**Li Yunpeng:  A Preliminary** **Research on the 1961-1980 History of the Turkish Workers’ Party (TİP)**

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**Abstract**

**In the 1960s and 1970s, the socialist movement in Turkey reached its peak, with one of its core leadership groups being the Turkish Workers’ Party. The Workers’ Party primarily engaged in parliamentary struggles, workers’ and student movements, and made indelible contributions to safeguarding the interests of the broader working class, promoting the social democracy and legal process in Turkey, and upholding Turkish independence and sovereignty. The ideology it advocated, represented by the “National Democratic Front,” continues to have an impact on the Turkish social leftist political parties. Due to subjective historical limitations and severe objective struggle situations, the Turkey’s Workers’ Party did not successfully lead the country’s proletariat to seize power. However, Party’s rise and fall provided experiences and lessons from the “Turkish model” for the development of the socialist movement in the developing third world countries.**

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, under the influence of Marxism and the Second International, the socialist movement began to emerge in Turkey. The October Revolution in Russia further promoted the development of the socialist movement in Turkey. In September 1920, the Turkish Communist Party was declared and established. However, due to ideological and geopolitical reasons, Marxist political parties in Turkey were consistently suppressed and even banned by the government. In the 1960s and 1970s, with the improvement of the socio-political environment, numerous socialist political parties emerged in Turkey, with the Turkish Workers’ Party being the most significant. The Workers’ Party allowed the Turkish people to truly encounter and understand Marxist-Leninism for the first time and once sparked vigorous workers’ and student movements in Turkey. Marxism-Leninism as a political trend has long been preserved in Turkish society.

1. The Rise of the Turkish Workers’ Party

The establishment of the Turkish Workers’ Party has profound historical connections and characteristics of the times. Its origins can be traced back to the Turkish Communist Party in the 1920s. Its birth was closely related to the profound changes in the international situation after World War II, and its development was closely linked to the favorable conditions that began to emerge in the domestic political situation in the early 1960s.

（1）The Early 20th Century Turkish Communist Party

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the once-dominant Ottoman Empire was facing internal and external challenges. Externally, under the encroachment of Western powers, it gradually became a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. Internally, various ideologies and advocacies such as Pan-Islamism, Pan-Ottomanism, Pan-Turkism, Kemalism, constitutional monarchy, separation of powers, and anarchism clashed intensely.

National separatist movements continued to rise, with uprisings from Arab, Greek, and Armenian populations. The bourgeois revolution led by the Young Turks in 1909 failed to accomplish the task of a democratic revolution. During World War I, the empire joined the Allied Powers, lost large territories after defeat, and eventually disintegrated. The Republic of Turkey was established in October 1923.

It was in this context of intense changes at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century that early socialist movements emerged in Turkey, first among Turks in Germany and Russia, and then within the Ottoman empire. The earliest socialist organization was the Armenian Revolutionary Hınchak Party, which advocated Marxism and socialism, and engaged in workers’ movements, but was severely suppressed by the government after 1913. The victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 greatly inspired the Turkish people to resist imperialism and the decaying rule of the Sultan’s government. Some books and manuals advocating Marxism and the Russian October Revolution appeared in the Anatolian region of the empire. In 1920, Mustafa Suphi established the precursor of the Workers’ Party, the Turkish Communist Party, in Baku (now the capital of Azerbaijan), and began translating works by Marx, Engels, and Lenin into Turkish. Due to its geographical proximity to the Soviet Union, the party’s charter and organization were influenced by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and led by the Communist International and Lenin.

From its inception, the Turkish Communist Party devoted itself to the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution in their country. Party leaders believed that the primary task of the Turkish people was to defeat the invading imperialist forces from Britain, France, and Greece, and to overthrow the reactionary rule of the Sultan’s government. The party took a supportive attitude towards the Anatolian nationalist regime led by Kemal. The Communist International also supported the Turkish Communist Party’s actions. However, after the basic defeat of the imperialist invaders and the seizure of state power, Kemal turned against the Turkish Communist Party.

This was primarily due to ideological opposition. Although the stateism and revolutionarism in the “Six Principles of Kemalism” were clearly influenced by the Soviet system, Kemal was intending that Turkey should be a western oriented burjuva state, not a socialist state. Furthermore, it was also due to geopolitical considerations. Kemal was concerned that the Soviet Union would use the Turkish Communist Party as a wedge to incite socialist revolution in Turkey and even turn Turkey into a Soviet republic.

Consequently, severe measures were taken against the Turkish Communist Party, including pressure, repression, and even assassination. Its publications were banned. Puppet parties, such as the so-called “Turkish Communist Party,” were established to compete with the Turkish Communist Party, but were not recognized by the Communist International as they did not adhere to Marxist-Leninist ideology or prioritize class struggle.

In the late 1920s, the Soviet Union began to repair relations with the Kemalist regime, hoping that Turkey could resist Western expansion. The Communist International also shifted the main focus of its struggle from the Near East to Europe and the Far East, and Communist International had some illusions about Kemalist bourgeois reform activities.

These factors prevented the Turkish Communist Party from fully mobilizing the revolutionary enthusiasm of the country’s working class and peasants, resulting in the failure of the revolutionary struggle. Faced with government suppression in 1923, the party was unable to resist and was forced to go underground. However, during this period, the theoretical and practical experiences of the Turkish Communist Party accumulated valuable experiences for the struggle of Marxist political parties in Turkey and nurtured the backbone of the socialist movement that followed.

Some leaders of the Workers’ Party, such as Behice Boran, the chairman of the Workers’ Party, were directly involved in the activities of the Turkish Communist Party. Some members of the party also came into contact with Marxism-Leninism through the Turkish Communist Party. The party’s initial understanding of Marxism-Leninism, especially its views on national issues, to some extent inherited the thinking of the Turkish Communist Party. The later proposal of the “National Democratic Front” by the party actually also drew on the experiences and lessons of the Turkish Communist Party.

1. **The Main Ideology of the Turkish Workers’ Party**

To date, among the Marxist political parties in Turkey, the Turkish Workers’ Party’s ideological achievements are the most systematic and fruitful. The party places great emphasis on ideological construction, and its theoretical principles have effectively guided a series of its political practices. However, internal ideological differences on certain important issues in later stages ultimately led to the organizational split of the party. The ideological development of the Turkish Workers’ Party can be roughly divided into two periods before and after 1968.

1. Early Period: “National Democratic Front” Ideology

The “National Democratic Front” ideology was conceived at the First Congress of the Workers’ Party and matured at the Second Congress, representing the culmination of the party’s early ideological achievements.

Since its founding in 1961, the Workers’ Party initially formulated the party’s manifesto, which aimed to “promote Turkey’s modernization process, allowing the broad laboring masses, including the working class and intellectuals, to share the same destiny. The party sought to organize workers and intellectuals and lead the way for democracy”.

In 1964, the First National Congress of the party declared itself as a “working class party,” with the task of “uniting all laboring people in the country and legally seizing power”. The First Congress also conducted a profound analysis of the Turkish economic foundation. The then-chairman of the party, Mehmet Ali Aybar, believed that an excessively liberal economic development model, combined with the influx of monopoly capital from imperialist countries, led to soaring prices, worsening inflation, and increasing burdens on people’s livelihoods.

The interests of the working class were severely damaged. Based on this, Turkey had to follow a non-capitalist development path, emphasizing the development of a mixed economy dominated by state-owned enterprises, particularly the nationalization and transformation of finance, energy, banks, heavy industry, and other sectors.

This model was a planned economy with state’s macro-control, not a socialist development model, but a special form of transition from capitalism to socialism, with the ultimate goal of reaching socialism.

The Congress also presented the party’s positions on land issue and private property, political issues, and foreign affairs.

Regarding land and property issues, the Workers’ Party believed that reform was necessary but cautioned against overly radical measures in current conditions. In terms of political issues, the party believed that personnel reform within the government was necessary, as the interests of the working class were not being adequately addressed. On foreign affairs, the Congress urged the Turkish government to pursue an independent diplomatic policy and not become a vassal of the United States. In 1965, the Workers’ Party officially incorporated the statement “the nature of the party is a socialist party, and the goal of the party is to lead the working class to seize power” into its party statutes, marking an important milestone in the party’s maturity.

In 1965, the Second Congress of the Turkish Workers’ Party saw a gradual radicalization of the party’s political positions. Mehmet Ali Aybar pointed out at the congress that the ruling Justice Partisi represented the interests of imperialism, the big bourgeoisie, and the landlord class, with the broad masses of the Turkish population suffering from dual exploitation by imperialism and big capitalists.

In response, Mehmet Ali Aybar argued that Turkey needed a second national liberation struggle, led by the working class as the vanguard, and emphasized that the socialist revolution and the national democratic revolution should be carried out simultaneously. The Workers’ Party should unite all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal political forces, mainly including center-left forces such as the Republican People’s Party, which followed Kemalism.

However, differing voices emerged at the congress, with some party members believing that Turkey should first carry out the national democratic revolution and then proceed to the socialist revolution. The congress concluded that the change in the nature of the regime could be achieved through elections within the framework of the Turkish constitution. Therefore, it was necessary to strengthen the party’s political propaganda work.

Later, the Workers’ Party summarized the above ideology as the “National Democratic Revolution United Front” ideology and further expounded that the national democratic revolution in Turkey should unite all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces to establish a revolutionary united front.

These forces included workers, peasants, the middle class, and the national bourgeoisie. Among these, the working class was considered the most thorough and progressive revolutionary force, followed by the peasants and then the middle class, including intellectuals, students, artisans, civilians, public servants, and military personnel. It’s worth noting that the Workers’ Party did not include the national bourgeoisie in the revolutionary forces, as it believed that the contradiction between the Turkish national bourgeoisie and the working class was far greater than their contradiction with imperialism and feudal forces, making it essentially impossible for the national bourgeoisie to become a revolutionary ally.

After 1964, the Workers’ Party began to focus on the issue of farmers, particularly the issue of land reform in rural areas. However, while the party recognized the severe inequality in rural land distribution and proposed a land distribution plan.

The party’s proposed solutions for resolving the land issue were seen as too simplistic and absolute which did not receive positive responses in rural areas nationwide. During this period, some Workers’ Party members also established the influential magazine “Direction,” (YÖN) which served as a platform to promote its ideological achievements and systematize the party’s various theoretical perspectives.

The party’s ideology at this time was later summarized by some leftist scholars as “Turkish socialism.”

Aybar did not oppose nationalism but believed that national revolution would solve the problems of underdevelopedness and would complement socialist revolution, and he advocated national identity and sovereign state identity.

In essence, Aybar had critically absorbed Kemalism’s understanding on issues such as the state, nation, and revolution in his ideology.

Overall, this period saw the Turkish Workers’ Party’s ideology evolving and taking on a more radical and comprehensive form, addressing various societal, economic, and political issues in Turkey with a focus on socialist and national democratic principles.

（2） Later Period’s Main Ideology

After the Second Congress, internal divisions began to emerge within the Workers’ Party, leading to severe disagreements among the party’s leadership that eventually became public. The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union caused a significant stir within the Workers’ Party, leading to a stark division within the party’s internal leadership over their views on the event.

Mehmet Ali Aybar vehemently criticized the Soviet invasion, seeing the Soviet Union as a dictatorship and centralized “empire”

Mehmet Ali Aybar believed that democracy was still an unattainable goal within the Soviet Union and that the bureaucratic privileged groups were undermining the socialist system. Aybar also advocated for the essence of the socialist system to be “human freedom” and strongly opposed the entrenched bureaucratic privilege in Turkey, which he attributed to the legacy of over 600 years of feudal rule under the Ottoman Empire.

Mehmet Ali Aybar argued that the socialist path in Turkey could not simply replicate the Soviet model and must have "Turkish characteristics"

Aybar envisioned a form of democratic socialism, incorporating the ideas of Karl Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg, while retaining existing parliamentary and judicial institutions, which he believed represented a democratic socialist approach.

However, some leaders, led by Behice Boran, supported the Soviet model and criticized Aybar’s ideas, warning that they were dangerous and not a path of scientific socialism, but instead as a form of revisionism and opportunism.

Behice Boran expressed concerns that Aybar’s approach risked turning the party into a non-combative parliamentary party and also accused Aybar of having dictatorial bürokratik tendencies.

Despite this, they did not present their own alternative ideological proposals.

The differing ideologies led to a sharp confrontation within the party after the Third Congress, further exacerbating the party’s internal divisions and personal power struggles among its leadership. The severe ideological differences and personal power struggles among the party’s leaders undoubtedly accelerated the party’s split.

By the time of the Fourth Congress in 1970, the internal divisions within the Workers’ Party had become acute. Following the party’s defeat in the 1969 elections, Aybar’s faction lost influence within the party, while Boran’s faction, although still in the mainstream, was faced with opposition. The party also saw the emergence of some moderate forces, and the central control of the party’s grassroots organizations in various provinces weakened.

At this point, the Workers’ Party was roughly divided into four factions: the Aybar faction, the Boran faction, the Third Road faction, and the Proletarian Revolution faction. These factions further split over issues such as the relationship between nationalism and socialism and the composition of the revolutionary class, with some factions even breaking away to establish new leftist political parties.

Due to the severe ideological differences, the Fourth Congress did not achieve significant meaningful results. However, it is worth noting the Workers’ Party’s stance on the Kurdish issue. The party explicitly acknowledged the existence of the Kurdish issue in Turkey, attributing the poverty and underdevelopment in the Kurdish regions of southeastern Turkey to imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and nationalist chauvinism.

The Workers’ Party advocated for granting more rights to the Kurds within the constitutional framework, supporting the Kurdish people’s national struggle, and believed that the struggle for Kurdish national rights could be combined with the socialist revolution.

However, the party opposed Kurdish autonomy and, more vehemently, opposed to the establishment of an independent Kurdistan.

The long-term ideological and leadership struggles within the Workers’ Party, as well as the confusion, led to the party losing the vitality and fighting spirit it had at its inception.

Faced with the 1971 military coup in Turkey, the Workers’ Party appeared weak and powerless.

Following the 1971 coup, many political parties, including the Workers’ Party, were unconditionally banned by the military, and the party’s leaders, including Boran and Aybar, were arrested and imprisoned.

Despite the party’s reconstruction in 1975, it failed to make much progress in terms of ideology. In 1975, over 50 former members of the Workers’ Party, led by Aybar, founded the Socialist Party. And the Boran faction established the Labor Party of Turkey (TİP). However, the reputation and influence of both parties could not be compared to that of the original Workers’ Party. In the later period of the Workers’ Party, the party’s journals gradually became the main platforms for the party’s theoretical development and ideological propaganda, such as “Direction,” “Turkish Left,” and “Ant.”

Various factions within the party had their own magazines, many of which contained insightful articles. For instance, “Direction” magazine often published the Workers’ Party’s discussions regarding the Turkish military. Dogan Avcıoğlu, for example, pointed out the differences in the nature of the Turkish military compared to the armies of Western capitalist countries.

Dogan Avcıoğlu argued that the military in the United States and other Western countries was mainly composed of the bourgeoisie, whereas the Turkish military mainly consisted of the impoverished masses. The composition of the Turkish military, according to him, made it inherently revolutionary and not merely a tool for maintaining the rule of the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, Dogan Avcıoğlu suggested that the military coups in Turkey objectively promoted the rule of law and justice in Turkish society to some extent. He also emphasized the significant role of the Turkish military in anti-imperialist struggles and stressed the importance of including the military as a crucial force to be mobilized in the socialist revolution in Turkey. Dogan Avcıoğlu’s insights were far-sighted, but unfortunately, the top leadership of the Workers’ Party did not put these ideas into practice.

1. **Main Activities of the Turkish Workers’ Party**

In comparison to the Communist Party of Turkey, the Turkish Workers’ Party and other socialist parties that later split from it have engaged in various social activities, effectively promoting democracy, fairness, and justice in Turkish society. The main activities of the Workers’ Party include parliamentary struggles, labor movements, and movements among intellectuals and students.

（1）Parliamentary Struggles

At the outset of the Workers’ Party’s establishment, the party’s leaders did not set the goal of armed seizure of power but instead aimed to take power through parliamentary elections within the framework of the 1961 constitution. Therefore, a significant activity of the Workers’ Party was focused on parliamentary elections. In 1963, the Workers’ Party successfully attracted Turkish Grand National Assembly members Niyazi Agirnasli and Esat Caga, thereby entering the senate for the first time.

In 1963, the Workers’ Party introduced 78 motions in parliament, seeking to abolish and amend certain reactionary and anti-democratic laws and provisions. The 1965 parliamentary elections were a crucial political practice for the Workers’ Party. In these elections, the Workers’ Party participated in elections in all 54 cities, holding numerous large-scale public speeches and rallies during the election process, effectively promoting the party’s political ideals. This effort attracted a large number of workers and students to join the party and garnered 15 seats and over 270,000 votes, accounting for 3% of the total votes. This election marked the first time a proletarian party strongly voiced its opinions on the mainstream political stage in Turkey. In parliament, the Workers’ Party began to put into practice some of the proposals from its First and Second Congress. The motions it introduced regarding improving working conditions and granting more rights to labor unions sparked heated discussions in parliament. However, in the 1969 elections, due to internal divisions within the party, another party leader, Boran, ran independently after disagreeing with the political proposals put forth by the party chairman Aybar at the Third Congress. Additionally, the “leftist shift” of the Republican People’s Party also attracted some votes that originally belonged to the Workers’ Party, resulting in the Workers’ Party only obtaining two seats and over 230,000 votes. This outcome signified the failure of the Workers’ Party’s aspirations to seize power through parliamentary struggles.

（2）Labor Movement

The workers constitute the main force of the Workers’ Party, which has led and initiated a series of vigorous labor movements. Many of the party’s leaders were former union leaders and had extensive experience in labor movement struggles. The labor movement directly expressed the political demands of the working class, and complemented the parliamentary struggle.

The 1963 Kavel workers’ strike marked the beginning of the Turkish labor movement. In January of that year, workers in a Kavel factory, which was owned by an American company, initiated a strike in protest against the increasingly harsh working conditions imposed by the management. The strike quickly spread throughout the Kavel region, and many women workers joined the struggle, forming a women workers’ organization to support the movement. The strike continued for six months. In July of the same year, the Turkish parliament passed a law that, for the first time, recognized the right of workers to strike, as strikes were previously considered illegal in Turkey.

The large-scale workers’ march in Istanbul in 15-16 June 1970 marked the peak of the Turkish labor movement and was the largest workers’ strike movement in Turkey’s history to date. In the late 1960s, leftist parties and political groups, represented by the Workers’ Party and the Revolutionary Workers’ Union, were very active in Turkish society. This prompted the ruling Justice Party to be alert and alarmed, leading the government to enact a series of laws to restrict the rights of unions and related leftist parties and political groups. The Workers’ Party and other leftist political groups then organized workers’ strike movements against these measures. The 15-16 June movement primarily concentrated in the Istanbul area, where within less than two days, over 150,000 workers participated in the march. The authorities obstructed the march and declared a state of emergency in the area. The government eventually deployed a large number of military and police forces, even using tanks to disperse the crowds, resulting in the deaths of five workers and the injury of hundreds. However, the workers did not surrender to the government, and eventually, the Justice Party government was forced to make certain concessions.

In the late 1970s, the Turkish labor movement was vigorous. At this time, Turkish society was divided into left and right-wing camp, with frequent street clashes and almost daily fatalities resulting from the conflicts. In 1976, tens of thousands of workers gathered in Taksim Square were suddenly subjected to armored vehicle and machine gun attacks, resulting in numerous casualties. On May 1, 1979, the Workers’ Party insisted on holding a large-scale march, leading to the arrest of 330 party members during this demonstration.

（3）Involvement of Intellectuals and Student Movement

Initially, the Workers’ Party rejected intellectuals, believing that they were wavering in their revolutionary stance. However, the party later absorbed a large number of intellectuals, particularly political science and law professors from universities, including Aybar and Boran, who were former university professors and leaders of the Workers’ Party. The inclusion of intellectuals further clarified the party’s charter, improved the party’s organization, and enabled the party to use a more scientific Marxist theory to guide its class struggle. Under the guidance of the teachers’ union, many teachers printed a large number of books promoting Marxism and edited and published magazines advocating Marxist-Leninist thought and the Workers’ Party’s ideology. This propaganda work allowed more Turkish people to truly engage with and understand Marxism, effectively supporting the Workers’ Party’s parliamentary struggle and the labor movement.

The students were an important force in the later period of the Turkish Workers’ Party. In 1968, the wave of anti-government leftist youth student movements that swept through several Western European countries quickly spread to Turkey. Student movement starting at Istanbul University and then rapidly spread to other universities across the country. The 1970s were the peak of the Turkish youth movement. Countless young students, inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology, took to the streets, demonstrating and clashing fiercely with the government and right-wing nationalist forces, with many sacrificing their lives.

Deniz Gezmis, a youth movement leader, was one of its representatives. During his time at Istanbul University, Deniz joined the Workers’ Party and founded the Progressive Student Committee under the party’s leadership. The committee played a leading role in protesting the arrival of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in Istanbul and supporting the labor movement. Subsequently, Deniz received guerrilla training with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Upon returning to Turkey, he was arrested twice and then released. In 1972, Deniz was arrested again and executed. His final words before his execution were, “Long live independent and free Turkey! Long live Marxism-Leninism! Long live workers and peasants! Long live the great struggle for independence of the Turkish and Kurdish people! Down with imperialism!” Deniz’s words brought tears to countless Workers’ Party members, and his deeds deeply moved an entire generation of Turkish youth. He was also referred to as the Che Guevara of Turkey. In the late 1970s, influenced by Deniz, Yusuf Aslan and Hüseyin İnan separately established two leftist youth armed groups to continue Deniz’s cause, until a military coup occurred in the early 1980s. However, with the increasing divisions and centrifugal tendencies within the later period of the Workers’ Party, some of these leftist youth groups gradually evolved into extreme “left-wing” terrorist organizations.

1. **Evaluation of the Turkish Workers’ Party**

The Turkish Workers’ Party existed for less than 20 years. As the most influential Marxist political party in Turkey to date. The Turkish Workers’ Party left a profound mark on the history of the Turkish socialist movement. Although, due to both objective and subjective reasons, the Workers’ Party failed to lead the working class to seize power in its own country, and even faced defeat, it has actively upheld the banner of Marxism-Leninism, explored the path to socialism in Turkey. Turkish Workers’ Party persisted in labor struggles, student movements, and parliamentary struggles. These efforts have had a positive impact on the dissemination of Marxism in Turkey, effected the socialist movement, effected the promotion of social progress, and have accumulated profound lessons, providing valuable experience for the development of socialist movements in the developing countries.

**A. Turkish Workers’ Party’s** **Positive Impact**

The Turkish Workers’ Party had several positive impacts on the socialist movement and social progress in Turkey. Firstly, the party had a clear anti-imperialist and anti-feudal nature. Turkish Workers’ Party united progressive forces in society, preventing the ruling authorities in Turkey from aligning blatantly with the United States and promoting the democratization process in Turkey.

Secondly, the Workers’ Party introduced Marxism to the broader Turkish population. Turkish Workers’ Party fostered the rooting and sprouting of Marxist thought in Turkish society. This ideological influence remains active in Turkish society to this day. Additionally, the Turkish Communist Party, the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK), and other organizations have been to a greater or lesser extent influenced by the Workers’ Party.

In particular, the Workers’ Party’s “National Democratic United Front” ideology still holds certain guiding significance for the socialist movement and Marxist political parties in Turkey.

Thirdly, the Workers’ Party effectively defended the interests of the working class, compelling the government to enact laws on labor unions and the right to strike, fought for improving working conditions and work hours, and legal recognization of the status of labor unions.

Fourthly, the Workers’ Party was the first Marxist political party in Turkey to propose land reform, which to some extent contributed to the draft of the Land and Agricultural Reform Law enacted by the Turkish parliament in June 1973.

Fifthly, the Workers’ Party’s social and economic proposals were acknowledged by the Republican People’s Party and later influenced their economic development path, profoundly impacting Turkey’s economic progress.

Sixthly, the Workers’ Party effectively cooperated with the global socialist movement, providing valuable experience and reflections from the “Turkish model” for the development of socialist movements in Third World countries.

**B. Lessons and Reflections**

The lessons from the failure of the Turkish Workers’ Party are also worth contemplating. Its failure was constrained by both historical objective factors and limitations in understanding at a subjective level.

There were two objective factors: Firstly, Kemalism and pan-Islamism were deeply entrenched in Turkey. After over 40 years of official indoctrination, Kemalism was widely accepted, especially among the elites and intellectuals in the developed western regions of Turkey. Similarly, pan-Islamism has a nearly thousand-year history in Turkey and deeply influenced the rural population, particularly the peasantry. Achieving a transformation in these ideological perceptions would undoubtedly have been extremely challenging.

Secondly, Turkey’s strategically important geopolitical position played a role.

After World War II, the United States regarded Turkey as the vanguard post of NATO to resist Soviet expansion southward and a key player in the Balkans to combat communism. Even if the Workers’ Party had won power through elections, the United States would not have allowed Turkey to become a socialist country.

**There were five subjective factors**.

Firstly, the Workers’ Party did not consistently and firmly uphold Marxism-Leninism as its guiding ideology. It did not firmly pursue the path of scientific socialism. By the later period, the party’s high-level thinking was confused, wavering between scientific socialism and democratic socialism, leading to indecision.

Secondly, the Workers’ Party failed to establish a strong united front that could unite more social groups and classes. It relied heavily on urban workers, students, teachers, artisans, and a few peasants, failing to mobilize the broader rural population to participate in the revolution.

At the same time, the party lacked a clear understanding of the national bourgeoisie, consistently placing it in opposition to the revolution.

Thirdly, the Workers’ Party was not sufficiently united internally, with the entire party failing to achieve a unified understanding and common purpose, and not adequately coordinating labor movements nationwide, which was reflected in the party’s relatively weak organization and relatively weak political work. In the later period, some smaller parties even split from the Workers’ Party, undoubtedly weakening its strength.

Fourthly, the Workers’ Party failed to pursue a thorough complete revolutionary struggle. It did not earnestly consider how to overthrow the Turkish government, focusing more on how to achieve certain reforms within the existing structure, resulting in a lack of thoroughness in its revolutionary efforts.

Fifthly, the Workers’ Party held unrealistic hopes for Turkey’s big private bourgeoisie groups for democratization. Later, faced with the government’s coercion and enticement, the party did not possess the determination for long-term struggle. When faced with failed strikes and government bans, Workers’ Party would compromise.