THE MAKING OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The Making of Modern Turkey

FEROZ AHMAD

ROUTLEDGE

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The making of modern Turkey

Turkey had the distinction of being the first modern, secular state in a predominantly Islamic Middle East. In this major new study, Feroz Ahmad traces the work of generations of reformers, contrasting the institution builders of the nineteenth century with their successors, the 'Young Turks', engineers of a new social order.

Written at a time when the Turkish military has been playing a prominent political role, *The Making of Modern Turkey* challenges the conventional wisdom of a monolithic and unchanging army. After a chapter on the Ottoman legacy, the book covers the period since the revolution of 1908, examining the processes by which the new Turkey was formed. Successive chapters then chart progress through the single-party regime set up by Atatürk, the multi-party period (1945–60) and the three military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980. In conclusion, the author examines the choices facing Turkey's leaders today. In contrast to most recent writing, throughout his analysis, the author emphasises socio-economic changes rather than continuities as the motor of Turkish politics.

Feroz Ahmad is a professor of history at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. He is the author of *The Young Turks* (1969) and *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy 1950–75* (1977).

The Making of the Middle East Series

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Roger Owen

The making of modern Turkey

Feroz Ahmad

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Preface and acknowledgements

After years of research on the history of the late Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, I had an urge to write an essay explaining the country to the general reader. This essay would synthesise my own research as well as the work of Turkish writers who had written extensively since the political liberalisation which followed the military intervention of May 1960. Roger Owen gave me the opportunity to do so when he asked me to write a book on Turkey for his series *The Making of the Middle East*.

The theme of the series suited me well because I too wanted to emphasise the active process suggested by the word 'making', the process adopted by the Ottoman-Turkish political elite at the beginning of the twentieth century. I also wanted to avoid the element of voluntarism suggested by the use of terms such as 'the rise', 'the development', or 'the evolution' of modern Turkey. Turkey, as is often suggested, did not rise phoenix-like out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. It was 'made' in the image of the Kemalist elite which won the national struggle against foreign invaders and the old regime. Thereafter, the image of the country kept changing as the political elite grew and matured, and as it responded to challenges both at home and abroad. This process of 'making' goes on even today.

Something needs to be said about the organisation of this book. Since it was conceived in the early 1980s when Turkey was under military rule, I thought it necessary to explore the roles of the army as a dynamic institution which responds to social change, and abandon the notion of a static body which stands outside or above society mediating conflict like a neutral referee. This I do in the introduction. The rest of the book is organised chronologically beginning with a chapter on the Ottoman Legacy and concluding with an Epilogue which examines Turkey's options in the 1990s.

This book has been written primarily for general, non-expert readers of English who want to have a better understanding of a fascinating and vital country in the region. I have therefore provided references and bibliography only in the English language to guide those who may want to delve a little deeper into the subject. In the text there are many quotations for which no reference is cited. These quotations are from Turkish sources. I felt that Turkish citations would be an unnecessary distraction for readers of English and therefore omitted them.

In writing this essay I have incurred many debts especially to friends in Turkey who have shared their ideas and taught me about their country ever since my first visit in 1962. The late Tarik Zafer Tunaya was one of the most generous of these friends. Roger Owen provided encouragement throughout the entire project, read the manuscript in various drafts and made wise suggestions which improved the quality of my work and saved me from errors. Mehmet Ali Dikerdem read the final draft and shared with me his vast knowledge and keen understanding of contemporary Turkey. Finally, my appointment as a University Research Professor provided some more time for writing and research and facilitated the completion of this enterprise.

Feroz Ahmad
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Abbreviations

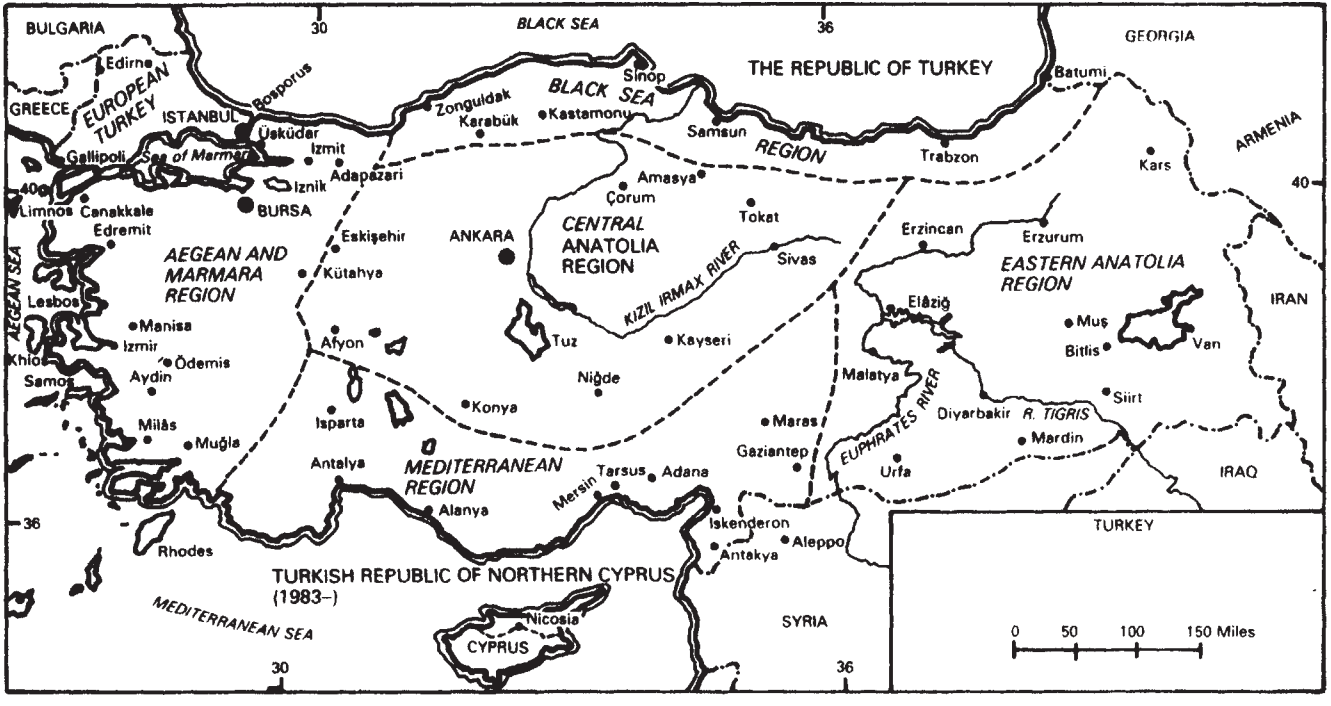
AFU	Armed Forces Union
CGS	Chief of the General Staff
CUP	The Committee of Union and Progress
Dev-Sol	Revolutionary Left
Dev-Yol	Revolutionary Way
DİSK	Confederation of Unions of Revolutionary Workers
DP	Democrat Party
EEC or EC	European Economic Community or European Community
Hak-İş	Confederation of Unions of Islamist Workers
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JP	Justice Party
MİSK	The Confederation of Unions of Nationalist Workers
MİT	National Intelligence Organisation
NAP	Nationalist Action Party
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDP	Nationalist Democracy Party
NOP	National Order Party
NSC	National Security Council
NSP	National Salvation Party
NTP	New Turkey Party
NUC	National Unity Committee
OYAK	Army Mutual Assistance Association
PKK	Workers' Party of Kurdistan
PRP	Progressive Republican Party
RPP	Republican People's Party
SHP	Social Democratic Populist Party
SODEP	Social Democratic Party
SPO	State Planning Organisation
TPLA	Turkish People's Liberation Army

Türk-İş	Confederation of the Workers Unions of Turkey
TÜSIAD	Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen
WPT	Workers' Party of Turkey

Notes on transcription

In the following pages, the official modern Turkish orthography has been used by transcribing Turkish names and words in the Latin script. Such notes on pronunciation based mainly on G.L.Lewis, *Teach Yourself Turkish,* 3rd ed. (1959), are given as an aid to readers unacquainted with Turkish.

c—j as in jam
ç—ch as in church
ğ—soft g lengthens the preceding vowel
I—something like u in radium
ö—French eu as in deux or seul
ş—sh as in shut
ü—French u as in lumière


BULGARIA
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BLACK SEA
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GEORGIA
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
Edirne
EUROPEAN TURKEY
Bosporus
GREECE
ISTANBUL
Üsküdar
Gallipoli
Sea of Marmara
İzmit
İznik
Adapazari
BURSA
Limnos
Çanakkale
Edremit
AEGEAN SEA
AEGEAN AND MARMARA REGION
Lesbos
Manisa
İzmir
Khios
Ödemis
Aydin
Samos
Milâs
Muğla
Rhodes
Eskişehir
Kütahya
Afyon
ANKARA
CENTRAL ANATOLIA REGION
Zonguldak
Karabük
Kastamonu
Sinop
Samsun
REGION
Amasya
Çorum
Tokat
KIZIL IRMAK RIVER
Sivas
Tuz
Kayseri
Niğde
Konya
Isparta
Antalya
MEDITERRANEAN REGION
Alanya
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Gaziantep
Iskenderon
Aleppo
Antakya
SYRIA
Trabzon
Batumi
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Erzurum
EASTERN ANATOLIA REGION
Elâziğ
Muş
Bitlis
Van
IRAN
Malatya
EUPHRATES RIVER
Diyarbakir
R. TIGRIS
Siirt
Mardin
Urfa
IRAQ
TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS (1983–)
Nicosia
CYPRUS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
TURKEY
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1 Introduction: Turkey, a military society?

Anyone reading about the political situation of Turkey in the early 1990s, or indeed during the past quarter century, is likely to be struck by the role played by the armed forces. The generals ousted the civilian government of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel on 12 September 1980, curbed all political activity, provided the country with a new constitution and a new political framework before permitting a tightly controlled general election in November 1983. As a result, power was restored to a civilian prime minister, Turgut Özal, whose party had won the election, and Turkey seemed to be back on the path to democracy. However, presidential powers, as defined by the 1982 constitution and exercised by President Kenan Evren, the general who had led the 1980 *coup,* enabled the armed forces to continue to supervise political activity. Moreover, martial law was applied long after civilian rule was restored and was removed only gradually, facilitating military control.

The military takeover of 1980 led many observers—foreign and Turkish—to emphasise the role played by the army in Turkey's politics and history. It was noted that the army had intervened in March 1971, and earlier in May 1960. There seemed to be a neat pattern of intervention every ten years, with the soldiers reluctantly soiling their hands in order to clean up the mess made by corrupt and incompetent politicians. In 1960, the army ousted the Democrat Party government of Adnan Menderes as he ran the country with total disregard for the constitution, relying on his overwhelming majority in parliament to justify his actions. In March 1971, the military High Command forced the resignation of Süleyman Demirel, and did so again a decade later, in September 1980. The first intervention was justified on the grounds of defending the constitution. On the other two occasions, the governments were described as weak and inefficient, the source of anarchy and

instability which threatened the very foundations of the state of which the armed forces were the guardians.

Apart from the immediate circumstances which are used to explain the military's role in current political affairs, this involvement is also rationalised in the context of Ottoman-Turkish history It is said that the Ottoman Empire was a great military establishment which conquered vast territories in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and even threatened Vienna on two occasions, in 1529 and 1683. The Janissary army became the scourge of Europe. But during the centuries of decline, this same army, now actively engaged in palace politics, became a greater threat to the ruling sultan than to his enemies. The Janissaries, in alliance with the men of religion, the *ulema,* became a formidable obstacle to reform. When the reforming sultans of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to modernise the structures of their ailing state, they gave their attention first to the army. As a result, military schools and academies based on the Western model were set up, and out of these institutions emerged a new generation of reformist officers dedicated to the salvation of their state and empire.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, these officers had also been politicised. They conspired with high civilian officials and imposed a constitution on a reluctant sultan in 1876. Later, when the sultan, Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), shelved the constitution and ruled as a despot, officers began to scheme for his overthrow and for the restoration of constitutional government. They set up a secret society, known as the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1889, and officers like Enver Pasha, Jemal Pasha, and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who all played critical political roles in modern Turkish history, were its members. The CUP-led rebellion in the army took place in June-July 1908 and, as a result, Abdülhamid was forced to restore the constitution he had shelved 30 years earlier. This was the beginning of the Young Turk revolution which continued for the next ten years, ending with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War.

Again, the Turkish army, even in defeat, seemed to be the only organised force capable of offering resistance to the invading and occupying forces of the Great Powers and their protégés. Following the landing in Izmir and the invasion of western Anatolia by the Greek army in May 1919, nationalist forces under the leadership of General Mustafa Kemal began to organise a resistance movement. It took three years of bitter struggle on a number of fronts before the nationalists were able to restore their authority over the whole of Anatolia.

Victories on the battlefield were followed by diplomatic successes, culminating in the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923 which granted international recognition to Turkey's new borders. On 29 October, the nationalist leadership, which was overwhelmingly military in its composition, established the republic and set in motion the process to create a new Turkey and a new Turk.

The emphasis on the army's role in Turkish history and politics, from Ottoman times to the present, suggests a continuity which seems plausible. It assumes that the army was an institution which never changed its world view, that it stood above society and acted independently of it. It also tends to obscure the changes, often sharp and dramatic, which Turkey has experienced and which provide a better and deeper understanding of modern Turkish history and politics. Of course, there is always the thread of continuity which runs through the history of virtually every nation and there is rarely a total break with the past. Yet it is vital not to lose sight of the turning points. This is particularly true in the case of modern Turkey where there has been a conscious effort to break with the past, especially on the part of the founders of the republic. Atatürk laid stress on the fact that the regime they were creating had nothing in common with the former Ottoman state and was a complete break with the corrupt past.

However, there is another thread of continuity which runs through the history of modern Turkey and which helps us to make better sense of the contemporary situation than does the factor of military involvement. This was the Turkish determination to find a place for their empire in the emerging world economy at the beginning of the nineteenth century, dominated by Britain and Europe in the industrial age. At first, the sultans hoped to meet the growing Western challenge by simply creating a modern army. But by the nineteenth century, the ruling classes realised that they could not withstand Western pressure by only military means. In order to do so, they knew that they had to create a modern political, social, and economic structure of which the modern army was but one part.

The Turks observed the forces released by the European revolutions and learned that pre-modern Ottoman political and social structures would not be able to survive the onslaught of modern societies. The empire had to move with the times and abandon its 'oriental despotism' which recognised neither the sanctity of private property nor the dignity and honour of the propertied classes. The sultan had to be persuaded to give up his absolute powers and recognise that his subjects enjoyed certain fundamental rights and freedoms. This was

partially accomplished by the imperial charters of 1839 and 1856, and by the constitution of 1876.

These reforms were only partially successful largely because there was no significant indigenous social stratum outside the bureaucracy capable of taking advantage of them. There was as yet no Turkish bourgeoisie which felt restrained by the old order and endeavoured to create a world of its own. In this period, most of the sultan's subjects who engaged in finance and commerce were non-Muslims who preferred to live under the protection of one of the Great Powers rather than under a strong Ottoman state. Moreover, as a result of the French Revolution, nationalism also made inroads into Ottoman lands, though not as yet among the Muslim peoples. Christian communities in the Balkans dreamed of liberation from alien rule, and the Greeks succeeded in establishing a national state in 1829. Other nationalities followed the Greek lead and struggled to satisfy their aspirations. Serbia, Bulgaria, and Albania acquired their nationhood in this manner. The Armenians and the Kurds failed only because after the First World War (unlike the Zionists) no great power took up their cause and provided the protection in the form of a mandate to set up a state. Finally the Turks themselves took up the struggle, fought a costly war and created a state of their own.

The army's role in the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the national state was critical. But it must be noted that this institution was in the process of constant change, at first reflecting the policies of the ruling elite and later the tensions of a society in decline.

The 'New Army' *(Nizam-i Cedid),* which replaced the army of the Janissaries in 1826, was the creation of Sultan Mahmud II (1807–1839) and the high officials of the Sublime Porte who advised him. Their aim was to create a modern fighting force on European lines, capable of performing as well as the army of their vassal Muhammad Ali of Egypt had performed against the Greek revolutionaries. The sultan soon found that he had to rely on foreign advisers to train his new army. In 1836, he invited British officers to study the problems of the army and to recommend the necessary reforms. Thanks to Russian pressure, the British were replaced by a Prussian mission under the command of Helmuth von Moltke. After the Crimean War (1853–1856), the Porte invited the French to reform the army and the British the navy. French was now taught in the military schools, bringing with it the ideas of liberalism and nationalism, so dangerous for the future of the old regime.

In 1879, following the Congress of Berlin and the rise of German

power, the sultan requested Berlin to send a military mission. The purpose was to counter-balance the influence of the other Powers involved in the affairs of the empire. The new mission under Colonel Colmar von der Goltz arrived in 1882; thereafter, German influence in the empire remained constant until the Young Turk revolution of 1908 when it was eclipsed by British influence. But German influence was restored after the defeats of the Balkan War (1912–1913) when the Liman von Sanders mission arrived and remained dominant until Germany's defeat in 1918.

It should be noted that apart from the foreign influences on the army, its social character was also undergoing a marked change in the last decades of the nineteenth century. This was true for the civil bureaucracy as well. At the very moment when the Ottoman economy was severely hit by the world depression of the 1870s, the army and the bureaucracy were becoming stratified, making promotion to the top virtually impossible.

At the same time, many who might have sought employment in petty trade under better circumstances, hoped to find economic security in state employment as well as in the lower ranks of the religious institution. Mustafa Kemal might well have become a small merchant like his father, or a functionary in the religious hierarchy, as his mother desired. Instead, he decided on the army where he received a modern education and the promise of economic security and advancement commensurate to his talents.

However, Abdülhamid II politicised the army and prepared the ground for his own fall. He abandoned the principle of merit and promoted officers to the highest ranks based on their loyalty to his person. He thereby created a schism in the army between professionals trained in the modern military schools and imbued with the spirit of patriotism, the *mektepli,* and officers who secured high rank principally because of their devotion to the sultan, the *alayli*.

Junior officers and civil servants joined the anti-Hamidian movement under the umbrella of the secret Committee of Union and Progress. Their aim was to overthrow the Hamidian autocracy and restore the constitution shelved in 1878. That is what the revolution of July 1908 accomplished. But this was only intended as the prelude to a social revolution designed to place the lower middle class, to which most Young Turks belonged, in a position of power and influence within the new regime. They differed from the senior officers who, like the high bureaucrats, wanted only a constitutional monarchy and had no desire to see Turkish society undergo a social revolution.

The army was neither monolithic nor did it act in unison; at the turn of the twentieth century the two most important groups in the army were the radical reformers who supported the CUP and the moderate liberals. This division is seen very clearly during the first five years of the constitutional period (1908–1913) before the Unionist officers seized power in January 1913. The rank and file of the army was largely conservative, even reactionary, and there were two mutinies to restore Abdülhamid's autocracy in October 1908 and April 1909. Both attempts were crushed, the second and more serious one by General Mahmud Sevket Pasha, an officer who was patriotic but did not support the CUP or the idea of radical social transformation.

In July 1912, there was a military rebellion reminiscent of the one four years earlier which had led to the restoration of the constitution. This time it was mounted by anti-Unionist officers whose purpose was to oust the pro-CUP cabinet and place the Liberals in power. They were able to achieve their aims entirely. Had it not been for the outbreak of the Balkan War in October 1912, they might have succeeded in destroying the Committee and purging its supporters in the army. Had they done so, the history of Turkey under the Liberals would have been very different.

The terrible defeats suffered by the Turkish armies in the Balkans and the government's willingness to surrender and place the empire's fate in the hands of the Great Powers, discredited the Liberals. Had they not been overthrown by a Unionist *coup,* they would have abandoned all notions of radical change and independence. Like the nineteenth-century reformers, the Liberals believed that Turkey needed European—preferably British—guidance in order to be prepared for the modern world, just as America was thought to be preparing the Philippines. They hoped that the kind of administration Britain had applied in Egypt would also be applied in Turkey bringing with it the benefits of the imperial system.

The Unionists, who seized power in January 1913, had very different ideas. They were willing to be a part of the Europe-dominated world system but they expected to be treated as partners, albeit junior partners, as 'the Japan of the Near East'. Following the Japanese example, they sought a degree of autonomy and independence sufficient for the creation of a capitalist society in Turkey with the requisite social classes. Before they could undertake such social engineering, they realised that they had to establish total control over the state of which the army was a vital component.

The first task of the Unionist government was to introduce its ideology of 'union and progress' throughout the army and remove all

other ideas which conflicted with it. Within a few years, the character of the army had been changed dramatically. Not only were all officers obliged to wear the khaki *kalpak,* a fez-like cap made of fur and favoured by the Unionists, but those who were considered incapable of accepting the CUP's leadership were retired in the January 1914 purge after Enver Pasha became minister of war. Two months later, the War Ministry issued a decree which broke completely with Ottoman military tradition and introduced an idea with great significance for the future republican state. Henceforth, officers were obliged to salute their regimental colours and standards first, even in the presence of the sultan. Thus the sultan was displaced as the principal symbol of loyalty.[1]

The Turkish army was no longer the same institution after 1913. Though it was politicised, at the same time it was removed from politics as an independent force and converted into an instrument of Unionist policy. This may seem contradictory in light of the fact that Enver's influence is said to have brought Turkey into the war on the German side, suggesting that Enver and the army controlled the CUP and not the other way around. In fact, policy was made by the inner circle of the Committee in which civilians formed the majority and Enver Pasha was first among equals. It should be remembered that Enver's charisma was the creation of the Committee which, after the revolution of 1908, exploited his dashing personality in order to develop a heroic image. Even his marriage with an Ottoman princess was arranged by the Committee as a way to influence and control the Palace.

The 'unionisation' of the army was a major event in the history of modern Turkey. The old regime was neutralised politically and the contradiction between the government and its army was removed. Both institutions had passed into the hands of the same class, the Turkish lower middle class, and therefore both were able to support the same programme of reform for the first time. As a result of the reforms implemented during the war, reforms which touched almost every aspect of society, by 1918 Unionists were able to boast that they had brought Turkey into the age of capitalism.

Turkey's defeat, however, created a new situation. The Unionist government collapsed and its top leadership fled abroad into exile. In these circumstances, the old regime, reduced to impotence during the war, was able to reassert itself in an attempt to fill the political vacuum. The British, who wanted to establish their influence in Anatolia, supported the sultan's government in Istanbul, hoping that it would regain its legitimacy and facilitate their task.

Had the Greek army not invaded Anatolia in May 1919, the sultan might have succeeded in regaining his former powers. But the invasion and the threatened partition of the country led to the rise of spontaneous resistance everywhere. Former Unionists, now describing themselves as nationalists, began to assume the leadership of the resistance movements. Had the sultan tried to provide leadership he would have had no difficulty in taking control. But Sultan Vahdettin, who came to the throne in 1918, had neither the will nor the ability to play such a role. Moreover, the old regime was totally demoralised and incapable of leading the resistance to imperialism. The sultan seemed willing to have his fate decided by the Great Powers in Paris so long as they gave him a state to rule, no matter how truncated. That is why he accepted the Treaty of Sèvres in August 1920, though it was mourned by the Turkish masses and rejected unconditionally by the nationalists.

The army was in a dilemma. After the collapse of the Unionist government most officers followed the sultan, expecting him to lead the struggle for Turkey's rights. They switched their loyalty to the nationalist cause led by Mustafa Kemal when they saw that Vahdettin was collaborating with the British and acquiescing to the partition of Anatolia. The army's loyalty to the throne had already been undermined by Unionist policies in favour of patriotism; in the circumstances of post-war Turkey, the army naturally opted for the patriotic-nationalist identity rather than the traditional dynastic one.

The Turkish army made a vital contribution to the national struggle but there was still no consensus as to the kind of regime that should be created after the victory. Some officers wanted to retain the constitutional monarchy along with the religious institution, the Caliphate. There was even talk of seeking an American mandate for Turkey. But given the wartime developments resulting in the emergence of a Turkish bourgeoisie, however small and immature, these proposals were anachronistic. There was now a sufficient social base for establishing a secular republic, for only such a regime could guarantee rapid progress towards modernity.

The Turkish Republic was proclaimed on 29 October 1923 and Mustafa Kemal became its first president. His position was still not secure. There were rivals and opponents who had to be removed, especially from the army where they could pose a serious threat. By 1926, this threat had been eliminated and some of the most prominent generals were retired. They included men like Kâzim Karabekir, Ali Fuad Cebesoy, and Refet Bele, all of whom had

distinguished themselves in the national struggle. They were forced to leave the army and disqualified from politics during Atatürk's lifetime.

Throughout the single-party period (1923–1945) the army was completely isolated from political life. Officers were told to retire if they wanted to enter politics. Many chose retirement and joined the ruling Republican People's Party (RPP); those who chose to serve the republic in uniform were not even permitted to vote. The army was given a place of honour in the republic but it was also removed from the mainstream of the social and political life of the country. Marshal Fevzi Çakmak who was Chief of the General Staff from 1925 to 1944 had the ideal temperament to lead such an army. He was a soldier of the old school who believed that officers should take no interest in politics. He did not approve of his men reading newspapers or even enjoying such an 'un-military' pastime as playing the violin!

Thus, during Fevzi Pasha's long tenure as CGS the army was effectively isolated from politics; it became the instrument of the one-party state controlled by the RPP. The self esteem of the officer corps was satisfied by making the Chief of Staff a more influential figure than the minister of war. In these years, the military tradition weakened as civil society with its emphasis on individualism grew stronger. Children of the old military elite rarely followed in their fathers' footsteps to join the armed forces; nor did the daughters tend to marry into military families. To give one example, both sons of General İsmet Inönü (1884–1972, military hero, prime minister and the republic's second president) preferred careers in business and the university, while his daughter married a cosmopolitan journalist. This trend might have continued beyond 1945 had the Cold War not intervened and once again brought Turkey's armed forces into the mainstream.

The Truman Doctrine (12 March 1947) and Turkey's integration into NATO in 1952 had the result of changing the character of the armed forces. They were brought out of the political shade into the limelight (especially during the Korean War) and became the symbol of the free-world ideology which post-war Turkey had made its own. Junior officers, especially staff officers, acquired an importance they had not enjoyed since the Young Turk period when the army was being modernised by the Germans. Once again, they had the mental flexibility to learn the science of modern warfare, this time from American instructors; the old generals, trained in the post-First World War era, were unable to cope with the new technology. Membership

of the Atlantic alliance tended to divide the army along technological and generational lines.

The Democrats accentuated this division by wooing the generals, who were considered politically significant, and neglecting the junior officers. Some generals retired and joined the Democrat Party, creating the impression that the army stood with the government. The High Command had been won over and was loyal to the political leadership. When the *coup* makers began to conspire against the government, they had difficulty in finding a senior general to lead their plot.

Unrest among the junior officers began in the mid-1950s. This coincided with the beginning of the inflationary trend in the economy which eroded the position of the salaried classes leading to a general disillusionment with DP rule in urban areas. The Democrats had failed to live up to the expectations they had aroused while in opposition. The young officers had hoped for thorough-going reform of the entire military structure. Such reform was considered and abandoned in 1953 as a concession to the old guard. Instead, the officers saw the prestige of the services declining in the multi-party period along with their modest living standards.

The Democrats were perceived to be neglecting the armed forces though that was not the case. The neglect seemed worse when the material condition of Turkey's army was compared with the armies of her NATO allies. Once they made the comparison, Turkish soldiers became aware of not only their own material backwardness but that of their country and blamed the politicians for all the shortcomings.

The Democrats, on the other hand, had no intentions of neglecting the army; only their priorities differed from those of past governments. They were in a hurry to develop Turkey and did not see the army as an institution which fostered such development. They saw it as an instrument of foreign policy which served the interests of the Western alliance as a whole. They therefore believed that the military budget ought to be financed principally with European and American aid. In the 1950s, Turkey's military spending was already causing economic hardship by fuelling inflation and throwing the economy off balance. The government wanted the allies to pay more of the cost of maintaining the huge military establishment which stood guard on NATO's eastern flank.

Discontent among the junior officers would not have led to a military *coup* had there been no political direction. That was provided by the RPP in opposition, engaged in a bitter and uncompromising struggle with the ruling Democrat Party. Some of the officers became

involved in the political controversies raging between the politicians and began to express their own grievances in terms similar to those of the opposition. Moreover, the army felt psychologically closer to the RPP whose claim as Atatürk's party conjured up memories of the comfortable link between the army and government. The Democrats, with their concern for encouraging civil society and in keeping with the practice of democratic and multi-party politics, had allowed the old intimacy to evaporate.

The military intervention of 27 May 1960 was the last of its kind in Turkey, that is to say a *coup* carried out by junior officers against their own High Command. It was in the tradition of the Young Turk revolution of 1908; its aim was not simply to orchestrate a change of government but to carry out fundamental structural changes in society. These changes were introduced in the early 1960s by means of a new and liberal constitution and a variety of other laws which permitted Turks to enjoy democratic politics for the first time. Trade unions were given the right to strike, and socialists (though not communists) were allowed to form a party and offer their critique of Turkish society. All this was very novel for a Turkey which had known only the 'Kemalist' consensus.

But the ruling circles and the military commanders learned important lessons from this experience of the early 1960s and began to take measures to prevent a repetition of the 1960 *coup*. The generals realised that they had to establish hierarchical control and a political consensus throughout the armed forces in order to stop interventions from below. The politicians realised that the generals had to be integrated into the ruling circles and given a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

As a result of this new awareness, Turkey's armed forces experienced another major transformation in the 1960s. Dissident officers were purged. The High Command formed the Armed Forces Union in 1961 to control and regulate the activities of all groups in the services, as well as to keep an eye on the National Unity Committee (NUC), the junta which took over in May 1960. Article 111 of the new constitution provided for the creation of the National Security Council, a body which included the Chief of the General Staff and the commanders of land, sea, and air forces, and which assisted the cabinet 'in the making of decisions related to national security and coordination'. These functions, increased in March 1962, gave power and influence to the High Command. In 1963, the state's intelligence apparatus was reorganised so as to increase its efficiency; a separate military intelligence agency was set up to keep track of any plots being

hatched by junior officers; there were rumours of many such plots but not one of them was permitted to reach maturity.

As a result of these measures, the armed forces became virtually an autonomous institution. The principal political parties, the Justice Party and the RPP, were no longer able to manipulate the army for narrow political ends. Instead, the generals were recognised as the guardians of the new regime they had just created. They were now deeply involved in the political and economic life of the country. Parliament passed legislation to improve the economic conditions of the officer corps and their social status rose accordingly. Salaries and pensions were increased to keep up with inflation and American-style PXs provided cheap subsidised consumer goods and food. Retired officers were recruited into the upper levels of the bureaucracy or into private or state-run enterprises, and generals were posted abroad as ambassadors. In 1961, the creation of the Army Mutual Assistance Association, better known by the Turkish acronym OYAK, brought the armed forces directly into business and industry. Thanks to the concessions granted by the government, within a few years OYAK had grown into one of the largest and most profitable conglomerates in the country, providing high dividends to its military investors.

The generals had become a privileged group in Turkish society and therefore had a major stake in maintaining the status quo. Their fortunes were no longer tied to those of a party or a leader but to the regime itself. Their primary concern was with stability and social peace and they were willing to overthrow any government unable to provide them. That is why the government of Prime Minister Demirel was removed from office twice, in March 1971 and September 1980; on both occasions Demirel was thought to have lost control of the situation and that was considered dangerous for the regime.

Ideologically, the generals were sympathetic to centre-right parties like Demirel's Justice Party whose programme was to promote capitalism in Turkey despite the opposition of traditionally conservative groups. They were more hostile to the socialists who denounced the whole capitalist experience as being totally irrelevent for Turkey's needs, and to parties like the Workers' Party of Turkey, which was founded in 1961 and dissolved following the *coup* of 1971. Their attitude towards the Republican People's Party became more ambivalent in 1972 as the party moved in the direction of social democracy and called for a more independent foreign policy. This was annoying to Turkey's NATO allies and alarming to the generals.

These attitudes were reflected on both occasions when the High Command intervened to restore political stability and establish new