

## **Insights of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers on the Cold War**

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### **Abstract**

1950s are an important historical point for Turkish foreign policy literature and researches on Turkish political thought. There is a general opinion in academia and Turkish Foreign Affairs that the main drive for Turkey's participation in the capitalist bloc led by the US after the war was due to its reflex for protecting national interests against "Soviet expansionism". This is deep-seated in the minds of scholars and is a mainstream approach in the literature. Such interpretation implies an approach that reduces the Cold War to a mere competition between two superpowers. There is a growing number of studies which are critical to this mainstream reading of the Cold War. This study examines contributions of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers to the efforts towards explaining the political atmosphere in 1950s that succeeded in devising an alternative reading of relations of Turkey with the world.

### **Keywords**

Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers, the USSR, Turkey, Cold War, 1950s

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## **Introduction**

The political-ideological stance of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers was undeniably important because it was the sole association that saw Turkey's relations in a different way, though its effect was symbolic and limited at that time. This study, first, attempts to point out the political-ideological standpoint of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers, second, to frame its analysis of evaluation of the Cold War as "global-systemic social conflict" and third to point its peace struggle.

The Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers was founded as the Turkish branch of the peace front in the world.<sup>1</sup> It advocated anti-imperialist, internationalist, pro-nuclear disarmament, anti-colonial, anti-racist, and "progressive" ideological-political stance that was a different line in Turkish politics in 1950s. Although it was not effective in official view and its activities were heavily restricted, it played a significant role in the formation of left wing stance on peace, anti-war and pro-nuclear disarmament currents then and even now. The Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers' activities are important not only because the association appears to have exerted influences on intellectual and political activists, but it offered an alternative reading of the evolution of the Cold War and thus deserves scholarly examination of its analysis.

## **Relating the ideas of a small group of Turkish intellectuals with the Cold War**

The Cold War, in its most common usage, refers to the tension and dispute era between USSR and the US on military, economic, ideological and political areas in a period of time which started at the end of World War II in 1945 and lasted until the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. Even though some define different sub-stages of the era, the definition of the Cold War focuses on the relationship between two super-powers<sup>2</sup> Even though mainstream and revisionist approaches in international relations literature firstly focuses on the regime changing activities of the USSR in the Central and Eastern Europe and

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<sup>1</sup> Behice Boran, *Behice Boran Yazılar Konuşmalar Söyleşiler Savunmalar Cilt 3*. İstanbul, Sosyal Tarih Yayınları, 2010, p.1559.

<sup>2</sup> Erel Tellal, *Uluslararası ve Bölgesel Gelişmeler Çerçevesinde SSCB- Türkiye İlişkileri 1953-1964*. Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Vakfı Yayınları, 2000, pp.18-19.

the “Soviet Expansionism” for its aim at the spread of communist ideology and secondly on the “American Imperialism” due to its aim at becoming the military, economic and political leader of the world and its international interventions, they read the Cold War basically as a period based on a rivalry between two super-powers for opposing interests and security measures.<sup>3</sup>

Except from the mainstream and revisionist approaches, the Cold War is defined as the intra-systemic and inter-systemic rivalry.<sup>4</sup> While rivalry intra-systemic analysts such as Michael Cox, Tony Cliff, Chris Harman and Alex Callinicos define the Cold War as the instrumentalization of overcoming intra-bloc rivalry, Isaac Deutscher, Fred Halliday and Richard Saull analyze the Cold War as the rivalry between two different social systems.<sup>5</sup> The Cold War, as it will be analysed in detail in this study that puts the experience of Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers in the focus, is a “global systemic-social rivalry” experienced to different aspects in the whole world.<sup>6</sup> In the historical process which began with the October Revolution in 1917 and lasted until the dissolution of the USSR, every geopolitical conflict was put in the context of inter-systemic struggle whose main line is antithetical due to their socio-economic roots.<sup>7</sup> In other words, local and international production of socialist and capitalist systems threatens the existence of the other system. In this context, pivot of social and political struggles in the world after 1917 focuses on seizure of political power in line with revolutionary transformation (despite different methods and means are used); in other words the pivot is establishing communist revolutionary states.<sup>8</sup> The presence of socialist system created a political focus for European countries such as France and Italy and many Asian, African and Latin American countries mainly China, Cuba, Korea and

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<sup>3</sup> Tolgahan Akdan, *A Systemic Analysis of the Cold War and Turkey's Postwar Drive to the West*. METU, 2014, unpublished MSc thesis.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Cox, “The Cold War and Stalinism in the Age of Capitalist Decline”, *Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory* 1, (1989). Tony Cliff, *Russia: A Marxist Analysis*. London: Pluto Press, 1970.

Chris Harman, *Class Struggles in Eastern Europe, 1945-83*, Guildford: Biddles, 1988.

Alex Callinicos, *Imperialism and Global Political Economy*, Cambridge: Polity, 2009.

Isaac Deutscher, *The Great Contest: Russia and the West*, London: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War*, London: Verso, 1986.

Richard Saull, “Social Conflict and the Global Cold War”, *International Affairs*, 87(5), (2011), pp.1123-1140.

<sup>5</sup> Tolgahan Akdan, *A Systemic Analysis of the Cold War and Turkey's Postwar Drive to the West*. METU, 2014, unpublished MSc thesis.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Saull, *The Cold War and After: Capitalism, Revolution and Superpower Politics*. London; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2007.p.8.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p.9.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, p.11.

Vietnam that seizing the political power might result in a socialist revolutionary transformation. The form of inter-systemic rivalry changed after World War II. The most crucial development different from the world after 1918, is the formation of the western capitalist bloc-world under the US leadership. The Bretton Woods agreement and consolidation of capitalist world market as well as the unquestionable military and economic supremacy of the USA post war period put the US in a special position for the systemic reproduction of the capitalist world. All international interventions of the USSR and the US are for possible revolutionary transformation and counterrevolution in the countries interfered in. As a result, the Cold War is not a mere diplomatic rivalry between Moscow and the Washington DC on the eve of a hot war; it is actually a social struggle period focusing on the revolutionary transformation which was politically realized by the establishment of a socialist state in 1917. Whereas the definition of the Cold War as a “global-systemic social struggle” period changes in almost every part of the world, it also offers us the possibility to include the local socio-economic dynamics in the scope of the analysis as it takes the social struggle processes with similar motifs into account. Therefore, it offers a rich frame which is not restricted by the limitations of the International Relations (IR) which almost became an “ahistorical/non-historical” and “asocial” discipline in mainstream.<sup>9</sup> The Cold War defined in this methodological ground is experienced with respect to its specific historical-geographical conditions and socio-economic dynamics in Turkey.

American President Harry Truman described two threats in his address to the US Congress in 1947 when he stated that they need to support “the free people” who are resisting attempted subjugation by “armed minorities” or “outside pressures”. By “armed minorities” he meant communist/socialist parties and organizations who played an important role in anti-fascist struggle in many countries particularly in Greece and by outside pressures” he clearly pointed out the USSR.<sup>10</sup> The Truman Doctrine is a military capacity enhancement and economic development doctrine designed in accordance with anti-communist axis. Along with its decision to send troops to Korean War, Turkey’s consent to accept American aid is the most significant determinant in

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<sup>9</sup> Robert W. Cox, “Social Forces, States, and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory”, *Millennium- Journal of International Studies* 10, (1981), p.126.

<sup>10</sup> “Address of the President to Congress, Recommending Assistance to Greece and Turkey”, March 12, 1947. Elsey Papers, Harry S. Truman Administration.  
[https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/doctrine/large/documents/index.php?documentid=5-9&pagenumber=4](https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/doctrine/large/documents/index.php?documentid=5-9&pagenumber=4). p.4.

Turkey's side in the international system after the World War II. With transition to "multi-party period" in Turkey and seizure of power by Democratic Party with 1950 elections there is a political continuity of Turkey's envisaged side in the international system. In particular, the divergence of opinion on renegotiation of the status of Turkish Straits with the USSR is stated to consolidate the policy of becoming a part of the Western alliance.<sup>11</sup> Edward Weisband made an interesting interpretation regarding the USSR-Turkey relations at the time by the help of his interviews with high level of bureaucrats and statesmen. The author states that "what is interesting about Turkish attitudes toward the Soviet Union during the war is how little the twenty years of good Turkish- Soviet relations seemed to affect the traditionally held Turkish image of hostile and aggressive Soviet Union".<sup>12</sup>

### **Turkey's International Relations in the Cold War**

Diplomat İldeniz Divanlıoğlu who visited Geneva as a member of Turkey's official delegation had to stay for a night in Rome on his way to Geneva in the spring of 1957. He goes to a bar nearby the Albergo de Rome hotel he is staying to watch the football match between England and the USSR.<sup>13</sup> Divanlıoğlu gets surprised by how "Italians with caps go into raptures" every time the USSR scores a goal, but they keep silent when England scores. Divanlıoğlu remembers "the ambitions of the USSR about the Western world and its efforts towards spreading communist revolution to the world". He asks: "How can a cheering like this be possible in the capital of Italy; a member of NATO that struggles against the greatest enemy of the free world and of Turkey; the USSR?" He finds it strange that "the red country" is applauded by the Italians. When he jumps to his feet to celebrate the goal scored by England in the second half, people react against him immediately and he is pushed out of the building. On his arrival to the hotel, he finds out that the customers in the bar were members of Italian Communist Party and later remembers to

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<sup>11</sup> John Vander Lippe, "Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War: Turkey's Participation in the Korean War", *Middle Eastern Studies* 36(1), (2000), pp.92-102.

<sup>12</sup> Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics*. USA: Princeton University Press, 1973, p.86.

<sup>13</sup> İldeniz Divanlıoğlu, *Emekli Büyükelçi Horoz Gibi Ötünce*, İstanbul, Doğan Kitap, 2007, p. 20-21.

advice his friends “to choose wisely as to which cafes and bars to visit in the capital of Italy which is among the most democratic countries in the world”.<sup>14</sup>

Divanlioglu’s memoir is striking in that it gives us an idea about the general approach of Turkish foreign affairs to the Cold War; Turkey is undoubtedly a part of the anti-communist “free world”. International relations of Turkish Republic after World War II are primarily analysed from three perspectives in historiography of Turkish foreign policy. These are; official historiography based on sources of Turkish foreign affairs, leftist-Kemalist historiography which evaluates Turkey’s joining in the capitalist bloc as a deviation from its independent foreign policy in the early Republican period and the Marxist historiography which considers the post-war transformation as a continuity relating to the socio-economic nature of political power.<sup>15</sup> The interpretation focusing on “Soviet threat” which permeates the whole official history perspective and is still a part of the dominant discourse regards Turkey’s NATO membership as an inevitable decision made in accordance with national interests taking into account the Soviet Union’s claims on the mutual control over the Straits, its demands of installing bases and moreover the speculations about a domestic communism threat.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, Leftist-Kemalist perspective criticizes abandonment of the independent and neutral foreign policy in early Republican period and defends that Turkey should follow its own path to development rather than following the capitalist or socialist path and should act independently and in accordance with its national interests in its relations with the world.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the third interpretation; the Marxist approach regards the international relations of Turkey after World War II as a continuity and considers the relations with the world not only as a foreign policy choice but rather as an issue of class stratification.<sup>18</sup> This third line is not merely a retrospective historical interpretation; it found a concrete political-ideological channel in 1950s.

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Cenk Saraçoğlu, “Türk Dış Politikası Tarih Yazımında Soğuk Savaş ve Türkiye-SSCB İlişkileri”, *Praksis* 17, (2011), pp. 57-68.

<sup>16</sup> Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950’li Yıllar*. Ankara, ODTÜ Yayıncılık, 2012, p.3-6.

<sup>17</sup> This approach is closely associated with the analysis of socio- economic structure of Turkey by Leftist-Kemalist MDD (National Democratic Revolution) or Dogan Avcioğlu line. It is one of the political outputs of the main standpoint which asserts that there is no capitalism in Turkey, that Turkey should firstly realize the bourgeois revolution.

<sup>18</sup> The emphasis on the continuity should not be polarized. There are people among them who see Saracoglu and Menderes government as a deviation from the foreign policy of Ataturk.

Founding of Turkish Association of Peace Lovers, its activities and political recipe are important in that they represent this line which is ignored today and was oppressed by inquiries and detentions at that time. It should be noted that, Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers has organic ties with the political tradition of TKP (Communist Party of Turkey);<sup>19</sup> however, rather than analysing political and ideological understanding of international relations by pro-Soviet line of Turkish left, this study focuses on Turkish Association of Peace Lovers that undertook a more inclusive front-line activity.

### **Struggle for Peace in the World and in Turkey**

World War II ended with two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>20</sup> Weapons of mass destruction that annihilate hundreds of thousands of civilians in a short period of time caused confusion all around the world. Thus, the USA showed its military supremacy to its allies and enemies near the end of the war. It is clear that one of the primary addressees of nuclear attack is Soviet forces that fought off the fascist invasion on their land and started advancing on the West and the East. Capitalist and socialist envisioning for shaping the world affairs started in the shadow of atomic weapons with the end of the war. Controversial and disputable nature of negotiations among USSR, the USA and England after the war triggered a fear that a Third World War was close at hand. Many people, mainly intellectuals, and institutions took action to prevent a possible world war that could cause a mass annihilation with the atomic bomb.

The use of nuclear weapons spurred a debate among scientists in the world. Using science and advancement against humanity like this was not deemed right. The Stockholm Appeal initiated by French physicist Frédéric

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<sup>19</sup> Representatives of Turkish Association of Peace Lovers rejected this relationship at that time when the idea of communism was forbidden and TKP was deemed to be illegal. Confessors like Aclan Sayilgan and right-wing nationalist writers like Fethi Tevetoglu and Ilhan Darendelioglu portrayed the Association as a monster of communism. Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers is a frontline initiative with a different agenda apart from TKP, therefore it is more accurate to mention a relationship rather than a one-to-one correspondence.

<sup>20</sup> There are some allegations that Japan surrendered before the atomic bomb attack and the real victory was after the advance of USSR and Mongolia troops on Manchuria. However, it is clear that, except from small-scale military operations, World War II ended with the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki regardless of when Japan surrendered and whatever the reason behind the bombings was.

Joliot-Curie demanding the ban of nuclear weapons and declaration of a country which first uses an atomic bomb as a war criminal paved the way for establishment of many Peace associations throughout the world.

The Stockholm Appeal put it as follows

We demand the outlawing of atomic weapons as instruments of intimidation and mass murder of peoples. We demand strict international control to enforce this measure. We believe that any government which first uses atomic weapons against any other country whatsoever will be committing a crime against humanity and should be dealt with as a war criminal. We call on all men and women of good will throughout the world to sign this appeal. March 19, 1950, Stockholm, World Committee of Partisans for Peace.<sup>21</sup>

World Peace Council is the international roof organization of these peace associations. Permanent committee members chosen by the World Peace Congress first held in Paris in 1949 consist of an interesting combination of Nobel prized scientists, peasants, world-renowned poets and painters, workers, priests and bishops and representatives of democratic struggle for women. Frédéric Joliot-Curie, Prof. Irene Joliot-Curie, Louis Aragon, Pablo Picasso, Prof. W. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Ilya Ehrenburg, Alexander Fadeyev, Pablo Neruda and György Lucaacs are the most famous names in this committee. Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet participated in the later World Peace Congresses too. Other demands of World Peace Congresses aside from the ban on the use of nuclear weapons are as follows; annulment of Atlantic Pact; withdrawal of US troops from Europe and Asia; cancelling the Marshall Plan and war preparations by the USA; withdrawal of colonial soldiers from the colonies; investment of money in development rather than armament.

Simultaneously with the peace initiatives in the world, Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers was officially founded in Istanbul on 21 May 1950 by Adnan Cemgil, Behice Boran, Architect Nevzad Ozmeric, Lawyer Vahdettin Barut, Lawyer Osman Faruk Toprakoglu, Sculptor Turgud Pura, Architect Affan Kirimli, Decorator Reşad Sevincsoy and housewife Muvakkar Guran.<sup>22</sup> Behice Boran who is among the founders of the association states in the 14th issue of *Cark Basak* periodical published on September 1, 1976 that they

<sup>21</sup> *Barış*, (Peace Magazine), April 15, 1950, issue 1, p.7, from now on refer to TUSTAV PEACE library archive for the mentioned texts: <http://www.tustav.org/kutuphane/baris-kutuphanesi/>.

<sup>22</sup> Fethi Tevetoğlu, *Türkiye'de Sosyalist ve Komünist Faaliyetler (1910-1960)*. Ankara, 1967, p.624.



founded this association in line with the rising demand for peace throughout the world against the warmongering by the USA “which is seen and depicted as the sole unbeatable military power after dropping atomic bombs on Japan” towards the Soviet Union. The Turkish front of world peace initiative which struggles against atomic weapons with Stockholm Peace Appeal defines its goal as: “Informing and warning the Turkish public and masses about the dangers of the atomic weapons and atomic war and inviting them to join the democratic and collective struggle for advocating peace” and emphasizes that this mission is a duty for patriots.<sup>23</sup>

Official founding of Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers is after the publication of BARIS Fikir Politika Sanat (Peace Magazine) periodical.<sup>24</sup> The periodical helped founding of the association and was also the most important publication reflecting its political-ideological stance. The announcement of founding of the association could only be published in the eighth and the last issue of the periodical dated August 1, 1950. The aim of the Association was stated by the president of the association Behice Boran to be “strengthening the demand for peace by the Turkish public with publications or by holding conferences and meetings or by applying to official authorities if necessary.”<sup>25</sup>

Shortly after the founding of Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers, Democratic Party government decides to send 4.500 soldiers to Korea. The administrative board of the Association demands that a telegram protesting this decision should be sent to the National Assembly of Turkey signed by Behice Boran and Adnan Cemgil. In the telegram, this decision is asserted to be against the United Nations Treaty and the Turkish Constitution. The association suggested that the Turkish government should make efforts to stop the war as done by Indian government (Nehru). Withdrawal of the decision which is incompatible with the constitution of Turkey is demanded and a call was made for an emergency meeting of the National Assembly of Turkey. On the other hand, 30000 pamphlet declarations were published and distributed in Istanbul. Members of Association of Peace-Lovers were detained on the night of distribution of declarations and founders of the association and the owner of the printing house which published the pamphlet-declarations were arrested by

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<sup>23</sup> Behice Boran, *Behice Boran Yazılar Konuşmalar Söyleşiler Savunmalar Cilt 3*. İstanbul, Sosyal Tarih Yayınları, 2010, p.1558.

<sup>24</sup> PEACE was a fortnightly published magazine that first appeared on 15 April 1950 and the last, 8th issue, was published on 1 August 1950. It did not survive due to detention of its editorial board members.

<sup>25</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_008.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_008.pdf), p.4.

reason of “undermining national strength” and “engaging in activities in conflict with national interests”.

The Prime Minister, Menderes, personally targets the Association of Peace-Lovers and claims that it has international roots. In response to this, the Association asserts that war threatens all nations in the world and it is utterly meaningless to regard the demand for peace as “Moscow discourse”. “Should we not believe in Mendeleev law only because it was originated from Moscow and instead accept that the flying castles that destroy schools, hospitals, universities and the whole cities with their citizens as doves of peace?”<sup>26</sup> Behice Boran who is accused of harming the national interest states in her plea that government decisions do not necessarily mean “national interest” and governments cannot be “absolute and sole judges free from shortcomings” and that Turkey entered the war “for the sake of American interests.” Behice Boran writes that Democratic Party achieved what it wanted with these arrests and the opposition was cut off on the issue of Korea.<sup>27</sup> She states that the fight which stopped formally in the following process goes on in its essence:

Fight for peace stopped formally but it was going on essentially because fight for peace is inseparable from anti-imperialist, anti-fascist struggle, independence and democracy. National and social independence wars do not contradict with the fight for peace in the world; on the contrary they complete one another. It is of utmost importance that imperialism has to be defeated and retreated to preserve world peace.<sup>28</sup>

Another important point to emphasize is that the reason why the efforts of Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers towards intervening in the foreign policy plot of Turkey was suppressed at that time and was later deliberately ignored by the mainstream media was due to the prevailing interpretation of “Soviet-threat”. Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers, later Peace Association, is not analysed apart from the news of prosecution, trial, arrest of its members and their answer to the prosecutor’s opinion, political pleadings, and memoirs of imprisonment and anecdotal narration of the activities of the association.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_008.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_008.pdf), p.5.

<sup>27</sup> Behice Boran, *Behice Boran Yazılar Konuşmalar Söyleşiler Savunmalar Cilt 3*. İstanbul, Sosyal Tarih Yayınları, 2010, p.1559.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*, p.1560.

<sup>29</sup> An important exception is the book of Pınar Selek titled: *Barışmadık* (2004) (İstanbul, İthaki).

### **Political-Ideological Stance of Association of Peace-Lovers**

Temporary reconciliation between capitalist-imperialist bloc and socialist bloc came to an end with the end of World War II. It is obvious that unlike the USA which became even stronger after the war, the USSR was far from having the necessary military and economic power to go into another war.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Truman Doctrine of the USA and its plan to “rebuild” Europe with Marshall aid and building a network of military bases in numerous parts of the world and signing of NATO as a defence treaty raised the anticipation of a third war. Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers summarizes its struggle in a world conjuncture like that as “becoming the front of protecting our homeland and people from imperialist attack and the pressure of dollar and atomic weapons”.<sup>31</sup> I will analyse the stance of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers, what is meant by imperialist attack, pressure of dollar and atomic weapons and the content of the opposition in its struggle against these issues in line with the political-ideological motives noted below.

### **Anti-Imperialism**

It is clear from the discussions in the *BARIŞ* periodical that the question of whether American imperialism is an illusion or not was as “valid” a question in 1950s. The periodical makes the imperialism more tangible by reporting the process of how the USA entered the Central America first via fruit and sugar companies and later via railway and construction companies; how the regional governments were forced to become dependent on American banks through loans and how Americans were granted with privileges to do petrol and mining businesses in this way; and the process of gaining political control over the regional governments.<sup>32</sup> The strategy of the United States, a country which has a history as such stated above in the Central America, after the World War II is defined as “burdening the underdeveloped countries with debts” and taking the control of these countries in this way. It is explained in

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<sup>30</sup> Even American Cold War strategist George Kennan stated that the policy of containment he put forward was not based on the possibility of a hot war with the Soviets, that the USSR did not have an expansionist policy; rather it was primarily trying to recover from the destruction of the war.

<sup>31</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_007.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_007.pdf), p.5.

<sup>32</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_004.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_004.pdf), p. 9.

the periodical that the reason why America gave up trade protectionism policies was because it wanted to take down its old rival-i.e., England after the war. It is also stated that low resistance of England against the American dominance was broken by the USA's contribution to the development of Japan and Germany. According to the periodical, converting the sterling zone into a dollar zone in world trade was the main imperialist strategy of the USA. The creation of the European Customs Union is also an important part of this plan.<sup>33</sup> Marshall Plan is evaluated as a plan of establishing American dominance on European nations and development of Europe is deemed as just a facade.<sup>34</sup>

The periodical of the Association, BARIS, dated April 15, 1950 was published with the editorial titled "Barış Yolu" (The Way of Peace). The very first paragraph of the editorial targets the American "military-industrial complex"<sup>35</sup>

The wounds inflicted by the last war have not healed yet. Desolate mothers' misery has not ceased, orphaned children's tears have not dried yet. The spectre of poverty is not only walking through the ruins of destroyed cities; it is also scything down the countries which have not yet experienced the bloody and burning disasters of the war. However, the ambitions of those who consider the sufferings of human-beings as a source of interest have not subsided. Greed of American monopolists who have come out the war with a profit of 53 billion dollars has yet to alleviate. On the contrary their ambition seems to have become even more intense.<sup>36</sup>

In the editorial it is emphasized that political and economic independence of some countries were eliminated with economic treaties and the military disputes following these treaties and that the USA threatens the world peace by the military bases in countries which was turned into an arsenal with the help of local defectors. It is stated that the American goods flooding the national markets harm the local industry and increase unemployment and thus, due to the increase in military and national debts taxes rise, salaries drop and livelihood of people deteriorate. It is highlighted that the actions of the United States are "preparation for war" but the progressivists in the world will

<sup>33</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_007.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_007.pdf), p.10.

<sup>34</sup> "Harbi Kimler İstiyor?" BARIS Fikir Politika Sanat, 2nd issue, March 1, 1950, p.3. [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_002.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_002.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> C. Wright Mills, *Power Elite*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 364.

<sup>36</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_001.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_001.pdf), p.1.

advocate peace and will not allow the outbreak of another war. People who “speak the same language with the imperialists” are targeted and it is asserted that “Turkish people want peace” against the argument as follows: “We are in the third world war” which is often emphasized in pro-American journalist Ahmet Emin Yalman’s columns. Destructive nature of the atomic bomb is largely covered in the periodical. It is exposed that atomic bomb is an instrument in the hands of Morgan family who are among the American billionaires and West European trust companies which have deep ties with this family.

Association of Peace-Lovers alludes to the USA’s policy of containment against the Soviet Union, even though it doesn’t use the exact term for the policy. It is stated that the USA is in preparation of a military intervention in Greece, Yugoslavia and Iran. It is argued that Ahmet Emin Yalman’s articles titled: “1 Numaralı Amerikancı (Number 1 Pro-Americanism)” reveal the expectations of America from Turkey and that Yalman claims that “minorities in Turkish nation are subjected to discrimination in public democracy” and urges the Turkish government to do its duty. Yalman is accused by the association of being a “warmonger” for writing these articles.<sup>37</sup> It is implied that Turkey is sought to become a part of the policy of containment against the USSR.

The periodical does not only discuss the imperialism from economic and military perspectives. It is also criticized that “imperialism shows fascism as a nervous breakdown of a few psychologically ill patients” and “conceals its real social basis”. In addition, not only the American imperialism’s threat to world peace but also cultural Americanization is largely mentioned in the periodical. In the article titled “Holivut Emperyalizmi, Yerli filmciliğimizin karşılaştığı tehlike (Hollywood Imperialism, the danger to our national cinema)” it is emphasized that American movies propagate for their own bloc and “the influence of American cinema on public misery, children and youngsters” is criticized.

Anti-imperialism is the key political-ideological motive of Association of Peace-Lovers. Both democratization struggle in Turkey and the peace struggle in the world are designed in line with anti-imperialist standpoint. Though they were presented under separate headings to make it easier to follow, the essential standpoint of the periodical and thereby the association is

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<sup>37</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_008.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_008.pdf), p.5.

anti-imperialism on issues of colonized countries, Korean War, European Union and Turkey's drive to the US-led bloc. In other words, each issue assessed under these headings are thematically organized to clearly present the way the Association evaluates each matter.

### **The Issue of Colonized Nations and Korea**

*BARIŞ* periodical openly criticizes the 73rd article of the United Nations Treaty which appoints a protecting power to a weaker country which is unable to secure its sovereignty.<sup>38</sup> It is proclaimed that The Dutch in Malaya (Malaysia), the French in Viet-Nam, the English and Americans in China, Pacific Islands and Africa “are not the protecting powers of those nations who want independence, on the contrary they only shed their blood.” The United Nations is condemned for remaining indifferent to colonial wars. It is pointed out that the colonial overlords; “dynasty and administrator clans who are owned by American dollar” wage a war against their nations by collaborating with foreign investors. National independence movements against colonialism in Asia, Africa and Middle-East are supported.

In this context, anti-imperialist struggle of Korea which has been a colony of France and Japan for many years is espoused. It is stated that the USA now plots to take control of the peninsula that could only gain its independence after a long colonial period by overthrowing People's Republic of Korea and manipulating the South Korea. It is emphasized that Korean War is conveyed falsely to Turkish people in the article titled “Kore Savaşının İç Yüzü (True Color of Korean War)” in the eight issue of the periodical. The background of the war is explained in detail against the false claims that the North Korea waged war against the South Korea without a reason and that “they will protect a free nation from being butchered.” It is also pointed up that Syngman Rhee government in the South “jailed 478 thousand patriots, murdered 100 thousand patriots, declared English as the official language of the country and handed over the public security to Japanese police.” It is stated that because of the actions of the government “Ninety percent of the South Korean people sided against Rhee government and the number of partisans who went undercover in the mountains have reached up to one hundred.” Threats of Rhee government like how three days would be sufficient enough to invade the capital of North Korea are also written in the article. It is explained

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<sup>38</sup> <http://legal.un.org/repertory/art73.shtml> .

that the South Korea wants to invade the North as heavy industry and mining resources are located in the North while the South struggles against massive unemployment, inflation and even famine (the USA has sent the South's rice harvest to Japan) due to its economy relying mostly on agriculture. It is reported that the North made an appeal of unification to the assembly in which the majority of members of the parliament consisted of independent parliamentarians chosen in the elections in the South and how the delegation from the North who were there for negotiation were detained, sent to Seoul and later jailed. It is also written that the war started on June, 18-i.e., a few days after the address of the Under Secretary of the State for Political Affairs to the South Korean parliament stating that South Korea is not alone. Thus, the Association of Peace-Lovers announces to the Turkish people that the Korean War was started by the "puppet cabinet of Rhee in the South" with provocations of American imperialism.

That activity of the association on the issue of Korea is not limited to informing the public. The Association of Peace-Lovers asks the most striking question to the Democrat Party (DP) upon its decision to send troops to Korea: Where is Korea? The government is strongly condemned for sending the sons of poor peasant families who don't even know the location of the country to fight for American interests. It is expressed that the resolution to help South Korea passed due to Soviets' boycott on the decline of the membership of China to the UN and this measure is not a UN resolution. It is asserted that with its resolution on Korea, the United Nations has stopped being an organ that unites Western and Eastern nations.

### **"European Union"**

Association of Peace-Lovers does not overlook the plan on establishing European Coal and Steel Community which is one of the pillars of today's European Union and often associated with French Foreign Minister Schuman. It is put across that the purpose of the establishment of the union is "mobilizing European industry which is controlled by German cartels and trust companies for war and turning Europe into a single market for America." It is also stated that the plan was devised to make use of Germany's heavy industry for the armament of Atlantic countries and that decline of Germany's

membership to NATO by France and England was bypassed in this way.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, it is written that the Schuman Plan threatens the standard of living for the labourers by “equalizing wages.”<sup>40</sup> The forecast of this approach before the foundation of an entity like European Union is quite striking. Today, the European Union is above all a single market and Germany is the central member of this market with its heavy industry.<sup>41</sup> Those who are hit hardest by every economic crisis under the roof of the EU are the labourers whose living standards deteriorate each day.<sup>42</sup>

### **Turkey's Drive after World War II**

Association of Peace-Lovers reveres Turkish War of Independence as the struggle against imperialist invasion. Besides, they also state that Nazis who got to the borders of Turkey during World War II were not alone, that a racist group (refers to Saracoglu government) who protect the interest of merchant bourgeoisie, landlords, corrupt contractors and officer tycoons holds power in Turkey and that they are disappointed by the outcome of the war.<sup>43</sup> It is pointed out that the same powers who had been waiting for the victory of imperialism were quick to “hide under the skirt” of American imperialism after the war. It is emphasized in almost all of the analyses on Turkey that the Democratic Party and the Republican People’s Party are the two sides of the same coin. It is highlighted that these are not the parties of workers, peasants or people; rather the parties of the ruling class. A special attention is drawn to the fact that there is no difference between not having the right to strike and DP’s promise for conditional strike. It is expressed that the DP has eliminated the achievements of the national independence war and that promise of free trade, removing customs walls and incentives for attracting foreign investors will put our export goods such as “Adana cotton, Bursa silk”, tobacco and grape into an unequal competition in the world market. DP’s promise of privatization is regarded as more of making benefits available to domestic “plunderer investors” rather than to the foreign investors.

<sup>39</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_005.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_005.pdf), p.2.

<sup>40</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_006.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_006.pdf), p.2.

<sup>41</sup> John Rosenthal, “Germany and the Euro Crisis: Is the Powerhouse Really So Pure?”, *World Affairs* 175(1), (2012), pp.53-61.

<sup>42</sup> Christoph Hermann, “Structural Adjustment and Neoliberal Convergence in Labour Markets and Welfare: The Impact of the Crisis and Austerity Measures on European Economic and Social Models”, *Competition and Change* 18(2), (2014), pp.111-130.

<sup>43</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_007.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_007.pdf), p.5.



The Association of Peace-Lovers strongly emphasizes that the ruling class is behind Turkey's drive towards the West. In an analysis formulated in the subsequent years, Behice Boran writes that Turkish capitalism benefited from three factors apart from economy in 1950s. These are: opening new lands for agriculture; receiving "approximately one billion worth of aid which was a lot of money at that time" from the USA every year; temporary change in the terms of trade in favour of agricultural products under the conditions resulted from the Korean War. According to Boran, Turkish capitalism draw a rising growth chart in those years thanks to these three factors and transformation of commercial capital into industrial capital accelerated.<sup>44</sup> That is to say, class background of "national interests" is revealed in this way.

The Association says very little about the issue of Turkey's drive except for stating that it should be on the side of peace. The Association which is criticized for being pro-Soviet did not expect from Turkey to be an "ally of the Soviets"; at least not in the 1950s. It is expressed that Turkey's interest lies in an independent foreign policy line and advocating peace.

### **Internationalism**

In the sections named "Fifteen Day Events" in BARIS, there is news from all over the world. There is an interesting collection of news articles about the countries ranging from the United States, to the Arab States, Germany, France and United Kingdom. These news articles prove that Association of Peace-Lovers which is an organization for anti-imperialist struggle does not have an anti-western discourse. There are many news stories in the periodical such as how the coal mine strike in America ended with the victory of the workers; how Republicans and Democrats decided to cooperate on not letting labourer congressman Vito Marcantonio to be elected in the 18th electoral district; how the academicians from California University opposed the pressure of the American government for loyalty pledge; that Paul Robesson was not allowed to speak on the radio about the rights of African Americans; how social democrats reacted against West Germany prime minister's making people chant the Nazi anthem "Deutschland über Alles"; how the detained leaders of the landless peasants were freed after the protests in Pakistan. News stories like these indicate, with the term in the periodical, that Association of Peace-Lovers

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<sup>44</sup> "Türkiye Ekonomisi: Dünden Bugüne" *Yürüyüş*, Sayı 153, 14 Mart 1978 in , 2010, p.1755.

embraces the whole of the “progressive” world and also they show, with the expression in the periodical again, that the Association “stands up against reactionists.” At this point, the meaning of progressivism for the Association of Peace-Lovers which embraces the progressive world should be elaborated on. Progressivism-reactionism issue in Turkey was discussed by Kemalist-oriented ideology within the limitations of secularism-religiousness for a while and now it is completely put aside with the defeat of Kemalist hegemony. However, concepts of progressive and reactionary powers are used in a universal context by the Association referring to either opposing to the social progress and transformation or yearning for change and fighting for it. Use of the term associated only with religion by Republican People’s Party (RPP) affiliated writers is opposed in the periodical at that time and it is emphasized that reactionism is not a formal issue. The periodical indicates that losing independence, absence of freedom and democracy and “instigation for war” are “political reactionism” and that religion is an instrument of reactionism, but it is not reactionary in itself. With such a definition of progressivism-reactionism, Association of Peace-Lovers regards American conservatives and Nazis as reactionary powers as well as the ruling class in Turkey who opposes social transformation. The effect of appeal for peace in the world is covered in detail in the context of progressive internationalism in each issue of the periodical of the association. People of Turkey are informed about the activities of peace callers all around the world via detailed news stories ranging from the news article titled “Tamtam in Black Africa calls for signing the Stockholm Appeal” to the news articles from Australia, China, Cuba, Japan and Egypt.

### **Anti-Nuclear Armament Movement**

We demand the outlawing of the dreadful atomic bomb and mass murder of peoples once and for all. We want a strict international control to ensure the implementation of this measure without exemptions. We believe that any government which first uses atomic bomb against any other country whatsoever will be committing a crime against humanity and should be dealt with as a war criminal.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> From the appeal to the nations of world in the 3rd session of Permanent Committee of the World Congress of Partisans for Peace:  
[http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_006.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_006.pdf), p. 11.

Association of Peace-Lovers advocates the demands against nuclear weapons publicised in the World Peace Congresses. The article written against nuclear armament by John Desmond Bernal published in the name of World Peace Committee urges the governments to stop researches on nuclear weapons and ban the use of chemical and biological weapons. At this point, the Association of Peace-Lovers announces that the Stockholm Appeal is the “expression of Turkish people’s sincerest desire” and that “every patriotic Turkish citizen will sign this appeal.” It is asserted that struggle for peace is also the cause for people’s desires and dreams and imperialism and its collaborators stand against this cause. The Association responds to the claims that the atomic bomb protected more than two hundred thousand soldiers by stating: “We don’t know if there is a right granted to those who took the role of “protectors of the humanity” to wipe out hundreds of thousands innocent people along with their cities in order to protect armed soldiers at a war.”<sup>46</sup>

Turning this struggle into a fight supported by the society is highly significant in that it enabled raising awareness of the people and opening the peace appeal for the signature of the nations of the world. This approach embodies a social politicization apart from the viewpoint that diplomats should be the ones to shoulder peace struggle. The influences of social politicization can be observed in Turkey too. A letter sent to the periodical is published with the title: “From our readers: A Turkish mother’s letter”. In this letter, Mrs. Bedriye’s neighbour Remziye’s words are conveyed word for word:

We hope for peace in the world. Is there news of war in newspapers? They always sugar-coat that devil called atom or whatever the hell. I fear nothing but children of Mohammed will be wasted. They will slaughter babies and children too. They will wipe everything off the maps with bombs. As if we haven’t suffered enough. We thought the worst were the Germans. Now the Americans insist they are at war with the Russians, like a broken record. There is no break from their nonsense even for a day. It has been a lot since the Balkan War. They will kill poor and miserable people again. I hope they all rot in hell.<sup>47</sup>

Mrs. Bedriye writes in her letter that she asked 20 people in her neighbourhood and none of them said they wanted war.

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<sup>46</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_006.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_006.pdf), p.3.

<sup>47</sup> [http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli\\_yayinlar/baris/b\\_008.pdf](http://tustav.org/yayinlar/sureli_yayinlar/baris/b_008.pdf), p.9.

The Turkish Association of Peace Lovers was closed immediately after detention of its members on account of distributing anti-NATO and anti-Korean War leaflets on Istanbul streets on 28 July 1950 - two days after the government's decision of sending Turkish troops to Korean War -. Following a lengthy judicial process, association managers received 15 months imprisonments on charges of "engaging in activities in conflict with national interests" at the court-martial. *BARIS* periodical could only be published eight issues due to imprisonments of its editorial board.<sup>48</sup>

### Conclusion

The principal and foremost mission of the Association of Peace-Lovers is forming an anti-imperialist peace struggle front by spreading the Stockholm Appeal on anti-nuclear armament all around Turkey. The Association puts great importance on its mission to "inform" Turkish people about DP's pro-American and liberal political and economic policies and its decision of sending troops to Korea. Hence, the Association reports the activities of imperialism all around the world to Turkish people and bases itself ideologically upon national struggles for independence, various progressive-democratic powers and working class. The Association of Peace-Lovers is an anti-imperialist, internationalist, anti-nuclear armament and in its own terms a "progressive" front in the Turkish politics in 1950s. The Association contextualizes the Cold War as an imperialist aggression towards socialist system and national liberation movements in addition to social and political pressure of progressive movements particularly labour, civil rights and anti-war activisms in domestic affairs of core-capitalist states. Apart from the Peace-Lovers of Turkey's interpretation of the Cold War, their activism is also situated in a "global-systemic social conflict". The anti-imperialist peace struggle of the Turkish Association of Peace-Lovers against a possible nuclear war in 1950s, its criticism against the foreign policy of Turkey and its alternative model for Turkey is analysed in the study.

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<sup>48</sup> Fatih Yaşlı, *Antikomünizm, Ülkücü Hareket, Türkiye*, İstanbul: Yordam, 2019, p. 94.

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