756–57.

⁹⁶ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 88100 - 320606 - 115," December 9, 1943.



Figure 2. Roosevelt, İnönü and Churchill in the Second Cairo Conference⁹⁷

2.2. Total Collapse of Allied Confidence and Rapprochement to the U.S.

Britain sent a military mission to Turkey in early 1944 to prepare its airfields for the use of Allied aircraft. The operation was codenamed “Saturn.” Immediately after the beginning of mutual discussions, Turkish foot-dragging tactics became apparent to the British side. In a telegram to Anthony Eden, Churchill laid out what would happen if Turks did not abide by the February 15 deadline: “It will be the end of the alliance between Britain and Turkey... we should completely disinterest ourselves in the future of Turkey. If...Russia demands Constantinople and Straits;

⁹⁷ “The President of Turkey Confers with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at Cairo,” 1943, 2004667692, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA.

Great Britain would in no wise resist her.”⁹⁸ When the British diplomats knew for sure that Turkey would not enter the war, the military mission was withdrawn, and Turkey was diplomatically punished. British Foreign Secretary Eden wrote: “Turks are not to be trusted and Numan least of all. I should like to see the latter scragged!”⁹⁹ George Clutton, a British diplomat, accused Turkey of betraying its allies and expressed his doubts about Turkey’s survival after the war.¹⁰⁰ It is evident from the British Foreign Office’s telegrams during this period that they were in favor of the Soviets teaching Turks a lesson for their non-belligerence.

British Ambassador to Turkey, Hugessen, noted after the departure of the British Military mission, “a period of some difficulty followed, during which we did not attempt to conceal our disappointment.”¹⁰¹ Britain suspended all shipments of war material, and the U.S. stopped all lend-lease-related supplies to Turkey.¹⁰² Turkish diplomatic archives reflect the chaos that engulfed after the mission’s departure. Turkish Ambassador to the U.K., Rauf Orbay, abruptly resigned from his post, which was interpreted as a reflection of the differences of opinion between him and Ankara regarding Turkey’s intervention in the war.¹⁰³ British Ambassador to Turkey,

⁹⁸ Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940–45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Hampshire: Springer, 2009), 139.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹⁰¹ Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Diplomat in Peace and War*, 200.

¹⁰² The Ambassador in Turkey (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1944, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, The Far East, Volume V* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1965), 817.

¹⁰³ “Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37398 - 150257 - 2,” March 20, 1944.

Hugessen, left his post unattended for about a month.¹⁰⁴ The Turkish Embassy in the U.K. reported to Ankara that more or less everybody in the British political spectrum was expressing their resentment towards Turkey.¹⁰⁵ The Turkish Ambassador to the U.S., Münir Ertegün, sent a detailed report to Ankara and argued that due to the recent events, the British side could sacrifice Turkey at any point for Russia's interests.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, British media started to harshly criticize Turkey and question its value as an ally.¹⁰⁷ While these debates were continuing, Churchill openly criticized Spain and Turkey for their positioning during the war. He argued that Turkey was following a sneaky foreign policy based on deception and that it would have to face the consequences during and after the war.¹⁰⁸ Ruşen Eşref Üneydin, who replaced Rauf Orbay as Turkey's Ambassador to the U.K., reported that during his two-month tenure, British officials purposely did not meet with him, therefore he could not provide any substantial information to Ankara.¹⁰⁹ Eventually, the Turkish side realized that their wish for a status quo ante was in vain. Numan Menemencioğlu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, wrote in his diary: "Little by little, the British began to abstain from all cordiality, and they no longer even appeared to see us, in order not to have to greet us."¹¹⁰ President Roosevelt also instructed his Ambassador to Turkey, Laurence

¹⁰⁴ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37320 - 149930 - 23," February 26, 1944.

¹⁰⁵ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37165 - 148354 - 205," February 15, 1944.

¹⁰⁶ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37165 - 148354 - 218," March 9, 1944.

¹⁰⁷ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37398 - 150257 - 23," April 16, 1944.

¹⁰⁸ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37055 - 148722 - 14," May 27, 1944.

¹⁰⁹ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37398 - 150257 - 69," July 1, 1944.

¹¹⁰ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 224.

Steinhardt, to “cool off relations with the Turks.”¹¹¹ On April 14, 1944, American and British Ambassadors threatened a blockade on Turkey if it did not cease its trade of vital items to Axis powers.¹¹² Turkey halted all chromium export to Germany on April 20, and about two months later, Numan Menemencioğlu resigned from his post since he was seen as a pro-Axis figure by the Allies.¹¹³ Even though Turkey ceased diplomatic relations with Germany on August 2, 1944, and declared war against the Axis on February 23, 1945, Turkey’s moment in the war had long passed. Now, as Churchill and Roosevelt warned in Cairo, Turkey was on its own. Turkish diplomatic archives time and again show that the Allies clearly warned Turkey of the price of being neutral during World War II, but Turkish policymakers did everything they could to stay neutral.¹¹⁴ In the aftermath of World War II, Turkey found itself in a position where it had to prove its worth as a reliable partner to the Allies due to its policy of neutrality.

Even before the conclusion of World War II, Stalin began to propose a change in the Montreux Convention regarding Turkey’s rights in the straits at the Yalta Conference.¹¹⁵ After the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union adopted a hostile attitude towards its relations with Turkey. Starting from March 1945, Soviet media launched an anti-Turkish propaganda campaign, claiming that two cities on Turkey’s northeastern border with the Soviet Union, namely Kars and Ardahan, originally

¹¹¹ The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Turkey (Steinhardt) *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1944, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, The Far East, Volume V*, 818.

¹¹² Ibid., 843.

¹¹³ Çalis, *Turkey’s Cold War*, 53–54.

¹¹⁴ “Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 37398 - 150257 - 15,” June 13, 1944.

¹¹⁵ Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War*, 178.

belonged to Armenians. Some Soviet academicians followed suit soon after with similar claims about Kars and Ardahan.¹¹⁶ On March 19, 1945, Vyacheslav Molotov, the Soviet Union's Foreign Minister, informed Selim Sarper, the Turkish Ambassador to the Soviet Union, that the Soviet Union had no intention of renewing the 1925 Treaty of Friendship. In another meeting with Sarper, Molotov disclosed the Soviet demands on Turkey: revisions to Turkey's eastern frontier and changes to the clauses of the Montreux Convention regarding Turkey's rights in the straits.¹¹⁷ Stalin did not change his position concerning these two demands until he died in 1952. In an oral history interview, Turkey's President İsmet İnönü suggested that his aim in the aftermath of World War II was to keep Turkey as a neutral state, avoiding leaning towards either the U.K. or the Soviet Union. However, he pinpointed the Soviet Union's hostile foreign policy as the watershed moment that forced Turkey to align itself firmly with the Western powers.¹¹⁸ At the same time, the U.S. and the U.K. lost their interest and confidence in Turkey due to the latter's foreign policy choices during World War II, and they maintained their distance after the conclusion of the war. Therefore, immediately after the end of World War II, Turkey started to approach the U.S.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 179.

¹¹⁷ "Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 68095 - 298075 - 51," March 20, 1945; Onur İsci, "Turkey at a Crossroads: The Soviet Threat and Postwar Realignment, 1945–1946," *Diplomatic History*, July 12, 2023, 1–26.

¹¹⁸ "İsmet İnönü, Metin Toker'e İkinci Dünya Savaşını Anlatıyor [İsmet İnönü Talks About World War II with Metin Toker] -YouTube."

2.3. Signing of the North Atlantic Treaty and Turkey's Reaction

The most shocking diplomatic event for Turkish foreign policy before the Korean War was the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty. Twelve states signed the Treaty in Washington on April 4, 1949. These nations also became the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), founded to deter any Soviet aggression against its member states by invoking Article 5 of the treaty.¹¹⁹ The reaction from the Turkish side to this development was one of disappointment. The Turks expected an invitation from the twelve states that initially formed NATO before signing the treaty. Politicians from the Republican People's Party (RPP) reasoned that the main reason why Turkey was not included in the new organization was its geographical location. This was what the American side informed Feridun Cemal Erkin, the Turkish Ambassador in Washington. Robert A. Lovett, the Undersecretary of State, informed Erkin that Turkey was geographically and culturally outside of the Western world. According to Lovett, this new organization was exclusively for the countries situated in the North Atlantic.¹²⁰ However, after NATO released the information that the parts of Algeria were also included in its sphere of defense, this theory was debunked.

İnönü sent his Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak to discuss NATO with the Secretary of State Dean Acheson in April 1949. The memorandum of this meeting from the American side details the frustrations of Turkey. Sadak started by stating that

¹¹⁹ "The North Atlantic Treaty" (NATO, 1949),

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm.

¹²⁰ Feridun Cemal Erkin, *Dışişlerinde 34 Yıl Vaşington Büyükelçiliği II. Cilt, I. Kısım* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), 14.

the Turkish government was shocked when it learned about Italy's involvement in NATO since it conceived NATO as first and foremost a security alliance between countries in the North Atlantic region.¹²¹ Sadak asked Acheson whether there was any change in the Truman administration's support for Turkish independence. Acheson replied that the Truman administration still thought highly of Turkey and supported its independence. Then, Sadak asked whether Turkey could be added as a member of this organization or another organization in the name of the Eastern Mediterranean Pact. Acheson replied negatively.¹²² Sadak then inquired about a mutual security pact between the U.S. and Turkey within a year. Acheson's answer was again negative, but he added that the developments in Europe might lead the U.S. to reconsider its stance.¹²³ After he met with Acheson, Sadak returned to Turkey empty-handed. In formal events, such as this one, American officials did not give a hint as to why Turkey was left out of NATO. However, in informal events, they spoke much more freely and candidly. An informal lunch at the Turkish Embassy in Washington provided U.S. State Department officials with an opportunity to share some insights about the U.S. approach towards Turkey with their Turkish counterparts. A senior State Department official told the Turkish Ambassador: "Neutrality during the war was very beneficial for you. I hope it continues to be equally beneficial in the future." In his telegram to Ankara, the Turkish Ambassador, Feridun Cemal Erkin, reported that this "half serious,

¹²¹ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), 1648.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 1650.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 1652.

half sarcastic sentence” had significant meaning to it.¹²⁴ Erkin did not detail his interpretation in the telegram; however, this document and numerous others from Turkish diplomatic archives leave no doubt that the legacy of Turkish neutrality was still on the minds of American policymakers, and it was affecting their decisions.

After Turkish Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak’s return to Turkey, Truman sent a private letter to İnönü on April 26, 1949, and suggested that “the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in no wise diminishes the concern felt in the United States for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of Turkey.”¹²⁵ The U.S. was trying to give the impression that it did not leave Turkey out, but at the same time, it did not promise anything concerning a defense pact. On October 13, 1949, Feridun Cemal Erkin, the Turkish Ambassador to the U.S., took John D. Jernegan, the Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs, aside at a lunch in the Turkish Embassy and inquired whether the U.S. took any steps concerning an alliance between Britain, France, and Turkey. Jernagen stated that the U.S. did not. Erkin informed him that his colleagues at the Turkish Embassies in Britain and France were ready to discuss this issue should the U.S. feel the need to do so. Jernagen thanked Erkin for reminding him about this issue and said that any discussion regarding it would be done in a strictly confidential format.¹²⁶ Turkish foreign policy was focused on a security pact with the U.S. after the conclusion of the North Atlantic Treaty.

¹²⁴ “Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 23597 - 102732 - 33.”

¹²⁵ Truman to İnönü *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI*, 1657.

¹²⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs (Jernegan) *Ibid.*, 1684.

On March 26, 1950, President İsmet İnönü met with General J. Lawton Collins and the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, George Wadsworth. The main topic of the meeting was Turkey's defense against possible Soviet aggression. According to the American version of the meeting, İnönü seemed to be expecting a war soon. When he observed that General Collins was very calm, he asked "How long before the next war?" Collins replied that in his view, the war was not imminent. When asked about the reason, Collins pointed out that the Soviets did not possess atomic bombs, had neither a substantial navy nor a large air force, and were already reaching some objectives without fighting. İnönü then inquired whether the U.S. would bombard the Soviet Union if it attacked Turkey. Collins replied that such an attack would be part of the Soviet Union's new world war scheme, and after Congress' approval, in his opinion, the U.S. would start bombarding the Soviet Union. General Collins' reply probably comforted İnönü, but he quickly pointed out that the thought of an attack against Turkey starting the Third World War was painful. He eventually pointed out the fact that there was no mutual defense pact between the U.S. and Turkey "Without any political commitment or agreement our two countries are working very closely together; Turkey has the very valuable statement of the President of the United States; and the personal opinions of American military and political leaders are that Turkey will not be left alone."¹²⁷ Here, İnönü reminds us of Churchill and Roosevelt's threat in Cairo. He hoped that the U.S. would not leave Turkey alone in the event of a war. Still, the fact that he brings this issue up is a sign that events panned out in the way Churchill and Roosevelt described in Cairo.

¹²⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of Staff, United States Army (Collins) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1241–47.

Turkey's Ambassador to the U.S., Feridun Cemal Erkin, met with the Under Secretary of State, James E. Webb, on April 27, 1950, and once again raised Turkey's desire to be included in a formal security agreement. Webb gave the same answer to Erkin that the U.S. had been repeating. Once again, Erkin left empty-handed, as Webb argued that he was not in a position to provide him with a quick answer on this issue.¹²⁸ It is very clear that the U.S. did not consider tying itself to Turkey's security, and there was no reason to do so either. The memories of Turkish neutrality were vivid, and the American public did not support an alliance with Turkey.¹²⁹ On the other hand, the Turkish side considered a formal security treaty with the U.S. a matter of life and death due to the Soviet Union's threats against its territorial integrity. What the Turkish side needed was a chance to redeem itself from the untrustworthy image that came alongside its neutrality policy during World War II. The Korean War would provide that opportunity.

2.4. The Price of Neutrality: Turkey's Intervention in the Korean War and the Making of a NATO Ally

The Democrat Party (DP) secured a resounding victory against the Republican People's Party, Atatürk, and İnönü's party, in Turkey's inaugural democratic election held on May 14, 1950. The main reason for the Democrat Party's sweeping victory was the public's dissatisfaction with the economic situation of Turkey. The Turkish Parliament elected Celal Bayar, the leader of Democrat Party, as the third President of the Republic on May 22, 1950. Bayar gave the task of forming the government to

¹²⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Webb) Ibid., 1252–53.

¹²⁹ Çalis, *Turkey's Cold War*, 76.

Adnan Menderes, who eventually became the Prime Minister. The Democrat Party's government program was not significantly different from that of the Republican People's Party. The main difference was in the economy, where the Democrat Party supported a liberal economic agenda with the help of privatization.¹³⁰

The Foreign Minister of the new government was Fuad Köprülü, a historian and arguably one of the best academics Turkey had at that time. Köprülü, the first Turkish national to be selected as a member of the Russian Sciences Academy, was expelled from the membership after he published academic articles debunking Russian arguments that Kars and Ardahan were originally Armenian lands.¹³¹ As someone who knew the ins and outs of Soviet conduct, he was well aware of the importance of Turkey's alignment with the West in its quest to deter the Soviet Union. The Democrat Party's foreign policy, however, was on a similar path to that of the Republican People's Party. Just before the end of its tenure, the Republican People's Party formally applied to NATO for Turkish accession, which was eventually rejected.¹³² The Democrat Party decided to follow the path that the Republican People's Party had left regarding Turkey's inclusion in the North Atlantic Pact.

The reaction of the Truman Administration towards the Democrat Party's election was simply a surprise. The Acting Secretary of State drafted a memorandum for Truman in which he suggested that the Democrat Party's victory was unexpected. He then added: "These elections represent the culmination of democratic development in Turkey, a country which, in a remarkably short period, has evolved from an absolute

¹³⁰ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 221–23.

¹³¹ Orhan F. Köprülü, *Fuad Köprülü* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayını, 1987), 9.

¹³² Çalis, *Turkey's Cold War*, 87–91.

monarchy to a multi-party system, under the guidance of a benevolent dictatorship.”¹³³ Turkey’s Ambassador to the U.S., Feridun Cemal Erkin, also reported the admiration of his American counterparts due to the Democrat Party’s election victory and suggested that Turkey had started to be seen as a model democracy in its region.¹³⁴ This perception of Turkey becoming a democratic “Westernized” country would eventually help it in getting a full membership to NATO. The Democrat Party’s election greatly helped change the attitudes of Western countries towards Turkey, as they started to view Turkey as a nation that is slowly developing democratic institutions. The Democrat Party’s victory eventually attracted foreign investment to Turkey’s previously statist economy, benefiting the ordinary people’s daily lives as well.¹³⁵

Feridun Cemal Erkin, Turkey’s Ambassador to the U.S., met with R. A. Hare, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, on June 2, 1950, and inquired again about any news on Turkey’s addition to a security pact. The answer, as usual, was negative. He told Hare that he would return to Turkey shortly and wanted to meet with James E. Webb, the Undersecretary of State. On June 14, Webb met with Erkin, and the main topic was the same. Erkin asked Webb whether he could “inform his Government that the inclusion of Turkey in a security arrangement with the United States was only a question of time.” Webb replied that he was not in a position to make such a statement. According to Webb’s memorandum,

¹³³ Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to the President *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1262–63.

¹³⁴ “Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA) 23888 - 103612 - 1,” May 19, 1950.

¹³⁵ Yaşar Baytal, “Demokrat Parti Dönemi Ekonomi Politikaları (1950-1957),” *Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 10, no. 40 (2007): 545–67.

Erkin did not pursue the issue further, and the meeting came to an end."¹³⁶ It is not hard to understand the frustration of Erkin since he was about to report to the newly elected government, and he did not want to go back to Ankara empty-handed. What he did not know was that a week later, the whole international situation would change.

On June 25, 1950, North Korea started its blitzkrieg attack against South Korea and changed the whole situation in the international arena. Truman Administration eventually decided that the U.S. had to help South Korea, and sent American combat troops to counter the North Korean attack. The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 82 on June 25, which called for the immediate cessation of hostilities. Since North Korea did not accede, the Security Council adopted Resolution 83 on June 27, which called on the member states to furnish assistance to South Korea to “repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area.”¹³⁷

The immediate reaction of Turkish officials to this new development was one of surprise because they were expecting Soviet aggression somewhere in Europe, just like their American counterparts. The new leadership of Turkey under the Democrat Party deeply contemplated the Korean War. Feridun Cemal Erkin, who came from Washington to brief the new government on Turkish-American relations, found himself in the middle of the discussion. In his memoir, Erkin recollects the time the Korean War was discussed among the high cadres of Turkish politics. During his stay in Istanbul, in the middle of one night, Erkin was informed that President Celal Bayar

¹³⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Webb) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1272–73.

¹³⁷ “United Nations Security Council Resolution 82, ‘Complaint of Aggression upon the Republic of Korea,’” 1950, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/82>; “United Nations Security Council Resolution 83, ‘Complaint of Aggression upon the Republic of Korea,’” 1950, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/83>.

planned to go to Yalova by boat and wanted Erkin to accompany him during the travel. When Erkin took the Presidential boat from the Moda district of Istanbul, he observed that President Bayar was with Prime Minister Menderes and the Speaker of the Parliament, Refik Koraltan. Menderes informed Erkin that the Turkish government received UN Security Council Resolution number 83, signed by Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the UN, which called on member states to assist South Korea. Menderes then asked for the Ambassador's opinion. Erkin said, "There can be no hesitation, we have to accept the request." However, Bayar and Menderes did not seem to appreciate his view and challenged him throughout the conversation. Eventually, Menderes jeeringly asked, "What are you talking about, Mr. Feridun? Our borders are disputed and threatened by a powerful neighbor. Don't you pay attention to the threat of the Soviet Union, which would regard an objection to [North Korea's attack] as a provocation?"¹³⁸ Erkin replied: "Mr. Prime Minister your objection strengthens my view. If we show no interest in the attack against South Korea, who would come to our help when we are attacked by the neighbor you mentioned in the future?"¹³⁹ After hearing this reply, Menderes turned to Bayar and said: "As you see Mr. President, our Ambassador's point of view is totally in line with us on this matter." It seems that in this conversation, Bayar and Menderes employed the Socratic method and used counterarguments to their arguments to see the defects of their position, which Erkin defended. When the Presidential boat approached Yalova, Selim Sarper, Turkey's permanent representative at the UN, also joined the conversation. Even though he agreed with the idea of sending troops to support South Korea, he suggested that this proposal be conditional upon Turkey's admittance to NATO. Erkin replied that Turkey

¹³⁸ Erkin, *Dışişlerinde 34 Yıl Vaşington Büyükelçiliği II. Cilt, I. Kısım*, 153.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 153–54.

should not put any conditions on its decision since it would diminish its value. According to him, Turkey was supposed to display its support for the free world while pursuing NATO membership. Menderes also accepted this view.¹⁴⁰

George Wadsworth, the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, met with Turkish Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü on July 22, 1950. Wadsworth started the conversation with the UN's Resolution 83, which asked member states to send ground troops to support South Korea. Without hesitation, Köprülü said that they are planning to reply positively, which would "bear witness to [Turkey's] sincere desire manifest by practical action its loyalty to the UN and Turk-US collaboration." He added that the Turkish government wished that their response would "conform with US policy and public opinion." Wadsworth, in reply, urged Köprülü to dispatch a combat unit between 4.000 to 4.500 men. Wadsworth commented on Köprülü's thinking process in his memorandum: "There was no doubt in my mind that he sensed his country on the verge [of] its most important post-war decision or that he was wholly sincere." What Wadsworth did not know was that on July 18, 1950, the cabinet met in Yalova and already decided to send ground troops to Korea. The Turkish side initially planned to send a full division of around 15,000 men which would be at the forefront of the war and display Turkey's full commitment to the UN. When Wadsworth met with the Defense Minister and Chief of Staff of Turkey, the Chief of Staff Gen. Nuri Yamut showed him an informal memorandum that Maj. Gen. Yusuf A. Egeli, a general staff, wrote to him about the Korean War. Egeli argued that "it will be the greatest crime in Turkish history if we fail to take advantage of this, opportunity."¹⁴¹ Here, it is clear

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 154.

¹⁴¹ The Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1281–82.

that the Turkish side perceived the Korean War as a chance to showcase its full support and loyalty to the Western pact, which was not done during World War II due to Turkey's neutrality-based foreign policy. This time, however, Turkey was determined to seize the heaven-sent opportunity and eliminate the negative perception of itself in the mindset of its Western allies, especially the U.S.

After the U.S., Turkey became the second country to answer UN Resolution 83 positively by promising to supply combat troops. When Ambassador Wadsworth met with Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, he provided Ambassador Wadsworth with the internal perception of the Turkish ruling cadres: "The Korean war has opened a new era, one in which we must strive harder and work faster towards common objectives. We will not be Utopians but apply ourselves to practical realities."¹⁴² Surprisingly, the Turks fully grasped the nature of the Korean War in the sense that it offered Turkey another chance after World War II to redeem itself and prove that it could become a trustworthy ally. It should be stressed that the main motivation behind Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War was not to join NATO. Neither Turkish nor American archival documents show a discussion linking Turkey's decision to its NATO membership. Instead, both Turkish and American archival sources indicate that Turkey's decision was taken first and foremost to demonstrate its solidarity with NATO allies. Turkey had to showcase its solidarity with Western allies primarily because it had not done so during World War II, losing valuable confidence in the process. Therefore, Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War was, in essence, the price of neutrality.

¹⁴² Ibid., 1289.

Following Turkey's official declaration of its intention to deploy 4,500 combat troops to engage in the Korean conflict under the auspices of the United Nations, the response from the Turkish public was predominantly favorable. On July 27, an opinion piece entitled "The Decision of the Government" was penned by Nadir Nadi, the esteemed founder of *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, and prominently featured on its front page. Within this op-ed, Nadi posited that the Turkish government's resolute determination to participate in the conflict would effectively address the question of the United Nations' viability as a stable international institution. He further contended that Turkey's leadership in this endeavor could potentially pave the way for other peace-oriented nations to follow suit.¹⁴³ Nadi's article unmistakably indicates that the prevailing sentiment concerning Turkey's military involvement in the Korean War was overwhelmingly positive. However, a notable dissenting voice emerged in the form of the Turkish Peace-lovers Association (*Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti*), spearheaded by Behice Boran. On July 28, the group distributed pamphlets at Galata Bridge, expressing opposition to Turkey's decision to dispatch combat troops to Korea. Their position was based on the argument that Turkey's security and future prospects would not gain in any noticeable way from such participation.¹⁴⁴

The Republican People's Party, now an opposition party after a long stint of one-party rule, disagreed with the Democrat Party on the procedure of deciding to send troops outside Turkey. They argued that the National Assembly should have decided on the deployment of Turkish troops outside Turkey instead of the Council of Ministers.¹⁴⁵ However, after some time, certain elements within the Republican

¹⁴³ Nadir Nadi, "Hükümetin Kararı," *Cumhuriyet*, July 27, 1950.

¹⁴⁴ "Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti Bildirisi," July 22, 1950.

¹⁴⁵ TBMM, *Tutanak Dergisi Dönem IX*, 1950, 56–58.

People's Party began to criticize the Democrat Party's decision, arguing that the Republican People's Party had successfully kept Turkey out of the war during World War II, whereas the Democrat Party failed to do so. On July 28, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes addressed these criticisms at a news conference in the Prime Ministry of Turkey. He refuted the Republican People's Party's claim of keeping Turkey out of World War II, asserting that it lacked a factual basis. Menderes added: "The main reason why there was no dispute regarding this issue is because of our patriotic concern not to engage in arguments concerning foreign policy-related matters." He contended that the calamities of the World War II era stemmed from "every nation's separate effort to protect peace" and the mistaken belief that each nation could single-handedly counter threats. Menderes then turned to the topic of neutrality, asserting that hesitancy and indecisive actions "would not shield us against the threats facing the world."¹⁴⁶ Menderes' refutation of the World War II era neutrality policy, essentially unveils the inadequacies inherent in such a policy. Turkey sought inclusion in the security apparatus established by the Western pact, and adhering to the neutrality policy of that era would have inevitably amplified the isolation experienced by Turkey in the aftermath of World War II.

In Washington, Turkey's Ambassador to the U.S., Feridun Cemal Erkin, persisted in exerting pressure on his counterparts regarding Turkey's inclusion into a security pact with the U.S. However, this time, the atmosphere was noticeably different. During their private meeting, Erkin apprised Secretary of State Acheson that the Turkish public exhibited a strong willingness to join the Western community. He urged Acheson to reconsider Turkey's inclusion in the security pact. In response, Acheson

¹⁴⁶ "Prime Ministerial Archives of Turkey (BCA)," 1950, 30100-12751.

conveyed that Turkey held a highly esteemed status in the U.S.¹⁴⁷ Instead of receiving clear-cut negative replies to Turkey's request, Erkin began to encounter much more sympathetic responses, which arose as a consequence of Turkey's unwavering support in the Korean War. Following Erkin's meeting with Acheson, the Joint Chiefs of Staff commenced deliberations on Turkey's formal inclusion into NATO. As part of these discussions, the Joint Chiefs of Staff entertained the notion of granting a consultative status in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to Turkey and Greece, among other potential measures.¹⁴⁸ This, in itself, serves as evidence that Turkey's deployment of combat troops altered Washington's attitude towards Ankara, albeit not entirely. Erkin's unrelenting full-pressure campaign persisted, as demonstrated in his telephone discussion with Burton Y. Berry, the Deputy Assistant Secretary. On each occasion, Erkin highlighted the mounting pressure from the Turkish public.¹⁴⁹ The U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, George Wadsworth, also explained the situation from his point of view:

I have been increasingly impressed by its sincerity and wide public support; and I have shared growing conviction my staff and friendly colleagues that domestic position present, sincerely cooperative government will be seriously weakened if its request not be granted.

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, Foreign Relations of the United States *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1301.

¹⁴⁸ Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Johnson) *Ibid.*, 1308.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1311.

Wadsworth also mentioned his discussion with President Celal Bayar in which Turkish membership in NATO was also discussed. Bayar said:

we are sincerely grateful for the very considerable contribution to our national strength you have made in the economic field as well. But there is a third and today even more important field, the political-strategic field, in which we sense a hesitancy on your part. We do not understand it. I speak not only as President but more particularly as a Turk. We wish to join the Atlantic Pact and bring our full cooperation to mutual defense of the western democratic world of which we truly feel ourselves a part... Does your Government not realize that we Turks will consider further deferment of favorable action on our request by the Atlantic Pact powers as a refusal and as unwillingness to accept us as equal partners in meeting jointly any threat of aggression? We have shown our good faith by forthright action towards meeting the Korean crisis. I fear frankly that, if Atlantic Pact Council of Foreign Ministers turns down our request, our morale will be seriously affected. We are not a people readily influenced by propaganda. In this matter, however, there is widespread concern and uncertainty. We feel our very future is at stake.¹⁵⁰

Here, President Bayar reiterates the fact that Turkey did not perceive its involvement in the Korean War as a give-and-take situation, wherein Turkey expected its admission to NATO automatically following its decision to intervene in the Korean War. Instead, Turkey viewed the Korean War as an opportunity to demonstrate its

¹⁵⁰ The Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State Ibid., 1312–13.

solidarity with the Western allies. The Korean War served as a litmus test for Turkey, allowing the U.S. to discern the genuine intentions of the former.

While Bayar and other Turkish politicians were exerting pressure on their counterparts in the U.S., the Turkish brigade, led by Brigadier General Tahsin Yazıcı, arrived in Korea on October 17, 1950.¹⁵¹ After a month-long training in the city of Taegu, the Turkish Brigade was attached to the U.S. Army 25th Infantry Division, with its primary mission being to suppress counter-guerrilla movements behind the rear of the U.S. advanced forces in North Korea. The Turkish Brigade's combat debut occurred during the Second Chinese Offensive in Korea. On November 26, 1950, Major General John B. Coulter ordered the Turkish Brigade to secure the town of Tokchon and the road between Kunu-ri and Tokchon, aiming to establish a defensive line against the Chinese troops. During the battles at Kunu-ri and subsequent engagements, while retreating to South Korea, the Turkish Brigade suffered approximately 400 casualties, marking the highest number of losses the Brigade experienced during its stationing in South Korea until 1971.¹⁵² However, as Gavin D. Brockett argued, the “legend of Turk” in Korea began with these battles, exerting an immense impact on the formation of the Turkish national identity.¹⁵³ After the Kunu-ri Battle, the American press abruptly shifted its focus to the Turkish Brigade, portraying it as a fearless unit. Feridun Cemal Erkin, Turkey’s Ambassador to the U.S.,

¹⁵¹ Tahsin Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım* (İstanbul: Ülkü Basımevi, 1963), 100.

¹⁵² Mesut Uyar and Serhat Güvenç, “One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950,” *Journal of Military History* 80, no. 4 (2016): 1117–47.

¹⁵³ Brockett, Brockett, “The Legend of ‘The Turk’ in Korea: Popular Perceptions of the Korean War and Their Importance to a Turkish National Identity.”

confirmed this observation by reporting that the volume of favorable news concerning the Turkish Brigade increased steadily in Washington during this period.¹⁵⁴

Amidst the prevailing positive sentiment towards Turkey in the American public due to the popularity of the Turkish Brigade, a significant conference was convened involving both Turkish and American officials. During this gathering, Turkish officials continued their longstanding efforts to advocate for Turkey's inclusion in a security pact with the United States. Notably, George McGhee, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern South Asian-African Affairs, openly proposed for the first time that the U.S. Department of State give serious consideration to the admission of Turkey and Greece into NATO.¹⁵⁵ McGhee emerged as a prominent proponent of Turkey's inclusion in NATO. In his oral history interview, he asserted that the primary rationale behind his advocacy for Turkey's NATO membership was the apprehension of a potential Turkish-Soviet rapprochement.¹⁵⁶ In his press statement after the conference, McGhee specifically mentioned Turkish intervention in the Korean War as a satisfactory development.¹⁵⁷ Following McGhee's suggestion, Secretary of State Acheson engaged General Marshall to explore the possibility of a favorable stance on Turkish inclusion in NATO.

¹⁵⁴ Erkin, *Dışişlerinde 34 Yıl Vaşington Büyükelçiliği II. Cilt, I. Kısım*, 213.

¹⁵⁵ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, 82.

¹⁵⁶ Richard D. McKinzie, "Oral History Interview with George C. McGhee," June 11, 1975, 57, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/oral-histories/mcgheeg>.

¹⁵⁷ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, 84.

Two major camps emerged in the State Department while evaluating Turkey's admission into NATO. One side suggested that even without Turkey's formal admission into NATO, it would cooperate with the U.S., so there was no need for the U.S. to push for Turkey's admittance into NATO. The other side, on the other hand, argued that a formal security agreement was needed to guarantee Turkey's full commitment to the U.S.' cause. George Wadsworth, the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, explained: "Unless we are prepared to come through with a commitment of real value to the Turks they would repeat last war's 'friendly neutrality' policy, block the straights, trade with both sides, and hope we would defeat the Moscovs." A subordinate who read Wadsworth's telegram noted, "I also believe that, given certain conditions, the Turks might 'weasel' on us."¹⁵⁸ As this document clearly shows, even those who supported Turkey's formal entry into NATO had doubts regarding Turkey's future behavior due to its neutrality policy during World War II. Turkey's untrustworthy image stemming from its World War II era neutrality policy haunted the U.S. policymakers. The Turkish side, however, skillfully used the Korean conflict to dispel the lingering image of untrustworthiness. The aforementioned document demonstrates that the Turkish side was unable to completely dispel the image of untrustworthiness in the minds of American policymakers. However, despite reservations about Turkey's future behavior, the U.S. decided to admit it into NATO, fearing that not doing so would jeopardize Turkish cooperation in the broader Cold War struggle.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Danforth, Nicholas L., *The Remaking of Republican Turkey Memory and Modernity Since the Fall of the Ottoman Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), p. 157.

¹⁵⁹ Danforth, *The Remaking of Republican Turkey*, pp. 156-7.

2.5. Conclusion

During World War II, Turkey made repeated assurances of joining the conflict alongside its allies Britain and France. However, Turkey's failure to fulfill these commitments resulted in a significant loss of credibility, a detriment that proved challenging to rectify. Following the hostilities of World War II, Turkey faced a hostile Soviet Union and consequently sought closer ties with the Western allies. Nevertheless, suspicions lingered due to Turkey's evasive neutrality policy during the war. Despite Turkey's persistent desire to become a member of NATO and multiple membership applications, the Western allies did not see fit to include Turkey into the Western security apparatus. The primary reason, as indicated by Turkish and other relevant archival sources, was the lack of trustworthiness associated with Turkey's neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II. For a long period, scholars who focused on Turkish diplomatic history made no connection between Turkey's neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II and Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War. This dissertation connects these seemingly unrelated events by arguing that Turkey's involvement in the Korean War was the consequence of its neutrality during World War II.

The objective of this chapter has been to utilize recently declassified Turkish archival records, alongside other pertinent sources, to demonstrate that by following a neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II, Turkey earned an untrustworthy image which caused a loss of confidence in the international arena. This loss of confidence which was at the forefront of Turkey's evaluation as a potential ally forced Turkey to take a more active stance in world affairs. When the Korean War erupted in 1950, Turkish policymakers viewed it as an opportunity to dispel their country's untrustworthy image, which stemmed from their neutrality during World War II. With

the advent of the Korean War, Turkish policymakers recognized an opportunity to demonstrate Turkey's solidarity with the Western powers, an aspect that was not adequately showcased during World War II. This paper contends that the principal impetus behind Turkey's intervention in the Korean War was to redress the loss of credibility stemming from its neutrality policy during World War II. Major foreign policy decisions invariably carry significant consequences, and Turkey's neutrality during World War II was no exception.



CHAPTER 3

TWO BATTLES THREE ACCOUNTS: BATTLES OF KUNU-RI AND KUMYANGJANG-NI FROM AMERICAN, KOREAN, TURKISH PERSPECTIVES AND THE MAKING OF THE LEGEND OF TURK IN KOREA

Troops! You deserve congratulations. You shall be waging war in East Asia, just as our beloved Prophet said. As troops of a strong nation, you will fight for the noble causes of humanity in far-off regions instead of fighting within our borders. Never forget that you are the lineage of the great *Akıncıs*, who ran and battled for freedom and justice, taking their banner from continent to continent. Keep your hearts at ease; don't worry. You will honor your flag by carrying it from triumph to victory, just like your forefathers did. It is truly wonderful that you are fighting for freedom, justice, and human decency.

Muhsin Örtülü (imam of Turkish Brigade)¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Bahtiyar Yalta, *Kunu-Ri Muharebeleri ve Geri Çekilmeler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005),

62–63.

After your recent victory, Turkish Brigade became B.B. (bravest of brave) among the
UN forces.

Commander of the UN Forces General Douglas MacArthur¹⁶¹

After the outbreak of the Korean War, the United Nations urged member states to furnish assistance to South Korea in order for it to repel the unprovoked North Korean attack with the Security Council Resolution 83.¹⁶² Turkey, under the rule of newly elected Democrat Party deeply contemplated about the Korean War and how Turkey ought to react to it. As shown in the previous chapter, Turkey was in urgent need of sincerely demonstrating its commitment to the Western alliance since it failed to do so in World War II and lost the confidence of major Western powers. Therefore, Turkey answered the United Nations' call for assistance positively and became the second country to do so after the U.S.¹⁶³ Initially, the Turkish side planned to provide a full infantry division to demonstrate Turkey's full commitment to the cause of the United Nations.¹⁶⁴ However, after several deliberations with the U.S., it was decided that Turkey would send a brigade comprising 301 officers, 323 sergeants, 5468 privates, totaling 6092 personnel.¹⁶⁵ Korean War was the first foreign armed conflict Turkey took part in after its foundation in 1923.

¹⁶¹ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 281–82.

¹⁶² "Security Council Resolution 83," June 27, 1950,
https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/112027/files/S_RES_84%281950%29-EN.pdf.

¹⁶³ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, 77.

¹⁶⁴ Uyar and Güvenç, "One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950," 1126.

¹⁶⁵ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

Preparations regarding the organization and assembly of the brigade began after the decision was made public on July 25, 1950. The most pressing issue for the U.S. side was the fact that Turkish Army did not fight a proper war after Turkish War of Independence. Major Generals of the U.S. Army, including General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, was concerned about Turkish Brigade's effectiveness in the battlefield and viewed Turkey's military contribution negatively.¹⁶⁶ However, this concern was not shared by the State Department which was quite eager of Turkey's and other nations involvement in the Korean War alongside the U.S.¹⁶⁷ Eventually, a compromise was reached when the U.S. side decreased Turkey's original suggestion of an full infantry division to a brigade which was accepted both by the U.S. Army as well as the Turkish government.

Turkey deployed a total of sixteen brigades to Korea until 1966 and maintained five honor guards until 1971, when the Turkish Army withdrew from Korea alongside the majority of United Nations forces.¹⁶⁸ Over the 21 years of the Turkish Army's presence in Korea, it actively participated in significant battles, including the Battle of Kunu-ri, Battle of Kumyangjang-ni, Chorwon-Seoul diversion; the Taegyewonni defense, the Barhar-Kumhwa and Battle of Nevada Complex. This chapter primarily focuses on two major battles in which the Turkish Brigade participated, Battle of Kunu-ri and Battle of Kumyangjang-ni, and compares the official accounts provided

¹⁶⁶ Uyar and Güvenç, "One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950," 1125.

¹⁶⁷ Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Merchant) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk), 19 July 1950 in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950: Korea* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1976), 432–35.

¹⁶⁸ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

by the United States, South Korea, and Turkey. The official histories of the Korean War were compiled by Turkey, the Republic of Korea, and the U.S. after the signing of the armistice in 1953. In their article titled “One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-ri in November 1950,” Mesut Uyar and Serhat Güvenç examined the Kunu-ri Battle, primarily comparing American and Turkish official accounts. However, a comprehensive history of major battles Turkish Brigade took part in, considering American, Korean, and Turkish sources, is yet to be published. This chapter aims to fill that gap by comparing and contrasting primarily American, Korean, and Turkish official histories, intending to document the history of the Turkish Brigade's two major battles in the Korean War.

3.1. Preparing for the Korean War: Formation of the Turkish Brigade

Immediately after the announcement of Turkey's military participation in the Korean War, Turkish Armed Forces started the preparations for of the brigade. The main basis of the Turkish Brigade was formed by 241. infantry regiment in Ankara. However, other units from Istanbul and İzmir were also trained and attached to the brigade.¹⁶⁹ Turkish Brigade was periodically inspected by an American military assistance group. The first findings suggested a lack of preparedness in the engineering, medical, vehicle transportation and communication units.¹⁷⁰ Turkish military took the advices of American military officials very seriously and took necessary precautions

¹⁶⁹ Yalta, *Kunu-Ri Muharebeleri ve Geri Çekilmeler*, 49–50.

¹⁷⁰ “I.Birleşmiş Milletler Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı Birliklerinin Amerikalı Uzmanlarca Yapılan Teftişlerinde, Istihkâm, Sıhhiye, Oto Nakliye Bölükleri...,” August 25, 1950, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBI (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

to prepare the soldiers in the best way possible. While military preparations continued, Colonel Celal Dora was appointed as the regiment commander, and President Celal Bayar appointed Brigadier General Tahsin Yazıcı to lead Turkish Brigade in Korea on September 9, 1950.¹⁷¹

The soldiers of the brigade were generally composed of volunteers. All of the soldiers were subjected to a health screening and those deemed unfit were sent back to their original units. From Turkish Armed Forces' archives, we understand that health criteria, among other, were quite tight and the Army aimed to select some of the best soldiers. The soldiers were vaccinated for contagious diseases. These soldiers were then trained by both Turkish and American specialists in their area of expertise.¹⁷² The soldiers were generally provided with American equipment acquired through Marshall Plan such as M1 rifles. There are conflicting accounts in terms of the total soldier count of the first brigade. Commander of the Turkish Brigade Brigadier General Tahsin Yazıcı and Colonel Celal Dora suggested, in their memoirs that the total number was 5090.¹⁷³ However, a document in Turkish Armed Forces Archives which lists all of the brigades sent to Korea until 1971 shows that the number was 6092.¹⁷⁴ Since this document was prepared in 1973 by Turkish Armed Forces with all

¹⁷¹ "Kore'ye Gidecek Birlięe, Tuęę. Tahsin Yazıcı'nın Komuta Etmesi.," September 10, 1950, Fon Code: 30-11-1-0, Prime Ministerial Archives of the Republic of Turkey (BCA).

¹⁷² "I. Birleşmiş Milletler Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı'na Tuęęeneral Tahsin Yazıcı'nın Seçilmesi..., " August 16, 1950, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBİ (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

¹⁷³ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 23; Celal Dora, *Kore Savaşında Türkler, 1950-1951* (İ. Akgün Matbaası, 1963), 24.

¹⁷⁴ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

of the necessary updates at hand, it is most probable that the number count of this document is correct.

On September 18, 1950, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Commander of Turkish Armed Forces General Nuri Yamut and Minister of Defense Refik Şevket İnce visited Turkish Brigade in their training quarters at Etimesgut, Ankara. In his speech to the soldiers, Menderes suggested that Turkey decided to participate in the Korean War for Turkey's future and all Turks were with the brigade. Commander of Turkish Armed Forces Yamut said: "You are going to the war. Your fame already reached Korea. Americans put up the banners 'Turks are here' in the weak parts of the front and gained strength from your name. My sons! I am sure you will fight thinking about Turks honor. I trust you. I will wait for your victory news."¹⁷⁵ Minister of Defense İnce, on the other hand, relayed his hope for a swift victory in Korea: "*Inshallah* the war will be over even before you reached Korea and then you can return Turkey safely."¹⁷⁶ The hope that war could end swiftly stemmed from the U.S. intervention. By mid-September, famous Battle of Incheon already started and the news of North Korean defeat in a variety of battle fronts reached Turkey. Therefore, soldiers started to think that they will not fight in Korea since by the time they reached, the war would be all over. The next day, Turkish Brigade started transferring to Iskenderun port, where American ships would take them all the way to Korea.

All of the units reached İskenderun port on September 24, 1950. On September 23, 1950, the units that reached İskenderun were assembled for the prayer of Eid al-Adha. All of the soldiers including the commander of the Turkish Brigade Brigadier

¹⁷⁵ Yalta, *Kunu-Ri Muharebeleri ve Geri Çekilmeler*, 55.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 54–55.

General Tahsin Yazıcı participated in the prayer that was led by the brigade's *imam* Muhsin Örtülü. As it was the very last public event before the long journey to Korea, soldiers were encouraged by Muhsin Örtülü. He said:

Troops! You deserve congratulations. You shall be waging war in East Asia, just as our beloved Prophet said. As troops of a strong nation, you will fight for the noble causes of humanity in far-off regions instead of fighting within our borders. Never forget that you are the lineage of the great *Akıncıs*, who ran and battled for freedom and justice, taking their banner from continent to continent. Keep your hearts at ease; don't worry. You will honor your flag by carrying it from triumph to victory, just like your forefathers did. It is truly wonderful that you are fighting for freedom, justice, and human decency. Troops! Know well that a soldier is not called dead. Because a soldier does not die but becomes a martyr. To become a martyr means to attain the highest place in the eyes of Allah. Being a martyr is achieving eternal life. Those who survive also earn the honorable title of *ghazi*. Soldiers, the brave grandchildren of martyred and *ghazi* ancestors! May the help of Allah and the intercession of our beloved Prophet always be upon you.¹⁷⁷

Örtülü's emphasis on the noble causes of humanity and depiction of the Korean War as a war similar to Ottoman *ghazas* are points that following chapters will investigate further. After the end of the prayer, preparations for Turkish Brigade's transportation to Korea continued. Three American military ships namely: USS General J. H. McRae, USS General W. G. Haan and USAT Private Elden H. Johnson.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 62–63.

USS General J. H. McRae left İskenderun on the night of September 25 followed by USS General W. G. Haan on September 26 and finally USAT Private Elden H. Johnson on September 29.¹⁷⁸ The ships passed through the Red Sea and made the only stopover in Colombo through which they reached Singapore and finally landed on Pusan, the final destination. Some of the major problems faced by the brigade in these ships were generally cultural. First and foremost, there was a lack of bread, one of the primary ingredients of every Turkish meal. This problem was solved by increasing the amount of potatoes served in every meal. One of the other major problems was the usage of toilets. The soldiers were used to squat toilets while they were provided flush toilets. This problem was solved by training soldiers how to use flush toilets by their superiors.¹⁷⁹ Soldiers military training continued in the ships and especially target practices were done. On October 18, 1950, first units of the brigade landed on Pusan port.

¹⁷⁸ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 85.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 86–87.

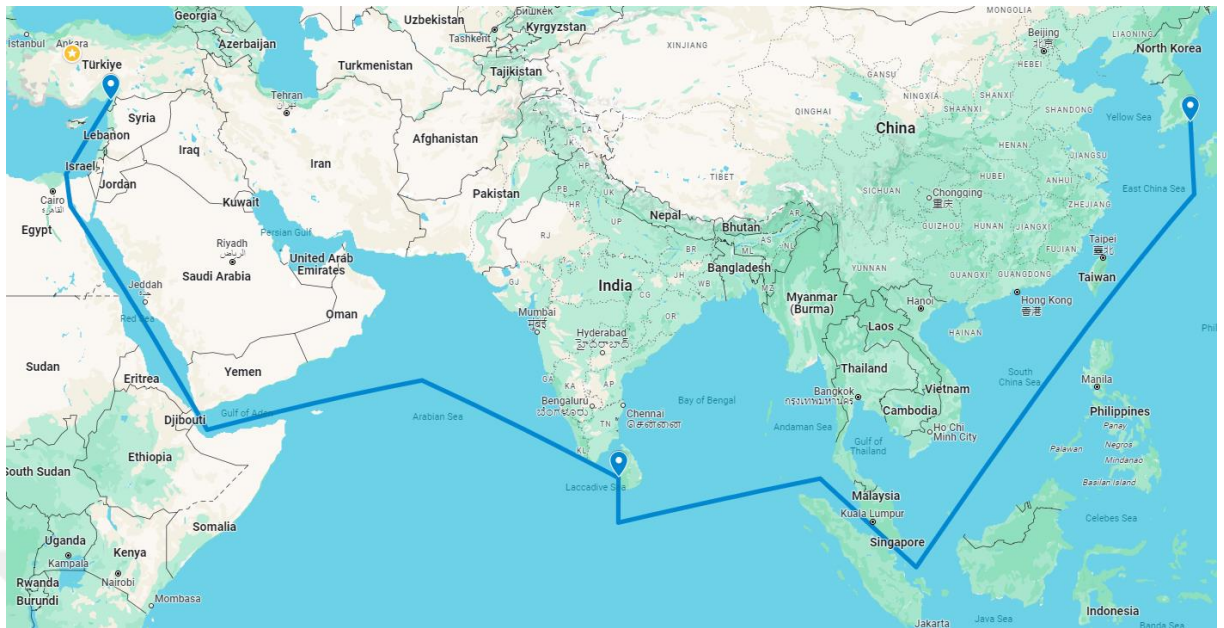


Figure 3. Turkish Brigade's Route to Korea via Google Maps.

Bahtiyar Yalta, a lieutenant, describes his initial observations of Pusan and Koreans in general:

The main street of Pusan is covered in dust. Barefoot, with heads uncovered, dressed in old clothes, weary, sad, and with gloomy faces, men and women wander the streets. The city's population seems to have increased due to migration. There is a crowd of unemployed and powerless people. After a lackluster welcome ceremony, we see poverty everywhere we look. Everywhere there is sorrow, fear, hunger, and haste. Almost everyone is begging. People sift through piles of garbage, hopeless and unemployed. There are hardly any vehicles on the streets other than military vehicles. The war has devastated the weak Korean economy... We got off at the train station. Children surrounded us. We were overwhelmed by the sound of children crying. They were asking us for food. We had entered a hellish situation. We were at a loss for what to do... We had never imagined encountering such a heartbreaking

situation in Korea. At the station, we distributed the ration boxes given to us to the children surrounding us.¹⁸⁰

3.2. Battle of Kunu-ri (Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River)

After reaching Pusan, the Brigade was sent to the city of Taegu, a central city about 100 km north of Pusan. The brigade reached Taegu on the night of September 20. In Taegu, the brigade was given its English moniker: “North Star.” There, the brigade received an accelerated military education from the American military officials and equipped with new military weapons. The brigade mainly trained for combat and guerilla actions. During its time in Taegu, the brigade was reorganized by Brigadier General Tahsin Yazıcı. The brigade’s 241st Infantry’s regimental headquarters was disbanded and three infantry battalions were directly connected under General Yazıcı’s command.¹⁸¹ The decision was taken by General Yazıcı and it was not received well by the commander of 241st Infantry Regiment Colonel Celal Dora who openly criticized the decision and even wrote a letter of protest to Turkish Armed Forces from Korea in which Dora asked his withdrawal from the war.¹⁸² Unfortunately, this issue dragged on throughout Yazıcı and Dora’s tenure in Korea and created two different camps of the brigade. At times, it threatened the unity of the brigade since both camps rarely communicated.

¹⁸⁰ Yalta, *Kunu-Ri Muharebeleri ve Geri Çekilmeler*, 126.

¹⁸¹ Uyar and Güvenç, “One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950,” 1132.

¹⁸² Dora, *Kore Savaşında Türkler, 1950-1951*, 78–79.

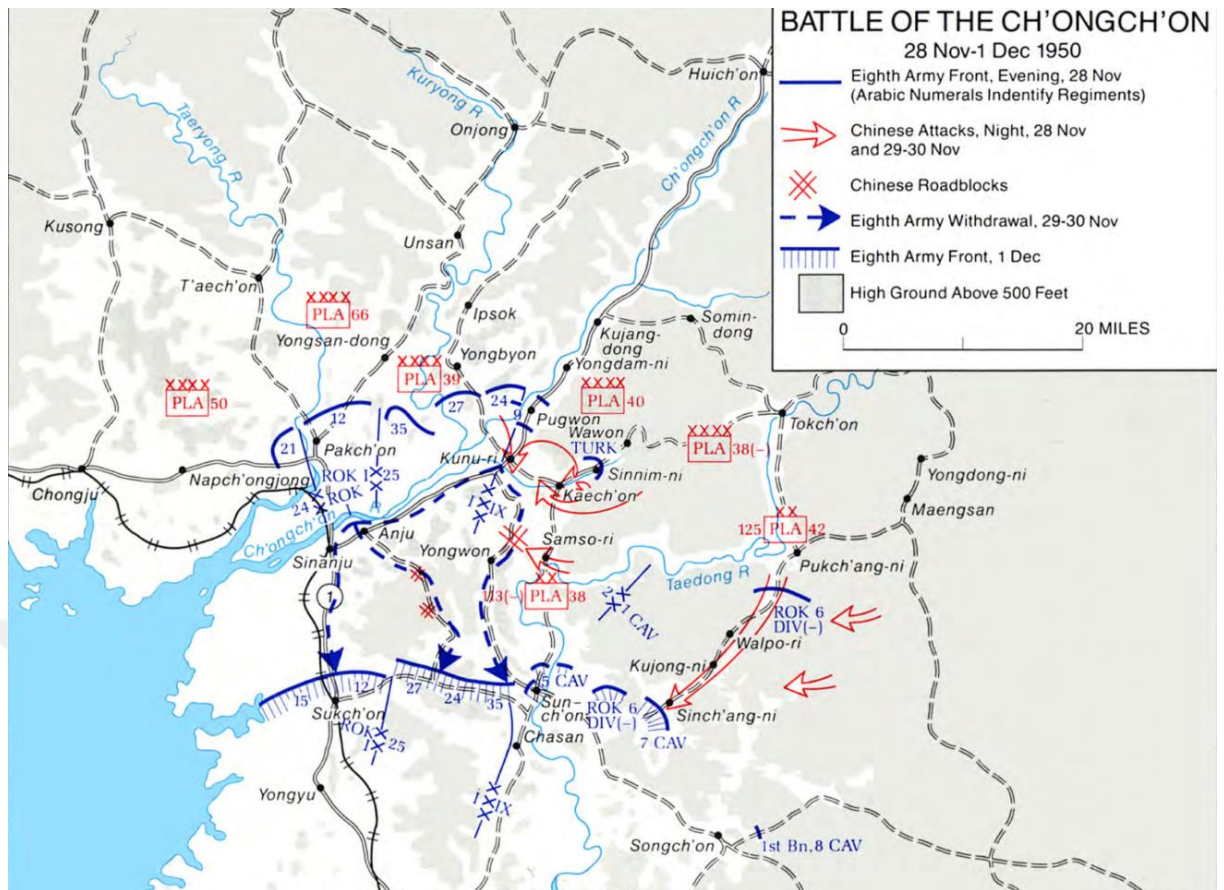


Figure 4. Battle of Kunuri (Ch'ongcho'on River)¹⁸³

The first order received by the brigade on November 26, 1950, was from Major General John B. Coulter, the commanding general of the U.S. Army 9th Corps, that the brigade was attached to 9th Corps and it needed to secure the town of Tokchon, a mid-sized town North of Pyeongyang, North Korea's capital city. At the time, the UN troops were on a mission to unify the Korean Peninsula and reach the Yalu River. Commander of the UN forces, General Douglas MacArthur suggested "you tell the boys that when they get to the Yalu (River) they are going home. I want to make good on my statement that they are going to eat Christmas dinner at home."¹⁸⁴ What MacArthur

¹⁸³ Billy C. Mossman, *United States Army in the Korean War Ebb and Flow, November 1950-July 1951* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), 106.

¹⁸⁴ *Washington Evening Star*, November 29, 1950.

did not take -into- account was a decisive Chinese intervention to defend North Korea. This counteroffensive would totally change the nature of the Korean War and prolong the conflict two more years in the end.

Turkish Brigade left Taegu way before the receipt of General Coulter's order and reached firstly to Seoul, then Pyeongyang and finally Kunu-ri. Some of the troops travelled by train and some by motorized units. On November 26, 1950, Turkish Brigade received an order to proceed for the city of Tokchon and protect it but it encountered withdrawing South Korean soldiers who communicated the existence of a big enemy unit north.¹⁸⁵ On November 27, at 14:30, a new order was given which asked the brigade to secure Yongdong-ni, an area between Tokchon and Kunu-ri. General Tahsin Yazıcı concluded that his troops would not be able to reach Yongdong-ni and instead retreated to Wawon.¹⁸⁶ Mesut Uyar and Serhat Güvenç links this and other independent decisions of the General to him belonging to the "Prussian School" that did not see a problem in making drastic changes according to the circumstances of the field.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 156–57.

¹⁸⁶ "Genelkurmay Başkanlığı'na Sunulmak Üzere Hazırlanmış Kunuri Savaşı İle İlgili Rapor.," November 29, 1950, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBI (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

¹⁸⁷ Uyar and Güvenç, "One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950," 1138.

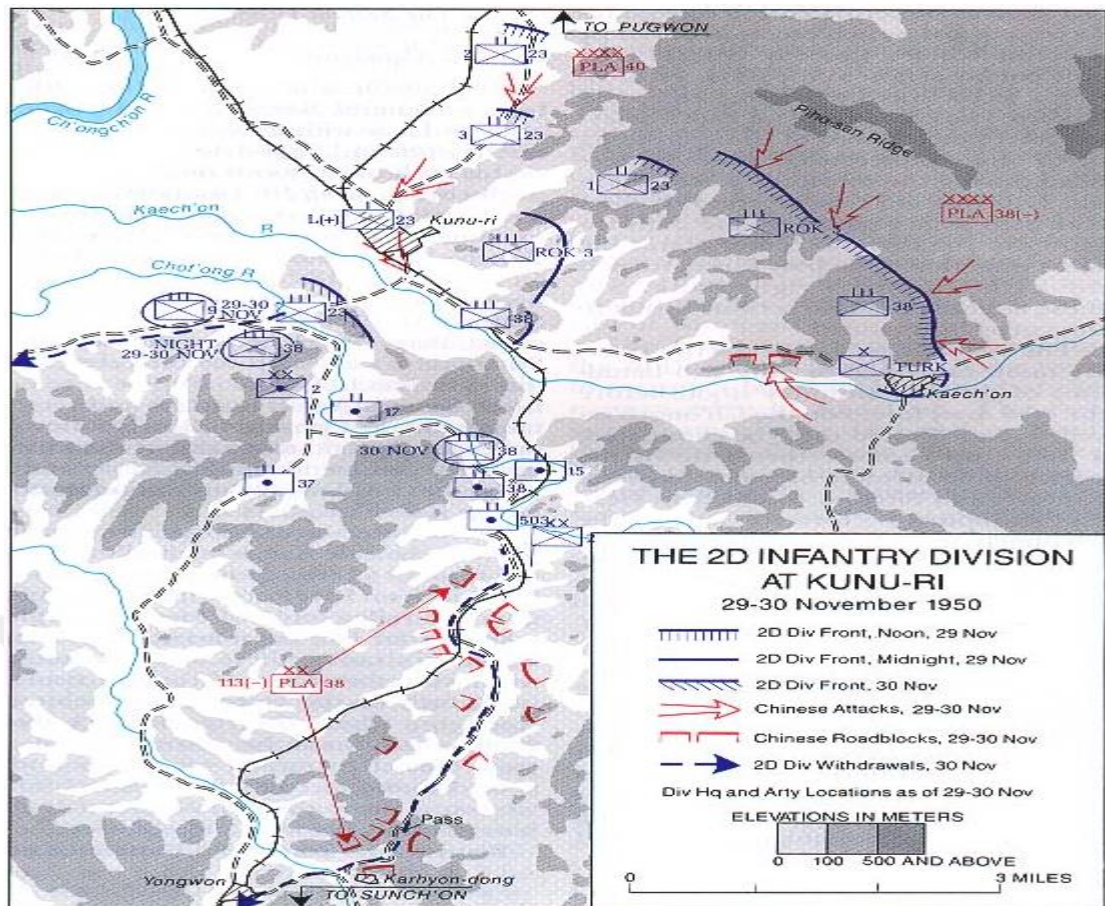


Figure 5. Battle of Kunu-ri¹⁸⁸

After General Yazıcı's decision, the brigade headed for Wawon. However, especially for the motorized units, it took around ten to twelve hours to turn their way around in the narrow pathways. The Reconnaissance Platoon was the first to be attacked by the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) 342nd Regiment 114th Division on November 28 around 1:00 o'clock. Then, throughout the day, the brigade fought with the Chinese PVA. After the brigade started to suffer greatly under the continuous Chinese PVA attack, General Yazıcı decided to withdraw to Sinnim-ni, instead of defending Wawon. However, unable to retreat fully, the brigade was surrounded by PVA 340 and 342nd Regiment. The battle continued through the night

¹⁸⁸ Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 110.

and the brigade was only able to break the Chinese encirclement on the morning of November 29.¹⁸⁹ Here, an interesting development occurred between General Yazıcı and Colonel Dora. Colonel Dora was of the opinion that the brigade should retreat further back but General Yazıcı wanted to defend Sinnim-ni. Colonel Dora, in his memoir, suggests that he communicated to General Yazıcı the need to regroup those soldiers further back from Sinnim-ni. To do that, Colonel, along with a couple of officers, withdrew firstly to Kunu-ri and then all the way to Pyeongyang.¹⁹⁰ General Yazıcı, on the other hand, argues that he did not allow Colonel Dora to withdraw, and that Dora's actions at that moment were not responsible.¹⁹¹ Here, it is clear that the chain of command was seriously broken. Mesut Uyar and Serhat Güvenç posit that "both Yazıcı and Dora made terrible mistakes and fell short of standards expected of a commanding officer."¹⁹² After breaking the encirclement, in the morning of November 29, Turkish Brigade was able to unite with the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division and was given the order to defend the right wing on the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division. However, after realizing the fact that U.S. divisions in its left-hand side started to withdraw, the brigade also started its withdrawal operation. During the operation of this withdrawal, on the night of November 29, Chinese PVA 114th Division again attacked the brigade.¹⁹³ Outnumbered, the brigade withdrew firstly to Kunu-ri and then Sunchon-Pyeongyang. When the units finally reached Pyeongyang, some of the

¹⁸⁹ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 6-0-54."

¹⁹⁰ Dora, *Kore Savaşında Türkler, 1950-1951*, 139.

¹⁹¹ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 177.

¹⁹² Uyar and Güvenç, "One Battle and Two Accounts: The Turkish Brigade at Kunu-Ri in November 1950," 1139.

¹⁹³ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 6-0-54."

American soldiers welcomed them very warmly. Private Mehmet Gürsoy recalls the scene:

All of the Americans were embracing us. They were saying 'Turkish number one.' For one moment, we thought they were mocking us. We lost our commander, we lost our battalion, we lost our unit. Later, we asked and learned that since the Turkish Brigade resisted, two American divisions were rescued from the siege. Still, we were devastated.¹⁹⁴

Kunu-ri Battle was the most devastating for the Turkish Brigade throughout the Korean War. The casualties of the brigade were at a record high of 767 of which 218 died in action, 455 wounded, and 94 missing.¹⁹⁵ While the brigade was able to retreat back, its effectiveness throughout the war became questionable. While General Walton Walker, commander of the U.S. 8th Army presented fifteen silver and bronze medals to the brigade's personnel for its bravery throughout Kunu-ri Battle, the issue of Turkish Brigade's role especially in the Kunu-ri Battle became a focal point of discussion for both Turkish and American historians. Given that Turkish and American sources have been thoroughly compared in Mesut Uyar and Serhat Güvenç's article titled "One Battle and Two Accounts: Turkish Brigade at Kunu-ri in November 1950," this account will first summarize the main points of divergence between Turkish and American accounts. Subsequently, it will introduce the South Korean official histories of the Korean War (6.25 전쟁사) prepared by the Military History Institute of the

¹⁹⁴ Cem Fakir, *Şimal Yıldızı Son Kore Gazileri* (İstanbul: NTV Yayınları, 2010), 73.

¹⁹⁵ H. Erkilet, T. Bıyıklıoğlu, and H. Arun, *Kore Harbinde Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerinin Muharebeleri (1950–1953) Özet* (İstanbul: ATASE Yayınları, 1959), 138.

Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea (국방부 군사편찬연구소) to better analyze the details of the battle.

The U.S. military's official history of the Korean War's third volume entitled *The United States Army in the Korean War* written by Billy Mossman makes several suggestions regarding Turkish Brigade's combat effectiveness during the Kunu-ri Battle. First and foremost, the U.S. official history makes the claim that stumbling upon fleeing South Korean troops in Tokchon which belonged to the 6th and 7th Infantry Divisions, the brigade mistook them for Chinese troops and fought with them causing casualties to both sides.¹⁹⁶ Mainly based on oral history accounts, this description makes Turkish Brigade's numerous battles in Kunu-ri irrelevant and accuses it of committing friendly fire, a major mistake in any war. When Turkish official military history and other accounts are checked regarding the occurrence of this or a similar event, General Tahsin Yazıcı's memoir provides some insights. Indeed, Yazıcı recalls encountering fleeing South Korean soldiers and posits that the brigade closely examined them and came to the conclusion that they belonged to the 7th Infantry Division of South Korean Army. However, the fleeing soldiers were not answering some of the questions in detail, which caused some soldiers of the brigade to suspect their identities. Still, Yazıcı suggests that due to language barrier, the brigade could not communicate with them in a clear manner and had to let them go on their way.¹⁹⁷ In order to verify the authenticity of the American official history's argument, South Korean official Korean War military history is consulted. However, South Korean official Korean War military history does not mention of any direct

¹⁹⁶ Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 81.

¹⁹⁷ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 65.

combat between 6th and 7th Infantry Divisions and Turkish Brigade or a friendly fire issue.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, one may argue that the friendly fire theory put forward by the U.S. official military history is not persuasive mainly because there is no hard evidence that supports the theory apart from some oral history accounts.

The issue of miscommunication is also highlighted and the U.S. official history suggests that Turkish Brigade was not able to effectively carry out the orders given to it by the U.S. 9th Corps. In addition, General Yazıcı's abovementioned Prussian style decisions to retreat without receiving a direct order was criticized and it is suggested that "regardless of repeated urgings from the American advisers" General Yazıcı decided not to follow General Walton Walker's orders line-by-line.¹⁹⁹ Here, a close reading of the U.S. official history may result in a conclusion that General Yazıcı's self-made decisions eventually led to the 2nd Infantry Division's right flank to be left vacant, which eventually led to more casualties of the U.S. side. While U.S. official history accuses Turkish Brigade of not following the orders line-by-line, Turkish official history accounts turn the blame to the U.S. Army for not providing the brigade much needed intelligence swiftly. Turkish official history accounts also view Yazıcı's decisions from a different angle and argue that General Yazıcı had the ultimate decision-making power since he was in field observing the changing conditions first hand. Therefore, following General Walker's orders line-by-line could result in

¹⁹⁸ 6.25 戦争史. 7, 中共軍 参战과 유엔군의 철수 [History of the Korean War Volume 7 Chinese

Intervention and UN Troops Withdrawal] (서울 Seoul: 국방부 군사편찬연구소 Ministry of Defense Institute of Military History, 2010), 465–68.

¹⁹⁹ Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 108.

devastating consequences.²⁰⁰ General Yazıcı, in his report to Turkish Armed Forces regarding the Kunu-ri Battle, repeats the issue of “taking the initiative at hand” and decide on what to do during the tumultuous situation. The documents found in Turkish Armed Forces Archives makes it clear that General Yazıcı saw it fit to make certain decisions instead of waiting for clear instructions from General Walker.²⁰¹ When we turn our attention to the Korean official history account, it also recounts the U.S. official histories argument that General Yazıcı did not follow General Walker’s orders line-by-line. However, the Korean official history sees merit in Yazıcı’s decision to retreat from Wawon to Sinnim-ni since he was “facing the imminent danger of a blocked retreat route.” This line of positively interpreting Yazıcı’s decisions continues for the retreat from Wawon to Sinnim-ni in Korean official history:

Having completed the defensive positions, the division was unexpectedly attacked by a Chinese Communist surprise assault at midnight on the same day. Infiltrating the rear of the division's position disguised as refugees, the enemy collaborated with North Korean forces, attacking vulnerable areas of the division. Turkish soldiers mounted vehicles, including tanks, and began a withdrawal towards Bongmyeong-ni. About an hour later, after receiving reports of the surprise attack from the mortar battalion, the division commander attempted communication, but there was no response from the main defensive

²⁰⁰ Erkilet, Bıyıklıoğlu, and Arun, *Kore Harbinde Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerinin Muharebeleri (1950–1953) Özet*, 98.

²⁰¹ “Birleşmiş Milletler Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Birliklerinin Başarısıyla Sonuçlanan Kunuri Savaşlarının Yer Aldığı 26 Kasım - 1 Aralık 1950 Tarihleri Arasını Kapsayan Hareket ve Muharebe Raporları...,” December 5, 1950, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBİ (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

position. Facing this situation, the division commander disregarded some suggestions for withdrawal and decided to establish a new defensive position in Bongmyeong-ni. After assessing the situation of the front-line battalions, he planned for the next operation. Following the commander's orders, approximately 150 assembled troops organized into companies to establish a new defensive position on the eastern hillside of Bongmyeong-ni. The division commander continued efforts to reinforce and strengthen the defensive position in Bongmyeong-ni while trying to rescue the isolated main force in Sinnim-ni.²⁰²

As can be inferred from the above passage, Korean official history seems to approach the whole battle in a more balanced way. Securing this balanced view was made possible by using newly released documents as well as compiled accounts. Therefore, according to the Korean official history, Turkish Brigade successfully slowed down the rapid advance of PVA especially in Wawon.²⁰³ Kim Jin Woo, a Korean military historian, in his article entitled “ 6·25 전쟁기 터키군 참전에 관한 연구 - 참전 동기와 군우리 전투를 중심으로 (A Study on the Turkish Participation in the Korean War: Focusing on the Motivation behind the Turkish Participation and the Battle of Kunu-ri) suggests that Turkish Brigade's “battles in Wawon-ni, Sinnim-

²⁰² *한국전쟁전투사: 청천강 전투* [History of the Korean War Battle of Chongchon River] (서울 [Seoul]: 국방부 전사편찬위원회 [Ministry of Defense Institute of Military History], 1985).454.

²⁰³ Ibid.460.

ni, and Bongmyeong-ni, played a vital role in buying crucial time for the withdrawal of the U.S. 8th Army.”²⁰⁴

The abovementioned positive Korean perspective cannot be found in official U.S. military histories. Turkish Brigade is generally viewed in a negative point of view primarily because of the commanding officer, General Tahsin Yazıcı’s self-made decisions on field, which was unheard of for the U.S. officers. However, read alongside Turkish and Korean official history accounts, one can have a balanced perspective regarding Turkish Brigade’s battle experience in Kunu-ri. As Uyar and Güvenç suggested in their abovementioned article, commanding officers Yazıcı and Dora made mistakes during the course of the Kunu-ri Battle. However, one should also recognize the merits of the brigade, for which it received fifteen Silver Star and Bronze Star medals from General Walton Walker after the battle.²⁰⁵

The battle and its result reached Turkey thorough printed press. One of the most prominent points was that the press decided to describe Battle of Kunu-ri as a great victory of the Turkish Brigade. *Cumhuriyet* reported that Turkish Brigade’s heroism in Kunu-ri created excitement throughout the world. The news also conveyed the words of an American soldier who said that he has yet to see a soldier in Korea as brave as the Turks.²⁰⁶ *Hürriyet*, on the other hand, transmitted that General Yazıcı was alive and Colonel Dora wrapped the flag of the brigade to his waist and opened the

²⁰⁴ Kim-Jin Woo, “6.25 전쟁기 터키군 참전에 관한 연구: 참전 동기와 군우리 전투를 중심으로

[A Study on the Turkish Participation in the Korean War: Focusing on the Motivation behind the Turkish Participation and the Battle of Kunuri],” *한국사연구회보* 162 (2013): 87–128.

²⁰⁵ Stanley Sandler, *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 2014), 339.

²⁰⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, December 2, 1950.

way for the brigade. A caricature depicted General Yazıcı in front of the soldiers shooting his gun while the soldiers killing the enemy with bayonet attacks.²⁰⁷ *Akşam*'s headline read "Turkish Bayonet's Heroic Saga in Korea."²⁰⁸ *Zafer*, on the other hand, suggested that the defeat was avoided only because of Turkish Brigade.²⁰⁹ Last but not least, *Son Posta* printed a picture which depicted praying soldiers in a mosque for the Turkish Brigade in Korea.²¹⁰ The common point of more or less all print media reporting the battle was that they depicted the Kunu-ri Battle as a huge victory of the brigade. In addition, the U.S. forces were portrayed as the ones in need that were greatly helped by the brigade. While some parts of these illustrations were right, some parts were totally wrong as well. The most important aspect of all, however, was that they rarely mentioned the situation of the killed or lost soldiers let alone the wounded. These aspects turned into details that were addressed later. Through these kinds of reporting, the myth of "Turk in Korea" was created and reinforced.²¹¹

Turkish print press was not the only one covering the Turkish Brigade's Kunu-ri Battle. Starting from late November, the American print press started focusing primarily on the Turkish Brigade and its battles against the Chinese PLA. Printing a picture of the Turkish Brigade in Kunu-ri, *The Guthrie Daily Leader* reported: "soldiers of the Turkish Brigade in camp near Kunu-ri, North Korea, are shown clearing their weapons in this picture taken on Thanksgiving Day. News dispatches

²⁰⁷ *Hürriyet*, December 2, 1950.

²⁰⁸ *Akşam*, December 2, 1950.

²⁰⁹ *Zafer*, December 2, 1950.

²¹⁰ *Son Posta*, December 2, 1950.

²¹¹ Brockett, "The Legend of 'The Turk' in Korea: Popular Perceptions of the Korean War and Their Importance to a Turkish National Identity."

say the Turks cut themselves out of a Red trap northeast of Kunu, killing more 200 Reds and capturing 200 others in a fierce bayonet charge.”²¹² *The Hobart Democrat-Chief* depicted Turkish Brigade’s leader General Tahsin Yazıcı as “Turks tough commander” and added that he “refused to withdraw” against the Chinese PLA attacks.²¹³ *Berkeley Daily Gazette* reported “Turks Battle Valiantly on the Korea Front” and included Lieutenant Theodore Pickett’s evaluation of the Turkish Brigade. Pickett, who worked closely with the soldiers of the Turkish Brigade on their retreat from Kunu-ri said: “the captain of that company I took up there- he wants to attack. I couldn’t get him to come back.”²¹⁴ These kinds of reporting kept continuing throughout November and December of 1950. Since the UN troops were on the retreat, Turkish Brigade’s bravery was especially highlighted throughout all of the American print press. It seems that this widespread praise of the Turkish Brigade effected U.S. politicians as well. For example, On December 18, former Congressman from Illinois Charles S. Dewey counted Turkey as one of the primary areas in the world where the U.S. should aid. Dewey said: “the splendid record of the Turkish Brigade in the Korean fighting may be cited” for grounds on aid to Turkey.²¹⁵ On February 12, 1951, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State George McGhee specifically cited Turkish Brigade’s bravery and said: “look at the brave Turkish Brigade in Korea which would not have been sent had not Turkey been confident.”²¹⁶ Statements such as this one show that Turkish Brigade’s battles in the Korean War indeed had a positive impact on Turkey’s

²¹² *The Guthrie Daily Leader*, November 29, 1950.

²¹³ *The Hobart Democrat-Chief*, November 29, 1950.

²¹⁴ *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, November 30, 1950.

²¹⁵ *Times Herald*, December 18, 1950.

²¹⁶ *Miami Daily News*, February 22, 1951.

outlook, especially in the U.S. After the Battle of Kunu-ri, Turkey was started to be seen as a potential partner of the U.S. This perspective gained more traction when the news of Turkish Brigade's battles reached the U.S. through print media. As noted in the previous chapter, an unintended consequence of Turkey's World War II era neutrality was the loss of credibility among the Western pact. Battle of Kunu-ri should be seen as one of the most important thresholds in repairing Turkey's outlook around the world.

3.3. Battle of Kumyangjang-ni

After the battle of Kunu-ri, Turkish and American military officers started shifting the blame of defeat to each other. Some U.S. officers complained about the problems of miscommunication and posited that Turks were unruly in the sense that they did not follow the orders line-by-line. The Turkish side, on the other hand, complained that it was not adequately supplied throughout the battles.²¹⁷ Turkish Armed Forces tried to solve the issue of miscommunication by sending more translators and personnel who could communicate in English.²¹⁸ After reaching Pyeongyang, Turkish Brigade was firstly sent to Kaesong, then Sosari, an area in between Seoul and Incheon. In Sosari, the brigade was rehabilitated and reinforced by new weapons. On December 13, 1950, the brigade was attached to 25th Infantry

²¹⁷ Stanley Sandler, *The Korean War: No Victors, No Vanquished* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 114.

²¹⁸ "Birleşmiş Milletler Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı'nda Görevli Tercümanlardan Biri Hasta, Diğeri Yaralı Olduğundan Tercüman Gönderilmesi," December 18, 1950, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBI (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

Division of the U.S. Army and ordered to defend Kimpo, a town located around thirty kilometers north of Seoul.

In late December, General Tahsin Yazıcı received an invitation from Korean President Syngman Rhee for a visit to Kyongmudae, the Presidential complex. General Yazıcı, along with Dr. Kamil İdil, Turkey's representative at the UN Commission on Korea, were received by President Syngman Rhee and his wife Francesca Donner Rhee. In his memoir, General Yazıcı recounts the time and suggests that the President and his wife received them like old friends. In the meeting, President Rhee started the conversation with Turkish Brigade's arrival to Pusan and turned his attention to the Battle of Kunu-ri. President Rhee extended his condolences for the soldiers that lost their lives in the battle and said that he followed the battle news all day and prayed for the brigade's safe return. In his memoir, General Yazıcı posits that he sensed the sincerity in the words of President Rhee since, during the conversation, President Rhee's eyes filled with tears.²¹⁹ When teas were served during the conversation, the Turkish side was reminded of Turkey with black breads served alongside their tea. General Yazıcı and Dr. Kamil İdil told the President's wife Francesca Donner Rhee that they were reminded of their villages with this black bread. After hearing their story, Francesca Donner Rhee specifically brought a whole black bread and gave them as a gift. General Yazıcı recounts that even though they wanted to leave earlier, President and her wife did not let them go, and they stayed in Kyongmudae, the Presidential complex, longer than expected.²²⁰

²¹⁹ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 249.

²²⁰ Ibid., 250.

Not long after General Yazıcı's visit to President Rhee, on December 31, 1950, Chinese PVA launched its third Third Phase Offensive aiming to break the lines of the UN forces and forcing them out of the Korean Peninsula by invading Seoul. General Matthew Ridgway who became the commander of the U.S. 8th Army after General Walton Walker's death on December 23, ordered his troops to withdraw from their positions. Turkish Brigade, alongside 25th Infantry Division, retreated all the way to the city of Chonan, about one hundred kilometers south of Seoul. On January 23, 1951, General Ridgway ordered the brigade to reach firstly Ansong, and the Kumyangjang-ni alongside the U.S. 25th Infantry Division.²²¹ The brigade was to participate in the Operation Thunderbolt, aimed to surprise attacking Chinese PVA troops by an unexpected offensive.

²²¹ Ibid., 259.

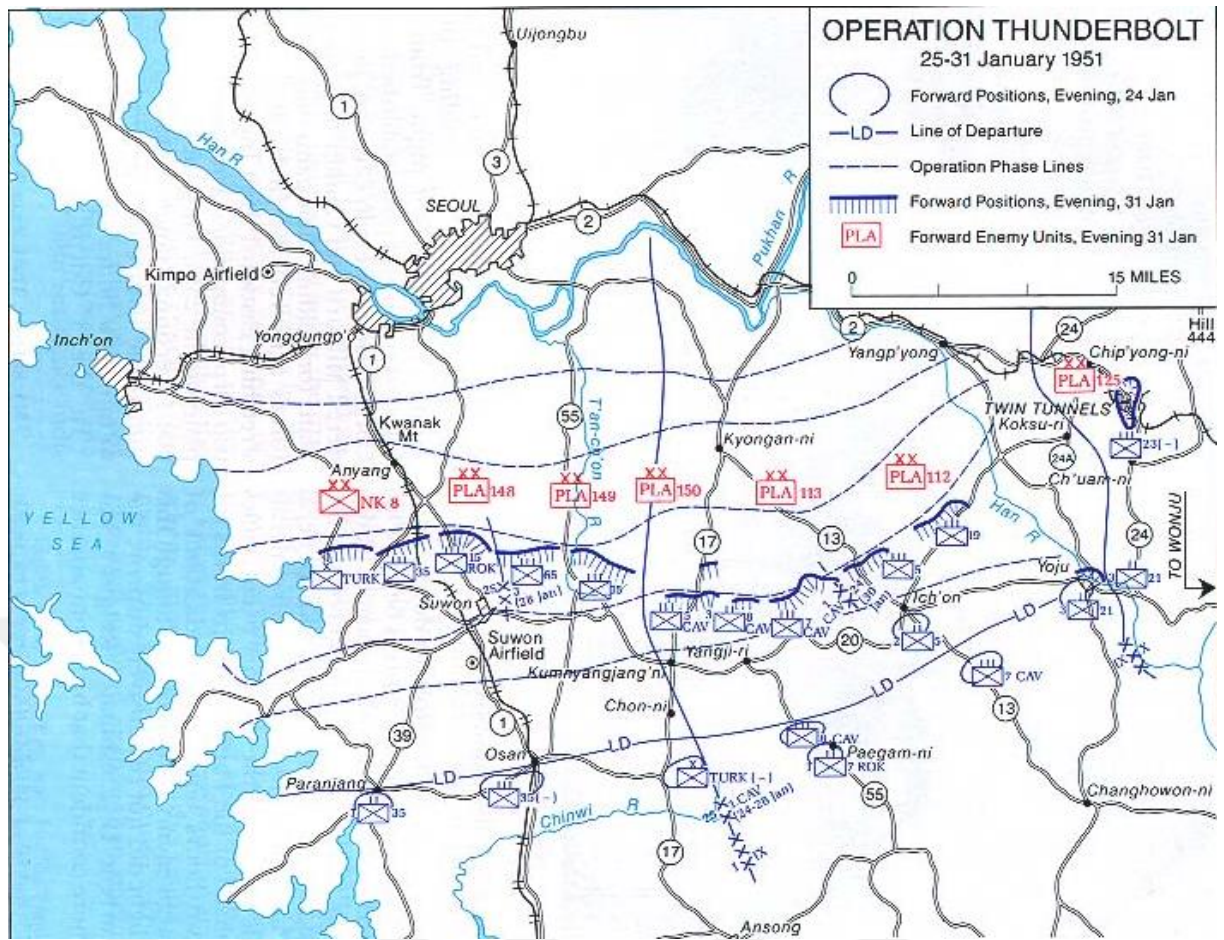


Figure 6. Operation Thunderbolt ²²²

On January 25, 1951, the brigade reached Ansong where it was supposed to attack Kumyangjang-ni. The brigade was to attack with two major units: the left unit was led by Colonel Celal Dora and the right was led by Major Ziya Aydemir. On the right side of the brigade there was 15th Infantry Unit of South Korea and on the left side was 35th U.S. Regiment.²²³ At 7:30 a.m. all of the units attacked altogether to the enemy positions. Both sides of the brigade received stiff resistance from the Chinese PVA units which were around three times the size of the brigade and by midnight, the left unit used cover and concealment effectively and approached the enemy positions.

²²² Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 241.

²²³ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 260.

while two other platoons flanked from the west attacked the enemy leading to the successful capture of Hill 185. The right side of the unit was able to reach to Kumyangjang-ni town's northern side and fought with the Chinese PVA units located in the town.²²⁴ However, in the night, General Yazıcı saw it fit to withdraw the unit to regroup further for an attack next day. In his memoirs, General Yazıcı recounts the time a diary was found on a Chinese PVA soldier belonging to a Turkish sergeant who died in Kunu-ri. The news of the found diary quickly reached all units and they realized that the Chinese units they were fighting against were the same that they fought in Kunu-ri Battle. This, General Yazıcı suggests, created a sense of revenge among all soldiers that fired them up in the ensuing battles.²²⁵

On January 26, the units attacked PVA positions at 7:30 a.m. again. The main aim of the left side of the brigade was to secure the strategic hill number 156 (151 in Korean sources) and the right side was to secure Kumyangjang-ni. The right side of the brigade again faced with stiff resistance and had to attack the enemy with their bayonets and eventually securing the control of Kumyangang-ni. Then, another Chinese PVA resistance occurred in the north eastern part of the occupied town, which was dealt with a new supply of troops. In the left side, the most crucial task was to secure the strategic hill number 156. The battle continued until sunset and the left-hand side of the brigade also had to attack the enemy with their infamous bayonet attacks. At the end of the day, both units of the brigade succeed in reaching their targets.²²⁶ During the three-day battle at Kumyangjang-ni, Turkish Brigade showcased its bravery in hand-to-hand combat and defeated the enemy. While Turkish sources

²²⁴ Ibid., 261–62; Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 243.

²²⁵ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 263.

²²⁶ Ibid., 267–72.

indicate the enemy casualties as more than 1000, the Korean official history claims it was 474 in which 77 in Kumyangjang-ni and 397 in hill number 151 (156 in Turkish sources).²²⁷

After the Kumyangjang-ni Battle, Turkish Brigade's fame reached to all of the UN forces. The brigade was awarded Distinguished Unit Citation signed by President Harry Truman on July 11, 1951, for its heroism in the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni.²²⁸ In addition, the brigade also received Presidential Unit Citation from South Korea on September 1952 for its heroic fighting in the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni.²²⁹ After the end of Kumyangjang-ni Battle, on February 13, the Commander of the UN Forces General Douglas MacArthur visited the brigade to congratulate them for their victory. General MacArthur told General Yazıcı that most UN forces started to call Turkish Brigade as "B.B." At first, General Yazıcı and his right-hand man could not understand what B.B. stood for. Later, General MacArthur told him that it meant bravest of brave

²²⁷ 6.25 전쟁사 제8집 中共軍 총공세과 유엔군의 재반격 [History of the Korean War Volume 8

The Chinese People's Army's General Offensive and the UN Forces' Counterattack] (서울 [Seoul]:

국방부 군사편찬연구소 [Ministry of Defense Institute of Military History], 2011).239-240.

²²⁸ Lippe, "Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War," 97; "25 - 27 Ocak 1951 Tarihleri Arasında Düşman Kuvvetlerine Karşı Girişilen Harekâta Gösterdikleri Fevkalade Cesaret ve Kahramanlık Dolayısıyla Kore Türk Tugayı İle Bağlı Birliklerinin Amerikan Hükûmetince 'Üstün Birlik Madalyası' İle Taltif Edilmesi.," June 21, 1951, 110-9-1-15 / KORE HARBİ (1950-1953), Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive.

²²⁹ "이승만대통령주한터키군사령관 타신야지치 소장훈장수여 [President Syngman Rhee Confers Medal to the Turkish Military Commander in Korea, General Yazıcı], 1951, CET0025566, 국가기록원 National Archives of the Republic of Korea.

and best suited for Turkish Brigade in Korea. Flattered, General Yazıcı thanked General MacArthur for personally visiting the brigade.²³⁰ Kumyangjang-ni battle proved to be a chance for Turkish Brigade to win against the enemy that forced it to withdraw from position to position in Kunu-ri. The brigade used this chance perfectly by fighting against the enemy preparedly and following the military doctrine line-by-line. Therefore, regarding the Kumyangjang-ni Battle, we find very little controversy in comparison to Kunu-ri Battle. The only issue that comes to the fore is regarding the number of casualties on the Chinese side which is generally given as more than 1000 in Turkish sources. However, the Korean official history disputes this number and as mentioned above, claims that the casualties of the enemy was 474. The U.S. official history, on the other hand, does not provide the details of Turkish battles in the whole Operation Thunderbolt.²³¹

Turkish Brigade took part in other big and small-scale battles after Kumyangjang-ni such as Chorwon-Seoul diversion, the Taegyewonni defense, the Barhar-Kumhwa attacks. The first Turkish Brigade that fought in the Battles of Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ni returned back to Turkey on July 15, 1951, and it was replaced by the second Turkish Brigade that arrived in Korea on July 2, 1951. On November 15, 1951, General Tahsin Yazıcı transferred Turkish Brigade's command to Brigadier General Namık Arguç and returned to Turkey. General Yazıcı retired from Turkish Armed Forces with the rank of a major general and entered politics on the side of the Democrat Party. Yazıcı was elected as a member of parliament twice between 1954 to 1960. After the eruption of a coup d'état in 1960, he was arrested and sentenced for

²³⁰ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 281–82.

²³¹ Mossman, *Ebb and Flow*, 243–45.

five years. Later, Yazıcı was released from prison with a pardon.²³² Colonel Celal Dora, the vice- commander of the Turkish Brigade in Korea also entered politics on the side of Republican People's Party in 1957. Controversies surrounded these two commanders of the brigade after their return to Turkey. They both blamed each other for failures in different times during the Korean War. With the publication of their memoirs, both commanders of the brigade replied to different accusations and conveyed the story of Turkish Brigade in Korea from their own perspective.²³³

Even after the ceasefire signed in 1953, Turkey continued sending brigades to Korea in case of the occurrence of a sudden war. Between 1950 to 1966, Turkey sent a total of 12 brigades to Korea. The last brigade returned to Turkey on July 15, 1966. After that point, Turkey decided to send honor guards since the possibility of a hot war in Korea decreased tremendously. Between 1966 and 1971, Turkey sent five honor guard units to Korea. The last of the honor guards returned to Turkey on June 30, 1971. According to the documents in Turkish Armed Forces Archives (ATASE), until 1971, Turkey sent 60,266 soldiers and other personnel to Korea. Turkish Brigades casualties until 1971 is as follows: 721 death, 2147 injured, 234 Prisoners of War (POW), 175 lost.²³⁴

3.4. Conclusion

Turkish Brigade and its Korean War experience is largely positively regarded in mass media records around the world. However, the conclusion of the Korean War

²³² Regarding Yazıcı's career see: Erhan Çiftçi, *Şark Cephesi'nden Kore'ye Bir Türk Generali Tahsin Yazıcı'nın Askerlik Serüveni* (İstanbul: Dergah, 2015).

²³³ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*; Dora, *Kore Savaşında Türkler, 1950-1951*.

²³⁴ "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

and the compilation of official histories of the war written by different nations created issues that were not addressed earlier. One of the primary issues that concerned Turkish Brigade's Korean War experience was the description of the brigade in the U.S. official Korean War history. The U.S. official Korean War history account specifically criticized Turkish Brigade's performance in the Battle of Kunu-ri and suggested that there was a communication issue between the U.S. Army and Turkish Brigade. When American, Korean and Turkish accounts are investigated, it is found that this issue was mainly caused by different military cultures. General Tahsin YAZICI who was educated in the Prussian school was a firm believer of the commander's authority in the field while Americans were expecting him to follow their orders line-by-line. The next major issue regarding Turkish Brigade put forward in the U.S. official history was regarding Turkish Brigade's alleged killing of South Korean soldiers by mistaking them with the Chinese PVA. When Turkish and Korean accounts are investigated, it is found that Turkish Brigade indeed encountered withdrawing South Korean troops but after learning the situation of the battle, the brigade let them go.

After the Kunu-ri Battle, Turkish and American sides shifted blame to each other regarding the causes of the defeat. While Turkish side argued that the Americans did not fully support them, the American commanders suggested that Turks were unruly and they did not follow orders given to them. Even though a common ground was found between Turks and Americans, mutual distrust must have continued until the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni. In this battle, Turkish Brigade fought against Chinese PVA on a hand-to-hand combat. The brigade became famous with its bayonet attacks and successfully secured the area around Kumyangjang-ni. The news of Turkish Brigade's victory in this battle reached even to the Commander of the UN Forces General

Douglas MacArthur who personally visited the brigade and gave them the moniker B.B. (bravest of brave). As noted in the previous chapter, an unintended consequence of Turkey's World War II era neutrality was the loss of credibility among the Western pact. Battle of Kunu-ri should be seen as one of the most important thresholds in repairing Turkey's outlook around the world. The next chapter will cover how Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War changed its internal politics by empowering the growth of pro-Americanism and anti-communism.



CHAPTER 4

FINDING THE FORTUNE STAR IN THE AMERICAN FLAG: THE BIRTH OF PRO-AMERICAN PROGRESSIVISM AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ANTI-COMMUNISM IN TURKEY

America, America,
As long as the world exists,
Turks stand together with you,
In the fight for freedom.
This is a song of friendship,
The echo of brotherhood,
In Korea, we became blood brothers,
The flame of this friendship never fades.
Our determination is to live free,
To establish peace in the world,
For this cause, our flag is always waved,
The love for independence is in our souls...
Celal İnce, *Dostluk Şarkısı*.²³⁵

²³⁵ Celal İnce, *Dostluk Şarkısı*, 1954, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VYs5vwBiGs>.

We know what America wants: a world without war or combat, a world that is dependent on the collective trust of free, equal, and sovereign nations, and a world in which only principles, and agreements reign. Anyone who wishes to live in that kind of world sees their fortune starred in the American flag.

Falih Rıfık Atay²³⁶

The end of World War II created a new world order in comparison to the period before the war. Turkey, a neutral state during World War II, had to make significant decisions related to its foreign policy. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the main reason for Turkey's decision to change its foreign policy track was the Soviet Union's open threats against its territorial integrity. By openly threatening Turkey, the Soviet Union left it with no other choice but to get closer to the Western nations, especially the U.S. and seek security guarantees by the way of becoming a member of NATO.

After the conclusion of World War II, Turkey's President İsmet İnönü was quick to realize that Turkey was far away from the democratic ideals of the Western nations.²³⁷ Therefore, on November 1, 1945, İnönü gave a speech in the Turkish parliament in which he urged for the creation of another party and suggested an election to be held in the year 1947.²³⁸ While İnönü's government employed pro-American politics after the conclusion of World War II, it was not until the election of the Democrat Party that we observe pro-Americanism being

²³⁶ "Missouri," *Ulus*, April 5, 1946.

²³⁷ VanderLippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy*, 5.

²³⁸ *T.B.M.M. Tutanak Dergisi (1 Kasım 1945)* (Ankara: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 1945), 7–9.

reinforced by progressive liberal policies. After the first free election in 1950 and the victory of the Democrat Party, the U.S. perception of Turkey began to change, as it saw Turkey evolving into a full-fledged democracy.²³⁹ Democrat Party's liberal progressive policies especially in the areas of democracy, economy, agriculture, religious freedoms, etc. helped Turkey to create a positive image, especially in the U.S., which helped Turkey's eventual admission into NATO.

While implementing pro-American policies, the newly elected Democrat Party faced criticism from communist sympathizers in Turkey. The most vehement criticism came from the Turkish Peace-lover's Association (*Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti*), an association founded in line with the main principles of Stockholm Appeal.²⁴⁰ After spreading handouts to the public criticizing Turkey's participation in the Korean War, the Peace-lovers Association's activities were forcefully stopped and most of its leaders were sentenced to imprisonment. Peace-lovers Association's activities against Turkey's participation in the Korean War and the government's response marked a turning point in Turkey's official stance against communism. After the closure of the Peace-lovers Association, the Democrat Party passed resolutions that aimed at criminalizing communism and limiting communist ideologies spread in Turkey. To reinforce public opinion against communism, the government supported the activities of the Association for the Struggle with Communism (*Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*) founded to deter the spread of communism in Turkey.

²³⁹ Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to the President *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1263.

²⁴⁰ Doğan Duman, "Kore Savaşı ve Türkiye'de Savaş Karşısı Bir Örgütlenme: Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti," *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 19, no. 39 (2019): 678.

Masuda Hajimu, in his book entitled *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World*, suggested that due to the domestication of the Cold War, various societies across the globe started “purifying” campaigns to solve local disagreements in a forceful way. Masuda Hajimu posited “suppression of counterrevolutionaries in China, the White Terror in Taiwan, the crackdown on “un- Filipino” activities in the Philippines, the Red Purge in Japan, and anti-communist movements in Western societies, such as anti- strike and anti- labor drives in Britain and McCarthyism in the United States” were part of these campaigns to eliminate opposing views in a variety of societies.²⁴¹ This chapter analyzes Turkey’s purifying campaign during the Korean War period. As the previous chapter demonstrated, Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ni Battles not only created “the legend of Turk in Korea,” in the words of Gavin D. Brockett, but they also created a sense of unity among those in Turkey. Therefore, any criticism against the Brigade and its mission in Korea was met with stiff resistance. This resistance eventually turned into a purifying campaign, similar to purifying campaigns in other Korean War participating countries, and purposely left dissenting voices outside of the imagined Turkish community. This chapter suggests that during the Korean War period, pro-American progressivism coupled with anti-communism became a leading ideological perspective in Turkey. Anti-communism was supported by the ruling Democrat Party and it was institutionalized almost as a state ideology. In this respect, Turkey’s experience was typical in comparison to the abovementioned countries that participated in the Korean War.

²⁴¹ Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible*, 7.

4.1. Communist Organizations and Their Activities in Turkey until World War

II

The first communist organizations emerged during World War I in the Ottoman Empire.²⁴² During the late Ottoman Empire, a variety of differing ways to save the Empire was discussed among the intellectual elite. The most prominent of all were Pan-Ottomanism and Pan-Turkism that were aiming to unify the disintegrating empire.²⁴³ Ottoman Empire's crushing defeat in World War I prompted an immediate disillusionment with Western ideals among the intellectuals. Therefore, some of the leading intellectuals decided to turn their face towards the supposed Eastern ideal world. The most prominent among them was Abdürreşid İbrahim who found the ideal Eastern compatible with Muslim values in Imperial Japan and promoted an alliance between Pan-Islamists and Pan-Asianists.²⁴⁴ For some others, the Eastern ideal world was much closer, in Russia where a different kind of order was taking shape with the emergence of the October Revolution in 1907. Starting from 1919, a variety of communism-oriented organizations such as the Green Army Association [*Yeşil Ordu Cemiyeti*], Workers and Peasants Socialist Party of Turkey [*Türkiye İşçi ve Çiftçi*

²⁴² George S. Harris, *The Origins of Communism in Turkey* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1967).

²⁴³ See: Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (California: University of California Press, 2023); Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995).

²⁴⁴ For İbrahim's Eastern ideal see: Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900–1945," in *Japan, Turkey and the World of Islam* (Brill, 2011), 1–27; Kubat, "A Muslim Intellectual in Korea."

Sosyalist Fırkası] were established in Anatolia.²⁴⁵ These organizations supported and helped the cause of the Turkish independence movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. Their main aim as reflected in an official document sent to the General Secretariat of the Russian Communist Party was “to enhance the credibility of the Turkish Communist organization, to benefit from the insurgent movement, and to ensure that the Turkish Communist Organization primarily conducts its organizational work in Turkey legally.”²⁴⁶

While these communist-oriented organizations aimed to benefit from the Turkish independence movement in their ultimate objective of legally establishing a communist party in Turkey, the Turkish independence movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal also planned to use these communist organizations in achieving the ultimate goal of an independent Turkey. The reception of communism as reflected in Turkish parliamentary records was initially quite positive. Besim Atalay, a member of the Turkish parliament suggested: “By walking together with the Bolsheviks we are approaching nearer to Sharia” and some others chanted “to the East” when a notion regarding sending a telegram to thank the Soviet Union for helping the cause of Turkish independence was brought to the parliament.²⁴⁷ Eventually, the Turkish independence movement requested a variety of military equipment, and the Soviet

²⁴⁵ Regarding early development of communist ideology in Turkey see: Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye’de Sol Akımlar* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2009).

²⁴⁶ Erden Akbulut and Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Komünist Partisi’nin Kuruluşu, 1919-1925* (İstanbul: Yordam Kitap, 2020), 82–83.

²⁴⁷ George S. Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement: Shaping Ideology in Atatürk’s Turkey* (Gorgias Press, 2010), 22.

Union supplied most of it.²⁴⁸ In 1921, the Moscow Treaty (*Türkiye-Rusya Muhadenet Ahitnamesi*) aimed at establishing and developing friendly ties between the Turkish independence movement and the Soviet Union was signed. However, this did not mean that both sides completely trusted each other. From the very start of the relationship, the Turkish side was quite suspicious of the aims of the Russians. These suspicions eventually came to the point of ordering the closure of the Soviet-linked communist party and establishing an official communist party. Following the closure of the Soviet-linked communist party, Çerkes Ethem's rebellion was erupted and it was specifically linked to the communist movement in Eskişehir and was harshly suppressed.²⁴⁹

After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the communist movement was outlawed and went mainly underground. Between 1923 and 1934, rare sources can be found in the Presidential Archives of Turkey (formerly Prime Ministerial Archives) regarding the activities of the underground communist movement. These include their publications, how they tried to infiltrate into Turkish Armed Forces, propaganda activities, statements that harshly criticize the ruling Republican People's Party, etc.²⁵⁰ Communist International gathering in 1934 directly affected the activities of the communist movement in Turkey. According to the directives of the Communist International, a united front against fascism was to be established and it would be mainly led by the youth and the women.²⁵¹ After the 1934 directive to form a united

²⁴⁸ Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Moskova Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 2017), 189–95.

²⁴⁹ Harris, *The Communists and the Kadro Movement: Shaping Ideology in Atatürk's Turkey*, 34–37.

²⁵⁰ For example see: "Prime Ministerial Archive of Turkey (BCA) 030.10.0.0, 08.421.19.," 1932.

²⁵¹ Regarding Communist International's 1934 meeting see: Georgi Dimitrov, *Selected Works*, Volume 2 vols. (Sofia: Sofia Press, 1972).

front against fascism, the communist movement in Turkey transformed its activities and became purposely much more visible. A youth organization called Turkey Communist Youth Group was established and organized in fourteen big cities in Turkey. Infiltration activities into the Turkish Armed Forces and various educational institutions were also actively pursued.²⁵²

When World War II started and after a period of time, Turkey increasingly began to depict itself as a neutral power, major ideological formations that were previously harshly suppressed by the state began their perspective campaigns to win over the minds and hearts of Turkey's population. Two major players were pan-Turkists that were actively supported by Nazi Germany and communist/ leftists that were supported by the Soviet Union.²⁵³ Since the Turkish government under the leadership of İsmet İnönü wanted to be seen as a neutral power, it did not block the activities of either party, which created a somewhat freer environment in comparison to the earlier period. The communist side took advantage of the changes in the environment and increased its activities, especially in the literary area. Magazines such as Red Voice (*Kızıl Ses*), New Voice (*Yeni Ses*), Communist Day (*Komünist Gün*), etc. propagated leftist agendas to the Turkish public.

The most prominent leftist publication in this period was *Tan* newspaper. Zekeriya Sertel and Sabiha Sertel were the main opinion writers who focused primarily on Turkey's position during World War II and how it should aim for a more left-

²⁵² Aclan Sayılğan, *Solun 94 Yılı: 1871-1965* (Ankara: Mars Matbaası, 1968), 219–21.

²⁵³ Regarding Nazi Germany's support of pan-Turkists see: İsci, *Turkey and the Soviet Union During World War II*, 123–43.

centered policy.²⁵⁴ Sabiha Sertel's harsh ideological arguments with writers from other newspapers took quite a bit of attention. In one of her pieces, Sabiha Sertel defined democracy as a preparation stage for socialism and suggested that "in an era where the world is transitioning towards a better democracy, and even socialism in many countries, being a socialist or a communist is not a crime. However, being a fascist is a crime."²⁵⁵ In other pieces, criticism against İnönü for being a "one leader" and the Republican People's Party for the destruction of Atatürk's revolutions can be found.²⁵⁶ However, the most prominent criticisms were against fascism and nationalism in Turkey. The nationalists on the other hand labeled Tan newspaper as the epicenter of communism and linked it to Moscow which led Zekeriya Sertel to write a series of pieces denying these accusations.²⁵⁷ Still, the accusations grew and when Stalin's demands on Turkey surfaced, it created anger, especially among nationalists who redirected their anger toward *Tan* newspaper's publishing house on December 4, 1945. The newspaper's editorial office and printing house were destroyed beyond repair.²⁵⁸ From that day onward, the newspaper ceased its existence and Turkey started to change its neutral stance. As it can be deduced from the abovementioned developments, the leftist movement was under immense pressure in Turkey by late 1945. The negative public reaction was mainly due to the Soviet Union's changing approach towards Turkey. As Cold War era began, Turkey's foreign policy choices increasingly started

²⁵⁴ For the couple's tumultuous life see: Zekeriya Sertel, *Hatırladıklarım* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2000); Sabiha Sertel, *Roman Gibi* (İstanbul: Belge, 1982).

²⁵⁵ "Tan Newspaper," June 22, 1945.

²⁵⁶ "Tan Newspaper," August 26, 1945; "Tan Newspaper," September 16, 1945.

²⁵⁷ "Tan Newspaper," October 10, 1945.

²⁵⁸ Erdal Yılmaz, "1945 Tan Gazetesi Baskını," in *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*, accessed December 18, 2023, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/1945-tan-gazetesi-baskini/>.

to be reflected in its internal politics, leaving a very limited space for the leftist movement to maneuver.

4.2. The Birth of Pro-American Progressivism in Turkey

The period after the end of World War II marked a profound change in Turkish foreign policy. As was discussed in the previous chapter, near the end of World War II, Stalin started to propose a change in the Montreux Convention regarding Turkey's rights in the straights at the Yalta Conference.²⁵⁹ After the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union started to take a hostile attitude towards its relations with Turkey. From February 1945 onwards, Soviet media started its anti-Turkish propaganda campaign claiming that Kars and Ardahan were originally Armenian. Some Soviet academicians soon followed suit regarding claims on Kars and Ardahan.²⁶⁰ On February 26, 1945, Soviet Union's Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov informed Selim Sarper, Turkish Ambassador to the Soviet Union, that the Soviets demanded a revision in the clauses of the Montreux Convention regarding Turkey's rights on the Straits.²⁶¹ Soviet Union's hostile foreign policy left very little maneuvering room for the Turkish ruling elite. Therefore, Turkey turned its face towards the Western powers since it had no other choice in the face of a Soviet threat.

Münir Erteğün, Turkey's Ambassador to the U.S., died on November 11, 1944, in Washington. However, since it was wartime, the U.S. was unable to send his remains to Turkey. After the conclusion of World War II, the U.S. State Department

²⁵⁹ Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War*, 178.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

²⁶¹ "Turkish Diplomatic Archive (TDA) 571/ 68095-298075-56," February 26, 1945.

decided to send Erteğün's remains with the battleship *U.S.S. Missouri*, which was the biggest battleship in the U.S. Navy's inventory at the time. Immediately after the State Department announced this issue, Turkish newspapers started to comment that it should be seen as a sign of American support for Turkey. *U.S.S. Missouri* started its journey from New York on March 23, 1946, along with *U.S.S. Providence* and *U.S.S. Power*, which were mainly supporting *U.S.S. Missouri*, and arrived in Turkey on April 5.²⁶² The arrival of *U.S.S. Missouri* was celebrated somewhat like a festival in Turkey. *Son Posta* newspaper's headline read "Welcome" written in English, and the first page displayed Turkish and American flags side by side.²⁶³ *Vakit* newspaper displayed American and Turkish soldiers shaking hands on its first page, and its headline read "Istanbul will Salute Friendly American Nation's Representatives Today."²⁶⁴ Falih Rıfkı Atay, editor-in-chief of *Ulus* newspaper commented in his column:

We know what America wants: a world without war or combat, a world that is dependent on the collective trust of free, equal, and sovereign nations, and a world in which only principles, and agreements reign. Anyone who wishes to live in that kind of world sees their fortune starred in the American flag.²⁶⁵

Nadir Nadi, *Cumhuriyet* newspaper's editor in chief also depicted his perceptions by arguing that "America is the most powerful nation on earth. However, this power does

²⁶² Cüneyt Akalın, "Missouri'nin Ziyaretinin Tarihsel Anlamı," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları*, no. 3 (2003): 5.

²⁶³ "Welcome!," *Son Posta*, April 5, 1946.

²⁶⁴ "Dost Amerikan Milletinin Temsilcilerini İstanbul Bugün Selamlıyacak," *Vakit*, April 5, 1946.

²⁶⁵ "Missouri."

not stem from the greed of aggression, invasion, or domination; rather, it stems from a pure ideal of peace, freedom, and equality of nations.”²⁶⁶ As can be deduced from Atay and Nadi’s commentaries, Turkish news outlets made every effort to depict the U.S. from a positive angle. These efforts quickly bore fruit, and quite a lot of Turkish people started to view the U.S. positively when faced with a hostile Soviet Union. When *U.S.S. Missouri* finally docked at Yenikapı port in Istanbul, thousands of Turkish citizens welcomed its crew. Turkish Postal Organization (PTT) printed a special stamp commemorating the arrival of Missouri. In addition, the Turkish Tobacco Organization (TEKEL) produced a new type of cigarette with *U.S.S. Missouri*’s figure alongside Turkish and American flags at the front of the cigar box. This is an example that shows how much importance Turkey attributed to a small diplomatic gesture such as the voyage of the *U.S.S. Missouri*. The American side was impressed. Regarding the Turkish reception of *U.S.S. Missouri*, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Edwin C. Wilson reported:

It was probably one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the friendliness on the part of a government and people of a foreign country towards US Naval officers and men that has ever occurred in connection with a US Naval visit. This demonstration can be mainly explained by the hope engendered in the Turkish government and people by recent developments in US policy, culminating in the USS Missouri visit, that the US has now established independent policy in the Near and Middle East based on the defense of its interests in the region, these interests being understood as maintenance of peace and security through support of the principles of the UNO. Translated into

²⁶⁶ “Missouri İstanbul’da,” *Cumhuriyet*, April 5, 1946.

specific terms applying to Turkey, the foregoing means to Turks that the US has now decided that its interests in this area require it to oppose any effort by the USSR to destroy Turkey's independence and integrity. This is because if the USSR is allowed to destroy Turkish independence and set up a "friendly" regime here, nothing could then prevent the Soviets from ascending to Suez, and once this occurs, another world conflict becomes inevitable.²⁶⁷

President İnönü's statement about Missouri leaves very little doubt about the aims of the Turkish side: "It would be much better if ships from the American Navy were close to us."²⁶⁸ Ankara had already started to flirt with Washington. Still, Washington needed more convincing to support Turkey militarily, especially after the Turkish neutrality policy in World War II.



²⁶⁷ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946. The Near East and Africa Volume VII 1946*

(Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 822.

²⁶⁸ Akalın, "Missouri'nin Ziyaretinin Tarihsel Anlamı," 6.

Figure 7. *Son Posta* Newspaper's Frontpage²⁶⁹

Turkey's pro-American stance after World War II was by no means a free choice. It was primarily triggered by the Soviet Union's hostile foreign policy towards Turkey, which started even before the conclusion of World War II. At the Potsdam Conference's seventh session, Stalin presented his plan for a change in the Straits regime and a revision to Turkey's eastern border to Churchill.²⁷⁰ Soviet Foreign Ministry sent instructions to the Soviet Socialist Republics of Armenia and Georgia to collect necessary historical evidence regarding the cities Kars and Ardahan which Soviet newspapers would later publish as evidence for the Soviet Union's territorial claims. In addition, Soviet special forces arranged provocations on the Turkish border, such as an explosion of a bridge across the Arax River and an air raid against Turkish soldiers.²⁷¹ These provocations left very little maneuvering room for Turkish policymakers. In the end, Turkey found itself in a position to defend its territorial integrity against the Soviet Union by closely attaching itself to the Western security apparatus.

Since the Soviet Union started an anti-Turkish campaign in its media, a similar anti-Soviet campaign was also started in Turkish media around the same time.²⁷² The newspapers focused primarily on debunking the Soviet Union's territorial claims on Turkish territory and providing its readers with the Soviet Union's negative aspects.

²⁶⁹ *Son Posta*, April 5, 1946.

²⁷⁰ Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Lexington Books, 2011), 89.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁷² Şaban Halis Çalış, "Ontological Concerns, Historical Realities and Conjunctural Developments: Continuity and Change in Turkey's Relations with Russia," *Bilig*, no. 96 (2021): 177–205.

The most popular among them was Ahmet Emin Yalman's articles in various news outlets such as *Vatan* and *Tanin* newspapers. In his articles, Yalman argued that the Soviet Union was the biggest military criminal and that the Soviet Union was repeating the mistakes of Hitler.²⁷³ Anti-Soviet propaganda in Turkey came to the point that the Soviet Embassy in Ankara had to report to Moscow that "Turkish newspapers started attacking Moscow radio in an attempt to discredit it in the eyes of Turks."²⁷⁴

While large segments of Turkish society started to feel increasing enmity towards the Soviet Union and communism, American help in this most desperate situation was appreciated. On March 12, 1947, President Harry S. Truman asked Congress for \$400 million to militarily and economically assist Turkey and Greece. Accordingly, Turkey was assigned \$100 million to modernize its army and support its shattering economy.²⁷⁵ Turkish news outlets welcomed this decision and mainly considered it to be one of the signals that the U.S. was on Turkey's side. Regarding the Truman Doctrine, the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper's headline read: "Truman's Historical Speech, President: Turkey's National Unity is a must for Middle East's Order."²⁷⁶ Therefore, according to this logic, Turkey was the most suitable partner. Newspapers tried to depict Turkey as indispensable for the U.S. strategic policy in the Middle East. When the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement was signed on July 12, 1947, this event was presented as a victory against the Soviet Union and

²⁷³ *Tanin*, January 6, 1946.

²⁷⁴ Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945-1953*, 160.

²⁷⁵ Joseph C. Satterthwaite, "The Truman Doctrine: Turkey," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 401, no. 1 (May 1972): 74–84.

²⁷⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, March 13, 1947.

supported by both the Republican People's Party and the Democrat Party.²⁷⁷ *Ulus* newspaper covered Turkish National Assembly discussions regarding the Agreement and suggested that "National Assembly Showed Support Friendly America."²⁷⁸

Another boost for pro-Americanism in Turkey came with Turkey's inclusion into the Marshall Plan. On July 4, 1948, an Economic Cooperation Agreement was signed between Turkey and the U.S. Based on this agreement, the U.S. provided approximately \$1.3 billion between 1948 to 1959.²⁷⁹ The Marshall's Plan aimed to support the development of Turkey's economy by integrating it into the capitalist market economy. Even though there were some disagreements regarding the usage of the Marshall Plan, the Turkish public was still appreciative of American help.

While Turkey under the leadership of İnönü tried to depict itself as a friendly nation and potential ally to the U.S., it was not at all convincing. The reason was simple: Turkey, after the conclusion of World War II, looked much different from the U.S. and its core ideals. First and foremost, Turkey has been ruled by one party from its foundation. It was not a functioning democracy. İnönü was quick to realize that and declared that Turkey would hold elections in 1945.²⁸⁰ However, the convincing effect of the open vote and secret counting policy of the 1945 elections is debatable. In addition, Turkey has been following a Soviet-style planned economy for quite a long

²⁷⁷ Füsun Türkmen, "Turkish–American Relations: A Challenging Transition," *Turkish Studies* 10, no. 1 (March 2009): 111.

²⁷⁸ *Ulus*, September 2, 1947.

²⁷⁹ Burcu Birinci, "The Marshall Plan in Turkey, a Critical Evaluation of United States' Interests in the Plan and Its Effects on the Republic" (Master's Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2007), 205.

²⁸⁰ VanderLippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy*, 1–5.

time instead of a free-market economy that is propagated by the U.S.²⁸¹ Last but not least, Turkey lacked quite a bit of liberal freedoms such as the freedom of religion. For example, in the early 1930's Arabic adhan was banned and the Turkish version replaced it. Under these circumstances, Turkey's inclusion into the Western political or security apparatus was nothing but a dream. As was discussed in the earlier chapter, this was repeatedly explained to Turkish officials by their American counterparts in a more formal way.

What changed the whole situation was the Democrat Party's unexpected election victory against İnönü's Republican People's Party on May 14, 1950. The U.S. reaction to this development was that of a surprise. State Department was expecting the continuation of İnönü's reign since, after all, that was what happened in more or less all authoritarian regimes at the time. When the news of the Democrat Party's election victory broke, Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb prepared a memorandum to inform President Truman about the details and the potential ramifications of the election. Webb suggested:

In free and orderly elections held in Turkey on May 14, 1950, the Democrat Party, the leading opposition party, scored a sweeping and generally unexpected victory over the Republican People's Party, the party of Atatürk and İnönü, which has been in power since the Republic was founded in 1923. These elections represent the culmination of democratic development in Turkey, a country which in a remarkably short period, has evolved from an absolute monarchy to a multi-party system, under the guidance of a benevolent

²⁸¹ Şevket Pamuk, *Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), 209–23.

dictatorship. Great credit is due to President İnönü who has fostered this development even though it has meant the defeat of his party. The Democrat Party victory is believed to reflect countrywide dissatisfaction with, economic conditions, and reaction against the single-party mentality characterizing many of the leaders of the People's Party... The Democrat Party, however, while admitting the necessity for state enterprise in Turkey, appears to attach more importance to the role of private enterprise and foreign capital in the development of the country than the Peoples' Party and also advocates the right of labor to strike which is now forbidden. The new government is expected to carry out its policies with moderation and caution.²⁸²

As anticipated by James E. Webb, the Democrat Party followed a progressive governing model in comparison to the models implemented by previous governments. Democrat Party's party program especially highlighted its progressive nature. According to the program, the foundational tenets of the party were "ensuring the realization of democracy in the Republic of Turkey broadly and progressively, and the conduct of public policy with a democratic perspective and mindset."²⁸³ Less than a month into the accession of power, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes stated that its government would take necessary measures to allow Arabic adhan, an important step in the path of religious freedoms in the country. This issue will be addressed in detail in the next chapter. Democrat Party's economic policies allowed more foreign

²⁸² *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, 1262–63.

²⁸³ *Demokrat Parti, Parti Programı* (Ankara: Güneş Matbaacılık, 1952), 47.

investment to come into the country and supported the development of private enterprises. The most drastic economic change, however, was in the agriculture sector in which the Democrat Party followed an agriculture-based growth plan. Funds from the Marshall Plan were directed to the modernization of the sector and through a constitutional change, the Democrat Party allowed lands under the ownership of the state to be distributed to small manufacturers and landless peasants. This constitutional change and its widespread usage led to an increase of around %400 in the level of cultivated land during the 1950s.²⁸⁴ Between 1950 and 1954, Turkey achieved a staggering average % of 10 growth.²⁸⁵ During its four-year first term in power, the Democrat Party followed pro-Americanism as left by İnönü's government but also drastically changed the lives of many which eventually helped its electoral victory in 1954.

4.3. Turkish Peace-Lovers Association and Institutionalization of Anti-Communism in Turkey

After the Democrat Party's sweeping victory in the election of 1950, the new government faced its most crucial foreign policy test almost immediately after coming into power. On June 25, 1950, North Korea attacked South Korea and started the Korean War. U.N. Security Council Resolution 83 asked member states to furnish assistance to South Korea so that it could repel North Korea's unprovoked offensive. As is explained in the previous chapter, the government contemplated how to answer this unexpected request from the Security Council. Eventually, the government unanimously decided to answer positively and Turkey became the second country after

²⁸⁴ Pamuk, *Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi*, 227–29.

²⁸⁵ TÜİK, *İstatistiksel Göstergeler, 1923-2008* (Ankara: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2009), 648.

the U.S. to declare that it would furnish the U.N. with land forces. After consultations with the U.S., it was decided that Turkey would at first send 6092 ground troops to Korea.²⁸⁶ Democrat Party announced its decision to the public on July 25, 1950. While the leading figures in the government were in agreement with the need to send ground troops to Korea, nowhere in the decision process did they consider a possible backlash. The unexpected backlash came from the far left-leaning Turkish Peace-lovers Association (*Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti*).

Turkish Peace-lovers Association was founded by Behice Boran, a well-known academic with communist/ socialist tendencies.²⁸⁷ Born to a middle-class family, Boran received her higher education in the U.S. at Michigan University. There, she was introduced to communist/socialist ideology and became a fervent supporter until she died. Boran was suspended from her position at Ankara University in 1948 due to allegations that she was spreading communist ideology.²⁸⁸ According to leading communists Aclan Sayılğan and Nihat Sargın, the Turkish Peace-lovers Association was founded as a regional representative of Stockholm Appeal, a Soviet-backed initiative that aimed at promoting nuclear disarmament and prevention of an atomic war.²⁸⁹ Turkish Peace-lovers Association was founded on May 12, 1950, under the direction of Stockholm Appeal which urged for regional organizations. However, the

²⁸⁶ “Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81.”

²⁸⁷ See: Gökhan Atılğan, *Behice Boran: Öğretim Üyesi, Siyasetçi, Kuramcı* (Ankara: Yordam Kitap, 2019).

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 104–6.

²⁸⁹ Duman, “Kore Savaşı ve Türkiye’de Savaş Karşıtı Bir Örgütlenme: Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti,” 678.

Association's activities started only after Turkey announced its decision to support U.N.-backed South Korea.

Barış (Peace) magazine, which acted as the Turkish Peace-lovers Association's press organ, published a special issue on August 1, 1950, entitled "Where is Korea?" It depicted the Korean War as a foreign event that had nothing to do with Turkey. In a special article entitled "Inside-Story of the Korean War," the magazine gave away the Peace-lovers Association's view regarding the Korean War. According to the article, "As soon as Syngman Rhee took power -in South Korea- he set up a regime of terror... Japanese were given the role of police and English was accepted as the official language." In addition, the article suggested that "there can be no doubt regarding who attacked first. Provoked by the U.S., the Korean War was started by Syngman Rhee's attack on North -Korea-"²⁹⁰ As can be deduced from the abovementioned passages, the Turkish Peace-lovers Association was repeating North Korea and Soviet Union's unfounded claims regarding the Korean War.²⁹¹ Even though the Association claimed to be defending world peace, this criterion was never applied to the Soviet Union, which was openly threatening Turkey's peaceful existence or North Korea, which passed the 38th parallel and started the Korean War. Looking from this perspective,

²⁹⁰ "Kore Savaşının İç Yüzü," *Barış*, August 1, 1950, 4.

²⁹¹ Regarding North Korea and Russia's View of the Korean War see: *자유와 독립을 위한 조선*

인민의 정의의 조국 해방 전쟁 [The Homeland Liberation War for the Justice of the Korean

People's Freedom and Independence] (평양: 조선로동당출판사, 1959); *History of the Just*

Fatherland Liberation War of the Korean People (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981); Katie Stallard, *Dancing on Bones: History and Power in China, Russia and North Korea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 35–49.

and taking into account the Turkish Peace-lovers Association's ties with the Stockholm Appeal, one can argue that the Turkish Peace-Lovers Association was guided under the ideological direction of the Soviet Union.



Figure 8. *Barış* Magazine's Front Page²⁹²

Barış magazine also published the Turkish Peace-lovers Association's telegram to the Turkish National Assembly. In the telegram, the Association argued that the ruling Democrat Party's decision to send troops to Korea through the decree of the Council of Ministers violated the constitution since a declaration of war could only be made by the Turkish National Assembly. In addition, the Association urged Turkey not to "intervene in the armed revolution in Korea this way." Instead, the

²⁹² *Barış*, August 1, 1950.

Association urged the Turkish government to do what India was doing: attempting to find a diplomatic solution.²⁹³

What brought the Turkish Peace-lovers Association national fame, however, was the handout the members distributed on Galata Bridge, Istanbul. The handout read:

No matter how this decision of the Adnan Menderes Government is shown to the Turkish Nation, it means that we joined the war for the sake of American interests. The government made this decision with the force of America... There is no benefit to our future and security in the participation of the war in Korea. Necmeddin Sadak, who until recently served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and followed international affairs, answers those who say, "If we do not send troops to Korea now, America will not help us when we are in trouble": He said: "if America has an interest that day, it will help us, otherwise it will not."²⁹⁴

As it can be inferred from the handout's content, the Turkish Peace-lovers Association tried to depict a situation in which Turkey was being forced by the U.S. to participate in the Korean War. In this way, the Association tried to garner support from the public. However, due to the Soviet Union's threats against Turkey, the Turkish public was more than ever inclined toward the U.S. cause. Still, the Turkish government perceived a sense of threat from the Turkish Peace-lovers Association's

²⁹³ "Türk Barışseverler Cemiyetinin B.M.M. Başkanlığına Çektiği Telgraf," *Barış*, August 1, 1950, 11.

²⁹⁴ Duman, "Kore Savaşı ve Türkiye'de Savaş Karşısı Bir Örgütlenme: Türk Barışseverler Cemiyeti," 680.

open disinformation against Turkey's participation in the Korean War. Here, it should be noted that, until the unfolding of this event, the political atmosphere in Turkey provided a space for leftist ideologies to express their viewpoint. However, after the distribution of handouts against Turkey's participation in the Korean War, the Turkish press and the government directly targeted the Peace-lovers Association to the point of criminalizing their activities. Turkish press took a negative stance while informing its readers about the Association's recent activities. In its coverage, *Cumhuriyet* newspaper suggested that the Association was "speaking from the mouth of Moscow."²⁹⁵ *Vatan* newspaper, on the other hand, characterized the Association's activities as forming a "fake peace front" and argued that the Association was formed as a result of "red agents activities in the country."²⁹⁶ *Zafer*, a newspaper close to the ruling Democrat Party suggested that "the Association's roots were outside" and recapped *Vatan*'s claim that "red agents" inside Turkey supported the foundation of the Turkish Peace-lovers Association.²⁹⁷ Other newspapers also followed suit and criticized the Association for its activities against Turkey's participation in the Korean War and accused members of the Association of being communists.

Leading figures from the government immediately responded to the Turkish Peace-lovers Association's allegations and directly attacked it through the use of mass media. Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü stated:

This is purely communist propaganda and communist press language. Their purpose is to destroy the strength of resistance of nations from within and thus,

²⁹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, July 29, 1950.

²⁹⁶ *Vatan*, July 28, 1950.

²⁹⁷ *Zafer*, July 29, 1950.

they hope to easily hold the population captive in the hands of foreign ideologies. The decision of the government in itself is a decision that will strengthen the possibilities of peace. ... The peace that the association founded by Behice Boran wants is communist. The one that redheads in Korea do by fighting and shedding blood with their sudden raid in Korea. The reason why the association shows us India as an example is simple. Because Indian Prime Minister Nehru appealed to Stalin on the Korean issue and asserted the mediation for admission of Red China to the United Nations.²⁹⁸

Prime Minister Adnan Menderes held a press conference and not only attacked the Turkish Peace-lovers Association but also criticized the former Republican People's Party for letting these kinds of organizations grow in Turkish society:

We know that this association has an international root. We also have complete information about the nature of the peace that these people love. As we are preparing to meet the communist aggression in Korea, we do not doubt that the Turkish public understands communist incitement of the same nature within us, and their verdict will not be mistaken. When we took over the government, we announced an effective fight against communism in the government program. We do not accept anyone or any organization's right to eliminate the freedom of others. For this reason, a party cannot be established in our country to destroy freedom. Our laws govern this. However, some people find the opportunity and hide their intentions and continue their activities in this harmful way in our country. We also observe that the main reason why the fight against them is

²⁹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, July 31, 1950.

still incomplete is that they found themselves, friends and protectors during the reign of the old government. This truth is well-known throughout the country. These circumstances will not be repeated by our government. The government and the party are fully determined on this issue. In this regard, if these people continue to take advantage of deficiencies in our laws, we will surely introduce new provisions and laws, especially during this gentle process, and prevent such acts, which are harmful to the country.²⁹⁹

Democrat Party's reaction to the Peace-lovers Association's activities marks a significant turning point in the Turkish government's stance against communism as an ideology. As mentioned earlier, during and after World War II, the Turkish government largely left the communist movement free in its activities. That is why organizations such as the Peace-lovers Association were founded and actively propagated their ideological stance. However, the Peace-lovers Association's handout distribution can be considered the last straw in the Turkish government's neutral stance against communist activities in Turkey. Soon after Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' press conference, Peace-lovers Association's President Behice Boran, Secretary General Adnan Cemgil, a printer who printed the handouts Cemal Onur, members of the Association Vahdeddin Barut, Osman Fuat Toprakoğlu and those whose names are involved in the distribution of declarations with Reşat Güranan and other members of the society were arrested for committing acts contrary to national interests.³⁰⁰ All of a sudden, the most vehement criticism against Turkey's decision to participate in the

²⁹⁹ *Ayın Tarihi*, July 1950.

³⁰⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, July 29, 1950.

Korean War evaporated. The fate of the Peace-lovers Association became an example for other critics, and the government took some steps to limit the impact of communist ideas in Turkish society.

A red scare wave started in the immediate aftermath of the arrest of Behice Boran and other communist sympathizers. Newspapers reported more or less daily about the arrested communist sympathizers around Turkey. In addition, the ruling government also took steps to eliminate communists from its flanks. For example, on August 11, 1950, the Minister of Education promised to “eliminate all harmful and degenerate members” of the Ministry.³⁰¹ The red scare spread through most of Turkish society, and people started to tip the security forces about suspected communists. Turkey's active participation in the Korean War significantly contributed to the occurrence of this persecution on such a scale.

Democrat Party also changed the legislation regarding the foundation of various associations in Turkey. The change in Turkish Criminal Code number 141 banned any attempt “to establish the dominance of one social class over other social classes, or to eliminate a social class, or to establish societies aimed at overthrowing the established economic or social foundations within the country.” The change in Turkish Criminal Code number 142 aimed to prevent “anyone who engages in propaganda, by any means whatsoever, to destroy or weaken national sentiments.”³⁰² These changes, in essence, aimed at stopping communist ideological propaganda

³⁰¹ *Cumhuriyet*, August 11, 1950.

³⁰² “Türk Ceza Kanununun 141 ve 142 Nci Maddelerinin Değiştirilmesi Hakkında Kanun,” December 3, 1951,

https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc034/kanuntbmmc034/kanuntbmmc03405844.pdf.

activities in Turkey. It is clear that after the purge of the Peace-lovers Association and the change in the Turkish Criminal Code, Turkey became an increasingly hard field to operate for communist ideologues. Therefore, leading leftist/communist ideology sympathizers such as Nazım Hikmet, Sabiha, and Zekeriya Sertel found the political situation in Turkey untenable and immigrated to the Soviet Union during the 1950s. The fact that communist/leftist leading ideologues found no way but to flee the country demonstrates the extent of anti-communism in Turkey during the Korean War.

4.4. Associations for the Struggle with Communism and the Creation of a Common Enemy

While the Turkish government started to openly criticize and took steps to block the growth of communism, it also allowed and supported pro-American right-wing conservative groups to organize anti-communist organizations around Turkey. The Association for the Struggle with Communism (*Komünizmle Mücadele Cemiyeti*) was the primary proponent of the anti-communist movement in Turkey. The Association was openly pro-American and used a mixture of nationalist/religious arguments to legitimize its activities. The first Association for the Struggle with Communism was founded in İstanbul's Beşiktaş district in May 1948.³⁰³ According to its charter, the Association for the Struggle with Communism in İstanbul was founded to fight against communism which aimed to invade the whole world and eliminate all social, religious, and cultural peculiarities of every nation. It argued that fighting against communism was a duty for all nationally conscious people. According to the charter, one of the aims of the Association was to provide financial support to those

³⁰³ Meşe, *Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri: Türk Sağında Antikomünizmin İnşası*, 117–19.

who struggle since “communism causes -ideological- destruction among those who are in financial trouble.”³⁰⁴

Apart from İstanbul, Associations for the Struggle with Communism were organized mainly in Adana, Zonguldak, and İzmir. The selection of Zonguldak and Adana as hubs for Anti-Communist propaganda is quite interesting. At the time, Zonguldak was one of the major centers for coal mining, and Adana was quite an important agriculture center in the southern part of Turkey. These locations were deliberately chosen since workers formed the majority of the society and communist propaganda was quite intense as well. Another interesting aspect of the formation of Associations for the Struggle with Communism was that their activities seemed to be totally in line with the Democrat Party’s efforts at countering communism. It is no surprise that some Democrat Party members, nationalists, and conservatives were quite active in these Associations. For example, parliamentarians from the Democrat Party regularly participated in the so-called condemning communism meetings organized by Associations for the Struggle with Communism across Turkey.³⁰⁵

Through time Associations for the Struggle with Communism garnered quite a lot of influence. These associations were mainly focusing on the common grounds between conservatism and nationalism. The charter of the second Association for the Struggle with Communism suggested that it aimed to “fight against communism through reinforcing the elements that allow us to live as a nation To achieve this goal,

³⁰⁴ *Komünizmle Mücadele Cemiyeti Ana Tüzüğü* (İskenderun: Özvatan Basımevi, 1948), 7.

³⁰⁵ Democrat Party’s Ankara parliamentarians participated in the condemning communism meeting organized by Association for the Struggle with Communism in Ulus, Ankara and the opening speech was given by parliamentarian Hamit Şevket İnce “Cumhuriyet,” August 27, 1951.

we will devote ourselves to our history, nation, and Allah.”³⁰⁶ *Mücadele* (Struggle) magazine, the official magazine of the Association regularly used religious references such as “believers of Allah! Unite in the struggle against communism.” Communism was criticized since they did not believe in Allah, had no family values, etc. *Mücadele* often warned its readers to “be wary of communism which threatens Turkey.”³⁰⁷



Figure 9. *Mücadele* Magazines³⁰⁸

Associations for the Struggle with Communism not only used religion and nationalism but also used leading politicians such as Atatürk, the founder of Turkey to garner public support. Every *Mücadele* magazine started with the alleged words of Atatürk: “It should not be forgotten that the biggest enemy of the Turkish world is communism. It should be crushed wherever it is seen.” There are differing views regarding the authenticity of the abovementioned sentence. However, there is no doubt

³⁰⁶ Mehmet Güldal, “Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye'deki Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri” (Master’s Thesis, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2018), 111.

³⁰⁷ *Mücadele*, no. 10 (n.d.).

³⁰⁸ *Mücadele*, Vol I, Issue 10.

that the members of the Associations for the Struggle with Communism truly believed it to be Atatürk's words since they widely used it. However, Atatürk was not the only politician the Associations looked upon. Association for the Struggle with Communism's popularity came to the level that Cemal Gürsel, the fourth President of Turkey, became the honorary president of the İzmir branch of the Association for the Struggle with Communism on June 23, 1965. Gürsel explained his reasons for becoming an honorary president in *Mücadele* magazine:

Until now, I have not taken part in any association. But I gladly accept -this invitation-. Instead of fighting communism with laws, it is much more effective to oppose it with the help of these associations. Because the law punishes, but these associations illuminate and enlighten the minds and consciousness of people. Therefore, this is more important.³⁰⁹

After Gürsel's acceptance of the honorary presidency, Association for the Struggle with Communism's membership grew steadfastly. However, Gürsel did not contend with only becoming an honorary president and he provided 200.000 *lira* from Turkey's reserves so that the Associations could be able to fight sufficiently against communism.³¹⁰ Was this the only governmental support that the Associations received? Perhaps not. As is known, the U.S. was pouring a lot of money to fight against communism during the Cold War. When we closely analyze publications of Associations for the Struggle with Communism in Turkey, we can indeed find traces of American support. For example, Struggle Against Communism (*Komünizmle*

³⁰⁹ *Mücadele* 2, no. 4 (n.d.).

³¹⁰ Güldal, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye'deki Komünizmle Mücadele Dernekleri," 115.

Mücadele) journal published in 1952 by the İstanbul Anti-Communist Association thanked the “İstanbul American news bureau for providing every convenience and help” during the publication process of the journal.³¹¹ In addition, upon closely scrutinizing Unity for the Struggle Against Communism (*Komünizmle Mücadele Birliği*) journal published in Istanbul between 1952 and 1957, we come across quite a lot of U.S.-based company advertisements.³¹² This documentary evidence suggests that the U.S. in one way or another was supporting Associations for the Struggle with Communism in Turkey as well.

Associations for the Struggle with Communism continued to disseminate anti-communist propaganda throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Political parties such as the Justice Party and Republican Villagers Nation Party openly supported it for their political purposes. After the announcement of the 1971 Turkish military memorandum, Associations for the Struggle with Communism were officially closed due to their “extreme activities.”³¹³ The official closing of these Associations also marked the end of an era in which the Turkish government officially supported the activities of Associations for the Struggle with Communism. Due to the negative effects of the Cyprus War on U.S.-Turkey relations, leftist elements gained quite a lot of traction while pro-Americanism became simply unpopular among many.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter focused primarily on two major changes in Turkish political history. The first one is regarding the pro-American pivot that Turkey employed in its

³¹¹ *Komünizmle Mücadele*, 1952.

³¹² *Komünizmle Mücadele Birliği*, 1952.

³¹³ *Milliyet*, April 28, 1971.

foreign policy after the conclusion of World War II. This chapter argues that after the election of the Democrat Party in 1950, the pro-American pivot in Turkish foreign policy was intensified with progressive liberal policies such as Turkey's transition to democracy, Turkey's market economy orientation, agricultural transformation, and improvements in terms of religious freedoms. These changes, along with the strengthening of pro-Americanism in the Turkish political sphere changed Turkey's outlook from an authoritarian country to a newly minted pro-American democracy. Turkey's new image, predominantly constructed by the Democrat Party helped it to be on good terms with Western democracies that shared the same values. The Korean War and Turkey's participation in it intensified and accelerated this process.

The second major change, in essence, was the result of the implementation of the first major change: pro-American progressivism, which was in contrast to the ideals put forward by communism. When the Democrat Party announced its decision to intervene in the Korean War on the side of the U.S., the Turkish Peace-lovers Association, decided to oppose it and inform the public of the reasons for their decision. Here, the Democrat Party criminalized the actions of the Turkish Peace-lovers Association by imprisoning the leaders of the association through legislative changes. Furthermore, Associations for the Struggle with Communism were outright supported to limit the spread of communist ideology in Turkey. This chapter analyzed Turkey's purifying campaign during the Korean War period. It showed that during the Korean War period, pro-American progressivism coupled with anti-communism became a leading ideological force in Turkey. Anti-communism was supported by the ruling Democrat Party and it was institutionalized almost as a state ideology. While Turkey's purifying campaign influenced and gained support among some in the society, the purifying campaign alone was not enough to garner the support of the majority of the

population. The next chapter will cover how the Democrat Party used Islam as a unifying tool to gain the support of the majority of the population. In doing so, the Democrat Party also revived Islam in Turkey's political and public sphere.



CHAPTER 5

KOREAN WAR AND THE REVIVAL OF ISLAM IN TURKEY'S POLITICAL SPHERE

We wanted to cut off our connection with the past for a while. That's when we
closed the tombs

Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver³¹⁴

The path to Korea is the path of God. Sending soldiers to Korea is a movement that falls under the command and obligation of the Word of God and aligns with its requirements. Participation in the Korean operation is a sacred duty like jihad and holy war. Therefore, those who pass away in Korea are martyrs. The survivors are honorable veterans who have served in the path of God. Being a member of the United Nations is both legitimate and necessary. Remaining outside would be a dangerous negligence, leaving ourselves to chance. Coming together to stop evil and to promote goodness in the world is a requirement and command of God. According to our religion, Muslims cannot remain indifferent to any oppression and injustice inflicted upon any group at any point in the world. Such indifference is tantamount to indifference to God.

The Religious and Political Need for Our Participation in the Korea Defense³¹⁵

³¹⁴ C.H.P. *Yedinci Kurultay Tutanağı* (Ankara, 1948), 457–58.

³¹⁵ İlahiyat Kültür Telifler Basım and Yayım Kurumu, “Kore Savunmasına Katılmamızda Dini ve Siyasi Zaruret,” *Acun Basımevi, İstanbul*, 1950, 50–51.

Korean War started with North Korea's unprovoked attack on South Korea on June 25, 1950. United Nations Security Council recommended all of its member states assist South Korea in repelling the unprovoked attack with its 84th resolution. Turkey was the second country to respond positively to this resolution after the U.S. committed 6092 soldiers to be sent to Korea.³¹⁶ Even though the decision to send troops to Korea was taken by a small ruling elite clique, rallying the whole nation behind this cause proved to be a difficult task from the start. The Republican People's Party supported the decision, but it protested the way the decision was taken. In its statement, Republican Peoples Party urged the ruling Democrat Party to listen to the opposition's views before making important decisions.³¹⁷ Two independent parliamentarians argued that the ruling Democrat Party violated the constitution since the right to send troops outside the nation's territory required the parliament's consent, which the Democrat Party bypassed by taking the decision unilaterally through the Council of Minister's Meeting.³¹⁸ Even though most of the widely read press supported the Democrat Party's decision, there were some critiques from the start as well. For example, an anonymous editorial entitled "The Decision is Wrong" harshly criticized the Democrat Party's decision and urged the government to focus primarily on protecting Turkey's borders.³¹⁹ The most well-known opposition against the Democrat Party's decision to send troops to Korea came from the far-left Peace-lovers

³¹⁶ "Fuad Köprülü'nün Lie'ye Gönderdiği Telgraf," *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*, July 26, 1950; "Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive, 110-9-1-15, 152-0-81."

³¹⁷ "CHP'den DP'nin Kararına Tepkiler," *Ulus Newspaper*, July 27, 1950.

³¹⁸ *Türk Parlamento Tarihi TBMM IX. Dönem 1950-1954* (Ankara: TBMM Vakfı Yayınları, 1999), 600-602.

³¹⁹ "Karar Hatalıdır," *Yeni Sabah Newspaper*, July 27, 1950.

Association that appealed to the parliament to undo the decision and circulated a declaration that openly called Turkish citizens to oppose sending troops to Korea.³²⁰

To get ahead of the criticisms and rally the nation toward supporting the decision to send troops to Korea, the ruling Democrat Party used various propaganda tactics. The usage of radio catches one's attention during the early phase of the decision. Adnan Menderes, the Prime Minister, specifically directed his press conferences to be aired on radio. Later, Ankara Radio created specific programs that were devoted solely to the Korean War, such as: "NATO Hour, Marshall Hour, UN Hour, Korean War Hour," etc.³²¹ In addition, propaganda posters depicting Turkish soldiers in Korea were distributed throughout Turkey with the help of the Turkish Postal Service (PTT). Even though the abovementioned efforts were helpful, they failed to make the far-reaching impact that was necessary. Crucially, the ruling DP decided to also employ religious propaganda to rally the public around the decision to send troops to Korea.

After Turkey decided to send land troops to Korea, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, which was connected to the Prime Ministry, started a nationwide campaign to depict the Korean War as a holy war similar to the ones the Ottoman Empire fought. One of the main reasons why the Turkish government felt obligated to take this path was the growing criticism against the decision to send soldiers to Korea. Since the Directorate of Religious Affairs had personnel all over the country, it was relatively

³²⁰For the full declaration see:

http://bianet.org/files/doc_files/000/000/135/original/T%C3%9CRK_BARI%C5%9ESEVERLER_CE_M%C4%B0YET%C4%B0_B%C4%B0LD%C4%B0R%C4%B0S%C4%B0-28_TEMMUZ_1950.doc

³²¹ Esra İlkey Keloğlu-İşler and Serdar Analı, "Voice of America'dan Ankara Radyosu'na: Kore Savaşı'nda Kamuoyu Oluşturma.," *İletişim*, no. 22 (2015).

easy to spread the propaganda regarding the Korean War. Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, spearheaded the effort to depict the Korean War as a religious war. In his public speeches, Akseki used dichotomies similar to “us and them” and claimed that the Korean War was waged against infidels represented by communists. Nicholas Danforth, in his book entitled *The Remaking of Republican Turkey Memory and Modernity, since the Fall of the Ottoman Empire*, challenged the arguments that Islam’s revival was due to anti-communism or Turkey’s intention to become a NATO ally and suggested that starting from late Republican People’s Party era until early Democrat Party period, there was a shared national vision, which was thought to be one of the central tenets of Turkish modernity.³²² Accordingly, Democrat Party’s Islam friendly policies such as lifting of Arabic adhan ban, expanding preacher schools etc. were a continuation of reforms implemented by Atatürk.³²³ This chapter disputes this perspective and suggests that the Korean War was the most crucial catalyst that helped the revival of Islam in Turkey. The war reinforced the process of the revival of Islam in Turkey’s socio-political sphere by allowing religious leaders to come to the fore of the process of manufacturing consent. Therefore, the Korean War, eased the process of the revival of Islam in Turkish public sphere.

³²² Danforth, *Remaking of Republican Turkey*, 195.

³²³ Ibid., 212.

5.1. Efforts to Alleviate the Impact of Islam in Turkey's Public Domain

Islam was the traditional basis of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey's predecessor.³²⁴ Ottoman Empire used Islam as the foundational tenet of the empire and created what Ahmet Yaşar Ocak called “official Ottoman religious ideology” from their interpretation of the religion.³²⁵ This official ideology determined the process of the Ottoman Empire's rule over its territories and legitimized its activities on those territories. When explaining the official Ottoman religious ideology, Bernard Lewis suggested “the first characteristic of Turkish Islam...is...the extent to which Turks have effaced themselves to Islam.”³²⁶ When the Ottoman Empire lost World War I and its territories began to be invaded by the Allied powers, Islam was used as a unifying power and it helped garner public support for the Turkish War of Independence. Major documents of the war stressed the protection of the rights of Anatolia's Muslim majority and defined one of the major aims of the war as the emancipation of the Caliph and sultanate.³²⁷ Turkish national anthem written by Mehmet Akif Ersoy also highlighted the importance of Islam for the public as “these adhans, whose statements are the fundamentals of my religion, May their sound prevail across my eternal

³²⁴ Bernard Lewis, “The Ottoman Empire and Its Aftermath,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 1 (January 1980): 1, doi:10.1177/002200948001500103.

³²⁵ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, “XV-XVI. Yüzyıllarda Osmanlı Resmi Dini İdeolojisi ve Buna Muhalefet Problemi,” *İslami Araştırmalar* 4, no. 3 (July 1990): 191.

³²⁶ Bernard Lewis, “Turkey: Westernization,” in *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, ed. Gustave E. Von Grunebaum (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 326.

³²⁷ *Milli Egemenlik Belgeleri* (Ankara: TBMM Kütüphanesi ve Arşiv Hizmetleri Başkanlığı, 2015), 20–30; Gotthard Jäschke, “Nationalismus Und Religion Im Türkischen Befreiungskriege,” *Die Welt Des Islams*, 1936, 57.

homeland.”³²⁸ On October 29, 1923, along with the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey, the Turkish National Assembly changed some of the laws in Turkey’s first constitution (*Teşkilât-ı Esâsiye Kanunu*). The second article of Turkey’s foundational constitution read “The religion of the Turkish State is Islam. Its official language is Turkish.”³²⁹

After the foundation of the Republic, we observe an increasing volume of laws passed by the Turkish National Assembly that specifically targeted to limit Islam’s social and political influence. The primary reason for these changes was to pave the way for the reforms Mustafa Kemal had in mind. The first major step was the abolishment of the caliphate which was seen as the most crucial representative of the official Ottoman religious ideology. On March 3, 1924, the Turkish national assembly passed a law that stated “the caliphate has been abolished.”³³⁰ Two other laws passed the same day. One of them abolished the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations and founded the Directorate of Religious Affairs.³³¹ The other one banned madrasas, the traditional Islamic religious institutions, and ordered their administration to be handed

³²⁸ İhsan Yılmaz, *Creating the Desired Citizen: Ideology, State and Islam in Turkey* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), 273.

³²⁹ *Kabulünün 100. Yılında 1921 Teşkilat-ı Esâsiye Kanunu Belgeler* (Ankara: TBMM Kütüphane ve Arşiv Hizmetleri Başkanlığı, 2021), 372–73.

³³⁰ “Hilafetin İlgasına ve Hanedanı Osmaninin Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Memaliki Haricine Çıkarılmasına Dair Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023, <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.431.pdf>.

³³¹ “Şerîye ve Evkaf ve Erkânı Harbiye Umumiye Vekâletlerinin İlgasına Dair Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023, https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc002/kanuntbmmc002/kanuntbmmc00200429.pdf.

to the Ministry of Education.³³² On April 10, 1928, a change was made in the abovementioned second article of the constitution. The change read “The official language of the Turkish state is Turkish; its capital city is Ankara.”³³³ With this change in its constitution, Turkey no longer had an official religion. Another law introduced in late 1928 declared Turkey’s transition to the Latin alphabet.³³⁴ In late 1934, a law that specifically regulated when and where religious attire was supposed to be used was passed.³³⁵ Around nine years after the latest change in the second article of the constitution was made on February 5, 1937, that read, “The Republic of Turkey is a Republic with nationalist, populist, statist, secular, and reformist characteristics. Its official language is Turkish. Its capital city is Ankara.”³³⁶ Another major change in the representation of Islam in the public space occurred when adhan’s Arabic version was replaced by the Turkish version upon the Directorate of Religious Affairs’ notice in

³³² “Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu,” accessed October 8, 2023,

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.3.430.pdf>.

³³³ “Teşkilâtı Esasiye Kanununun Bazı Maddelerini Muaddil Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023,

https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc006/kanuntbmmc006/kanuntbmmc00601222.pdf.

³³⁴ “Türk Harflerinin Kabul ve Tatbiki Hakkında Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023,

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.3.1353.pdf>.

³³⁵ “Bazı Kisvelerin Giyilemeyeceğine Dair Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023,

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.3.2596.pdf>.

³³⁶ “Teşkilâtı Esasiye Kanununun Bazı Maddelerinin Değiştirilmesine Dair Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023,

https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc017/kanuntbmmc017/kanuntbmmc01703115.pdf.

1932.³³⁷ In 1941, the law prohibiting the usage of Arabic adhan was passed in the parliament.³³⁸

As Şerif Mardin explained based on the center-periphery model, the reforms after the foundation of Turkey created two types of citizens. The first type in the center represented the urban, modern, secular elite while the second type in the periphery represented rural, traditional, religious villagers.³³⁹ M. Hakan Yavuz categorized these groups as “white Turks” and “black Turks.” About the abovementioned reforms M. Hakan Yavuz argued:

The face of the Republican-imagined Turkish identity has always been Islam. As might be expected, this has created a sense of deep existential unease. Islam, excluded from the construction of Turkish identity, has come back to haunt the Kemalist imagination and disturb the Republican peace of mind. It has created fear in the minds of the guardians of Kemalism and their view, has polarized society into separate secular/Kemalist and Muslim/Islamic factions. The *raison d'être* of the Kemalist establishment is to keep the Islamic "other" at bay, and this struggle is what unifies the Kemalist military-bureaucratic establishment... Modern Turkey, like a transgendered body with the soul of one gender in the body of another, is in constant tension. White Turks regard themselves as Western souls in the body of a foreign socio-political landscape. Its body is native to the land, but its soul is alien. The soul of white Turkey and its Kemalist identity is in constant pain and conflict with the national body

³³⁷ “Türkçe Ezan Okunacak,” *Son Posta*, January 30, 1932.

³³⁸ “4055 Nolu Kanun,” accessed October 8, 2023, <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/4827.pdf>.

³³⁹ Şerif Mardin, “Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?,” *Daedalus*, 1973, 169–90.

politic of Turkey Each side has its discursive field. For the white Turks, identity is based on the ideology of militant anti-religious secularism, known in this case as Kemalism, or laicism. Islam, on the other hand, has provided the vernacular for the marginalized majority, who were excluded from the top-down transformation. While secular discourse seeks to empower the state, Islamism empowers the excluded black Turks and Kurds. The black Turks and Kurds use a shared religious tradition to mobilize against exclusion and marginalization by the white Turks, and they use other strategies, techniques, and ideas to enhance their consciousness against the hegemony of Kemalism.³⁴⁰

According to Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, efforts such as plans to change the inner structure of the mosques, performing the Turkish version of the adhan, Turkish Quran recitations alongside *incest* instrument were examples of the state's efforts to shape the cultural domain of Islam according to its preferences and “the state, by intervening in the realm of belief and culture, endeavored to transform Islam into a sort of 'Westernized Islam,' in a sense, striving to develop a form of 'reformed and civilized' Islam befitting a Westernized Turkey.”³⁴¹ Documents from Turkish Archives show that the ban on the Arabic version of adhan created the most amount of backlash among those living in the periphery. People across various cities violated the law and recited the Arabic version of adhan for which they were punished.³⁴² This backlash came to

³⁴⁰ M. Hakan Yavuz, “Cleansing Islam from the Public Sphere,” *Journal of International Affairs*, 2000, 25–26.

³⁴¹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Türkler, Türkiye ve İslam* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1999), 119.

³⁴² For example, see: BCA 409001, 590381, CBA 2/11-1, 5015, CBA 2/11-23, 5437-149.

the point that two individuals recited Arabic adhan inside the Turkish National Assembly.³⁴³ To prevent the backlash from getting out of hand, the government sternly punished the violators.

The government also kept a close eye on notable Muslim intellectuals in and outside of Turkey. For example, Abdürreşid İbrahim who advocated for Pan-Asianism led by Japan to ally with Pan-Islamism, was closely monitored and warned that he would be expatriated from Turkish citizenship if he “continued his harmful activities against Turkey.”³⁴⁴ In the end, Abdürreşid İbrahim left Turkey for Japan where he led a group of Tatar Muslims advocating for Japan’s leadership in the Muslim world. Turkish government closely followed this group’s actions in Japan and took steps to block Japan’s attempts to revive the caliphate in Central Asia.³⁴⁵ While Turkey’s attempts at blocking an alliance between Pan-Asianism represented by Japan and Pan-Islamism represented by figures such as Abdürreşid İbrahim requires a separate study, the attempts to redefine traditional Muslim networks in Turkey paved the way for the development of largely underground religious networks such as *Nurcus* and *Naqshibendis*.³⁴⁶

5.2. Republican People’s Party’s Backpedaling on Some Reforms

For most of its rule as one party, the Republican People’s Party generally did not feel the urgency to check the needs and expectations of the majority of people

³⁴³ *Cumhuriyet*, February 5, 1949.

³⁴⁴ Caner Arabacı, “Abdürreşid İbrahim’in Türkiye Vatandaşlığı Serüveni ve Konya Hayatı,” *Akademik Sayfalar* 14, no. 19 (June 11, 2014): 296; Kubat, “A Muslim Intellectual in Korea.”

³⁴⁵ A. Merthan Dündar, “Sehzade Abdülkerim Efendi’nin Japonya’nın Destegiyle Türkistan İmparatoru Olma Meselesi Üzerine,” *Bilig* 66 (2013): 82.

³⁴⁶ Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 133–35.

living in the periphery. Reforms were initiated in a manner of top-down and most people were not expected to contribute but to follow the reforms as is. Since most of the ordinary people did not take part in the making of most of the reforms, there occurred a certain distance between the government ruled by the Republican People's Party and ordinary people who were mostly living in the periphery. The government did little to reduce this distance until the late 1940s when Turkey slowly approached its first democratic election and the Republican People's Party had to take into account the needs and expectations of those living in the periphery.³⁴⁷

One of the first proposals for change came in the Republican People's Party's seventh general assembly. Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, a member of parliament from İstanbul, suggested a partial opening of tombs. Tanrıöver recounted an incident when a foreign diplomat requested to visit the tomb of Suleiman the Magnificent and was taken aback after hearing the ban. Tanrıöver explained to the diplomat "We wanted to cut off our connection with the past for a while, that's why we closed the tombs." Then, Tanrıöver gave another example, this time from a villager who told him "In our village... there's only one imam left. We're keeping vigil over the deceased... If you don't provide us with an imam and a preacher, we'll bury our dead like carcasses for the dogs."³⁴⁸ As a former diplomat, Tanrıöver provided examples from different countries and highlighted the need for religious education to counter the threat of communism. To do that, he suggested the opening of Islamic divinity student schools and university-level divinity faculties. As the example of Tanrıöver suggests, Islam was perceived as a weapon against the spread of communism in Turkey.

³⁴⁷ VanderLippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy*, 1–5.

³⁴⁸ C.H.P. *Yedinci Kurultay Tutanağı*, 457–58.

Vehbi Dayıbaş, a member of parliament from Sinop, argued that adding religious education to the primary school's curriculum would be quite welcome. Abdulkadir Güney, a member of parliament from Çorum, agreed but added the necessity of establishing religious education institutions to train future religious leaders.³⁴⁹ However, the hardliners in the party did not tolerate these suggestions and strongly criticized the abovementioned members of parliament. Cemil Barlas, a member of parliament from Gaziantep, specifically criticized Tanrıöver for his stance on secularism and suggested that “the last refuge of the Turkish nation is neither in religion nor in faith.”³⁵⁰ Yusuf Ziya Kösemen, a member of parliament representing Kocaeli warned that secularism constituted the foundation of unity in Anatolia.³⁵¹ Even though there were some members of parliament from the Republican People's Party such as Tanrıöver and Güney who highlighted the need to revise reforms related to Islam's public presence, the majority of the members of parliament refused to make any concessions regarding previously implemented reforms. This shows that any revision proposal regarding Islam's public presence would face staunch criticism within Republican People's Party on the grounds that these attempts damage the secular nature of the country. In addition, as Kösemen suggested, there were those who thought that any attempt to increase the presence of Islam in public sphere would jeopardize the unity of the country.

Despite the abovementioned staunch criticism, as the election neared, the Republican People's Party took steps to formalize some of the points suggested by its members of parliament. The first such step came in the area of religious training

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 448–50.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 459–60.

³⁵¹ Ibid., 461–62.

institutions. While the original proposal was to open Islamic divinity student schools, the Republican People's Party polished it and opened Islamic divinity cram schools (*imam-hatip kursları*) in early 1949.³⁵² In addition, the party took steps to restart religious education in universities by opening a divinity faculty at Ankara University. Minister of Education Tahsin Banguoğlu explained the main aim of opening this faculty as:

Today, our universities form a community of knowledge within our society. The institution we aim to establish will be following the conditions of the new civilized and social life that Atatürk's revolution has brought us, and it will be worthy of the identity of our new society. This is why, just as in all Western countries and some Eastern countries, we also intend to establish an institution providing theological knowledge within the community of the university...³⁵³

Last but not least, the Republican People's Party changed the 677th amendment of the constitution regarding the ban on tombs and added the following sentence “The mausoleums belonging to Turkish dignitaries and those possessing significant artistic value may be opened to the public by the Ministry of Culture. Officials and staff necessary for their maintenance shall be appointed.”³⁵⁴ Passing these laws must have been very hard especially on the side of secularism lard liners in the party. However, we must note that it was the Democrat Party whose constant requests on the side of

³⁵² BCA, 030-01-0000,42-251-17-1.

³⁵³ *T.B.M.M. Tutanak Dergisi, Yüz Birinci Birleşim*, vol. 20, 1949, 282–83.

³⁵⁴ “Tekke ve Zaviyelerle Türbelerin Seddine ve Türbedarlıklar İle Bir Takım Unvanların Men ve İlgasına Dair Kanun,” accessed October 14, 2023, <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.3.677.pdf>.

religious freedoms that forced the Republican People's Party to give in and take the abovementioned steps.

The Republican People's Party's last steps in the area of religious freedoms did not seem to be very convincing for the electorate. In the first democratic election of Turkey's history on May 14, 1950, the people of Turkey voted out the Republican People's Party and instead elected the Democrat Party. One of the first political actions of the Democrat Party after its election was to lift the ban on the Arabic version of adhan. On May 16, 1950, based on a motion made by the Democrat Party, the Turkish National Assembly lifted the ban on the Arabic version of adhan.³⁵⁵ However, even lifting the ban on the Arabic version of adhan was not fully supported within the Democrat Party. After the motion was passed in the National Assembly, it was sent to President Celal Bayar for his approval. However, it seems that President Bayar hesitated approving the notion which caused Prime Minister Adnan Menderes to tender his resignation. After observing Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' steadfast reaction, President Celal Bayar approved the notion and a small-scale crisis was averted.³⁵⁶ As this example clearly shows, there was a staunch resistance within the Turkish political spectrum against religious freedom policies that would help the revival of Islam in public sphere. However, as we will see in the following pages, the Korean War changed the whole situation and eased the revival of Islam in Turkey's political and public sphere by decreasing the tone of criticisms. The ban on the Arabic version of adhan was generally considered as one of the major tenets of one-party dominance and the lifting of it certainly helped improve the popularity of the Democrat

³⁵⁵ *T.B.M.M. Tutanak Dergisi, Dokuzuncu Birleşim.*, vol. 1, 1950, 181.

³⁵⁶ Zakir Avşar and Ayşe Elif Emre Kaya, "Arapça Ezan Yasağı ve Kaldırılması," *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 33, no. 95 (2017): 150–51.

Party. However, the lifting of this ban can only be considered as the very first step on the way of the revival of Islam in Turkey's socio-political sphere. The outbreak of the Korean War reinforced this process by allowing religious leaders to come to the fore of the process of manufacturing consent.

5.3. Revival of Islam in Turkey during the Korean War

The Turkish government, under the leadership of the Democrat Party, announced its decision to send troops to Korea on July 25, 1950. However, immediately after the announcement, the Democrat Party struggled to justify the need to send troops to Korea. As it was mentioned in the earlier chapter, a wave of criticism mainly coming from the Peace-lovers Association did not help either. Since the start of the Korean War was probably the first time an ordinary person living in Turkey heard of the word Korea, a phrase was floated mainly by the Peace-lovers Association: “where is Korea?”³⁵⁷ This phrase was specifically used to highlight the disconnectedness between Turkey and Korea and to give the sense that the Korean War had nothing to do with Turkey. To overcome this problem, the Democrat Party decided to use religion to manufacture consent among the widest possible amount of people in Turkey. Therefore, the Directorate of Religious Affairs suddenly came to the fore of the discussion. After its foundation in 1924, the Directorate of Religious Affairs was largely neglected. The budget allocation to the directorate was quite low. This issue was brought forward in the budget allocation discussion of 1949 by Sinan Tekelioğlu, a member of parliament from Adana. He argued:

³⁵⁷ *Bariş*, August 1, 1950.

My request from the government, due to us being a country where 98% of the population is Muslim, is to assign a position suitable for the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, which is responsible for managing and maintaining the unique religion of our country, corresponding to the honor of the Turkish nation. This is a duty for all of us because we are Members of Parliament. I don't know, what is the salary of the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs?... Now my request from the government, of course, this year the budget has been passed, but I reiterate the importance of ensuring that these *muftis* can make a living and receive a salary in accordance with state laws for the coming year. I request this on behalf of the Turkish nation. They aren't even provided with a room server. What does it mean, my friends, to be the *mufti* of a province, of a district? I don't know if there's any need to say it anymore. Then there are the preachers and the *muezzins*; the salary given to them is at most 15-20 lira. When the poor *muezzin* goes up the minaret, he feels his legs trembling. Last year, my friends here proposed with fifty signatures and their salaries were increased by five lira each. I wonder, in this year's budget, if will we see even a small increase for them! As for the current situation, they receive a full salary of 15 - 20 lira. What does this signify? What do they do outside? They are busy all day sweeping and cleaning the mosque and its surroundings. I once again request to the government. Let's rectify this situation. For the sake of Allah, let's rectify their situation and provide them with sufficient money so that they can climb the minaret with strength and recite with power.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁸ T.B.M.M. Tutanak Dergisi, *Ellinci Birleşim*, vol. 50, 1949, 448–49.

Directorate of Religious Affairs which had an obscure role in the state affairs until then was brought forward to the very front line by the Democrat Party. Precisely a month after the announcement of the decision to send ground troops to Korea, Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, held a press conference. In his rather long speech, Akseki primarily attacked communism. We should remember that at the time, the Peace-lovers Association was primarily associated with communism in the Turkish political sphere and his press conference must be viewed from this perspective. Akseki suggested “Islam categorically rejects both the ideology and the implementation of communism in any form. The greatest weapon against communism is faith and spiritual strength. It is impossible for a true believer to reconcile with communist ideas and actions.”³⁵⁹ Here, Akseki made a distinction between faithful people and “faithless communists.” This essential distinction seems to be important since it can be observed in other contexts as well.

While Akseki continued the argument that Islam and communism stood on opposite sides of the ideological domain, a booklet entitled “The Political and Religious Necessity of Our Participation in the Korean War [*Kore Savaşına Katılmamızın Dini ve Siyasi Zarureti*]” was published. The booklet was prepared mainly to address the religious concerns of the public regarding the Korean War and Turkey’s participation. The main aim was to persuade the public that the Korean War was similar to any other war Turks fought in the past. The booklet suggested that becoming a martyr (*şehid*) in the Korean War had a “holy meaning” since every believer had a duty to rescue the oppressed from oppression. Crucially, the booklet put

³⁵⁹ “Cumhuriyet,” August 26, 1950, 1.

forward the idea that participation in the Korean War was the same as participating in jihad and *ghaza*:

The path to Korea is the path of God. Sending soldiers to Korea is a movement that falls under the command and obligation of the Word of God and aligns with its requirements. Participation in the Korean operation is a sacred duty like jihad and holy war. Therefore, those who pass away in Korea are martyrs. The survivors are honorable veterans who have served in the path of God. Being a member of the United Nations is both legitimate and necessary. Remaining outside would be a dangerous negligence, leaving ourselves open to hazards. Coming together to stop the evil and promote goodness in the world is a requirement and command of God. According to our religion, Muslims cannot remain indifferent to any oppression and injustice inflicted upon any group at any point in the world. Such indifference is tantamount to indifference to God.³⁶⁰

Here, it is clear that the Directorate of Religious Affairs tried to portray the Korean War as just another holy war that the Turks used to fight. This attempt was vital since most Turks did not know anything about Korea, and there were rumors that the Korean War could not be counted as a holy war. Turkish Brigade's commander Tahsin Yazıcı recalled that a soldier told him about a rumor that Korean War soldiers would not be counted as a martyr.³⁶¹ This very question haunted some Korean War

³⁶⁰ Basım and Kurumu, "Kore Savunmasına Katılmamızda Dini ve Siyasi Zaruret," 50–51.

³⁶¹ Yazıcı, *Kore Hatıralarım*, 62–63.

veterans until they died. In an oral history account, a Korean War veteran disclosed his emotions:

They call us ghazi... I think about myself. Am I a ghazi? The enemy we fought was not our enemy... Who did we help? The ones we helped were infidels, and the ones we fought against were infidels as well... When I get more sick, I mean when death comes near me, I cannot help but think about this. Am I a ghazi?³⁶²

Some intellectuals followed suit in depicting the Korean War as primarily a religious war. For example, Ahmet Yanşar, in his book entitled “The Cause of Korea [*Kore’de Görülen Dava*]” suggests that the Korean War was the continuation of Godly causes providing examples from previous prophets and like the Korean War to the problems faced by them.³⁶³ While there was an effort to create a religious atmosphere around the Korean War, most oral history accounts reveal that the first brigade participants had a vague understanding of why they had to fight in Korea. Eliminating this vagueness was one of the critical tasks of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Some soldiers recalled that local *muftis* and *imams* persuaded them to participate in the Korean War.³⁶⁴ When the news of the first fallen soldiers reached Turkey, large religious ceremonies (*mevlid*) to commemorate them were prepared. On December 26,

³⁶² Nazan Kahraman, “Kore Gazileri Üzerine Nitel Bir Çalışma: Merzifonlu Kore Gazileri,” *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches* 15, no. 25 (2020): 3617–18.

³⁶³ Ahmet Yanşar, *Kore’de Görülen Dava* (İstanbul: Güven Basımevi, 1951).

³⁶⁴ Ahmet Oğuz, “Sözlü Tarih Çerçevesinde Kore Gazilerinin Kore Savaşıyla İlgili Hatıraları,” 2012, 127.

1950, a large *mevlid* with the participation of more than 70.000 people was held at İstanbul's Süleymaniye mosque. On the right-hand side of the pulpit, a poem by Mehmed Akif Ersoy was hanged which read "Oh martyr, oh martyr's son, do not ask a grave from me, The Prophet stands with arms wide open for you." People from all walks of life participated in this ceremony which was broadcast live in İstanbul and Ankara through radio. The ceremony started with a sermon given by the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs Ahmet Hamdi Akseki. In line with his previous statements, Akseki immediately declared the religious nature of the Korean War:

This war [the Korean War] is not an ordinary war. This [war] is a clash between truth and lie, between people of the book and those who do not have the book, between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Our history is full of heroism shown on the path of truth, on the path of Allah... Thanks be to Allah a hundred thousand times that the valorous spirit in the hearts of our people has not died. From now on, if I die for the cause of truth, I will be a martyr, and if I live, I will be a veteran; both ranks are the highest in the eyes of Allah... All the sins of a martyr are forgiven, and they will intercede for seventy of their relatives.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁵ *Yeni Sabah*, December 11, 1950.



Figure 10. Ahmet Hamdi Akseki (middle) in Süleymaniye Mosque³⁶⁶

Akseki then mentioned the earlier wars Ottomans fought, such as the Battle of Sırp Sındığı and World War I. He aimed to make a connection between the Korean War and the earlier wars of the Ottoman Empire. Here, Akseki openly contributed to the portrayal of the Korean War as a holy war which is more or less similar to Ottoman *ghaza*. Not everyone welcomed this religious depiction of the Korean War. For example, Hikmet Bayur, a member of parliament from Manisa, openly attacked Akseki for violating the secular nature of the Republic by defining the war in religious terms. Bayur suggested that in a secular state, a state employee cannot talk in a way that would prioritize one religion against the other. Bayur also argued that Akseki's

³⁶⁶ *Yeni Sabah*, December 11, 1950.

language would fuel fanaticism which was mostly stopped with the reforms implemented during foundation of Turkey.³⁶⁷ Bayur's criticism reflects the displeasure felt by some in Turkish political domain. Most of those who shared Bayur's criticism were worried that these activities could inflict damages to reforms passed during one party era. However, there were also those who perceived the religious nature of the Korean War as given since common people needed some convincement regarding their participation in a foreign conflict. During the Korean War, it is observed that Islamist magazines such as *Sebilürreşad* and *Büyük Doğu* directly confronted ideas criticizing the religious nature of the Korean War. For instance, Bayur's abovementioned criticism against Akseki was met with stiff criticism. Mehmet Raif Ogan, an author who wrote both for *Sebilürreşad* and *Büyük Doğu* published a number of articles directly criticizing Bayur. Ogan gave the example of the U.S. which was using religious concepts in its fight against communism in Korea and suggested that according to the logic of Bayur, the U.S. could not be considered as a secular state. In the end, Ogan argued "the war that is taking place inside and outside our borders is definitely a holy jihad (*mukaddes cihat*). Those who survive it are *gazi* and those who die in it are *şehids*. May God bestow his *şefaat* upon us."³⁶⁸ During the Korean War, the criticism against the religious tone of the war came from a very limited number of politicians such as Bayur but it was met with a stiff resistance mainly by Islamist magazines. Politicians especially from the Democrat Party stayed away from making any comments similar to those of Bayur. Instead, they publicly joined *mevlids* and other nationalist gatherings in support of the Korean War. This author could not locate any members of parliament from either the Democrat Party or the Republican People's

³⁶⁷ *Sebilürreşad*, January 1951.

³⁶⁸ Solomonovich, *The Korean War*, 80.

Party who publicly criticized the religious nature of the Korean War during the period when Turkey sent a brigade to Korea. This clearly shows that there was a major shift in the political perception of Islam from the period directly before the Korean War when any attempts at improving the public and political influence of Islam were met with stiff political resistance.

During and after the Korean War, Islamic magazines vigorously supported the religious nature of the Korean War. For instance, in the magazine *İslam'ın Nuru* (The Light of Islam), an article written by Ömer Kirazoğlu, an engineer, posited that Turkish soldiers became martyrs in the Korean War, and because of their service in Korea, everyone in Turkey could live their religious life freely, and freedom at all levels was finally achieved in Turkey.³⁶⁹ This idea of fighting for the freedom of religion and religious values is also quite common in magazines. For instance, an article published in the *Hareket* (Movement) magazine suggested “Those who fell martyr in Korea are dying for an idea that history has bestowed upon them. This idea is the idea of the century: rebellion against absolute materialism that disregards human spiritual values!” The author added “in Korea, we defend the sacred rights of humanity against those who regard matter as God.”³⁷⁰ As it can be deduced from the abovementioned passages in the magazines with Islamic tendencies, the Korean War was depicted as a religious war similar to the Ottoman Empire’s *ghazas*. However, solely focusing on published magazines during the Korean War period would fall short of providing a complete picture of what the general public thought about the war.

³⁶⁹ *İslamın Nuru*, May, 1952, 35-36.

³⁷⁰ *Hareket*, March, 1953, 16.

After the Directorate of Religious Affairs and Akseki's efforts in portraying the Korean War as a holy war, we find evidence that the Korean War was indeed perceived as a religious war by some segments of the Turkish society. To better analyze the Turkish general public's sentiments towards the Korean War, an investigation into the literature regarding the Korean War is necessary. Most of the poems written about the Korean War carry a religious tone in one way or the other. Mehmet Ateş, a minstrel, wrote a poem regarding the Korean War entitled "33's Korean War Legend." In this poem, Ateş depicted the Turkish Brigade fighting a holy war and getting help from prominent Muslim and Turkish leaders in history:

Ali grids himself with his sword...

Hamza is coming riding his horse...

We started the war with cries of Allah Allah...

Hasan, Huseyin, Hanifi, Halid bin Velid,

Ali is coming with his Zulfiqar

Ebubekir, Omer, his holiness Osman [is coming]

His Holiness Moses is coming carrying his staff...³⁷¹

Just like Akseki, Ateş also mentions the dichotomy between truth (*hak*) and lie (*batıl*): "Turk's road is towards the truth (*hak*). Our chests are full of faith, and belief [of Islam]." ³⁷² Another prominent topic in the literature regarding the Korean War is

³⁷¹ Özge Erdağı, "Kore Harbi'nin Yazılı ve Sözlü Türk Halk Edebiyatı'na Yansıması," 2007, 58.

³⁷² Ibid., 56.

regarding communism. Most of the Korean War literature treats communists as infidels who need to be punished by Muslim Turks in the name of God. For example, Hamit Özpolat's poem entitled "Mother's Adress to Son" depicts a rightful holy war against communist infidels:

Drive the red dogs into the sea...

That red dog's death is near

With your bayonet Mehmedim.

My son never forget the Balkan Wars

Most of Russia's dirty tricks

Crack their bones down

Finish the communist race Mehmedim.³⁷³

Written from the mouth of a mother to his son fighting in the Korean War, this poem reflects the mindset of some in Turkish society during the Korean War. Communists are seen as infidels to fight and defeat. We should also recall that during the 1950s, the anti-Russian sentiment was relatively high due to Stalin's demands on Turkey after the end of World War II. Özpolat seems to have reflected Turks previous experiences with Russians as cases to get lessons from in his poem. Especially, the mention of the Balkan Wars is interesting. It seems that the Korean War was perceived as an opportunity to get the revenge for the Balkan Wars' defeat. The theme of infidel

³⁷³ Ibid., 59–60.

communists versus Muslim Turks appears to be the most prominent in Korean War-related literature.

Hüseyin Özgül is another poet who wrote about communism and Turkey's religious duty, if you will, in the Korean War. The title of his poem is "World is Against Stalin." This poem also uses the dichotomies used in the abovementioned poems. However, its harsh tone towards Russia differentiates it from the others:

The world feels helpless because of the Russians

They spread evil with their tongues

Everyone complains about Stalin

Please wipe his body away from the world God!

They have no religion, honor, or decency...

Turks are loved by Allah

All of them are lovers of Muhammed

Know that Sharia is eternal you evils!³⁷⁴

This poem's apparent hostility towards Russia is clear. One may rightfully ask why Turks were focused this much on Russia instead of China or North Korea. The answer seems to lie in the first-hand experience of Turks. Since the majority of the public had very little to no knowledge of China or North Korea, which were the main enemies of the Turkish Brigade, the public seems to have turned their attention towards

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 77–78.

their old and well-known enemy Russia.³⁷⁵ Another explanation could be that the Turkish public perceived the Chinese and North Koreans as mere puppets of Russia. Therefore, most of their attention was directed toward Russians. In addition, Özgül's poem situates Turks as faithful Muslims who, in one way or the other, protect sharia by waging war against infidels.

The perception that the Turkish Brigade was fighting against communist infidels and defending Islam was common among the soldiers as well. However, we should note that the official Turkish military documents focus more on nationalism than Islam. When we look at the official gazette of the Brigade entitled "North Star," we find some shreds of evidence of religion's prominence. For example, Sergeant Mustafa Kemal Bayram's poem entitled "To Turkish Ghazis" was written as an open call to the soldiers who fought in the Korean War. In his poem, Bayram depicts a world waiting for good news from the Turkish Brigade:

All of the world expects victory from you

Shout out Allah Allah with all of your faith...

You should make the world tremble with the voice of Allah Allah!³⁷⁶

The sense of fighting for the sake of Islam is much more apparent in oral history accounts instead in official Turkish Armed Forces documents. It seems to be an intentional choice by the Armed Forces to focus more on nationalism. However, some

³⁷⁵ See: Çağdaş Üngör, "Perceptions of China in the Turkish Korean War Narratives," *Turkish Studies* 7, no. 3 (September 2006): 405–20, doi:10.1080/14683840600891075.

³⁷⁶ "Turkish Armed Forces ATASE Archive 154-9-9-2a," 1950.

Korean War veterans openly suggest that one of the main reasons why they went to Korea was to defend Islam against infidels. For example, Korean War veteran C.S. argued that “the Korean War was a war against infidels. I went there to defend my country and religion.”³⁷⁷ Another Korean War veteran O.E., agreed with the abovementioned statement and suggested that “there was no choice but to fight against Communists. Korean War can also be seen as a war against infidels (*imansız*) which was done by our predecessors such as the Ottoman Empire and Seljuk Empire.”³⁷⁸

As can be deduced from the abovementioned sources, during the process of manufacturing consent for the Korean War, Islam came to the fore with its traditional justifications for war such as *ghaza*, which was widely used in the Ottoman Empire. Islam’s place in the socio-political domain was extremely limited during the Republican People’s Party era. However, in the late 1940’s the Republican People’s Party realized the expectations of the majority and gave some concessions in terms of religious freedoms in Turkey. These concessions themselves prove that a grassroots movement was in the making. Democrat Party’s election and the lifting of the ban on adhan’s Arabic version was a win for this movement. However, there was a need for an excuse to return Islam to its rightful place. This excuse came with the Korean War and the grassroots movement used it extremely well to find a way around strict secularism. Since the Korean War was depicted as a religious war, the people’s need for religion and religious services became apparent which allowed some changes that widened the influence of Islam in Turkey. For example, Islamic divinity cram schools were turned into official Islamic divinity schools in 1951. In addition, elective and

³⁷⁷ Full names of the veterans are not provided due to their request. “Oral History Interview with Korean War Veteran C.S.,” May 17, 2017.

³⁷⁸ “Oral History Interview with O.E.,” May 17, 2017.

mandatory religion classes were inserted into the curriculum of official schools. Last but not least, Quran reading programs were introduced on the official radios. These changes show that the revival of Islam was already in the making but the outbreak of the Korean War accelerated and eased the process.

5.4. Conclusion

After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, a series of reforms were made to limit the social and political influence of Islam especially in the public domain. These reforms in the end created two separate types of people: those living in the center and those living in the periphery. The difference between these two types was quite high and the necessity to communicate was not given from the get-go. However, after the end of World War II, Turkey decided to become a democratic country and therefore, those living in the center were forced to listen to the needs and expectations of those living in the periphery. Then, one of the most important issues that came to the fore was the issue of religious freedoms. The ruling Republican People's Party made some concessions to please the electorate to no avail.

On May 14, 1950, the Democrat Party won the first democratic election in Turkey's history. Afterward, it followed policies in line with protecting religious freedoms. After the outbreak of the Korean War, the Democrat Party decided to intervene militarily. Shortly after the announcement of this decision, a variety of people from all walks of life started criticizing this decision. Even though the Democrat Party tried to answer criticisms targeting the decision logically, their answers had little or no impact on the ordinary people who most probably heard about Korea a month ago through the news. The task of persuading the general public proved

difficult, primarily because of the dissenting opinions that criticized the Korean War's legitimacy. Faced with these challenges, the Democrat Party decided to employ the Directorate of Religious Affairs to garner ordinary people's support for Turkey's intervention in the Korean War. The Directorate of Religious Affairs used dichotomies to simply convey the reason why Turkey should partake in the Korean War. The Directorate portrayed the Korean War as a holy war, similar to previous Ottoman *ghazas*, and urged the people to participate. The conflict brought Turkey into the global Cold War and forced the country to reevaluate its role in the world, leading to a greater emphasis on Islam as a source of national pride and identity. This chapter argued that the outbreak of the Korean War reinforced the process of the revival of Islam in Turkey's socio-political sphere by allowing religious leaders to come to the fore of the process of manufacturing consent. The outbreak of the Korean War facilitated the implementation of religious freedom policies, mitigating potential resistance. However, the Korean War automatically brought about some religious freedoms, as the war was portrayed as a holy war, and public religious commemorations were deemed necessary to manufacture consent. Through these commemorations, Islam was revived in the political and public sphere during the Korean War period in Turkey. The revival of Islam in Turkey's political and public sphere was not the only social change the Korean War brought about. Turkey's participation in the Korean War prompted a reconsideration of what constituted being a Turk. The next chapter will cover how Turkey's participation in the Korean War caused a structural change for Turkish nationalism at the time.

CHAPTER 6

THE KOREAN WAR AND THE BIRTH OF INTERNATIONALIST NATIONALISM IN TURKEY

My dear mother,
I will go to Korea
God turns me into a lion
Let no spark jump here
Turk extinguishes the fire in its place
... my lion your name, like mine, is Turkish
You never lag in rushing to help
...Helping the weak is our honor
In every campaign, we have faith in Allah...³⁷⁹
Korean War Song

At this moment, the Turkish War Brigade has started battling the Reds in Korea. The brave Mehmetçik, who fights for world peace and the security of freedom, is actively engaged in combat against the archenemy of Turkish history and a disgraceful regime for civilization, thousands of kilometers away from the homeland. May Allah be their helper. Go, dear lions of the

³⁷⁹ “Kore Savaşı Türküsü,” 1951, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SR0h954auK4>.

Turks, go. Defeat the enemies with the help of friends, and make the enemies miserable.

...

March on...like a sultan, enter Korea, leave Korea behind

Let hundreds of Koreans witness the conquest, from the history of your ancestors.³⁸⁰

Ahmet Kabakçı

Turkish nationalism appeared on the world stage from the late 19th century to the early 20th century when Greeks, Armenians, and ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire began to assert their own national identities. This caused a disintegration in the Ottoman millet system which was one of the cornerstones of the Ottoman order.³⁸¹ In the late 19th century, Turkish nationalism, based on the idea of a "Turkish" race, emerged, gaining popularity among Ottoman intellectuals from the 1890s onwards. After the Ottoman Empire's defeat in the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, many Ottoman prominent intellectuals believed the empire was on the verge of collapse. Therefore, the idea that Turks have great kinship based on race and the Turkic language, from the Balkans to Siberia, became much more appealing and quickly turned into a central ideology of the Young Turks.³⁸²

As part of its efforts to modernize and adopt Western values, the newly established Republic of Turkey embarked on its version of nationalism. The official

³⁸⁰ Ahmet Kabakçı, "Kore Mücahitlerine," *Komünizme Karşı Mücadele*, November 1, 1950, 7.

³⁸¹ See: Svetoslav Stefanov, "Millet System in the Ottoman Empire-Example for Oppression or for Tolerance?," *Bulgarian Historical Review/Revue Bulgare d'Histoire*, no. 2–3 (1997): 138–42; Sener Akturk, "Persistence of the Islamic Millet as an Ottoman Legacy: Mono-Religious and Anti-Ethnic Definition of Turkish Nationhood," *Middle Eastern Studies* 45, no. 6 (November 2009): 893–909.

³⁸² See: Masami Arai, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, vol. 43 (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

form of nationalism created after the foundation of Turkey mainly focused on the origins and importance of the Turkish nation throughout history. The official narrative aimed to create a nationalist discourse that aligned with Western forms of nationalism prevalent at the time. The official form of nationalism especially shied away from the Ottoman tradition and highlighted the Central Asian origins of Turks.³⁸³ A pan-Turkish version of nationalism emerged during World War II and adopted the Central Asian origins but it shunned Islam as the religion of Turks. Both of these theoretical constructions of nationalism had little input from the ordinary people.

The outbreak of the Korean War provided for the first time a chance for ordinary people to be involved in the ongoing nation-building process. Korean War served as the first practical test of Turkish nationalism carried out by the people themselves, revealing that the practical manifestation of Turkish nationalism was not confined to either official nationalism or the pan-Turkist version that was put forth by intellectuals. Instead, it emerged as a multifaceted identity that transcended theoretical boundaries, incorporating elements from both the theoretical versions of nationalism. Glenda Sluga, in her book entitled *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, argued that “in the twentieth century the international and national shadowed each other as the object or method of political ambitions.”³⁸⁴ Unlike the general tendency to perceive nationalism and internationalism as opposite ends, Glenda Sluga showed that the relationship between the two was much more intertwined and that they mostly complemented each other’s growth throughout the twentieth century. Building upon

³⁸³ Şaban Çaliş, “Pan-Turkism and Europeanism: A Note on Turkey’s ‘pro-German Neutrality’ during the Second World War,” *Central Asian Survey* 16, no. 1 (March 1997): 103–14.

³⁸⁴ Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 157.

Sluga's argument, this chapter suggests that the Korean War was an important turning point in the development of Turkish nationalism. It acted as a crucial catalyst, propelling Turkish nationalism into a more internationalist phase. Additionally, the new form of nationalism that emerged mainly because of Turkey's intervention in the Korean War not only incorporated elements from both official and pan-Turkist nationalisms but also embraced aspects that had been intentionally omitted in the construction of both nationalisms, such as the Ottoman tradition and Islam.

6.1. The Formation of the Official Version of Turkish Nationalism

Turkish nationalism gained traction after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. Atatürk who was deeply influenced by the works of Ziya Gökalp formed a country based on the prominence of the Turkish nation. After the foundation of the Republic, a lot of work was undertaken to theorize the new nationalism which was supposed to be one of the pillars of the Republic. In 1924, an article was added to the constitution that read "In terms of citizenship, the (Turkish) term applies to the population of Turkey without distinction of religion and race."³⁸⁵ However, the task of laying the foundations of a particular Turkish national identity different from earlier periods was started with school books such as Turkish History (*Türkiye Tarihi*), the Mainlines of Turkish History (*Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları Medhal*), and Secondary School History (*Ortamektep İçin Tarih*).³⁸⁶ One of the main topics we observe in these books is an outright criticism of the Ottoman Empire and its traditions. For example,

³⁸⁵ "1924 Anayasası | Anayasa Mahkemesi," accessed September 19, 2023,

<https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/oncelki-anayasalar/1924-anayasasi/>.

³⁸⁶ Ersanlı, *İktidar ve Tarih: Türkiye'de "Resmi Tarih" Tezinin Oluşumu (1929-1937)*, 103–38.

in the Turkish History book it was suggested that in the previous period, Turks lived in an age where the notion of race had disappeared.³⁸⁷ In the Mainlines of Turkish History book, Ottoman political history was totally bypassed.³⁸⁸ In the Secondary School History book, the Ottoman Empire was defined as the “sick man of Europe” and the narrative described the Empire as a foreign, non-Turkish entity.³⁸⁹

After the publishing of the abovementioned official history books, the government organized Turkish History Congresses to better formulate the origins and foundations of the Turkish nation. As a result, the Turkish History Thesis which became the official doctrine during the Atatürk period was introduced. The thesis insisted that Turks were progenitors of all notable races in the world and situated the Turkish race as one of the major races in history.³⁹⁰ The thesis was introduced to the public during the First Turkish Historical Congress in 1932 and was influenced by the book *The Mainlines of Turkish History (Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları)* published by the Committee for the Study of the Turkish History of the Turkish Historical Society. The thesis was a way to create a new national identity for the Turkish people and to legitimize Turkish nationalism. Afet İnan, a sociologist by training and one of the main proponents of the Turkish History Thesis announced her findings of the civilized Turkish past at the Turkish Historical Congress:

The Turkish children of today know and will make known that they are not from a tribe with 400 tents; they are a nation of high capacity, which comes

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 118–19.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 125.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 132–33.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 227.

from a 10,000-year Aryan, civilized, elevated race. (Prolonged applause.) Also, we must understand this well, that our ancient Hittites, our ancestors were the first native inhabitants and rulers of our present homeland. Tens of thousands of years ago they made this their true home in place of their motherland. They brought the center of Turkdom from the Altay to Anatolia and Thrace. The solid foundations of the Turkish Republic are in the unshakable rocks of this true homeland. (Applause.) The true heir of this blessed land, the fearless guardian of the Turkish republic are today's young and vigorous children of that great, elevated, noble Turkish nation. We are! (Prolonged applause.)³⁹¹

While the Turkish Historical Thesis was developing and becoming the official state narrative, a language theory in the name of Sun and Language Theory (*Güneş-Dil Teorisi*) was also introduced by the Turkish Language Association. The Sun Language Theory proposed that all human languages are descendants of one proto-Turkic primal language.³⁹² As is obvious, both the Turkish Historical Thesis and Sun and Language Theory were part of the efforts to construct a new homogenous Turkish nation. In another school textbook entitled *Civilized Information (Medeni Bilgiler)* Afet İnan suggested that “there is no nation on Earth that is bigger, older, and cleaner than the Turkish nation.” Accordingly, the language of the nation was Turkish and the

³⁹¹ Clive Foss, “Kemal Atatürk: Giving a New Nation a New History,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 5 (2014): 832–33.

³⁹² İlker Aytürk, “Turkish Linguists against the West: The Origins of Linguistic Nationalism in Atatürk’s Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (November 2004): 1–25, doi:10.1080/0026320042000282856.

nation was scattered throughout the world.³⁹³ Secularism was a pillar of the Turkish nation and according to the book, a nation did not necessarily have the same religion. Therefore, the Turkish nation's national pride should not come from a sense of religious belonging, rather it should come from a sense of humanitarian togetherness.³⁹⁴ In 1939, Afet İnan wrote an article in which she summarized the Turkish Historical thesis as:

The Turkish children... cannot be considered the authentic owners of this homeland, given their recent migration here. This idea is historically and scientifically erroneous. The Turkish brachycephalous race was the first to establish a state in Anatolia. The cultural homeland of this race was initially in Central Asia, which had a suitable climate. However, the climate changed due to natural causes. This population, which had developed the ability to polish stones, utilize metals, and adopt agricultural practices, was forced to migrate. They spread from Central Asia to the East and South, and the north and south of the Caspian Sea in the West. They settled where they went and established their cultures. In some places, they became indigenous, while in others, they intermingled with another indigenous race. The race they encountered in Europe was dolichocephalous. The founders of Iraqi, Anatolian, Egyptian, and Aegean civilizations were representatives of the Central Asian brachycephalous race. We, the Turks of today, are their descendants. This is a summary of Atatürk's historical thesis.³⁹⁵

³⁹³ Afetinan and Peker, *Vatandaş İçin Medenî Bilgiler*, 1:18–19.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:24–25.

³⁹⁵ Afet İnan, “Atatürk ve Tarih Tezi,” *Belleten* 3, no. 10 (1939): 245–46.

The theoretical framework of the Turkish nation summarized above was reinforced by top-to-bottom reforms such as the simplification and Latinization of Turkish, the adoption of a new Turkish civil code, the law on family names, the abolition of the caliphate, and the introduction of a secular education system.³⁹⁶ In theory, these reforms were supposed to gradually change the idea of Turkish nation/nationalism and create a much more homogenous society. However, just like Tanzimat reforms, very little input was taken from the society during the implementation of these top-down reforms. The official version of nationalism promoted by the state mainly focused on tracing the roots of the imagined Turkish nation and purposely eliminating elements of Ottoman tradition. Even though there was a considerable nationalism tradition formed way before the foundation of Turkey, the official version of nationalism was rarely challenged. This situation was dramatically changed during World War II.

6.2. Pan-Turkist Movement During World War II

As was mentioned in the second chapter, Turkey followed a neutrality-based foreign policy during World War II. The nature of this neutrality also extended to ideologies favorable to the fighting parties in World War II. As is explained in the third chapter, the spread of communist ideology was allowed during World War II in order not to get any criticism from the Soviet Union. At the same time, the ruling Republican People's Party also allowed nationalist elements to spread their ideas more freely. This

³⁹⁶ Dankwart A. Rustow, "The Modernization of Turkey in Historical and Comparative Perspective," in *Social Change and Politics in Turkey* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 93–120.

policy was followed since Germany under the leadership of the Nazi party found especially the racist version of Turkish nationalism useful for their particular worldview. In addition, some German leaders thought that having Turks as allies would be beneficial in their fight against the Soviet Union since a large amount of ethnic Turks were living under the rule of the Soviet Union.³⁹⁷

Having received a green light from the ruling party to proceed with their ideological pursuits, a pan-Turkist movement started its activities. One of the foremost proponents of this nationalistic movement was Hüseyin Nihal Atsız, an academic by training who foresaw the publication process of numerous nationalistic publications. Atsız led the publishing of the magazine *Orhun*, one of the most prominent nationalistic magazines during the World War II era. *Orhun* started its irregular publication process in late 1933 and finished its first publication phase in late 1934. The first issue gave away the main aim of the magazine as “to serve the ideal of Great Turanism.” According to *Orhun* “The Turks have come to this world to fulfill a lofty duty, and this duty will only be completed when the whole world becomes a Turkish homeland.”³⁹⁸ *Orhun* also advocated redefining the official definition of Turk. As is known, Atatürk, in his speech commemorating the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Republic said “How happy is the one who says I am a Turk.” This sentence mainly summarizes the official nationalism narrative which was not race-based, rather

³⁹⁷ Tilman Lüdke, “Pan-Turkism in Action? Turkic Nationalists, Nazi Germany and Turkey During World War II,” *Turkish Historical Review*, 2023, 1–24, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1163/18775462-bja10050>.

³⁹⁸ *Orhun*, November, 1933, 1-2.

it was a highly praised choice. However, *Orhun* harshly criticized this non-race-based nationalism and suggested:

Orhun voices column reporting the denial of the Turk, phrases like 'It is enough to be a citizen of Turkey to be Turkish,' 'The Turk has no civilization,' etc. are presented as evidence, causing a commotion. In the article, young people are advised as follows regarding this matter: 'Turkish youth! They say you are non-existent despite your existence for two thousand five hundred years. They deny your pure blood. While only those who are descended from the line of Kırşad and Kül Tigin have the right to bear the noble name of Turk, they attempt to explain it with a single word in the dirty identity cards hidden in their pockets resembling a pincushion. While great ones are shining like the North Star in the heavens of art and knowledge, they want to erase you in a so-called cloak of knowledge... The denial of being a Turk is impossible. Denial of the Turk is a denial of nature. We must show those who deny the existence of the Turk.'³⁹⁹

Other topics covered by *Orhun* were the biological superiority of the Turkish race, Turanism ideal, anti-communism, racism, militarism, the ideal woman, etc. *Orhun* was closed after its lead writer Hüseyin Nihal Atsız published two letters written directly to Prime Minister Şükrü Saracoğlu, warning him especially about the communist threat inside Turkey by providing examples and urging Saracoğlu to put an end to their activities.⁴⁰⁰ Soon after the publishing of the second letter, *Orhun* was officially banned by the Turkish government in 1943.

³⁹⁹ *Orhun*, December 1943, 23.

⁴⁰⁰ *Orhun*, March and April, 1943, 1-2.

Another influential nationalist magazine during World War II was *Bozkurt*, published by Reha Oğuz Türkkan, another academician by training. Türkkan previously published another pan-Turkist magazine called *Ergenekon* between November 1938 to January 1939. *Bozkurt* should be seen as a continuation of *Ergenekon* and it was started to be published in May 1939, and major nationalists including Hüseyin Nihal Atsız, Zeki Velidi Togan, Cihat Fethi Tevteoğlu, and Besim Atalay published opinion pieces in the magazine. *Bozkurt*'s motto was "The Turkish Race Above All Races" which was written below the name of the magazine. Reha Oğuz Türkkan explained the main aim and ideological standpoint of the magazine:

Who are we? We are Grey Wolves. What is our ideology? The Turkishness of the Grey Wolf. What do Grey Wolves believe in? In the superiority of the Turkish race and the Turkish nation over every race and every nation! What is the source of this superiority in our view? It is Turkish blood! Is the Turk inherently superior and talented? The Turk derives his intelligence, courage, military genius, and great abilities and talents in every field from his blood... Are Grey Wolves proponents of Pan-Turkism?... War is a great and noble law of nature. We are the grandchildren of warriors. Grey Wolves believe that war, soldiering, and heroism should be elevated to the highest position of honor.⁴⁰¹

The main topics of discussion in *Bozkurt* were similar to that of *Orhun*. Racism, villager movements, language, militarism, anti-communism, woman, family and paganism. One of the most important topics, for our discussion is paganism which was widely used in these Pan-Turkist magazines. While discussing some of the most

⁴⁰¹ *Bozkurt*, March 5, 1942, 5-6.

important aspects of their imagined communities, Pan-Turkist magazines rarely discussed Islam which was the religion most people in Turkey believed in.⁴⁰² Rather, these magazines focused primarily on pre-modern Turkish ways of living. Therefore, the authors in these magazines did not shy away from criticizing Islam. For example, a piece published in *Bozkurt* criticized Islamic ways of living while glorifying old traditions as:

Everyone was turning their faces towards a grave five times a day, but every morning, I was releasing my heart to the places where the sun rises. They are seeking help from the grave, while my heart is adorned with epic tales from the lands where the sun rises. They bow their heads, reciting prayers, while I walk the roads with my chest open and bare. They have a doubtful hope, but I have genuine faith.⁴⁰³

As it can be deduced from the abovementioned piece, the Pan-Turkist movement was not satisfied with the religious situation of Turks and they aimed to return to a more ideal pre-Islamic past. Here, both official nationalism and the Pan-Turkist version of nationalism agree in the sense that Turkish society needed a religious change. At the same time, neither version of nationalism felt compelled to investigate how ordinary people perceived the theoretical changes they envisioned. The outbreak of the Korean War changed this situation, as a wide variety of people

⁴⁰² For a discussion on imagined communities see: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁴⁰³ *Bozkurt*, May 1940, 76.

living in Turkey found the chance to contribute to the discussion on what constituted a Turk.

6.3. Korean War and the Birth of Internationalist Nationalism

As Gavin D. Brockett suggested, “Turkish print media played a crucial role in the formation of national identity after 1945” and “the press provided an outlet for Turks to express both their support and dissatisfaction” towards the construction of Turkish national identity.⁴⁰⁴ Therefore, an analysis of printed media as well as literature published during the Korean War is essential to better understand the popular responses towards the theoretically constructed Turkish identity because those sources provide less filtered information about the mindset of common people.

When Turkey under the leadership of the newly elected Democrat Party announced its decision to take part in the Korean War by sending a brigade, most of the ordinary people in Turkey did not even know where Korea was. Therefore, a legitimization effort by the usage of religion and nationalism soon followed the announcement. On the nationalistic front, one of the most ardent supporters of this decision was the Association of Turkish Nationalists (*Türk Milliyetçiler Derneği*). A poem entitled “To Korea Mujahedeen” written by Ahmet Kabakçı published in the Association’s journal Struggle against Communism (*Komünizme Karşı Mücadele*) laid out a popular nationalistic justification of Turkey’s participation in the Korean War:

⁴⁰⁴ Brockett, “The Legend of ‘The Turk’ in Korea: Popular Perceptions of the Korean War and Their Importance to a Turkish National Identity,” 140.

At this moment, the Turkish War Brigade has started battling the Reds in Korea. The brave Mehmetçik, who fights for world peace and the security of freedom, is actively engaged in combat against the archenemy of Turkish history and a disgraceful regime for civilization, thousands of kilometers away from the homeland. May Allah be their helper. Go, dear lions of the Turks, go. Defeat the enemies with the help of friends, and make the enemies miserable.

...

March on...like a sultan, enter Korea, leave Korea behind

Let hundreds of Koreans witness the conquest, from the history of your ancestors.⁴⁰⁵

This poem connects Ottoman history with modern Turkey by placing Russia as “the archenemy” and suggesting Turkish soldiers in Korea follow Ottoman Sultans on the battlefield. As it was discussed previously, official and pan-Turkist nationalism narratives specifically shied away from the Ottoman Empire and the tradition it left behind. However, a large sum of nationalist writings during the Korean War specifically connected the Ottoman past to that of an imagined community of Turks. The abovementioned poem also situates Turkey’s place in the international order and suggests that as a responsible member of the world community, Turkey had responsibilities such as “fighting for world peace and security.” This idea of Turkey being a vital part of the international community was widely reflected in print Turkish press at the time. For example, a caricature published in *Hürriyet* newspaper depicted

⁴⁰⁵ Kabakçı, “Kore Mücahitlerine,” 7.

the U.S. as a blonde weeping young woman saying “I am waiting on the shores of Korea. My dear I am expecting you immediately.”⁴⁰⁶ In the background, a Turkish soldier on a ship approaching the sinking Korean Peninsula is also depicted. This caricature shows the supposed importance of Turkey and its help in the Korean War. The perception of an indispensable Turkey in Korea was reinforced after the Battle of Kunu-ri when Turkish soldiers fought to the death against Chinese-North Korean combined forces. After the Battle of Kunu-ri, the narrative of the “undefeatable Turk” was reflected in various printed press in Turkey and this narrative depicted a world in which Turkey’s active participation in various problems such as the Korean War was indispensable.



⁴⁰⁶ *Hürriyet*, July 28, 1950.

Figure 11. Cartoon Regarding the Korean War⁴⁰⁷

During the Korean War, Ankara Radio, the official radio station of the Turkish government at the time, composed a special song for the Korean War entitled Korean War song (*Kore Türküsü*). The song depicted a conversation between a Turkish mother and her son who had gone to Korea. The son explained that he went to Korea to prevent the outbreak of war in Turkey. He believed that Turks had a responsibility to "extinguish the fire in its place," to stop the war in Korea from spreading to other regions, including Turkey. The idea of extinguishing fire in its place reflected the international duty Turkey had at the time. According to this perspective, Turks could not turn away from the problems of the world since sooner or later these problems would appear in Turkey. This perspective was widely used during the Korean War and its similarity to the "domino theory" used in the U.S. is quite striking.⁴⁰⁸ In the song the Turkish mother affectionately called her son "my lion" and took pride in the fact that he did not shy away from helping the Koreans. She emphasized that "assisting the weak is an honor for Turks," and their "belief in Allah remained steadfast." Korean War songs portrayed participation in the Korean War as a national duty for any Turk, as Turkey could not turn a blind eye to injustices beyond its borders.⁴⁰⁹

Mustafa Deral, a teacher, wrote a book-length study entitled *Why Are We Going to Korea (Kore'ye Niçin Gidiyoruz?)* to justify Turkey's international duty to join the just cause of the Korean War.⁴¹⁰ The notion of extending a helping hand to

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Frank Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁴⁰⁹ "Kore Savaşı Türküsü."

⁴¹⁰ Mustafa Deral, *Kore'ye Niçin Gidiyoruz* (İstanbul: Barış Matbaası, 1950).

like-minded individuals through participation in the Korean War was actively promoted by prominent figures. Colonel Celal Dora, the second commander of the Turkish Brigade in Korea, composed an anthem specifically for the Korean War. In this anthem, Dora drew parallels between the Korean War and the Yemen campaign of the Ottoman Empire. He asserted that the Turks' decision to participate in the Korean War was regarded with admiration by the world, except for Moscow. Furthermore, he argued that fighting was an integral part of Turkish identity, emphasizing that Turks inherently valued freedom and peace. To deny assistance, he believed, would disgrace Turkishness.⁴¹¹ This internationalist perspective was apparent in nationalistic books as well. For instance, Zeki Afşin's book *Heroes of Korea and Turkey (Kore Kahramanları ve Türkiye)* had George Washington and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on its cover. It depicted George Washington and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as very similar figures. On one hand, George Washington found the U.S., a bastion of democracy and freedom, on the other hand, Atatürk founded Turkey on the principle of "Peace at home, peace around the world." Therefore, according to the book, Turkey and the U.S. shared the same principles. Korean War was a struggle between democracy and autocracy and Turkey should be with the U.S. which shared the same principles in terms of democracy, freedoms, and liberalism. The book also provided biographies of notable Turkish leaders alongside notable Western leaders such as Winston Churchill, Dwight Eisenhower, etc.⁴¹² Afşin's book can be seen as an attempt to link Turkish history with that of Western history and suggest that first and

⁴¹¹ Dora, *Kore Savaşında Türkler, 1950-1951*, 21.

⁴¹² Zeki Afşin, *Kore Kahramanları ve Türkiye* (Ankara: Desen Matbaası, 1953).

foremost Turks are on an equal footing with that of Western nations and Turkey is a valuable member of the international community.

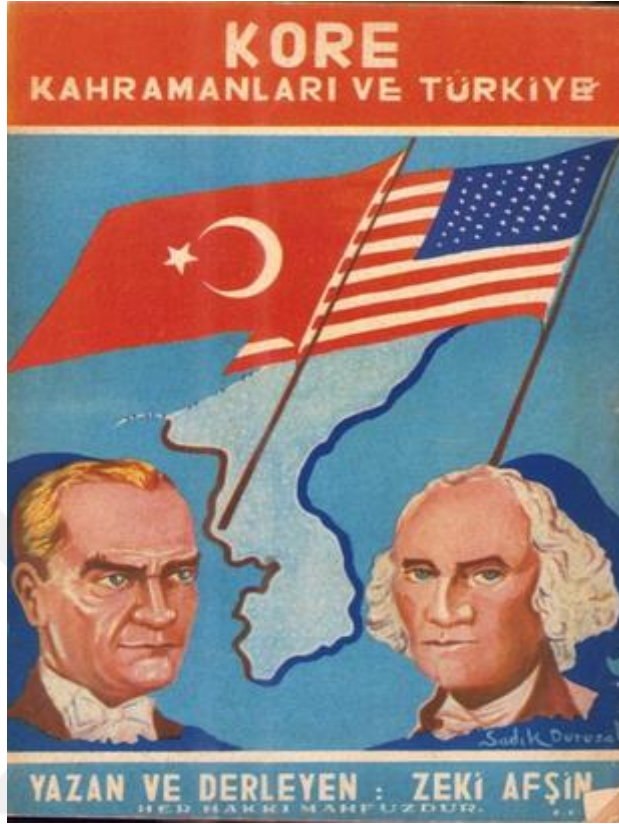


Figure 12. Front Page of Zeki Afşin's Book

Based on the aforementioned sources, it can be inferred that the Turkish public was led to believe that Turkey's participation in the Korean War was part of an international campaign alongside other friendly nations. Assisting the powerless was portrayed as a national duty for every Turk, and similar to previous campaigns in Turkish history, the Korean War was depicted as a just cause essential for the future security of Turkey. This period witnessed the emergence of the internationalist aspect of Turkish nationalism, which had been downplayed in the literature. This internationalist dimension of nationalism assigned certain responsibilities to Turks, such as fighting for freedom and peace beyond the borders of Turkey. These responsibilities also aimed to make Turks responsible members of the international

community. The internationalist aspect of Turkish nationalism reached its peak with Turkey's accession to NATO in 1953.

Furthermore, the Korean War marked a period of significant reevaluation of Turkish nationalism. As mentioned earlier, the official version of nationalism had downplayed the significance of the Ottoman past and Islam in the nation-building process. However, the sources referenced in this study demonstrate that during the Korean War, not only did the Ottoman past regain prominence, but the influence of Islam also became evident in nationalist writings. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this does not imply a complete rejection of the official version of Turkish nationalism by the Turkish public during the Korean War. On the contrary, one may observe that the official version continued to find acceptance among the public alongside traditional aspects. For example, in the poem composed by Atilla Türkben, we can detect certain influences stemming from the official and pan-Turkist construction of the Turkish nation and its origins:

Korean warriors [Gazi], I wrote this legend for you.

Look at the history, whose descendants you are.

Of Attila, Timur, Fatih and Barbaros [sic]

You are the children of this country's heroes.⁴¹³

Significant Turkic figures like Attila and Timur are referenced, but they are swiftly followed by prominent Ottoman figures such as Fatih (Mehmed the Conqueror) and Barbaros. Moreover, the term *ghazi*, an Islamic religious title, is employed to

⁴¹³ Solomonovich, *The Korean War*, 112.

describe Turkish soldiers in the Korean War. This pattern is evident in the nationalistic popular writings of the time related to the Korean War. *Orkun*, a nationalist magazine which was the continuation of the previously mentioned *Orhun*, also drew connections between the Korean War and the Central Asian history of Turks:

Like centuries ago, in the Kunuri Battles Turks and Chinese once again confronted each other on the battlefield... Despite twenty-seven years of spiritual undermining, they proved to friend and foe alike that they were the same soldiers who fought in Çanakkale and Sakarya.⁴¹⁴

The notion of Turks being once again pitted against the Chinese was extensively employed. A notable instance can be observed during the Korean War meeting of the National Student Union (*Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*), where a large poster was displayed bearing the inscription: "History comes alive, Turks once again in front of the Great Wall of China."⁴¹⁵ With the frequent references to the Central Asian heritage of the Turks during this period, one may argue that one of the objectives of the official as well as pan-Turkist construction of Turkish nationalism, which aimed to attribute greater significance to Central Asia in history, was indeed accomplished. While Turkish nationalistic narratives started to attribute greater significance to the Central Asian history of Turks, we find no mention of Turk's relation to Koreans. Historical sources show that Gökturks and the Goguryeo Kingdom of Korea were

⁴¹⁴ "Türkler Kore'de," *Orkun*, no. 11 (December 15, 1950): 5.

⁴¹⁵ *Yeni Sabah*, December 10, 1950, 1.

closely cooperating during the pre-modern period.⁴¹⁶ This historical connection could provide another justification for why Turkey should participate in the Korean War. However, no mention of ancient Turkish-Korean relations in any of the sources investigated for this study shows that connection. Therefore, one may suggest that Turkish academia as well as the Turkish public were unaware of the ancient bonds between Turks and Koreans at the time.



Figure 13. Korean War meeting of the National Student Union⁴¹⁷

The significance of the piece published in *Orkun* lies in its distinction as one of the first critiques of official nationalism by nationalists during the Korean War. The year 1950, when the Korean War began, marked the twenty-seventh year since the

⁴¹⁶ See: 김지영, “6 세기 후반-7 세기 초반 고구려·돌궐 관계의 변화 [The Relationship Changes between Goguryeo and Dalgul from the Late 6th Century to the Early 7th Century].”

⁴¹⁷ *Yeni Sabah*, December 10, 1950.

establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Describing this period as the commencement of spiritual undermining indicates the nationalists' discontent with governmental reforms. *Orkun* extensively disseminated these nationalistic criticisms throughout the Korean War. As an example, the speech delivered by Arif Nihat Asya, a renowned Turkish nationalist, during a commemorative event organized by the Association of Turkish Nationalists to honor Turkish soldiers in the Korean War, was published in *Orkun*. In his speech, Arif Nihat Asya suggested:

In the previous era, as our spirituality, selfhood, and morality were being destroyed and suppressed, doubts began to arise within many of us. We questioned whether we could replicate the heroism displayed by our race in the past, or if our sense of valor had also deteriorated. These doubts lingered in our minds. However, heroism in Korea, by eradicating all of these doubts, became the catalyst for the nation to regain its self-confidence.⁴¹⁸

As evident in Asya's aforementioned speech, certain nationalists perceived the period from the establishment of the Republic of Turkey until the Korean War as an obstruction to religious and nationalist freedoms. These ideas existed even before the Korean War, but they did not gain much prominence. However, since popularity played a significant role in garnering public support for the Korean War, these ideas suddenly came to the forefront, leading to an increased questioning of the period preceding the Democrat Party. It is worth noting that 1950 marked the first democratic election in the history of the Republic of Turkey, and the Republican People's Party,

⁴¹⁸ "Milliyetçiler Federasyonunun Tertipleđi Mehmetçik Günü," *Orkun*, December 22, 1950, 12 edition, 6.

which had been in power since the country's foundation, was defeated in the ballot box. Consequently, the sense of democracy and freedom of ideas must have been quite high during this time. Hence, criticism directed towards the preceding government took place within a notably more liberal environment.

Nevertheless, the profound criticism of governmental reforms did not imply the abandonment or disregard of Atatürk and his legacy. In numerous written works related to the Korean War, we witness the mention of Atatürk's name alongside other renowned Turkish or Islamic figures from history. A notable exemplification of this can be found in the epic titled "To Korea Martyrs," authored anonymously during the Korean War:

Jannah is our rightful place...

Seyyid Battal Gazi is in Korea...

The enemy has encircled us, My commander, Atatürk, is here...

Allah will help us, The martyrs of Karbala are in Korea...⁴¹⁹

The abovementioned epic as well as other sources mentioned in this chapter shows that the Directorate of Religious Affairs' efforts to present the Korean War as a holy war worked. In addition, not only did the public perceive the Korean War as a holy war, but it also connected major figures in Turkish history to create a perception that the Turkish Brigade in Korea was following the same trajectory as that of other major historical Turkish figures. Therefore, during the Korean War, a traditionalist type of nationalism not only accepted the official and pan-Turkist versions of Turkish

⁴¹⁹ Atilla Türkben, *Kore Gazi ve Şehitlerine Destan* (Ankara: Buket Basımevi, 1951), 181.

nationalism but crucially also added the elements that official and pan-Turkist versions purposely shied away from such as the Ottoman tradition and Islam. This hybrid form of nationalism was so widespread that we can find representations of it even in ordinary people's writings. For example, Naci Tuncer who wrote a letter to his brother in Korea said:

Allah is with us. The great prophet who declared that paradise is under the shade of swords is with us. Throughout history, with the spirits of our ancestors and the prayers of 20 million, my prayer is also united with yours. Istanbul's conqueror stands alongside the conquerors of Korea. The legacy of our ancestors who rushed to help the oppressed showed the followers of Stalin what a great power the followers of Allah are.⁴²⁰

Another letter entitled "To the Heroes of Korea" written by Recep Özgür also demonstrated the connection formed between Central Asian roots, Ottoman tradition, and Islam which were the main tenets of this hybrid form of nationalism created during the Korean War:

The glorious children of a heroic and invincible race, galloping from the steppes to the shores of the Baltic, from the Chinese Sea to the gates of Vienna. The brave ones who carry the glorious flag of the Turk in the lands of Korea, rushing from victory to victory! MEHMEDÇIKS: Turkishness trusts you, and takes pride in you. Twenty million Turks have become one heart, your glorious epics have filled our souls. Just as the invincible armies of the great Turkish ruler Mete once trampled over the Great Wall of China like an avalanche, today

⁴²⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, December 12, 1950.

you, who are the heroic children of those times, turn the Korean lands into a hell for the crimson communists with the cries of ALLAH ALLAH. As every soldier who falls to the ground, and becomes one with the homeland under the shadow of the glorious Flag in Korea, the invincible heroes of Asia, the spirits of Genghis, Metes, wise Khans, Gültekin, and Kürşad, will eternally be praised while embracing them and the sacred martyrs of Turkishness. The eternal truth will vanquish the crimson microbes, and shortly, the sun of freedom will bring hope and happiness to millions. O unwavering, unyielding, invincible son of the Turk, Hero Mehmed. May your existence, name, and honor be eternal, just like you. Your epics have spread to the world. The whole world admires you. Run from victory to victory, bestowing glory upon Turkishness and the world, heroes. Allah and the Turkish nation are with you.⁴²¹

The Korean War provided a chance for ordinary people in Turkey to participate in the nation-building process that was started with the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. The Korean War experience in Turkey illustrates that both official and pan-Turkist versions of nationalism influenced the perception of ordinary people toward nationalism in the country. However, the Korean War experience also shows us that the ordinary people were not at all concerned with associating themselves with the Ottoman tradition or Islam which was purposely kept out of the nation-building process in both official and pan-Turkist versions of nationalism. Rather, ordinary people felt at ease to be associated with them.

⁴²¹ *Cumhuriyet*, December 14, 1950.

6.4. Conclusion

As part of its efforts to modernize and adopt Western values, the newly established Republic of Turkey embarked on propagating its official version of nationalism. The official form of nationalism specifically rejected the Ottoman tradition and highlighted Turks roots in Central Asia and Anatolia. This narrative aimed to create a nationalist discourse that aligned with Western forms of nationalism prevalent at the time. Pan-Turkist form of nationalism which emerged during World War II not only criticized the official version but also shied away from Islam as a religion. Both the official and pan-Turkist versions of nationalism were top-down projects with little input from the ordinary people.

Turkey's involvement in the Korean War sparked a significant nationalist movement within the country from the bottom up. This movement gained even greater intensity when news of casualties reached the public, leaving a profound impact on society. At times, school children went so far as to donate their blood to create Turkish flags for Korea. On other occasions, large gatherings provided a platform for sharing ideas and criticisms concerning the ongoing events in Korea. During the Korean War, a wide range of people began to contribute to the nation-building process and questioned what constituted a Turk. The outcome was a more hybrid form of nationalism that deviated from the official theoretical nationalism as well as the pan-Turkist nationalism that came into existence during World War II. While the Ottoman and Islamic traditions were not favored by the official and pan-Turkist nationalisms, the Korean War demonstrated their indispensability. The primary criticism voiced against official nationalism was its suppression of Islamic and Ottoman traditions, which ordinary people chose to embrace.

Furthermore, an internationalist aspect of nationalism emerged during the Korean War. This new nationalist perspective acknowledged Turkey's responsibilities within the global community. First and foremost, the new hybrid form of nationalism that emerged during the Korean War highlighted internationalism as a form of nationalism. Accordingly, Turkey and Turks as a whole had duties towards like-minded people around the world. These responsibilities stemmed from Turkey's role as a member of the international community. One of the primary reasons for intervening in the Korean War was to protect and be alongside like-minded people around the world. This internationalist dimension of nationalism differed significantly from the official nationalism and pan-Turkist nationalism which were primarily inward-looking. However, the Turkish nationalism that arose during the Korean War encompassed the political spirit of the time and exhibited an internationalist perspective. To summarize, this chapter argues that the Korean War acted as a crucial catalyst, propelling Turkish nationalism into a more internationalist phase. Additionally, the new form of hybrid nationalism that emerged during the Korean War not only incorporated elements from both official and pan-Turkist nationalisms but also embraced aspects that had been intentionally omitted in the construction of both nationalisms, such as the Ottoman tradition and Islam.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Korean War is often referred to as the forgotten war.⁴²² One of the primary reasons is the fact that there were no victors on any side. After three years of fighting, the armistice of 1953 kept the borders between South and North Korea more or less the same. While learning history, people tend to focus more on victories rather than defeats. The same goes for official histories primarily aimed at creating a “desired citizen.”⁴²³ Korean War proved to be a challenging case to defend since quite a lot of lives were lost for it but the benefits seemed vague. Therefore, rather than closely focusing on the legitimacy and results of the war, it was simply bypassed by calling it a “police action.”⁴²⁴ This perspective created problems for people who lived through

⁴²² I.F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War, 1950–1951. A Nonconformist History of Our Times* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988); John Melady, *Korea: Canada’s Forgotten War* (Dundurn: Macmillan, 1983).

⁴²³ Yilmaz, *Creating the Desired Citizen*.

⁴²⁴ Sheila Miyoshi Jager, *Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea* (London: WW Norton & Company, 2013), 72–73.

the war, some even participated in it, and suddenly found themselves in a situation where the Korean War and related references were undesirable.

Odd Arne Westad taught us the nature of the Cold War as primarily an ideological confrontation that had its roots in the late 19th century.⁴²⁵ Westad argued that during the Cold War, Washington and Moscow were locked in a conflict over the concept of European modernity and they needed to change the world to prove the universal applicability of their ideologies.⁴²⁶ In his book entitled *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World*, Masuda Hajimu suggested that the Korean War “functioned as a catalyst in the crucible of the postwar world and contributed to the materialization of the Cold War world.”⁴²⁷ Bringing the impact of foreign policy decisions on the inner politics to the forefront of Turkey’s Korean War experience, this dissertation suggested that Turkey’s decision to intervene in the Korean War and its spillover effects not only changed Turkish diplomacy but also altered Turkey’s international perception and its society in a fundamentally different way than the period preceding the Korean War. These changes were generally the result of Turkey’s Cold War experience, and this experience was domesticated and intensified at home, similar to other countries experiencing the Cold War. The outbreak of the Korean War and Turkey’s participation in it played an important role in the making of these changes. The changes occurred in four major areas: Turkish diplomacy, the emergence of pro-American progressivism and anti-communism, the revival of Islam in the Turkish political sphere, and the birth of internationalist

⁴²⁵ Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 4–5.

⁴²⁶ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4.

⁴²⁷ Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible*, 6.

nationalism. The dissertation argued that, during the Democrat Party's rule between 1950 and 1960, Turkey entered a unique period, primarily influenced by the impact of the Cold War on the country's politics and the subsequent ripple effects felt by society in the form of domestication of the Cold War. Last but not least, the dissertation posited that the Korean War was the most crucial catalyst in domesticating the Cold War in Turkey and fostering the creation of a “godly progressive nation.”

As mentioned above, diplomacy was the first area that had to be reordered during the Korean War period in Turkey. To understand the main tenets of this reordering, one needs to look into Turkey's World War II era foreign policy and its negative impact, which continued for a long time. Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, mainly followed a rational foreign policy that was changed according to the needs of the time. The Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I had an impact on the leaders of the Republic of Turkey, and they became very cautious of situations that could result in Turkey's involvement in a larger worldwide conflict.

When World War II erupted in 1939, one of the first things that came to the minds of the leaders of Turkey, especially President İsmet İnönü, was the Ottoman Empire's defeat and the challenging process of independence. Even so, İnönü decided to form a formal alliance with Britain and France. The Treaty of Mutual Assistance signed by Turkey, Britain, and France on October 19, 1939, was the first time Turkey was accepted into the Western alliance scheme. Unfortunately, the literature does not accord this treaty the recognition it deserves as the first major step in Turkey's integration into the Western alliance structure. The details of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance leave no doubt that it constitutes a

formal alliance and substantiates that Turkey was not a neutral state throughout World War II.⁴²⁸

The first time Turkey's allies Britain and France, requested its entrance into World War II was after Italy's formal declaration of war and raid on Malta. While British and French Ambassadors in Ankara were expecting at least a supportive posture from their Turkish counterparts, Turkey officially announced that it would continue to be a neutral power and not involve itself with the war militarily. This answer, as mentioned in the first chapter was a real shock, especially for the British, and they requested a correction of the announcement, which was rejected. In essence, Turkey decided not to follow the Treaty of Mutual Assistance line-by-line. This was essentially the start of Turkey being seen as an untrustworthy ally, primarily by Britain.

After Turkey's decision not to involve itself in the "hot" war in Europe, Turkey started to follow a neutral foreign policy.⁴²⁹ In this process, Turkey continued its trade relations both with the Allies and the Axis powers. This situation went on until 1943 when Churchill presented his plan of German invasion that involved Turkey's entry into the war to hit Germany's "soft belly" in the Balkans. Turkey's President İnönü was flown to Cairo to meet with Churchill and Roosevelt at the Second Cairo Conference and was asked to prepare his army for war against Nazi Germany. There was even a deadline: February 15, 1944. İnönü tried his best to gain some more time by suggesting that the Turkish

⁴²⁸ See: Millman, *Ill-Made Alliance*.

⁴²⁹ Specifically see: Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War*; Weber, *The Evasive Neutral*.

Army needed more equipment for such an invasion, and the required numbers were exchanged. The closer the deadline came, the more the British side realized Turkey's unwillingness to involve itself in a war against Nazi Germany. Once the situation became clear, the British side started to openly threaten that there would be a price to be paid after the conclusion of the war with Turkey.

With the end of World War II, President İnönü was calculating to keep Turkey's status as a neutral country and not leaning toward either side.⁴³⁰ However, things did not go according to plan, and the Soviet Union decided to openly threaten Turkey's territorial integrity by requesting changes to the Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits and Turkey's eastern border. Turkish Diplomatic Archives show the chaos that ensued after the recognition of the Soviet Union's demands. For Turkey, these demands were unacceptable, but challenging the Soviet Union by itself was an extremely risky choice. Therefore, Turkey was left with no choice but to diplomatically return to its position at the start of World War II. However, unlike the Second Cairo Conference, Turkey was no longer essentially needed from the perspective of the allies. This perspective was reflected when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in 1949, and Turkey was left out of it.

Despite Turkey's efforts to become a formal member of NATO, the allies did not feel any urgency to accept Turkey into NATO. In one of his visits to Washington, the Turkish Foreign Minister received the explanation that Turkey was not a Western country culturally and therefore could not become a NATO

⁴³⁰ "İsmet İnönü, Metin Toker'e İkinci Dünya Savaşını Anlatıyor [İsmet İnönü Talks About World War II with Metin Toker] -YouTube."

member. This was one of the excuses the U.S. found to dissuade Turkey's aspirations to become a member of NATO. During a dinner program at the Turkish Embassy in Washington, one State Department official told the Turkish Ambassador that Turkey's neutrality helped it during World War II, and he wished to see how it would continue to help Turkey after the war. The Turkish Ambassador was irked by what he heard at this dinner and immediately reported the conversation to the Foreign Ministry in Ankara, commenting that the words of the State Department official were quite important. By then, the Turkish side clearly understood that the legacy of Turkey's infamous World War II neutrality was not forgotten and that Turkey's neutrality created an image of untrustworthiness.

Democrat Party's election on May 14, 1950, was probably one of the most important events that occurred after World War II in Turkey. This election surprised Western countries, especially Washington, and created a sense of hope that a country such as Turkey could turn into a functioning democracy one day. The first foreign policy challenge leaders of the Democrat Party faced was the eruption of the Korean War on June 25, 1950. After receiving the U.N.'s call for assistance, leaders of the Democrat Party carefully considered the situation and decided to deploy ground troops to Korea. This decision was made to demonstrate Turkey's solidarity with Western countries, not only in simple words but also through action, without expecting anything in return. Showing solidarity with its allies was one thing Turkey failed to do during World War II, and the leaders of the Democrat Party did not want to make the same mistake again, especially when facing a threat from the Soviet Union. Had Turkey intervened in World War II, as discussed in Cairo, this would not be necessary. However, since Turkey did

not adequately show its support to its Allies during World War II and earned an untrustworthy image as a result, it needed a chance to redeem that image. This dissertation argued that the Korean War precisely gave Turkey this chance, and therefore, Turkey's involvement in the Korean War must be seen from the angle of the price of neutrality.

The second chapter of this dissertation delved into Turkish Brigade's role in the Korean War, focusing specifically on two significant battles: the Battle of Kuni-ri and the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni. As discussed in the chapter one, Turkey gained an untrustworthy image due to its World War II era neutrality and this dissertation suggested that the Battles Kuni-ri and Kumyangang-ni helped eliminate the abovementioned untrustworthy image. Battles Kuni-ri and Kumyangang-ni have garnered substantial attention in Turkish, American, and Korean military history. The choice to highlight these battles stems from their prominence in historical narratives.

In examining the Battle of Kuni-ri, discrepancies emerge between Turkish and American accounts. One contentious issue revolves around friendly fire incidents. According to the official U.S. military history of the Korean War and certain American military records, the Turkish Brigade mistakenly targeted withdrawing South Korean forces during the 1950 Chinese Offensive. Additionally, the U.S. official history posits that the Turkish Brigade at Kuni-ri did not consistently adhere to given orders. Turning to the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni, disagreements arose concerning the casualty figures for the Chinese People's Volunteer Army. By consulting official accounts from American, Korean, and Turkish sources for the first time, this dissertation aimed

to present a nuanced and balanced perspective on the Turkish Brigade's most important engagements in the Korean War.

After thoroughly examining American, Korean, and Turkish accounts of the Battles Kunu-ri and Kumyangjang-ni, it is suggested that the contention regarding friendly fire was unfounded. While Turkish sources confirm the fact that they observed withdrawing South Korean units and inquired about the situation, there is no mention of friendly fire. Additionally, Korean accounts also do not cite any issues with regard to friendly fire before or during the Battle of Kunu-ri. Therefore, one may argue that the U.S. official history's claim is unfounded. The other contention regarding the Turkish Brigade's adherence to orders is a complicated issue. As previous studies have suggested, Turkish and American armies received different military educations. Therefore, according to their Prussian-style military education, in Turkish military, commanders were given the right to control and react to problems on the field. Thus, the contention between Turkish and the U.S. official histories must be seen as a difference of military cultures. Last but not least, there is a disagreement between Korean and Turkish sources regarding the number of Chinese casualties after the Battle of Kumyangjang-ni. Since the official U.S. military history does not provide its own numbers for Chinese casualties, it is hard to come to a conclusion regarding this issue.

Apart from providing a balanced perspective on the abovementioned historiography contentions, this dissertation argued that after the Battle of Kunu-ri, Turkey was started to be perceived as a potential partner of the U.S. This perspective gained more traction when the news of Turkish Brigade's battles reached the U.S. through print media. As noted in chapter one, an unintended consequence of Turkey's

World War II era neutrality was the loss of credibility among the Western pact. This dissertation suggested that the Battle of Kunu-ri should be seen as one of the most important thresholds in repairing Turkey's outlook around the world.

The abovementioned battles highly influenced the internal political circumstances of Turkey as well. With the election of the Democrat Party, Turkey continued its pro-American policy that was left by the İnönü administration. Turkey's pro-Americanism after World War II was not a choice but a necessity. The Soviet Union was threatening its territorial integrity and Turkey had no power to fight the Soviet Union by itself. Therefore, it needed an ally as powerful as the Soviet Union, and the U.S. was the only country that fulfilled this requirement at the time. İnönü government's pro-American policies became apparent, especially during the visit of the *U.S.S. Missouri* in 1946. The U.S.' monetary support in the form of the Marshall and Truman Plans created an atmosphere quite friendly towards the U.S. in Turkey. While the U.S. did not provide as much money to Turkey as it did to, for example, Greece, it still valued Turkey's position in the Near East as strategic in stopping the Soviet Union's expansive policies. With the election of the Democrat Party, an element of progressivism especially in the areas of economy and religious freedoms was added to the already ongoing pro-American policies of the İnönü government. This dissertation suggested that the abovementioned changes that occurred after the Democrat Party's election changed Turkey's outlook from an authoritarian country to a newly minted pro-American democracy which helped it to be in good terms with Western democracies.

Turkey's decision to intervene in the Korean War did not immediately unite the nation behind the cause. Leftist factions aimed to take advantage of this

foggy atmosphere and organized to stop the government's decision. The leading movement was the Turkish Peace-lover's Association founded by Behice Boran. Founded in line with Stockholm Appeal's main aims, the Turkish Peace-lover's Association openly criticized the government's decision through its press organs such as its magazine entitled Peace (*Barış*). When we analyze this magazine, it soon becomes clear that the Peace-lover Association was following the official narrative of North Korea and the Soviet Union about the reasons for the emergence of the Korean War.

What brought the Turkish Peace-lover's Association to national fame was their flyer handout in the middle of İstanbul. The handout contained a staunch criticism against the government's decision to intervene in the Korean War. It suggested that the Korean War had nothing to do with Turkey and Turkey was drawn to the war mainly by the U.S. The government's reaction to the Turkish Peace-lover Association's flyer handout was quite harsh as well. It was the first time the Democrat Party government faced harsh criticism coming from somewhere other than the Republican People's Party. Leaders of the Democrat Party immediately attacked the Turkish Peace Lover's Association's supposed links to the Soviet Union, and soon after the flyer handouts, more or less all of the main organizers of the Peace Lover's Association were behind bars. Now, the main issue was to create a dichotomy between "us" and "them" through which the government could unite the nation behind its cause. This search for unity eventually created a purifying campaign against communism.

First and foremost, the "other" was created. The target was communism represented by the Soviet Union and its supporters. While the Turkish Peace-lover Association was closed, the organization and activities of Anti-communist

Associations were supported. Anti-communist Associations held rallies in support of Turkey's participation in the Korean War. In addition, they functioned as a place where nationalists and religious people could exchange ideas since the members of Anti-communist Associations were both religious and nationalist people. By the late 1950's, Anti-communist Associations were acting as a bulwark against communism, which was regarded as an evil ideology. In addition, Associations for the Struggle with Communism were also places where pro-American viewpoints were quite welcomed. Through their activities, Associations for the Struggle with Communism helped institutionalize anti-communism in Turkey. This dissertation argued that during the Korean War period, pro-American progressivism coupled with anti-communism became a leading ideological force.

While the purifying pro-Americanism and anti-communism influenced and gained support among some in Turkey, they were not enough to garner the support of the majority of the population. Therefore, to rally the nation behind the Korean War cause, the Democrat Party government decided to use the power of religion. The Directorate of Religious Affairs, which was not at all prominent during the era of the Republican People's Party, suddenly became the center of attention. Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, was suddenly on the front page of newspapers explaining religious necessities for Turkey's participation in the Korean War. Accordingly, the Korean War was a fight between truth and falsehood. Turkey was fighting against non-religious communists in Korea, and this just cause must be defended. Akseki, the head of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, participated in religious ceremonies organized for the martyrs and highlighted the religious nature of the Korean War

by comparing it with the *ghazas* of the Ottoman Empire. These ceremonies generally garnered thousands of people and created a sense of belonging among the participants. This dissertation argued that the Korean War became the turning point for Islam's political and public presence in Turkey.

The revival of Islam in the public sphere brought forward some of the religion-related issues previously not adequately considered by the government. Since the Korean War was depicted as a holy religious war, this depiction provided some ground for the government as well as people to suggest the need for religious services all around Turkey. It was indeed a sensible way to go around the strict secularism prevalent at the time. The Democrat Party made several changes in the school curriculum, and added religion classes both as elective and mandatory. In addition, Islamic divinity schools were opened to educate future leaders of Islamic education. Last but not least, Quran reading programs were introduced all around Turkey for younger people to learn the Quran. These are some of the changes the Democrat Party made in its first years of government and reflected the kind of government it was aiming to showcase. Therefore, the Democrat Party's governing and its tolerance of religious freedoms helped the revival of Islam in the public sphere. This dissertation suggested that the outbreak of the Korean War facilitated the implementation of religious freedom policies, mitigating potential resistance. However, the Korean War automatically brought about some religious freedoms, as the war was portrayed as a holy war, and public religious commemorations were deemed necessary to manufacture consent. Through these commemorations, Islam was revived in the political and public sphere during the Korean War period in Turkey.

The last major societal change observed during the Korean War in Turkey was regarding Turkish nationalism. During the foundation and early periods of Turkey, a new kind of nationalism was introduced to the public by the state. This new form of nationalism focused primarily on the origins of Turkic peoples and their supposed closeness to other European races. In addition, the official version of nationalism mainly aimed at creating a homogenous imagined community that would consist of the people living in Turkey at the time. Therefore, a top-to-bottom version of official nationalism was created, which purposely distanced itself from the Ottoman tradition and Islam. Instead of Ottoman tradition, Central Asian origins were mainly highlighted and the official version of nationalism was supported by reforms such as the simplification and Latinization of Turkish, the adoption of a new Turkish civil code, the law on family names, the abolition of the caliphate, and introduction of the secular education system.

The official version of nationalism went largely unchallenged until the start of World War II. When World War II started and especially after Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, the Turkish political climate was affected by the ideological divisions this conflict brought with it. As a neutral state, the Turkish government did not suppress the ideological spread of either nationalism or communism. The development of race-based Turkish nationalism was supported by some circles in Germany.⁴³¹ A race-based version of nationalism did not appreciate the official version of nationalism's open-door policy reflected in Atatürk's words "how happy to call oneself a Turk."⁴³² However, just like the

⁴³¹ Lüdke, "Pan-Turkism in Action? Turkic Nationalists, Nazi Germany and Turkey During World War II."

⁴³² *Hâkimiyet-i Milliye*, November 30, 1933.

official version, the race-based version of nationalism also distanced itself from the Ottoman tradition as well as Islam. Rather, it focused on returning to the Central Asian ideal form of nation and nationalism. In doing so, this form of nationalism primarily distanced itself from Islam and focused on paganism and other pre-modern period Turkic religious traditions. Similar to the official version, this race-based version of nationalism was also theoretical, formed in a top-down way with little feedback from the ground. After Nazi Germany's defeat in Stalingrad, the government suppressed the spread of this form of nationalism and instead focused on promoting the official form.

When the Korean War started in 1950, suddenly, the general population's perspective on nationalism became much more important than the theoretical constructions of the past. Here, a new form of nationalism which can be defined as a hybrid nationalism, was formed. From literature written primarily by common people, we can gather the main tenets of this hybrid nationalism. One of the primary tenets, unlike the abovementioned theoretical forms of nationalism, was Islam. Accordingly, the Turk fighting in Korea was primarily a Muslim fighting for the benefit of his nation. In addition, the Turk in Korea was proud of the Ottoman tradition and fought just as Mehmet the Conqueror and other famous Ottoman sultans. Last but not least, the Turk in Korea was also attached to his Central Asian bonds as well. Here, it is clear that the imagined Turk that was formed primarily during the Korean War was a hybrid version that not only embraced Islam and Ottoman tradition but also embraced the Central Asian past.

Furthermore, this dissertation demonstrated that the new form of nationalism had an internationalist side that suggested Turks had duties for the well-being of the whole world. This new nationalist perspective highlighted

internationalism as part of nationalism. Accordingly, Turkey and Turks had duties towards the like-minded people around the world. This dissertation argued that the Korean War acted as a crucial catalyst, propelling Turkish nationalism into a more internationalist phase.

All in all, this dissertation demonstrated that the Korean War created a Turkey profoundly different from the previous period. This was primarily the result of the domestication of the Cold War. One may argue that this form was the Democrat Party's ideal Turkey – a Turkey at peace with its past and the majority religion, Islam. A democratic Turkey allied with the U.S. and other Western nations in NATO. A godly progressive nation, a direct product of the Democrat Party era, only existed for a decade between 1950 and 1960. This period was exceptional in a variety of ways. With the Democrat Party's victory in the first democratic election in Turkish history, Turkey emerged as a potential Western-style democracy. Turkey's pro-American shift in terms of foreign policy and its participation in the Korean War helped dispel the untrustworthy image, a legacy of the World War II era neutrality. Pro-American foreign policy was further strengthened by liberal progressive policies, and anti-communism became institutionalized. The Korean War was portrayed as predominantly a religious conflict to rally large segments of the population in support of the cause. This led to the resurgence of Islam in the political and public sphere, supported by the religious freedom policies of the Democrat Party. Last but not least, Turkish nationalism entered a phase of hybridization, wherein the Korean War proved to be a crucial catalyst that pushed Turkish nationalism towards a more internationalist orientation.

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APPENDICES

A. MOLOTOV CONVEYS THE SOVIET UNION'S DEMAND FOR A RECONSIDERATION OF THE MONTREUX CONVENTION.

T. C.
Hariciye Vekâleti
Şifre Müdürlüğü
№ _____ - 2 -

Yazıldığı tarih _____
Geldiği tarih _____
Numarası _____
Açan _____

[Bu yazının mahrem tutul-
masına itina edilecektir]

ŞİFRE TEL

HARİCİYE VEKÂLETİNE

neticesine zor olmayacağını limit ettiğini söyledikten sonra Molotov dedi ki :

7- " Şişe Türkiye'yi daha yakından alâkadar eden bir mesele den daha bahsedeceğimiz Kırım Konferansında Montreux Mukavelesine de temas ettik. Bazenler içinde Japonya İmparatoruna Sovyetler kadar, hatta Sovyetlerden daha fazla söz sahibi olmasını Sovyet Hükümeti doğru bulmamaktadır. Bu ciheti Sovyet Hükümeti Kırım'da Müttefiklerine söylemekle muvafık bulmuş ve söylemiştir. Fakat bu noktada müyyen bir karara varılmamıştır. Çünkü Sovyet Hükümeti Konferansa hazırlanmış bir proje arz etmemiştir. Ancak, Montreux Mukavelesine kendisini tatmin edilmiş addetmediğini ve bir revision talebinde bulunduğunu söylemekle iktifa etmiş ve kısa bir fikir testisinden sonra diğer Müttefiklerin de bir revision'a muhalif olmadıkları neticesine varılmıştır. Mevcut bir proje olmadığından meselede stide tekrar ele alınmasına karar verilmektedir. Fakat Sovyet Hükümeti meseleyi önceden inceye tetkik etmektedir " dedi.

Ben " Sovyet Hükümetinin yaptığı söylediğiniz ince tetkikten sonra varılan netice hakkında da bir şey söylemek istemisiniz? " dedim. Molotov " mesele henüz tetkik edilmekte olduğundan

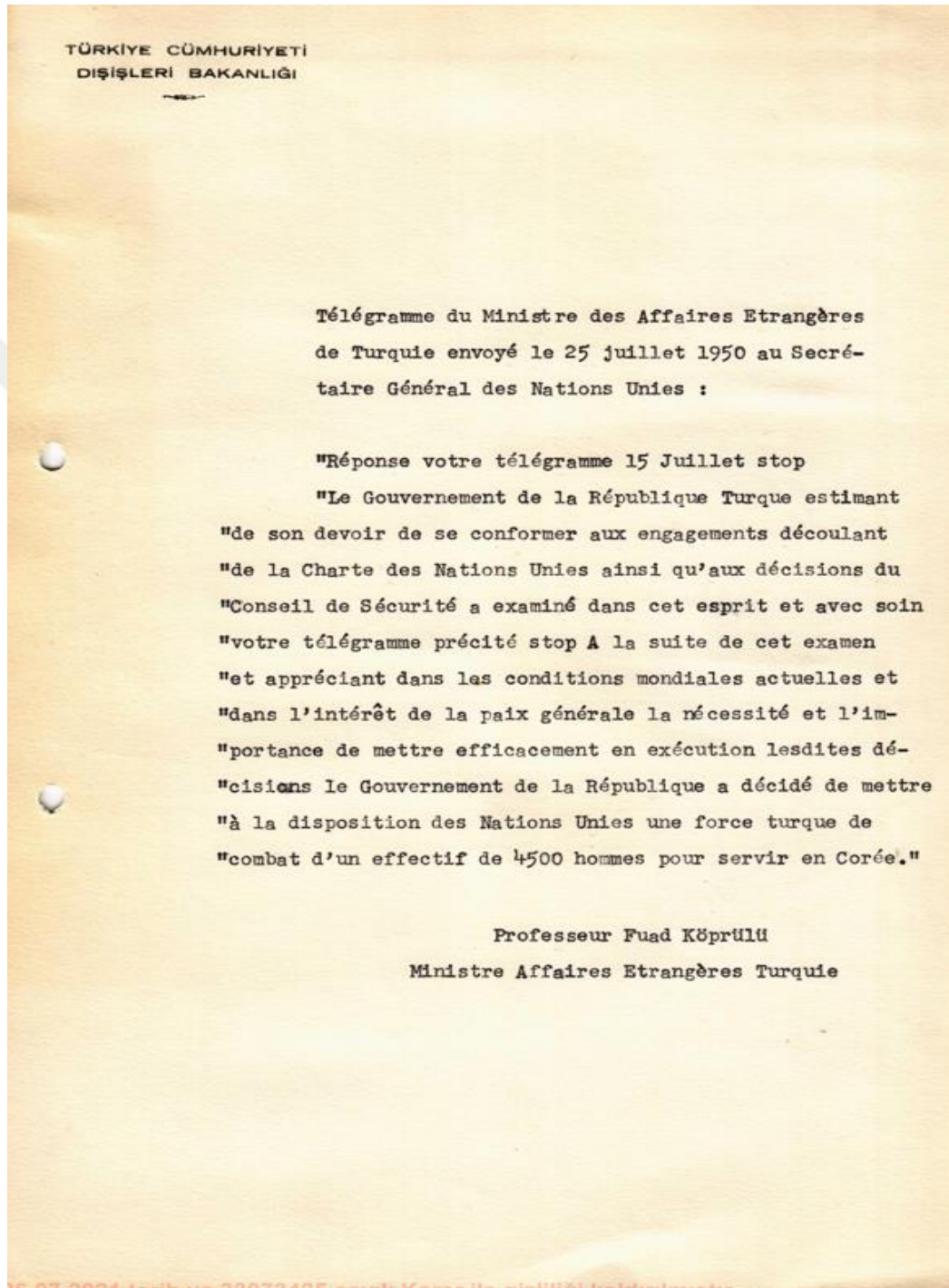
D. U. Müdürlüğüne
D. U. M. Malûmaten

./.

5 Oc 2024 tarih ve 32363030 sayılı Karar ile gizliliği kaldırılmıştır.

Source: Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA)

**B. TURKEY DECIDES TO SEND GROUND TROOPS TO KOREA IN
RESPONSE TO THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
NO.83.**



Source: Turkish Diplomatic Archives (TDA)

C. TURKISH BRIGADE PREPARES FOR KOREA.

I Tuğay

TASNİF DIŞI

Kıta B.M.Türk S.K.K. I/24.T.P.A. *I B.* Harp Ceridesi 1

Harbî Cendeler

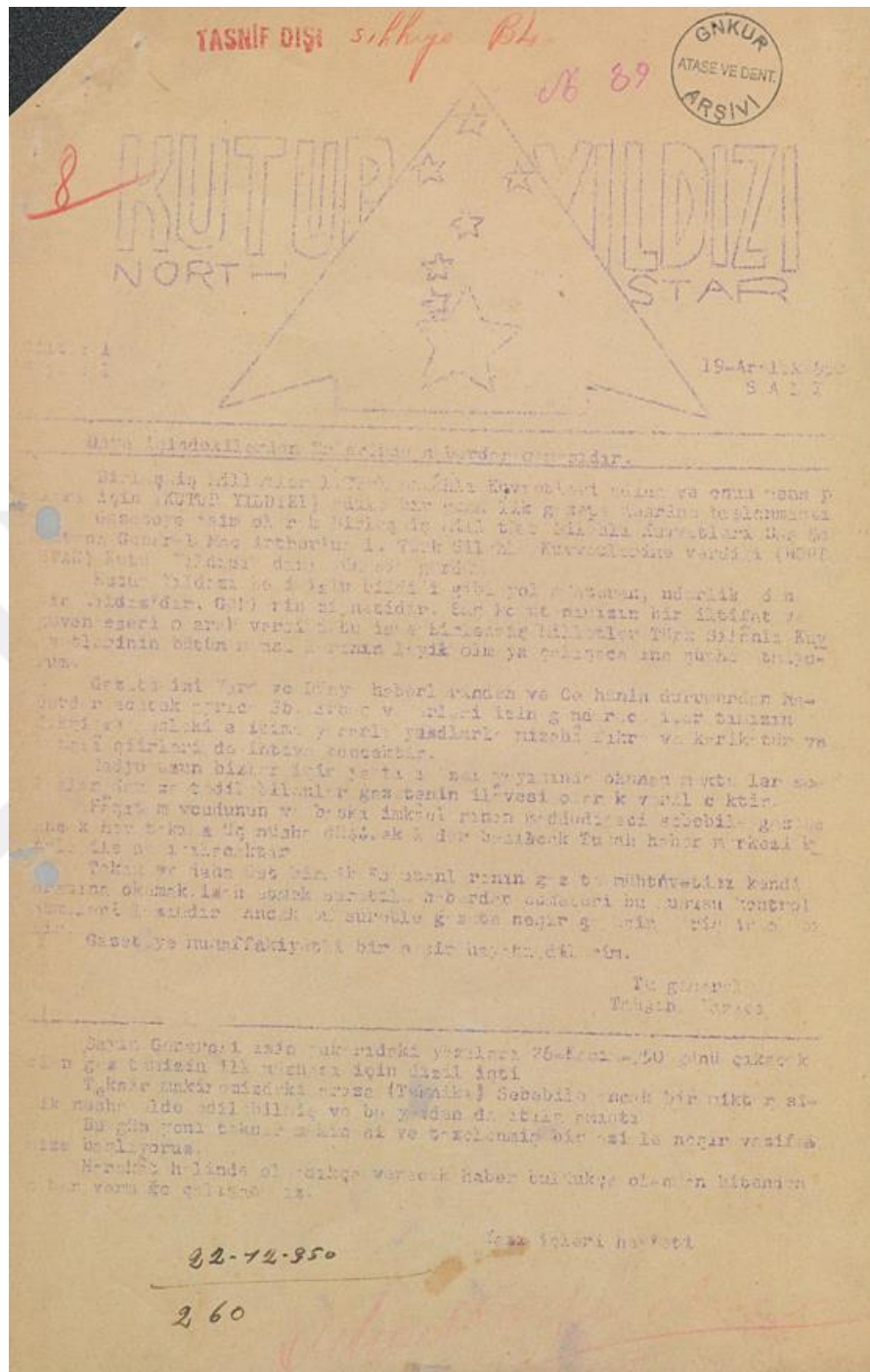
VAKALAR

10 Ağustos 1950 - 30 Eylül 1951

Tarih Saat Dak.	Bulunduğu yer	VAKALAR	MÜLAHAZAT
10-9-950 P a z a r	Etime- ut	1-Tb. bu gün çamaşır ve beden temizliği yaptı. Erata o/030 nisbetinde Ankara'ya izin verildi. 2-Çadırılı Ordugah yeri hazırlandı ve kışla Pavyonlarından erata çadırılı Ordugaha çıktı. 3-Sıkı emniyet tertibatı alınmasına rağmen Tb.dan izin vesikası erler Ankara'ya getmişlerdir. <i>Emniyet</i> <i>I.Tb.K.</i> <i>Bnb.</i>	
11-9-950 P a z a r t e s i	Etime- sut	1-bu gün Tb.ra yeni verilmiş olan Amerikan Ağ.mt.,Hf.mt.,Otomatik tüfekleriyle eğitime devam edildi. 2-Tb.da mevcut kadro fazlası erat(çvş,onb ve er)Tuğayın depoBL.nü teşkil için depo.k.na teslim edildi. 3-bu gün Tb.za3,5 inçlik bazooka ve 81.m.m.lik Havan.Topu ve gizleme ağıları ayrıca Tomson makineli tabancaları verildi. 4-Uyuz tedavisine devam edilmiş bizzat Tb.K.nın nezareti altında BL.K.ları önünde ilaçları sürdükten uyuz tedavisine devam edilmiştir. 5-bu gün A.Komutanı saat 20,00de Tb.k.nın çadırı önündeTb. Sb.larını ve alayın tekmil Sb. larını Toplayarak iç hizmet ve eğitimdeki kusurlar üzerinde durarak gerekli emirleri verdi ve verimli çalışmanın ne şekilde yapılacağını izah etti. <i>Emniyet</i> <i>I.Tb.K.</i> <i>Bnb.</i>	
12-9-950 S a l ı	Etime- sut	1-Tb.a bu gün Kh.ne bir 4.BL.ğe iki Şoförverildi 2-Alaydan Dini ve Ahlakî kitap blar verilerek BL.lere Mî tesaviyen dağıtıldı. 3-Uyuz erlerin tedavilerine bizzat BL.K.,-ları nezaretinde devam edildi. 4-İskenderunda depo edilmekte olan araç ve malzemenin muafazası için I.BL.den Sb.ve Gd.lî ile birlikte bir Tk.Ankaradan trenle İskenderuna sevk edildi. 5-bu gün Garnizon sinamasında erata Kore Savaşlarına ait askeri bir filim gösterildi. 6-Ankaradan gelen Noter Tb.Sb.larının ve Gd.lerinin Türkiyedeki Mağlarını almaya iş. Bankasını mutemet yaptıklarına dair Noter senetlerini tanzim ettiler. 7-Tb.Sb.ve Gd.lîlerinin Ankara'ya İskenderun yolluklarını almak için Tb.Hs.me. Özalp'ı Tb. mutemeti tayin edilmiş olup muameleleri tamamlamak için 28. tünenden ödenecek Pam.ları almaya Gönderildi. <i>Emniyet</i> <i>I.Tb.K.</i> <i>Bnb.</i> <i>Muharrem</i>	

Source: Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive

D. TURKISH BRIGADE'S OFFICIAL GAZETTE



Source: Ministry of National Defense ATASE Archive

E. TURKISH BRIGADE LEAVES FOR KOREA



Source: National Archives of the Republic of Korea (국가기록원)

F. TURKISH BRIGADE TRAINS IN KOREA



Source: National Archives of the Republic of Korea (국가기록원)

**G. GENERAL TAHSIN YAZICI RECEIVES THE KOREA PRESIDENTIAL
UNIT CITATION (대한민국 대통령 부대 표창) FROM PRESIDENT
SYNGMAN RHEE**



Source: National Archives of the Republic of Korea (국가기록원)