ANTI-COMMUNISM AND THE MAKING OF ÜLKÜCÜ PARAMILITARY IDENTITY, 1974-1980

VASFİ CAN YAZICI

Boğaziçi University

2012

ANTI-COMMUNISM AND THE MAKING OF ÜLKÜCÜ PARAMILITARY IDENTITY, 1974-1980

Thesis submitted to the

Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

by

Vasfi Can Yazıcı

Boğaziçi University

2012

"Anti-Communism and the Making of Ülkücü Paramilitary Identity, 1974-1980," a thesis prepared by Vasfi Can Yazıcı in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree at the Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University.

This thesis has been approved by

Assoc. Prof. Cengiz Kırlı _____

(Thesis Advisor)

Prof. Abbas Vali _____

Prof. Çağlar Keyder _____

December 2012

An abstract of the Thesis of Vasfi Can Yazıcı, for the degree of Master of Arts from the Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University to be taken in December 2012

Title: Anti-Communism and the Making of the Ülkücü Paramilitary Identity (1974-1980)

This study examines the construction of Ülkücü paramilitary identity through the discourses on communism which were developed by the ultranationalist militants politically active inbetween 1974 and 1980's coup d'état. It does so via historical data which carry the mark of militants' own voice; most significantly memoirs, confessions and movement publications.

The aforementioned era witnessed one of the most significant socio-political crises in the history of Turkish republic, causing the death of hundreds with the murder of public figures, fatal street warfare and massacres. Ülkücü movement and its paramilitary forces emerged as the chief catalyst of these events, serving to the unsuccessful power strategy of the Nationalist Action Party.

Raison d'étre of Ülkücü paramilitaries; the existence of radical leftist activity, not only grew so as to receive a violent response from its antagonists, but also helped anti-communism become a very significant component to the language and ideology of the Turkish Right; producing vast populations penetrated with communist enmity. The anti-communist militancy of Ülkücü movement articulated it to these larger segments of Turkish society. Its unique paramilitary response differentiated its anti-communism and identity from the rest of this larger anti-communist bloc. This ground of articulation and differentiation forms the objective of the present thesis.

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Yüksek Lisans derecesi için Vasfi Can Yazıcı tarafından Aralık 2012'de teslim edilen tezin özeti

Başlık: Anti-Komünizm ve Ülkücü Paramiliter Kimliğinin İnşası (1974-1980)

Bu çalışma, Ülkücü paramiliter kimliğinin inşasını 1974 ile 1980 darbesi arasında aktif siyaset yapan ultra-milliyetçi militanların komünizm söylemleri üzerinden incelemektedir. Bu söylemleri militanların kendi sesini taşıyan tarihsel veriler; en başta hatıratlar, itiraflar ve hareket neşriyatı aracılığıyla irdelemektedir.

Bahsi geçen dönem kamusal figür cinayetleri, sokak savaşları ve katliamlar ile yüzlerce insanın ölümüne ve bu özelliğiyle Türkiye Cumhuriyeti tarihinin en önemli sosyo-politik krizlerinden bir tanesine şahitlik etmiştir. Ülkücü Hareket ve paramiliter kuvvetleri Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi'nin başarısız iktidar stratejisine hizmet ederken, bu olayların başat aktörleri olarak ön plana çıkmıştır.

Ülkücü paramiliterlerin varlık sebebi olarak tanımlayabileceğimiz radikal sol siyaset yalnızca antagonistlerinden şiddetli bir tepki alacak kadar büyümemiş, aynı zamanda anti-komünizmi Türk Sağı'nın dil ve ideolojisinin en önemli bir parçası kılmış, komünist düşmanlığı geniş halk tabakalarına nüfuz etmiştir. Ülkücü Hareket'in anti-komünist militanlığı onu bu geniş tabakalara eklemlendirirken, şahsına münhasır paramiliter reaksiyonu onu bu en geniş anti-komünist bloktan farklılaştırmıştır. Bu eklemlenme ve farklılaşma zemini, işbu tezin objektifini oluşturmaktadır.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many persons helped me with this thesis to varying degrees. Above all, I would like to express my appreciation to my advisors Cengiz Kırlı and Abbas Vali. They did not only lead my intellectual quest but also provided me with the psychological and moral support I was in need of. Words are inadequate to express my gratitude to both of them. I also would like to thank the thesis committee member Çağlar Keyder for his careful readings, comments and critics that improved my study.

I would like to thank my father, mother and brother Cem for their endless love and patience. Without them I would never accomplish this work. I would also like to thank Nilay, Batuhan, Yalçın, Neşe, Tamer, Saki, Abdülhakim, Fırat, Onur, Özlem, Pınar, Eda, Özge, Fabio, Zeki, Levent, Doğukan, Hande, Tolga, Turgay and numberless friend of mine for their support and motivation. I owe thanks to my colleagues in the workplace for their support and the time they provided for my research.

I am thankful to Tracy Lord Şen not only for her academic support but for her most genuine companionship. I also thank Kathyryn Kranzler for her patient support in the editing of the present work.

My last acknowledgement goes to a former Ülkücü militant that I cannot give the name of, who supported my thesis with his memoirs of the day and provided me with the publications of and books about the era. Although he would be immensely disappointed if he were to read the critical work presented here, I owe him a big gratitude.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1
Theoretical Background 6

CHAPTER I: THE HISTORICAL FORMATION OF THE ÜLKÜCÜ MOVEMENT 14
The Ideological and Associational Possibilities 16
The Colonel 23
A Brief Overview of the 1970's Turkey 28
Türkeş's Discourse on Economy, and the Class Character of the Paramilitary Base 33
The Second Generation and Türkeş's Power Strategy 39
Some Notes for Further Investigation on the Ülkücü Literature 49

CHAPTER II: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING PROCESSES 53
A Brief Overview of the Organization 55
Recruitment 57
The Organizational Structure 63
The Spaces of Training 73

CHAPTER III: ANTI-COMMUNISM AND THE MAKING OF THE ÜLKÜCÜ PARAMILITARY IDENTITY 81
Statism 83
Anti-Internationalism 90
Anti-Cosmopolitanism 96
The Masculine Self 103

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION 112

BIBLOGRAPHY 121

INTRODUCTION

Greywolves, the name adopted by the Ülkücü paramilitaries to address themselves, had its supposed roots in the ancient Turkic, Central Asian past. The character in the Turkic mythology was portrayed in the publications of the militants as the chosen vanguard figure that appeared "during times of trouble and crisis"[1] to maintain order for the rest of the nation. In these ahistorical accounts, the troubles of the nation were depicted as arising from enemies within and without. The greywolf was called for to fight against Chinese attacks while at the same time to protect the nation from the internal adversaries of civil war. The struggle of this mythical figure was described as bringing along a moral order as well as a social and political array. The greywolf fought for the nation at the risk of its life, won on the battleground, and subsequently created a harmonious order in every aspect of life. These tasks were not only assigned to it by the nation, but also were given by its natural endowments.

How the Ülkücü paramilitaries of the late 1970s conceived of themselves was not so different from the meaning they ascribed to the position of the mythical greywolf vis-à-vis the nation. The street warfare of 1970s' Turkey had as its prominent agent Ülkücü paramilitaries; who not only shed blood throughout the country, but as the members of an ever-growing political movement, also marked the social and political life of the era. While the opposition to the radical leftist activity occupied their world of practices, their mental world was also structured by this antagonism; as they gave meaning to their cause, political activity and themselves. A self-conception of "savior of the nation" and a self-proclaimed elect status which was

[1] Ayşe Neviye Çağlar, "Greywolf as Metaphor," in *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, eds. Andrew Finkel and Nükhet Sirman (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 90-91.

bestowed upon them as an innate category accompanied their political violence towards the "communists."

***

The Ülkücü movement, which I define as the overarching political agent which embraced and went beyond the activity of the Nationalist Action Party[2] was one of the most significant actors in the obstruction of growing class politics of the 1970s and in the course of events that eventually led to the military intervention in 1980. The NAP conducted politics on "two virtually distinct levels;"[3] officially through its parliamentary and electioneering activity by the party itself and unofficially through its affiliates, most importantly through its semi-clandestine paramilitary youth branch, Ülkü Ocakları[4]. Ülkücü[5] movement's paramilitary forces, which succeeded at a rapid expansion in their initial 12 years until the coup d'état of 1980, consubstantiated themselves with Alparslan Türkeş and his doctrine, and bestowed upon him a political power he never would had by means of mere parliamentary activity.

Starting as a minor association which gathered small groups of right-wing, anti-communist students in the universities, by 1980 the movement had 1,500 branches throughout the country and more than 100,000 members nationwide.[6] The twelve years following the emergence of the movement witnessed two generations of militants, one that was active from the foundation to the military intervention of 1971, and one that was active after 1974; the latter constitutes the subject of the

[2] *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, from here on abbreviated as "the NAP."

[3] Jacob Landau, "The Nationalist Action Party in Turkey," *Journal of Contemporary History* vol. 17, no. 4 (Oct., 1982) p. 590.

[4] [Idealist Hearths], from here on referred to as Ocaks.

[5] "*Ülkücü*" in Turkish means "Idealist." Despite the fact that the movement had at its ideological core a strong anti-materialism, neither the term was employed with regards to its point of reference in the Western philosophical thought, nor there was a tendency within the movement to form such a relationship.

[6] Landau, "The NAP", p. 594.

present thesis due to both the more significant part they played in Turkish politics and the more historical data they left behind.[7]

Despite the fact that the Nationalist Action Party (or, Ülkücü movement in general) has been a significant and dynamic actor in Turkish politics, the academic investigations into this subject have been pursued to a limited and insufficient extent. The era between its foundation in the late 1960s and the coup d'état of 1980 have the biggest share of this lack of examination. As I will provide a more detailed account in Chapter 1, the existing literature on the NAP and Ülkücü Movement has tended to take the party program, the writings of Türkeş and other top cadre members, parliament records, mainstream and/or right-wing newspapers, and formal party periodicals as its objects of investigation. These studies have preferred to stick to the historico-political level of party top cadre and movement ideologues. The novelty of the present thesis is its attempt to analyze the making of the paramilitary indetity; to explore what happened at the grassroots. I attempt to do so via historical data that carry the marks of Ülkücü militants' own voices: the confessions made by members that renounced the movement before the coup d'état, the publications of Ülkücü members for the indicated era, and most importantly militant memoirs either published in book forms or stated in the press starting from 1985.

The present research might be conceived as a study in cultural history (in the broadest meaning of the genre). It attempts to shed light on the cultural world of its subject and for reasons to be explained, investigates the constitution of the paramilitary identity refraining from any detailed discussion of political economy. As the memory texts are taken as the vista to the world of the militants, the largest

[7] I will explore the question of the generations in-depth in Chapters 1 and 2.

theoretical contribution to the thesis' methodology is derived from the literature on memory in anthropology and history, which dates back to early 1990s.[8]

The analysis of the discourse that is presented by the materials produced in different eras and different socio-political contexts, brings about, and indeed necessitates a historiographical sensitivity towards these memory-texts. It is assumed that these narratives are first and foremost shaped by their writers' present historical conditions (and thus, intentions) and the content of the materials are examined with such logic in mind. To give a brief example, a text written by a militant before the coup d'état differs greatly in its relation to militarism from a text written in 2010, where the text is clearly affected by the growing public opposition to the coups and the role of the military in politics. Hence, effort is made to address the referenced militants with regards to the context of their writing process. Their geographical origin, level of education, position in the class structure and other such criteria are also portrayed as much as possible in order to illuminate the differing approaches by the militants to similar topics; in short, to indicate the schisms within the organization.

***

The supposed threat of communism and the "defense" by the *Ülkücü* paramilitaries "on behalf of the nation" was the pretexts on which the movement legitimized its existence before what one might call the larger anti-communist bloc of Turkey. Anti-communism in Turkey, of course, was not something peculiar to Türkeş's paramilitaries. It preceded the foundation of the movement, and moreover

[8] Some of the works that had impact on my methodology include Annette Kuhn, "A Journey through Memory," Memory and Methodology, ed. S. Radstone (New York: Berg, 2000); Nadia Seremetakis, "The Memory of Senses" in *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, ed. N. Seremetakis (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Natalie Zemon Davis and Randolph Starn, "Introduction", *Representations: 26* Special Issue: Memory and Counter Memory, (1989); James E. Young, "Toward a Received History of the Holocaust," *History and Theory* 36, no. 4 (Dec, 1997); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

was a significant aspect of the internal security discourse of the statesmen. Arguably, it was also a widely accepted ethico-political stance among the conservative population, if not a stance very well understood. Hence the anti-communism of the Ülkücü movement was the element that articulated it to the larger conservative sectors of the population; it amounted to a supposed ethical identicalness and sharing of similar fears and enemies for the two parties. It also meant that this larger bloc was prone to provide the movement's largest human resource as well as providing the latter with moral and financial assistance.

On a strictly discursive level, the so-called defense of the traditional moral codes and the nation from the communist threat meant that the Ülkücü militants were the passionate defenders of the existent morality and the existent societal structure as they understood (or invested meaning to) them. Yet the face value of the Ülkücü discourse neither represented the militants' own morality nor explained their societal yearnings. The identity of the Ülkücü militants was formed when they opposed the threat of communism (hence, the political activity of the communists), and when at the same time they went beyond this "protected" conventional morality, and foresaw novel hierarchies for the future of the nation in which they would get their fair share. In other words, the anti-communism of the Ülkücü militants was idiosyncratic to the anti-communism of the larger conservative sectors of the population, and their identity was constituted on the juncture where they opposed the communist activity and were articulated to this crowd, and where concurrently they differentiated themselves from the masses they believed they were protecting.

Revealing the true character of this ambiguous ground of articulation and differentiation is the target of the present analysis. While anti-communism in the broadest sense is considered as paving the way for the composition of this ground,

the paramilitarism of the Ülkücü movement is taken into account as constituting the idiosyncrasy of the Ülkücü militants' own opposition, their own way of anti-communism. Hence, the anti-communism and paramilitarism of the movement are argued to be inseparable traits of the Ülkücü identity. My quest for the construction of Ülkücü paramilitary identity is conducted as I show the forms these traits appear in the mental world of the paramilitaries. The four sections on statism, anti-internationalism, anti-cosmopolitanism and the masculine self address the diverse aspects of anti-communism and paramilitarism of Ülkücü identity.

Theoretical Background

The concept of identity has been a prominent issue in contemporary political theory and political philosophy; hence there is a great deal of literature on the subject. My personal engagement with this literature brought me to a reading of the philosophical writings of Jacques Derrida, as they proved to be more useful than the mainstream approaches to the concept of identity, especially with regards to the subject I attempt to analyze in the present thesis. The mainstream answers to the contemporary debates on the problems of identity and difference were not helpful to me in understanding an ultranationalist, violent and in-conflict political community. To oversimplify, these approaches either emphasized questions regarding the subjectivity of the "individual" or tended to obscure the significance of the "otherness" and the relations of forces between political entities in the constitution of the community identities.[9] A research directed to the identity construction of a

[9] Some prominent examples for this sort of take of the term in contemporary theory are Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); Jeremy Waldron, "Cultural identity and Civic Responsibility," in W. Kymlicka & W. Norman (eds.), *Citizenship in Diverse Societies* (Toronto, ON: Oxford University

political community like Ülkücü movement, I came to realize, cannot succeed without a theoretical basis that does not take into account its "enemy," its "other," or to quote one of its former members, the "raison d'étre" of its political existence.

As has been said, my take on the concept of identity has come to be guided by the thought of Derrida. However, I shall underline that I am dealing with his work in a very selective manner; I make use of it insofar as it informs the present research. His elaborate approach to the concept of identity, and in particular, his notion of "constitutive outside," were helpful to my understanding and subsequent depiction of the construction of the Ülkücü identity. His works, which put forward the "the centrality of the us / them distinction in the constitution of collective political identities,"[10] emphasized "difference" as the necessary condition of the possibility of politics, and departed from the aforementioned approaches which focus on isolated subjects. When politics is understood as relation of forces, the constitution of the political community does not stand for a process "that takes place inside the community,"[11] to use the language of Anglo-American ontology, it does not represent a simple "positive" act, but it stands for the relation of one group to the other parts of the political objectivity or of the political realm.

The "ethicopolitical principles" that are formed within a political movement are always subject to differing and "competing interpretations" by its possible members. Hence, it is impossible for a movement to perform a "fully inclusive"[12] political character; to reach a ground of consensus that would establish the political principles and agenda of the community once and for all. Hence, one might argue

---

Press, 2000), pp. 155-174; Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Post-Socialist" Condition* (New York: Routledge,1997); Richard Rorty, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[10] Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000), pp. 12-13.

[11] Chantal Mouffe, "Democratic Politics and the Question of Identity," in *The Identity in Question*, ed. John Rajchman, (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 36.

[12] Ibid. p. 36.

that "there will always be a constitutive outside, an exterior to the community that is the very condition of its existence." since "all forms of consensus are based on acts of exclusion"[13].

Hence, the "constitutive outside" appears as the condition of emergence of a political community while it determines the conditions of the latter's minimum consensus, the content of its identity. As for the present subject, the "outside" of the Ülkücü identity consisted of a variety of exteriors from which it derived its very character and the limits to its inclusiveness. A former militant, Tuncay Güner, described whom they were fighting against (hence who were subjected to their acts of exclusion) in a rather crowded paragraph:

> Who were we taking down? The communist militants who attacked our sacred values, our flag, our religion, our soldiers, our police, our unity and solidarity, our history, our breed, our national culture, Ataturk and our state… Atheists, hippies, marginal types behaving contrary to social values and rules, tourists we found out to be CIA and KGB agents, those who were prostitutes, pedophiles, molesters, hoarders, racketeers, cigarette raffles, potheads, dealers, those who openly exposed and encouraged homosexuality, those who ran casinos, rogues, rapscallions disturbing the people, those who shook down the craftsmen….These invaded every part of the city as cancerous cells.[14]

As will be more clear in Chapter 3, my presupposition in the quest for Ülkücü paramilitary identity is that the communists were the most effective of these exterior reference points in the creation of the movement's inside and its very condition of emergence. Although many times it is hard to differentiate between these political enmities (they are mostly intertwined), I examined the Ülkücü identity and its

[13] Ibid, p. 36.

[14] Tuncer Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar* (Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2011), pp. 17-18. "*Kimleri mi indiriyorduk? Mukaddes değerlerimize, bayrağımıza, dinimize, askerimize, polisimize, birlik ve beraberliğimize, tarihimize, ecdadımıza, milli kültürümüze, Atatürk'e ve devletimize saldıran komünist örgüt militanlarını, Ateistleri, hippileri, toplum değerlerine ve kurallarına aykırı davranan marjinal tipleri, KGB ve CIA ajanları olduğunu öğrendiğimiz turistleri, fuhuş yaptıranları ve yapanları, sübyancıları, cinsel tacizcileri, stokçuları, vurguncuları, sigara tombalacılarını, esrarkeşleri ve uyuşturucu satıcılarını, toplum içinde alenen homoseksüelliğini teşhir edenleri, özendirenleri, kumarhane işletenleri, dolandırıcıları, halkı huzursuz eden sokak kabadayılarını, esnafı haraca bağlayan bitirimleri indiriyorduk… Bunlar kanser hücreleri gibi şehrin her tarafını işgal etmişlerdi."*

emergence as a political movement through the paramilitaries' conception of the communists. The different traits of the movement's anti-communism that are laid out in Chapter 3 are also meant to shed light to the rest of movement's exteriorities.

As has been said, in terms of historiography, my access to the political objectivity of the late 1970s and to the Ülkücü paramilitary identity was provided (and hence, restricted) by the discourses of former movement members. I must note here that, following Mouffe, I refer to the political community/movement "as a discursive surface and not as an empirical referent."[15] Hence, I take the construction of Ülkücü community identity as a discursive phenomenon. The militants' discourses (the narratives which carry the marks of militants' own voices) on communism, the constitutive outside of the movement, are employed to trace this discursive formation. To avoid any misunderstanding, I shall also point out that I use the concept "discursive formation" in the Foucauldian sense. It refers to specific discourses and their non-discursive conditions of possibility; that is, the institutions, processes and practices without which the discourse could not develop or exist, hence which support and sustain them. The segmentation of the thesis is conducted with regards to this analytical duality. The historical formation of the movement is followed by a chapter on the organizational structure, recruitment and training processes, within which I lay out the non-discursive conditions of possibility for the Ülkücü discourse's emergence. The chapter on anti-communism and the making of the paramilitary identity, on the other hand, attempts to set forth this discourse itself, providing the findings on the construction of Ülkücü identity.

The limitations to the present study and the shortcomings in the consequent text are indicated in detail in Chapter 1 and, to a limited extent, in the succeeding

[15] Mouffe, "Democratic Politics," p. 36.

chapters. To point out the most significant of them, I must acknowledge primarily the fact that, as I briefly mentioned before, the present thesis does not conduct a class-based analysis, due to the lack of data regarding the material conditions which would determine the paramilitaries' historical conditions. The material made use of in the structuring of my historico-political narrative carry a certain extent of ambiguity and unreliability; first and foremost due to the inductive method it brings about for the analyst. It is clear that the discourses of some 20 people[16] cannot be taken to represent the totality of a political community of 100,000 men; however, I attempted to overcome such difficulty as I pointed out the status of these militants with regards to the position they occupied within the movement and, to a limited extent, within society.

Two other shortcomings of the present work are related to questions of gender and youth. First, despite the fact that I make one of my prominent arguments with regards to gender protocols (which are constituted vis-à-vis an "outside," the communist imagery), I do not set forth the narratives and conditions of the women members of the organization. My reason for omitting is simple: there are no available data as such. I attempt to overcome this with reference to the women imagery in the militants' minds. Second, the study lacks a detailed comparative dimension which would enable the reader to contrast the Ülkücü paramilitaries to the era's other politically active youth, most importantly the radical leftists; the condition of emergence of the former. My justification for this is the scope and quantitative boundaries of the present thesis. These issues will be taken into consideration.

***

[16] This is the approximate number of the former militants whose memoirs I studied and with whom I conducted interviews.

Having provided the method, theoretical basis and shortcomings of the present study, let me pass to the structuring of the thesis. The upcoming Chapter 1 attempts to historicize the Ülkücü movement's political pursuit with regards to its ideological and associational antecedents and the socio-political context of the 1970s. It also provides the reader with a selective literature review comprised of works held on the Ülkücü movement, and the paramilitary experiences of Germany and Italy during the interwar era. A historical narrative is constructed which is guided by selective points as these are taken to help the understanding of the Ülkücü movement within a wider historico-political framework. The chapter begins with the section on the ideological and associational possibilities before the movement that enhanced and restricted its development. Then a close-up to Türkeş's personal political quest is portrayed in order to scrutinize the emergence of the movement as a parliamentary and paramilitary actor. A brief overview of Turkey in the 1970s is then provided to show the turbulent socio-political atmosphere of the country. The following section, where Türkeş's prescriptions to this atmosphere are depicted sets forth the class character of the paramilitary base with reference to the studies done in the Ülkücü literature. The chapter ends with a final comment on the status of the Ülkücü literature.

Chapter 2 provides the non-discursive conditions of possibility which helped produce, support and sustain the Ülkücü discourse. As I have already mentioned, it sets forth the institutions, processes and practices that functioned in this regard. It starts with a brief overview of the Ülkücü organization, in which I lay the ground for the political analysis of the movement and its rapid expansion during its nucleus phase. A discussion on the recruitment process follows it, where I explain the spread of the movement and describe the social character of its human resources. The study

of the organizational edifice and the accompanying power structure follows this. Finally, I show how the education of the militants was pursued in diverse spaces of training; Ocaks, prisons and streets.

Chapter 3 presents the most significant findings with regards to the title and aim of the thesis. The different forms of anti-communism which are manifested in the memory texts of Ülkücü militants are examined and their relation to the construction of paramilitary identity is discussed. The four sections on statism, anti-internationalism, anti-cosmopolitanism and the masculine self are chosen as the prominent forms which the anti-communism of the movement took, and the agenda of indicating the idiosyncrasy of the Ülkücü opposition is dealt through these topics.

The section on statism deals with the Ülkücü slogan of "backing up the state" and the resulting forms of anti-communist political violence. It starts with an analysis of the ways in which the militants related themselves to the state, in other words, with the elaborations of the sorts of state representations they had in mind when they equated their anti-communist political activity with service to the state. The image of communism as the enemy at the gates that jeopardizes the perpetuity of the state will be dealt with closely. The depiction of the relation of the militants to the state apparatuses will help me address how they legitimized their paramilitary activity and acquired a unique status of privileges before law with regards to the rest of society.

The anti-internationalism section narrates the logic of positioning the communist enemy in relation to foreign sources of power. Having a strong parochial mentality at the bottom, the Ülkücü militants sketched different portrayals of communists either as ignorant tools of foreign calculations (most prominently, that of USSR and China) or as deliberate collaborators of the same agents acting within the nation. The section deals with the question of how the ideas of class-transcendence

and war of nations resulted in equating paramilitary activity at home with military wars abroad. The acquiring of the "savior of the nation" title accompanies my findings.

The section on anti-cosmopolitanism deals with the success of the movement in channeling the militants' hatred of the degenerate city life to the corrupt communist enemy. The transformation of the militants' initial quasi-leftist response to the social injustices into anti-communist militancy shapes my discussion. How the image of an idealized simple rural man was developed, how it functioned in the paramilitary activity, and how the communists were codified as the pioneers of cultural degeneration are examined.

The section on the masculine self will explain how the idea of communism's threat to women's honor was adopted by the Ülkücü militants and what forms of masculinity they imagined for themselves as a result of this imagined threat. It will be shown that communism meant for many militants a reversal of gender relations and that the conventional gender protocols that they claimed to defend did not reflect their self-depiction of masculinity. The Ülkücü paramilitary men's going beyond conventional masculinity and the strengthening of their elect status is discussed in the remainder.

The final chapter presents concluding remarks regarding the paramilitary experience of Turkey and provides final notes on the legacy of the Ülkücü discourse.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL FORMATION OF THE ÜLKÜCÜ MOVEMENT

Historicizing the Ülkücü movement's embryonic phase is a difficult task, not only because it had a dense fourteen years, full of historically and politically significant events, but also with regards to the fact that it displayed a variety of antecedents which gave meaning to its emergence, ranging from the state's nationalism to the interwar years' fascist experience, from the cold war anti-communism to the Turanist tradition. Attempting to integrate such a historical narrative regarding events and conditions of emergence with a review of the literature on the Italian and German experiences is even more difficult, since such comparisons risk being unjust to the movement's idiosyncrasy and jeopardize a proper analysis of its sui generis conditions of emergence which many times were in contradistinction to the movement's "counterparts" in Europe.

A more apparent entanglement regarding a comparative analysis between the Ülkücü movement and European fascists is that when doing so, one has to differentiate between fascists in power and fascists on the way to power.[17] As I will show below, the fact that the Ülkücü movement never succeeded at taking over the state power, not only obstructed its organizational and ideological maturation, but also (considering the aims of the present thesis) deeply affected the mental worlds of the militants both during their paramilitary activity and through their post-coup d'état prison years. Here and in the rest of the thesis, my comparisons are made in line with these restrictions.

[17] H. Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p.163. Also see S. L. Andreski "Some Sociological Considerations on Fascism and Class," in S. J. Woolf (ed.) *The Nature of* Fascism (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), pp. 97-102.

For this matter, my intention here can be described as to provide a concise historical/political account which is first guided by selective and focused points in the history of the organization, and second, informed and structured by the literature on the Ülkücü movement, and German and Italian examples of interwar years.[18] I avoid a fully fledged chronological narrative or a history of development as these have been given already by other analysts of the subject.[19] Rather, this section attempts to lay the ground for the political analysis of the upcoming chapters while it makes its own political commentaries. As was made clear in the Introduction, my analysis focuses on the second generation militants; hence, the post-1974 era is given more attention although I here and there refer to the years 1966-1974 and before.

To accomplish what I have set forth so far, I primarily will show the ideological and associational possibilities before the movement that enhanced and restricted its development. Then I will portray the political quest of Türkeş on personal and party-wise levels. Then I will provide a brief overview of the socio-political environment within which the movement made its biggest mark, the 1970s, a decade of crises for Turkey. Then, I will provide the promises made by Türkeş to his electorates and paramilitaries. A literature review concerning the class origins of the paramilitaries will accompany his pledge, while I will comment briefly on the relation between his socio-economic discourse and his audience. Later, I will deal with the power strategy of Türkeş and the paramilitaries' positioning in this quest.

[18] I have chosen to narrow my comparative scope to two paramilitary experiences in Germany and Italy. This has two reasons. Firstly, it is a matter of lenght (of the thesis) and time (of research) that I needed to give my focus to as few experiences as possible. Secondly, and more significantly, the aforementioned examples happen to be the mostly recognized paramilitary instances, providing me with wider literature.

[19] These include Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket* (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2003); Jacob Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974); Mehmet Ali Ağaoğulları, "The Ultranationalist Right," ed. I. Schick, *Turkey in Transition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Last, I will make a brief commentary for further investigations of the Ülkücü literature.

The Ideological and Associational Possibilities

For an organization like the Ülkücü movement, the members of which admit that their raison d'être was above all opposition to communists, the biggest possibility for their emergence—as an ideological and associational attraction point—was opened up by the growing upheaval of the radical leftist politics in the 1960s and 1970s. As the leftist political activity manifested itself in the practices of trade unions, youth organizations and other bodies, and as it began conducting parliamentary activity via the Labor Party of Turkey [Türkiye İşçi Partisi, est. 1961], all tools but the parliamentary opposition of the anti-communists were simultaneously established. Moreover, the ideological response to the left became more visible than ever. The beginning and the continuation of the NAP's political quest shall first and foremost be sought in this regard. Since it is the task of Chapters 2 and 3 to describe the ways in which this opposition took place, let me for now introduce the ideological and associational antecedents of the Ülkücü movement that enhanced (and in certain ways, restricted) its formation and development as a political antagonist.

The ideological currents which opened up possibilities for the Ülkücü movement (as for the latter to propose an ideological outlook with a pre-disposed audience) can be reduced to two dimensions: The first was the heritage of the official history-writing and Kemalism. For my present purposes, I content myself with remarking on the significance of national education in Turkey and the consequent

ideological development of Turkish youth, which should have made it relatively easier for Türkeş to create a powerful ultranationalist organization.[20] The second was the more relevant ideological resource that was rooted in the anti-communist and Turkist/Turanist[21] traditions of Turkey. Although these were initially different movements with different agendas, the post-WWII era witnessed the coming together of the two; if not on an intellectual plane, then on an organizational axis.

Turanism and anti-communism in Turkey were relatively old ideologies, one dating back to the onset of World War I[22] and the other to the interwar era. To put it simply, Turanism was an ideological position taken by a limited number of intellectuals who supported an irredentist foreign policy that suggested the unification of the Turkic nations of Central Asia and Turks elsewhere with the Republic (the name Turan signified this utopian, gigantic, and ethnically united "nation state") while proposing "the Turkification of certain domestic peoples."[23] The irredentism[24] of Turanist vision was legitimized on the grounds of "captive Turks" in the USSR and of their need for liberation from "the Russian imperialism"; hence one might claim that the Turanists had an anti-communist side from almost the

[20] I also avoid discussion of the kinship of Kemalism and the Ülkücü ideology. For a geneaology of the nationalist ideologies in Turkey and the positioning of Ülkücü movement, see Poulton, *Top Hat*, esp. pp. 130-167; for the relation between the Kemalists and ultranationalists, see Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," esp. pp. 184-186; and for a discussion on the Turkish education system and its relation to the Ülkücü militants' ideology and to the Turkish youth in general, see Landau, *Radical Politics*, pp. 29-31.

[21] Although the two terms sometimes designate different positions by different people, I use them interchangibly and omit deeper discussion. For an analysis regarding the differences between them see Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," pp. 177-184; Landau, *Radical Politics*, pp. 193-194; Çağlar, "Greywolves," pp. 81-82.

[22] Though its beginning as a "romantic vision" dated back to the nineteenth century, the 1910s were when it acquired a political character. Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," p. 184.

[23] "[P]robably Kurds, Laz, Circassians, and others." Ibid, p. 181.

[24] Although the NAP never had an official irredentist foreign policy, the political outlook of certain segments of the grassroots (and, arguably the party top cadre) was shaped around this romantic vision. As I will elaborate in Chapter 3, irredentism did not occupy the minds of the Ülkücü militants as much as it was referred to in the publications by the movement. It rather functioned as a metaphor that gave meaning to the street warfare going on between paramilitaries and radical leftist militants (or in general, Ülkücü activity), for the activity of the leftists were interpreted as serving to the interests of the USSR. See the section on Anti-Internationalism.

beginning of their ideological and political pursuit. Following the WWII, The "hard-line policies" adopted by the Turkish governments drove Turanists to emphasize their anti-communist side instead of their imperialist vision, for they strived to attain legitimacy before the state, since they had for a while suffered from the state-led legal proceedings.[25]

Turkey's anti-communism, on the other hand, as I have just mentioned, was an ideology which was adopted by the statesmen's rhetoric right after WWII. The statesmen's open statements of this political bent were to be materialized as the parliament formed a "struggle with communism commission" as of 1963.[26] As for the non-governmental part of this stance (although when anti-communism was the case, the distinction between state and civil society was pretty much blurred), the indicated era witnessed the opening of many anti-communist organizations with branches all over Turkey. This meant a great deal of networking among university students, local notables, right wing intellectuals, politicians and the industrialist bourgeoise.[27] This huge ideological penetration of towns, Anatolian cities and the urban context was largely effected by the cold war anti-communism in the world. The rhetoric concerning the geopolitical status of Turkey before the USSR and the accompanying concerns regarding a "Russian invasion" and the moral and political decay, easily gathered the different factions of the Turkish right wing, from mainstream conservatives to political Islamists and ultranationalists. Composed of

[25] Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," p. 189. The Turkism acts of 1944 and the subsequent trials were the most prominent of these. For a description of the events by Türkeş himself see Alparslan Türkeş, *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayı* (İstanbul: Arkın Yayınevi, 1968).

[26] *Milliyet* 12.01.1963

[27] The anti-communist ideology further strengthened its legitimacy before the public as Cemal Gürsel (the General of the 1960s coup and later president of the Republic) joined the Association for Fighting Communism in Turkey [*Türkiye Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*, AFCT] as the honorary chairman. As I will address at greater length in Chapter 3, the discourse of the statesmen and the accompanying rhetoric by the Turkish media had a huge impact on the youth, influincing the autobiographies of Ülkücü militants and other right wing activists in their later retrospections.

such distinctive ideologies within its various organizations, those tending for more ultranationalist ideas (Turanists, Turkists and others) within the anti-communist circles came to occupy a substantial number, and they indeed began shaping the ideological and political paths these organizations pursued.

The coming together of the ultranationalists and anti-communists of other bents on an ideological axis did not initially lead to an absolute organizational unity. Moreover, the establishment of a party had to wait until 1965. In addition to its socio-economic reasons,[28] one politically major factor in the delay of the parliamentary representation was the centrist parties' success at employing a nationalist and anti-communist discourse (this narrowed down the political space before the ultranationalists); another was the relatively rare presence of radical leftists in the political arena (which would have grown a spontaneous conservative reaction). As these conditions changed, the ultranationalist and more militant anti-communist ideologies found for the first time the opportunity to break out of their borders and go beyond the discourse and practice of the intellectual minority, to merge and organize around various associations, and to spread to wider communities, most significantly the youth in the universities.

One other significant aspect of the associational possibility before the Ülkücü movement and its antecedents was the legal opportunities granted to the political organizations of various ideologies that were non-existent prior to the "second republic." The increasing presence of the leftist political activity owed much to the organizational freedoms given by the coup constitution of 1961, as did the spread out

[28] After Karpat, Ağaoğulları describes this as the lack of a social and economic turbulence in the 50s, which was needed by an ultranationalist party to emerge. Kemal Karpat, *Turkey's Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p.270, referred to in Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," pp. 191-192.

of anti-communist organizations.[29] (It should be noted that Colonel Türkeş was among those officers who hesitated in granting such freedoms.) As I have just mentioned, the rather patchy conditions of various Turkist/Turanist activists started to change as they began to unify within the larger anti-communist organizations. While the new constitution opened the way for these organizations, the latter paved the way for the ultranationalist cliques to mature in a noticeable manner. However, it was Ülkücü movement (and hence the NAP) that ultimately united the ultranationalist circles as it incorporated various groups, and marginalized and neutralized those opposing Türkeş's minor hegemony throughout the four years succeeding the establishment, or, one must say takeover, of the party.

Türkeş's Ocaks started their recruitment from the already organized anti-communist youth groups, the most significant of which were the Association for Fighting Communism in Turkey and the National Turkish Students Union (*Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*). In the early days, the pursuit of Türkeş's militants seemed to be the taking over of leadership in these organizations, to consolidate hegemony over the totality of anti-communist militancy (this was pretty much parallel to what Türkeş attempted, to reign over the totality of the right wing politics). While the Ocaks started to be established as of 1966, 1968 and 1969 witnessed political violence between Ülkücü militants and other right wing students[30] in the movements' struggle to gain power in the anti-communist bloc. Ülkücü students who then referred to themselves as nationalist socialists[31] (*milliyetçi toplumcu*) seemed to be

[29] For an elaborate description of these rights see Landau, *Radical Politics*, pp. 10-11.

[30] The records of these early days disclosed by Feyizoğlu are exemplary. For the events taking place in the aforementioned era, see his *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket*. The violent deeds between Ülkücü cadres and other right-winger students over the leadership of AFCT are especially worth investigating.

[31] The usage of this name was later banned by Türkeş as for its connotations of Nazi Party.

the most tentative group about resorting to violence for the sake of their political aims, providing tips for the organization's future characteristics.

Despite the fact that there were so many anti-communists who were unwilling to go after Türkeş and his newly emerging militants, the number of young men passing from these associations to consolidate under Türkeş's influence was significant. When it was understood that the movement was unable to maintain hegemony over the whole anti-communist youth bloc, Dündar Taşel decided to organize the young supporters of Türkeş solely in the Ocaks.

As mentioned, although in the beginning of their political pursuit, the Ülkücü militants could not fully dominate the other constituents of the anti-communist bloc (particularly over the more Islamist groups, who had an advantage in terms of quantity), as of 1980 they outnumbered those involved in the political Islamist organizations. One might argue that, the existence of the politically active right wing youth and the accompanying political culture was probably more important for Türkeş than the quantity of men provided to him, since this proved enough to establish a paramilitary nucleus.

One could also argue that the associational possibilities before the Ülkücü movement were not as great as those that had been granted to the *Squadristi* in Italy and *Sturmabteilung* in Germany in the interwar period. The trainees of the Ülkücü paramilitaries were limited to the immediate environment of the Colonel and his colleagues (who were of a military past), yet the number of these active or former officers was insufficient considering the number of paramilitary troops Türkeş had in mind.

Moreover, unlike the Italian and German fascist experiences, there were no war veterans in Turkey to fill the paramilitary lines. The former two had the

advantage of employing a great deal of men in paramilitary formation who had already experienced warfare. The foundations of the SA, for instance, had been laid before the Nazi party, as they had been used as assault troops by the German army during World War I.[32] Also, There was no nationwide ultranationalist intellectual network in Turkey (as said, these only formed a minority) to influence and organize the nationalist youth in a widespread and rapid fashion.[33] There was a network of right wing anti-communist wealthy men to fund the commando camps and Ocaks within their provinces, yet they were not necessarily supporters of the NAP; in fact, many of them tended to be open partisans of the centrist right wing Justice Party.

To return to the historicity of Türkeş's paramilitary nucleus, the military intervention of 1971 was another obstacle before his movement since it hindered development in terms of its paramilitary formation. The camp and street activities were necessarily suspended by Türkeş in order to "help the military" in establishing order.[34] The military intervention at the same time propitiated the conservative response as the military repressed the radical left political activity. This should have handicapped the speed of the recruitment process, which was largely dependent on the spontaneous reaction of the conservative youth to the presence of the leftists. While this was the case for the first generation, second generation militants found more time to be involved in politics (the military kept a certain distance to the political field until 1980), more appropriate conditions to increase their number (the

[32] Ian Drury, *German Stormtrooper 1914-18* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 1995), p. 68.

[33] To recall Gramsci's analysis of 1920s Italy, this can be interpreted to mean that there were no widespread moral/intellectual leaders who would articulate the movement to the larger segments of society. It was true that the teachers in the rural context were effective in interpellating the pre-fascist youth into Ocaks, yet the number of these people were limited and their effectivity was largely dependent on the geographies they operated. The significance of this lack manifests itself when one compares the gathering of 200,000 men around the Squadristi in the organization's third year, to the 100,000 militants around the Ocaks at the end of twelve politically active years.

[34] This was certainly a political maneuver by Türkeş in order to reduce the impact of the military act to a minimum. Considering the death sentences given to the leftist militants, he was indeed quite successful in his pragmatist approach.

"communist threat" was bigger than ever) and more educators to train (the first generation was at their service). Before turning to their experience, let me provide a close-up of Türkeş's personal political quest to depict the emergence of the movement in more detail.

The Colonel

Colonel Alparslan Türkeş, a Cypriot studying at the Turkish Military Academy in Istanbul, was influenced by the works of Nihal Atsız and other Turanist thinkers at a very young age. The famous Turkism acts of 1944, in which many ultranationalists were arrested for the protests and marches they conducted, enabled him to make his first public appearance and quickly rendered him a respectable figure among the ultranationalist circles. He later was among those who forged the coup d'état of 1960 (he was the colonel who read the coup statement from the radio), yet with regards to his unwillingness to turn over the political power to civil governments and his ultra-nationalist attitude throughout the military leadership of the initial six months, he ended up in exile in India along with a group of men known as "the Fourteen," officers of the National Union Committee. Many of them later joined Türkeş in his political quest.

Türkeş's resignation from his office in the Turkish army was the precursor of his involvement in politics. After several attempts in other parties, in 1965, he took the leadership of the Republican Villager Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi*) together with his close circle from the military. Eliminating those members who opposed Türkeş with regards to his ultranationalist aims, within a short period,

the legislation of the RVNP was altered into "a vertical pattern of authority"[35] to enable Türkeş to exert absolute power over the party apparatuses. The new body of the party and its command of chain greatly differed from the other parties in Turkey. In this sense, the militaristic approach of Türkeş to an electioneering organization was easily visible. Shortly after, the name of the party was changed to the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*) in 1969, possibly after the Spanish Falangist party, *Partido de Moviemento Nacional.*[36]

Türkeş's first Ocak was founded in 1966 in the Ankara University Law faculty.[37] As I will elaborate in Chapter 2, the rapid expansion of the movement with the opening of other Ocaks not only made the organization a powerful agent in Turkish politics, but also determined the very characteristics of its structure. One might argue that between 1966 and 1968, the Ocaks did not function as a paramilitary organization, but rather as a regular right-wing party's youth branch, despite the fact that the more qualified and educated members of the nucleus phase (they were to a major extent university student) were—as I mentioned before—willing to use violence from the very start.

Conjoint to the political activities in the urban context so as to gain power within anti-communist circles, the newly emerging militants started to prepare themselves in the camps and Ocaks for street warfare with the "real enemy," the communist militants. In 1968 Dündar Taşel, a close associate of Türkeş and his colleague in the Fourteen, opened up the first commando camp in Muğla. This was when the Turkish and international public began to get tips regarding the political

[35] Landau, *Radical Politics*, p. 214.

[36] Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," p. 212. Another common argument for the name of the party is that Türkeş liked and was infuenced by the name of the semi-official movement periodical *Milli Hareket* (National Movement). Soner Yalçın and Doğan Yurdakul, *Reis: Gladio'nun Türk Tetikçisi* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2003) p. 41.

[37] Feyizoğlu, *Fırtınalı Yıllarda*, p. 27.

strategy in Türkeş's mind. Although (as mentioned) these were closed after the 1971 military intervention, on Türkeş's order, the camps were reestablished in the late 70s, this time more clandestinely and often under the personal initiatives of the first generation elders.

Despite the fact that in the beginning Türkeş had a rather secular (if not anti-clerical, as in the Nazi experience) political quest, he had to change his discourse over time due to his desire to expand the paramilitary and electorate base of his party. The 1969s party congress was definitive of this political refraction. The debates over the party flag were symptomatic of the differing stances within the party and of the new politics of Türkeş. There were within the party those favoring the greywolf emblem who were of a more Turkist and non-Islamic political tendency (to them Turkish history was much older than could be reduced to its post-Islamic era), while Türkeş and his supporters favored the symbol of the three crescents as to refer to the "inseparability" of the Islamic and Turkish civilizations. In the end, three crescents were chosen as the party emblem while symbol of the greywolf over the turquoise blue flag (which both carried significance with regards to Turkic myths) was chosen for the Ocaks.

In this regard, the 1969 congress might be evaluated as the breaking point from which time on Türkeş had no rivalry whatsoever in the ideological and political pursuit the movement drew to itself. It is true that he had already established organizational authority over the party and its paramilitary organs; yet the rather eclectic nature of the NAP's political and ideological environment ultimately reduced to the single will of the Colonel after the congress of 1969. The RPNP was supposed to be open to the different voices of the ultranationalist circles (they all had finally found the chance for representation in the parliament); yet 1969 marked the

assimilation of differing ultranationalistic ideas under Türkeş's interpretation of Turkism. Those who opposed the new situation were exposed to violence by Türkeş's newly emerging but devoted militants; indeed the marginalization of these segments became another moment in the constitution of the Ülkücü ideology and identity.[38] Before passing to the analysis of the 1970s and the positioning of the NAP's discourse and practices in this context, let me examine briefly Türkeş's electioneering performance in order to make clearer what sort of voting base he succeeded at maintaining and how paramilitaries mattered in his power strategy.

After taking over the party leadership in the RPNP, Türkeş competed in four elections at the head of the party until the coup d'état of 1980; in 1965, 1969, 1973 and 1977. Although his electioneering performance was never dramatic, his influence over the Turkish politics was always far beyond what he succeeded at doing at the ballot box. The fact that the growing support for his political goals was never enough for him to win an election was one of his major reasons to form a power strategy so notorious. Although the present thesis is focused neither on the NAP's electioneering performance nor on the characteristics of its electorate base, we shall look at the number of Türkeş's voters and his leverage in the parliament to see why paramilitaries mattered so much for him and the NAP's functionality within the cabinets it attained.

[38]A former militant, Terzioğlu's narrative is highly descriptive of this marginalization process. In one significant instance, he depicts the neutralization of the ultranationalist group which called itself *Nasyonel Aktivitede Zinde İnkişaf* (Robust Growth in National Activity) the abbreviation of which was NAZI. Ahmet Haldun Terzioğlu, *Komando* (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2010) pp. 252-253.

Table 1. Electioneering Performance of the NAP by Election Year

Year	Number of Votes	Share in the Total Vote	Seats (out of 450)
1965 (under RVNP)	208,696	2.2	11
1969	275,091	3.0	1
1973	362,208	3.4	3
1977	951,544	6.4	16

Source: Landau, "The NAP," p. 590.

The number of NAP voters in the 1977 elections probably represented the limit superior for Türkeş. For reasons that I will explain, Türkeş could not compete with the centrist right Justice Party. His electioneering performance was to a major extent dependent on taking over the support for the Islamist, National Order Party. To recall Juan Linz's determination, in contrast to the opposition on the paramilitary level, as was the case for other fascist parties, the real rivals of the NAP were other conservative parties opposing it at the ballot box.[39]

Despite the fact that the expansion in the electorate base of the NAP was never enough for the movement to attain state power via democratic means, the growth in the number of NAP voters was definitive of the movement not only in terms of revealing the party's growth, but also with regards to the cultural and political characteristics of its voting base. Apart from the quantity of the support for Türkeş, the geographical division of this support was significant; the provinces, where the NAP enjoyed its power at the utmost. As we will see in the next section and as this was also the case for the movement's paramilitary base, the electorate support for the NAP was strongest among the Sunni Turkish population, principally

[39] Juan J. Linz "Some Notes toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective," in *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, W. Laqueur ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 26-27; Also see Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 192-193.

in cities and towns where the Alevi and Kurdish citizens were present to the eyes of the former.[40] This is key to understanding the movement and the success of its accelerated recruitment process.[41]

A Brief Overview of Turkey in the 1970s

From the mid-sixties' to 1980s coup, when the Ülkücü movement made its emergence, is the story of an economy falling into a non-curable crisis.[42] Politically, as we understand the term as electioneering and parliamentary activity, the era between mid 1960s and mid 1970s was dominated by the two major centrist parties, on the right, the Justice Party and, on the left, the Republican People's Party. Despite the ever-growing rhetorical opposition between the two parties, one might claim that they were not far from each other with regards to their analyses and prescriptions of the political economy of the late 1970s. As the wounds of the growing economic (and for reasons to be explained, social) crisis began to be felt more than ever in the mid 1970s, the discourse of the centrist parties began to lose its attraction in the eyes of those belonging to the marginalized sectors of the national economy, and to some extent in the eyes of the organized laborers of the industrial cities. The discourses of development by these two major parties were effective when the economy was in a state of relatively rapid growth; the questions regarding the redistributional justice were able to be postponed by the hegemonic bloc as the life quality of the masses

[40] The "fertile crescent," as addressed by Türkeş, designated those Central and Eastern Anatolian provinces where the NAP derived most of its votes. Topographically, these provinces formed a shape like the crescent on the NAP's flag. Adana, Sivas, Van, Kars, Erzincan, Maraş, Hatay and Tokat were some of those among others.

[41] See also Chapter 2.

[42] Avoiding a discussion regarding the political economy of the period, I will content myself with proposing the works held regarding the era. The ones that were most effective in shaping the mindset here are Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, (London: Verso, 1987); Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009*, (İstanbul: İmge Yayınevi, 2011).

had grown relatively better. When the growth of the economy came to a halt as of 1974, the unease among the lower classes became more apparent and this provided a political space for the radical movements to raise the voices and earn sympathizers more than ever before in the history of the Republic.

The industrialization project which accompanied the discourse on development, and the subsequent monopolization of production in the hands of the urban capitalists, had already brought forth a new trouble for the cabinets of the era. As has been discussed by other authors,[43] the project marked dissolving effects upon the socio-economic structure of the small-scale producers of the periphery. The traditional middle classes were faced with the danger of losing their social and economic status by dispossession and the subsequent social degradation.[44] There unavoidably emerged cracks in the ability of the centrist parties to remain convincing in ideological terms, and this might have been the second moment in the opening of the political field for larger radical movements.

Obviously, these two moments cannot portray by themselves the whole picture regarding the political economy of the rising radical movements after 1974. Yet they at least can be argued to have granted the possibility for a political economic discourse such as the NAP's to be effective among larger crowds. The

[43] Keyder, *State*, pp. 165-196.

[44] The fear of the middle and lower middle classes regarding a downward movement in the class structure, and their consequent political response has been dealt with by many authors in Fascist literature as the major driving force (and the motif under the emergence) of the fascist political economy. The most commonly referred to works include: K. D. Bracher, *The German Dictatorship* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973); Michael Kater, *The Nazi Party* (Cambridge, Mass: Harward University Press, 1983); Peter Stachura "The Nazis, the Bourgeoisie and the Workers During the *Kampfzeit*," in P. Stachura (ed.), *The Nazi Machtergreifung* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1993); Geoff Eley, *From Unification to Nazism: Reinterpreting the German Past* (London: Routledge, 1986); Francis L. Carsten, "Interpretations of Fascism," in *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, ed. W. Laqueur (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976). Mann chooses to refer to the totality of such theories as "middle class theory." and sets forth their theoretical limitations. See Mann, *Fascists*, pp. 17-21. Bora et al and Keyder also construct similar arguments for the support behind the NAP. See Keyder, *State*, pp. 220-221; Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 52.

social support for the NAP, which shall be understood as its electorate and paramilitary bases, were largely dependent on these conditions. Indeed one might add that the support for the radical leftist politics was fed by the same or similar conditions. The era following 1974, as already discussed, witnessed a loss of belief in the centrist parties. Birand's rightful depiction indicates that, the economic conjuncture which seemed to be incapable of recovery as of 1978, closed the elbowroom for the center right and left, thus rendering the radical wings of the two sides as the sole actors to conduct politics and determine the social environment.[45] The crisis of the national economy bolstered the rising street warfare, ending up in one of the greatest social crises in Turkish history.

The consequences of the late 1970s socio-economic crisis for the cultural sphere might be reduced sketchily to two dominant axes[46]. The first was the cultural "antagonism" between the urban lifestyles of the upper classes in the cities and the new inhabitants of the city shantytowns, who brought their supposedly unchanged traditional moral and cultural codes with them. The second was the cultural encounter of previously (geographically speaking) distant groups such as the Sunni and Alevi populations, in the shantytowns of the cities, and little cities and towns of Anatolia. The former encounter generated a reactionary social base for both the right and left-wing movements of radical character. This social base was dominated primarily by the lower class youth from Anatolian-origin households and later was fed by those youngsters coming to the cities from the rural areas for education or employment purposes. In the case of the radical leftists, the schism between the urban lifestyles of upper classes and the contrasting lives of the shantytown inhibiters

[45] Mehmet Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Belgeseli*, 1998 [documentary].

[46] I take such antagonisms as dominant with regards to their capacity to generate political conflict, if not on a strictly material basis, with regards to the narratives of the politically rival street groups. Deeper analyses regarding the narratives of the Ülkücü militants are explored in depth in Chapters 2 and 3.

functioned as a visible antagonism which by nature helped the radical groups legitimize their claim to class war. For the Ülkücü movement, however, this antagonism worked to produce quasi-leftist responses from the right-wing youth yet its reflection on the arena of political practice was highly different.[47]

The migration from villages to towns and cities was symptomatic of the consequences of the 1960s and 1970s development project in Turkey. The second encounter I described above ultimately was dependent on this mobilization process and had two geographical dimensions. The first confrontational subset was made up of Alevi citizens who had migrated from villages to the Anatolian towns and cities, and the conservative Sunni population who already had established a middle class lifestyle thereby. After their immigration to the cities and towns, an educated minority, the Alevi citizens, started to find work in the cities' and towns' public offices and other desk jobs. Through the cabinet of the Republican Peoples Party, they became the target for the Sunni, conservative population for their supposed networking activity. The networking of certain societal segments in Turkey's state apparatuses played a big role in generating political reaction among others, though many times this was just a rhetorical point employed to legitimize the political violence directed to the alleged networkers. To many conservative people, Alevi citizens easily became the agents to be blamed for the retrogressing economic conditions and the accompanying fear for losing their class positions. The fact that the Alevi youth was often eager to involve in (or as were associated with) Marxist politics and publicly propagandized leftist politics did nothing but escalate this

[47] Chapter 3 describes the transformation of this response to the street warfare to radical leftist militants and others.

tension. As explored in depth in Chapter 3, their political tendency was interpreted above all, on a moral and cultural axis.[48]

The second subset regarded the overall immigration movement from Anatolia to the larger cities where the Sunni and Alevi populations were articulated to the workforce of the city industry or went after other occupational opportunities. In addition to the types of conflict in Anatolian towns and cities, this confrontation had its own consequences. In this second process, *hemşehrilik* (the imaginary moral bond among the people coming from the same cities, towns or villages to the urban context) was the major driving force in the creation of particular shantytown neighborhoods, whereby the moral and political codes of their "origins" were reproduced. The famous "liberated areas" [*kurtarılmış bölgeler*] of the 1970s[49] were created by the radical leftists and Ülkücü militants often in line with these origins of the neighborhoods. The urban shantytowns were divided by particular ideologies and became the scene for the most violent political confrontations. The encounter of the right-wing populations and that of the left led many to the conviction that the problems experienced were due to the people belonging to the "rival" political and moral stance. As Keyder notes, the new conditions of living "graced all implicit rivalries within the gloss of political vocabulary."[50] The development of the NAP's electorate and paramilitary base took place in these conditions.

[48] Although the literature on the Ülkücü movement focuses on the Sunni/Alevi conflict, I shall make a brief commentary regarding the Turkish/Kurdish opposition. Although the latter did not generate a confrontation as violent as the former, some interviews I held with the Aegean Ülkücü militants put forward that the growing presence of Kurdish Marxist militants also was unwelcomed by the Sunni Turks and helped the expansion of Türkeş's paramilitary base.

[49] The narrative of ex-chairman of the Ocaks, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu is examplary. Mehmet Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Belgeseli*.

[50] Keyder, *State*, p. 216.

Türkeş's Discourse on the Economy, and the Class Character of the Paramilitary Base

As already pointed out in the Introduction, the present thesis lacks two major dimensions among others, a scrutinized class perspective of the worlds of the militants and the corresponding analysis regarding the socio-economic aspect of Türkeş's political discourse, which was designed to attract the youth to the paramilitary scene. For the latter, one reason on my part to avoid such discussion (I do this to a limited extent) is the fact that the economic prescription of Türkeş was neither well enough articulated to be understood by the grassroots nor was there a will on the side of the militants to learn about it. Second, as I will explore in depth, the discourse on economics was not very effective on the recruitment of paramilitaries or in the development of the Ülkücü ideology.

The lack of a class based analysis in the thesis on the other hand, has more "material" reasons. First, the Ülkücü historian lacks data such as organization records, membership documents, subscription receipts and other relevant material (these were destroyed during and after the coup d'état) which would provide the empirical evidence regarding the socio-economic character of the grassroots. Second, the other possible resources, the narratives by the militants and the press material from the indicated era are far from enabling us to set forth a rigid class-based argumentation; they both carry the risk of misleading inductions. My references here and there to the class structure of the organization are based largely on these "non-reliable" resources and they do not have any claim to inclusiveness.

However, I shall give a brief summary regarding these dimensions with reference to the previous works on Turkey and elsewhere. To speak of Türkeş'

economic discourse, we must point out that an analysis directed at such a discourse carries significance as it is related to the economic (and as he will claim social and moral) crises of Turkey. The works on the Fascism literature pay utmost attention to the crises of fascist countries and the corresponding solutions preached by the fascist leaders. Such works are often held within the historiographical pursuit of historical sociology.[51] As did the existing literature on the Ülkücü movement, I avoided such perspective in which one might look closer at the socio-economic conditions whereby a fascist party is more or less likely to gain support and hold onto power.[52] I acknowledge the significance of the question for the late 1970s in Turkey and the Ülkücü movement. My reason for omitting such an analysis is its less direct relevance to my subject—the mental worlds of the Ülkücü militants—than that of an understanding of the socio-political environment of the organization would reveal. Besides, such pursuit carries the risk of reducing Türkeş's failure (to take over the state power) to the conditions surrounding him and the movement.[53]

However, as might be asked in an analysis conducted within the same approach, the questions regarding the solutions preached by Türkeş remain more relevant and they deserve a brief mention. Türkeş's answer to the economic turbulence of 1970s was a "national economy" which I will restrain myself from explaining in depth. Yet to describe it in a nutshell, it was not much different from its similar ideas in interwar years' Europe; a state sponsored, rapid development theory that ultimately preached the permanence of the existent relations of production (or at

[51] Among the most notable are Mann, *Fascists*; and Juan Linz "Some Notes."

[52] We shall note that Keyder responses to this question in his 1987 monograph to a certain extent. Keyder, *State*, pp. 220-221.

[53] For an elaborate depiction of the historical sociology in Western academics, see Dennis Smith, *The Rise of Historical Sociology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Craig Calhoun, "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. by Terence J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University, 1996) pp. 305-337.

most, the relations prior to the recent economic dissolution)[54] while aggrandizing the benedictions of accelerated industrialization and modernized agriculture for the disadvantaged segments of society.[55] To recall what has been said so far, Keyder suggests that, the solution posed by Türkeş was restorationist in its attempt to reconcile the traditional middle classes and the urban capitalists, where the former began to suffer from the dissolving affects of the industrialization project carried out by the latter. To Keyder, this solution was not realistic insofar as a nationalist solution in the crisis of the international division of labor system in the 1970s—in the form of a return to the traditional economic structure—was simply impossible.[56]

While this discourse had the traditional middle classes and the industrialist bourgeois as its audience, Türkeş was never able to convince the latter. The industrialist bourgeois, who might be defined as the most remote part of the hegemonic historical bloc to the Ülkücü movement[57] displayed hesitation towards Türkeş, his paramilitaries and his economic model. This was one significant point in the determination of Türkeş's power strategy and his ultimate failure. The statism of Türkeş, his authoritarian figure, his non-qualified and non-reliable cadres might have

[54] The interview with Ramiz Ongun, the chairman of *Ocak*s in 1970, provides an illustrative example for the idea of class-transcendence in fascist organizations: "The Turkish nation has been divided into six social segments. These are workers, villagers, craftsmen, public servants, employers and independent business owners… These are organized within themselves… Hence, instead of creating classes and confronting each other, The Turkish nation has been united around economic bonds as well as around national consciousness, national morality and national values. The Turkish nation shall be united in sorrow, grief and pride." Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Fırtınalı Yıllarda*, p. 797. *"Türk milleti 6 sosyal dilime bölünmüştür. Bunla işçi, köylü, esnaf, memur, işveren ve serbest meslek sahipleridir… Bunlar kendi aralarında organize edilmiştir… Yani, Türk milleti sadece sınıflar meydana getirilerek, birbirlerine düşürülme yerine bu sınıflar milli şuurun, milli ahlakın, milli değerlerin yanında ekonomik bağlarla da birbirlerine bağlandırılmıştır. Türk milleti tasada, kederde ve kıvançta birleştirilmelidir."*

[55] Landau's analysis in this regard is highly descriptive. Especially see *Radical Politics*, pp. 224-226, 229; and "The NAP," p. 601.

[56] Keyder, *State*, p.221.

[57] By the historical bloc of the 1960s and 1970s Turkey, I imply the "historical congruence between material forces, institutions and ideologies" which manifested itself in the strategic direction taken by the industrialist bourgeois, the military and the bureaucratic elite; a direction which eventually lead to the coup d'etat of 1980. Stephen Gill, *Power and Resistance in the New World Order* (New York: Palgrave, MacMillan, 2002), p. 58. The concept of hegemony, on the other hand, is employed in the known Gramscian sense. It is simply the artistic play of (a) certain historical agent(s) to convince the rest of the society that its particular interests are for the interest of all.

been three of many reasons for the industrialist bourgeois to develop such a distance. However, what was more significant (with regards to the aims of the present thesis) was the fact that Türkeş's electioneering and paramilitary bases also displayed a distance towards the capitalists of Istanbul.

The Democratic Party tradition of rural Turkey, which was the main and the largest paramilitary resource to the movement, left the new paramilitary generation a very strong anti-elitism directed towards the bourgeois of Istanbul and the culture represented by their urban way of living.[58] Since proximity with the Istanbul bourgeois would not have conformed with the spontaneous ideology of the grassroots, the industrialist bourgeois and the role cast for them by Türkeş's economic model manifested itself in their absence in his discourse. The industrialist bourgeois was almost never named by the leader, yet the model he proposed was of a kind that could not do without them. In addition to its failure to be well articulated, Türkeş's economic discourse also presented an example of political pragmatism. The distance between the elements of Türkeş's audience drove him to the other components of the historical bloc, the military and the bureaucratic apparatus, and his power strategy was structured around this drive.

To speak of the class characteristics of the paramilitary base, one must note that there are a limited number of analyses in the literature attempting to reveal this issue. The most depictive of them are Bora et al.'s and Keyder's analyses on the subject. Bora and Can portray a two-folded schema for the paramilitaries, those in the urban and rural contexts. The paramilitaries of the rural context, they suggest, were the youngest generation of the traditional middle classes who, as has been mentioned, were not successfully integrated into the capitalist system and hence

[58] I will elaborate this issue in Chapter 3 under the section on Anti-Cosmopolitanism.

developed a reaction to the big capitalists of the cities, bequeathing this political stance to their children.[59] As for the urban context, they claimed that the biggest difference between these militants and those of the rural areas was that the former did not hold a socio-economic status to defend or protect with a slight economic transition, as was the case for the militants of the rural context. This fact rendered these "nothing to lose" militants one of the most violent constituents of the movement. The paramilitary bases at the city universities, on the other hand, were composed of two main groups; the constituents of the rural context coming to the city for education, and the children of urban families belonging to the lower-middle classes, laborers or lumpenproleteriat. The expansion of the movement never reached to the working class youth; it rather spread among the unemployed, those who were in disguised unemployment and marginal sector laborers.[60]

Keyder's analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the class character of voters, providing us with hints regarding the younger generation on the paramilitary scene. His depiction was as follows:

> …those remaining outside [of the organized segments of the national labor market]—unorganized urban laborers, the marginal sector of shanty towns, small town workers in and out of self-employment, and partly proleterianised villagers— were swayed by the promise— and disillusioned by the betrayal— of unified development. They provided a potentially wide base for fascism. Without this promise, the fascist alternative would not have appeared on the agenda.[61]

My readings of Ülkücü memoirs and the interviews I made led me to think that both depictions carry elements of truth and falsity. First, it is true that the militant base presented heterogeneity, not only with regards to the differing class positions, but also due to the differing social and intellectual positions. As will be

[59] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 53.
[60] Ibid, pp. 55-56.
[61] Keyder, *State*, p. 221.

shown in Chapter 2, these divisions manifested themselves in the urban/rural dichotomy proposed by Bora et al., and at the same time determined the very nature of the division of labor within the organization. For instance, the militants who come from the rural context to the urban paramilitary scene, tended to occupy the lower ranks in the organizational structure, often being assigned difficult and dangerous tasks. Second, the electorate base was also far from homogenous, as this was the case for many fascist examples. It has been almost a sociological dictum that fascist movements never have a "distinctive social base"[62] and acquire electorates and paramilitary troops from different classes and social segments, depending on the context in which they operated.

The similarity between the Ülkücü movement's paramilitary base and that of the Italian and German fascist experiences in the early phases of their paramilitary development is illustrative here. The common fact is that the paramilitary scene and the movements in general were attractive mostly to those who were the least integrated in the class structure of society.[63] Students, the unemployed, some intellectuals, and officers were often apt for differing roles in the paramilitary scenes and fascist movements. For the Ülkücü movement, as it never matured enough to overcome this early phase, the stretching of the paramilitary organization to include the workers or producers of the country never became possible.

Türkeş's economic prescription was not effective in his attempt to expand the paramilitary base of the movement as much as his discourse on defending the culture and morality, which was supposed to be under siege. As I have attempted to show, his ideas regarding the economy were far from being clear; and, as will be clear in Chapters 2 and 3, this discourse did not have any correspondence to the daily lives

[62] Linz, "Some Notes," p. 4.

[63] Ibid. p. 15; Francis L. Carsten, "Interpretations of Fascism." Also see the works of Togliatti. Palmiro Togliatti, *Faşizm Üzerine Dersler* (Ankara: Bilim ve Sosyalizm Yayınları, 1978).

and the mental worlds of the paramilitaries. What was offered on the economic plane was at best interpreted by the paramilitaries as a promise to them by the leader for an upward movement within the class structure of society.[64] For now, I will be contented with discussions on the economic discourse and class structure of the organization. I will make use of more discussions on the class discussions in the next chapters, though I will do this pragmatically.

The Second Generation and Türkeş's Power Strategy

Setting forth the socio-economic conditions surrounding the Ülkücü militants' environment in the 1970s, I can now turn to the historicity of the second generation militants and attempt to show how they mattered to and were integrated into the power strategy of Türkeş. Such an attempt primarily brings forth the question that what sort of role was cast for the Ülkücü paramilitaries in this strategy. Although this is the task of the upcoming chapter, I shall say a few words with regards to the other fascist experiences here. To recall the European cases, it is significant to remember that fascist movements were always more complex than the parties competing in the electoral struggle.[65] Many times they were a vast combination of organizations, labor unions, non-governmental organizations of various interest areas, professional chambers and, above all, the paramilitary organizations which made their differing legal manifestations with regards to the countries in which they appeared.

The power of the paramilitaries and their influence over the totality of the movements (hence the parties) varied according to the country. For instance the

[64] Chapter 3 will deal with this utopian character of paramilitaries' interpretation.
[65] Mann, *Fascists*, p. 17.

Italian Militia was never as effective as the SA or SS in Germany[66] whereby the SA constituted a relatively autonomous power base that became a supposed threat to the top cadre of the Nazi party. The paramilitary troops of the SA went so much further to pose a distinct political agenda than that of Hitler, claiming that the Nazi revolution still had not taken place despite the seizure of power by Hitler[67] (for this reason, they were destroyed by Hitler in a one night's takeover, known as the "Night of the Long Knives").

The Italian experience on the other hand, displayed seemingly decentralized but empowered troops, yet these ultimately ceased to be a potential threat to Mussolini. The Blackshirts did not threaten the function of the fascist party or the status of Mussolini, but rather matured into a legal state organ, and then jeopardized the monopoly of the military over exerting legitimate violence. In this way, the political challenge for Mussolini was transformed into the task to condone the local authority of his paramilitaries while at the same time preventing a conflict between them and the military.

Contrary to their counterparts in Germany and Italy, the Ülkücü paramilitaries almost never displayed a political autonomy vis-à-vis Türkeş nor did they seek to form a power base so as to jeopardize his function. However, this should not mean that Türkeş perfected the control and manipulation of his paramilitaries. The Ülkücü movement was not a centralized organization where the apex of the pyramid had the fullest control over its base. The direction of power was not on a one way axis, going from top to bottom but it was bilateral. Yet, as will be seen in the chapter on organizational structure there was no form of leadership other than Türkeş's (maybe

[66] Giorgio Rochat, "The Fascist Militia and the Army" in *The Ax Within: Italian Fascism in Action*, ed. Roland Sarti (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), p. 45.

[67] Eleanor Hancock, *Ernst Röhm: Hitler's SA Chief of Staff* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 3.

Gün Sazak and Dündar Taşel might be taken as exceptions for short periods of time) to give an absolute direction to the parliamentary activity of the representatives and the paramilitary activity of the militants.

What might be called the relative autonomy of the paramilitaries lay in the fact that Türkeş, as he aimed at a one-man leadership in the country and made use of his paramilitary power for this ultimate goal, had to satisfy the very limited needs and wishes of his devoted militants by adjusting his political discourse and practice[68] (I will add that these were slight adjustments; the most obtrusive of which was the discursive turn in 1969). These needs and wishes were not directed to the leader by democratic means. Rather, Türkeş was to test the water at the grassroots level as he pursued his personal political agenda. In this sense, the participation of the militants in the decision-making process of the party was mediated by Türkeş's populism towards his subjects.[69] The paramilitaries were just content with the existence of someone making political decisions on their behalf. The power they exerted over the other apparatuses of the movement was enough for them to feel significant.

I will explore the status of the Ülkücü militants within the movement in detail in the next chapter. To turn back to the historical conditions which surrounded them, I shall speak of the military intervention of 1971, as it was one of the most significant turning points for the movement, not only in terms of organizations' legal status (the military shut down the *Ocak*s if not was able stop their whole activity), but also with regards to its maturation as a paramilitaristic political actor. This second point had its reasons.

[68] The more material needs of the militants were either satisfied via the redistributive function of each local Ocak (thanks to their own local funders) or via expenses from the central budget (such as logistical supply). An ex-militant of the ÜM's bureaucratic cadre, Yurtaslan's narrative is depictive. *Ali Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı* (Istanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1980), p. 19. See also the chapter on the organizational structure.

[69] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 67.

First, the fear of punishment pushed the militants to the underground, suspending their provocative activity directed toward the leftist militants and other agents of leftist politics (such as trade unions and progressive university youth). Right before the memorandum, Türkeş declared that they were ready to help the military as much as possible, and stopped the activity of his militants so as to prevent a military act directed at his movement. Second, and more important, the decline in the leftist political activity handicapped the growing reaction from the conservative elements of society, blocking the most fruitful human resource for the militant recruitment. This stopped the expansion of the paramilitary base. The "success" of Türkeş at this critical juncture of 1971 was that the movement was able to "live through" the military act (as they did not experience a single death penalty), considering the actions taken towards the leftist activists, this was quite enviable. Moreover, as I will address in more detail, this parallel between Türkeş's discourse and the practice of the military was to be further employed by the leader to legitimize his political pursuit on a legalistic and statist ground.

As have mentioned, the era between the movement's foundation and the coup d'état of 1980 witnessed two generations of militants. My take on this generations issue is of rather a pragmatic nature. I consider the militants active after December 1974, for this was the first fatal conflict between the Ülkücü militants and leftists since the memorandum, as belonging to the second generation, although among them were certain movement members who already had participated in the pre-memorandum paramilitary scene. The second generation not only formed a paramilitary base with a more diversified human resource, but also coincided with an idiosyncratic phase in the Ülkücü movement's paramilitary history. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, this phase represented a geographical and institutional spread

of the movement, from cities to towns, from universities to high schools. More importantly, the era witnessed the presence of the NAP in two cabinets between March 1975 and January 1978, and the external support of Demirel's final cabinet between October 1979 and September 1980.

This participation in the cabinets of the National Front[70] has two important implications for my analysis. First, they were symptomatic of the political power bestowed on Türkeş by his paramilitary forces. Although the number of NAP representatives did not bear so much significance (see the table above), the number and importance of the ministries given to the Colonel's party was quite impressive.[71] Second, and as I will discuss in more detail, the owning of certain ministries gave the movement the chance to network in the relevant state apparatuses. However, neither the participation in the cabinets nor the networking opened up the possibility for Türkeş to realize his power strategy, the maturation of the movement's paramilitary formation ultimately came to a halt.

As Bora and Can accurately describe, the power strategy of Türkeş and the NAP became visible starting from 1974. The goal was symptomatic of the interwar years' fascist parties and organizations: Creating a turbulent social and political atmosphere by means of street violence, and assigning Türkeş and his paramilitaries as the role of savior of society from this violent environment. The nucleus phase of the Ülkücü paramilitaries had already given the signs of such political pursuit. However, as mentioned, the military intervention of 1971 suspended this strategy for three years. The RPP cabinet of 1974 addressed not only a rise in the publicity and support of the leftist politics, but articulated it to the various areas of society, and also provoked the Marxist militancy nation-wide. This was the right time for the

[70] The first cabinet was comprised of the JP, NAP, NSP and RRP (Republican Reliance Party) while the second was formed by the initial three parties.

[71] The NAP had 2 ministries in 1975 while this number was 5 for the second cabinet in 1977.

Ülkücü movement to restart marking the political and social life. The killing of Şahin Aydın in December 1974 heralded the political nature of the era and the role cast to the Ülkücü militants until the 1980's coup d'état.

Mann's depiction regarding the methods and agenda of the fascist paramilitary organizations might provide us with a vista of the power strategy of Türkeş and the role cast for his paramilitaries in this pursuit:

> It was "provocative," intended to produce a violent reaction from its political rivals. This would enable the fascists to declare that their own violence was "self-defense." Second it would repress enemies, since fascist paramilitarism conferred logistical superiority in street warfare, enabling them to bring "order" to the streets. It was hoped that both "self-defense" and "success" would bring more support and legitimacy to the notion that fascist "orderly violence" could end social chaos. This was then further exploited electorally. Third, paramilitarism could in the last resort launch a coup – provided the army was also immobilized.[72]

There are many points in need of clarification with regards to the Ülkücü case. First, it was true that the ability of the movement to legitimize the political violence under the guise of self-defense nurtured the support for *Ülkücü* movement for a long time, if not electorally, with regards to the young men joining to the paramilitary lines and the moral/financial assistance provided by the conservative population. However, after 1978, when "the anarchy escalated" as to give shape to the daily lives of Turkish society in general, the public discourse of terrorism started to damage this good savior image and the Ülkücü militants began to be portrayed in the press as the counterpart of radical leftist terror on the opposing political side. The accusations regarding terrorism were very effective on the mental worlds of the

[72] Mann, *Fascists*, pp. 358-359

militants as well; many of them later felt the necessity to explain how their militancy had been something different than terrorism.[73]

Second, the "defense" or the street warfare against the leftist militants was many times "successful" thanks to the paramilitaries' logistical superiority and the Ülkücü movement's intimacy with the repressive state apparatuses. The clarification of the latter is discussed in Chapter 3. As for the former, the logistical superiority vis-à-vis the left was primarily due to the movement's unity in the streets as a political actor. As many of the paramilitaries have acknowledged in their later memoirs, their biggest advantage against the radical leftist organizations laid in the disparate nature of the latter in contrast to the almost monolithic structure of the right-wing militancy. Whilst the left had witnessed an undeniable amount of violence within, the inner political violence inside the Ülkücü movement was less hazardous to the function of the organization as opposed to the malfunctioning battles between the Marxist organizations of various kinds. The only threat posed within the right-wing came from the Islamist *Akıncılar*, yet they were usually considered dangerous with regards to recruiting potential Ülkücü militants into their organization, hence almost never were seen as street rivals.

However, the advantage of the Ülkücü movement over the leftists was due to a relative strength. One might claim that if there was a unified leftist militancy which encountered the paramilitary violence, the chances of the Ülkücü movement in the street warfare would be rather limited.[74] This brings us to the third point: the "orderly violence" by the fascist paramilitaries. As I will elaborate in the upcoming chapter,

[73] Oğuzhan Cengiz's prison memoirs are examplary in this regard. Oğuzhan Cengiz, *Kapıaltı*, (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2004). Also see his later memoir: Oğuzhan Cengiz, *Yanık Kale* (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2009).

[74] The anti-fascist front formed by the various Marxist organizations before the Çorum massacre is a good example of how the unity on the left handicapped the activity of the paramilitaries.

the image of an orderly organization did not represent the true character of the Ülkücü movement's paramilitary formation. Yet again, the Ülkücü movement appeared to the observer to be the most regulated militant arrangement in contrast to the other political street groups. The paramilitaries' warfare methods, as well as their public appearance were in fact many times far from a formation that coveted the military. The political violence by the youngest militants was childish in motifs and methods but fatal in consequences. Unlike the *Camicie Nere,* the *SA* and other paramilitary examples, the Ülkücü paramilitaries did not wear uniforms except for the brief periods in the commando camps, and when they marched, it resembled crowds of men in suits lined up for gym classes rather than troops ready for battle with their enemies. Still, these were effective in creating some disciplined image before the public and the non-politicized youth at least till the individual acts manifested the true character of the movement before society.[75] This is also why, contrary to the literature on the Italian and German examples, I restrain myself from using the denominator "paramilitary troop" and stick with the terms "paramilitaries" and "militants."

Last, we shall speak of the coup potential inherent to the Ülkücü ideology and practice. As Mann accurately determines, the function of the fascist paramilitaries was never a counterpart of the function of the military. The coup plans immanent to the activity of the paramilitary troops would have been possible only if the fascist movements could have appealed to the soldiers.[76] Although the NAP had always been close to the military apparatus due to the occupational history of its top cadre, the late 1970s was probably when it had the biggest influence over Turkish military personnel. The crucial handicap before Türkeş in this regard was that he never had

[75] Also see Chapter 2.
[76] Mann, *Fascists*, p. 17.

influence over the military high command, but had to be content with the support of the younger military officers. This fact not only jeopardized the possibilities of taking over state power with the help of military, but also became his biggest trouble after the 1980 coup d'état as the cadres who had launched the coup were not sympathetic to him and to his street forces.

The bond between the Ülkücü movement and young officers resembled that of the fascist troops and the military in Italy, if not on a strategic then on an ethical level. As Rochat wrote for the Italian case, it rested upon "moral and ideological affinities" and "shared value judgments such as the need for discipline and hierarchy in social relations, reverence for national traditions, the wastefulness of political debate…"[77] and so on. In Italy too, the army high command was not involved in the fascist movement, and it was the local commanders of the lower ranks who sympathized with the goals of the squads. The difference was that the *ras* (local fascist chiefs) had the power to act as semi-autonomous political agents and their collaboration with the local commanders were more effective than the *Ülkücü* case. For the latter, the collaboration meant at best the smoothing of paperwork or forming good relations with the repressive apparatus where the gendarmeries were in charge instead of the policemen. This parochial network of relations was far from enabling Türkeş to realize his power strategy.

Despite its "unsuccess," this strategy of Türkeş continued to be dangerous and it yielded its fruits in the massacres that took place after 1977. In addition to the murders of popular leftist figures (Kemal Türkler and Doğan Öz, among many others) and massacres aimed at leftist university youth (the Bahçelievler Massacre of October 1978 and the 16 March Massacre in 1978 are the best known), the bloody

[77] Rochat, "The Fascist Militia," p. 44.

events of Sivas (September 1978), Maraş (December 1978), and Çorum (May-June 1980), which were directed at the Alevi communities of the aforementioned provinces, were among many other political acts whereby the Ülkücü paramilitaries marked one of the peak moments in the political violence history of Turkey. Despite the still widespread right-wing analyses which aim to throw the book at the "deep state" and foreign intervention so as to claim that the involved people were provoked, innocent citizens, the responsibility of Türkeş and his paramilitaries was clear. The cold-blooded murders aimed at politicized and non-politicized civilians and the sexual violence exerted thereby have yet to be analyzed from the perspective of its victims.[78]

Here, one final comment shall be made regarding the movement's relation to the contra-guerilla, a topic that probably has drawn more attention in the literature than the movement itself. Although I have avoided making use of this literature and provide limited data regarding its history, the readers might at least find here a number of reasons that will make the relation more intelligible. To name one, the mission of backing up the state, a term that I borrow from Bora and Can, and its definitiveness in the Ülkücü ideology (hence in the mental worlds of the paramilitaries) was one major reason for the movement to easily become the most capacious human resource for the underground state contra-guerilla. The overlap between the anti-communist agenda of the Ülkücü movement and the contra-guerilla (this was at least what was told to the militants by the recruitment agents[79]) made it very attractive for the paramilitaries to join in the "deep state." Such entitlement not

[78] İnci Aral, *Kıran Resimleri*, (Istanbul: Can Yayınları, 2000) is the most commonly referred book as to cover narratives by the women victims of Maraş.

[79] Birand's already referred to documentary on the 1980 coup d'état has examplary narratives by former Ülkücü militants.

only bolstered their tendency to a "mysterious" and "dangerous" identity, but also meant a decent salary and a better living.

Some Notes for Further Investigation on the Ülkücü Literature

I will spare some final paragraphs for the works (those by Landau, Feyizoğlu, Poulton and Çağlar) on the Ülkücü movement in order to facilitate future investigations and further clarify the position of the present thesis. To begin with Landau, his two works, the monograph *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, and the essay "The Nationalist Action Party in Turkey," were the first international academic writings that focused on the NAP. Similar in method, the two works pursue the parliamentary activity of the NAP, while *Radical Politics* puts the NAP and the Ülkücü movement within a wider historical frame, locating them in the opposition formed against the organized radical left. They both carry utmost significance for those interested in the activity of the party's top cadre. The present work differs from them with regards to the historical data it employs and subjects it analyzes.

Poulton's study, on the other hand, addresses the different forms nationalism disguises itself in Turkey and attempts to set forth the continuity and ruptures amongst these different forms. The present work does not attempt such a genealogy. It rather refers to such kinship between the Ülkücü ideology and its predecessors so long as such relation has a significant effect on the understanding of the former, and does this to a limited extent. The book also suggests a bipolar framework for the political environment of Turkey, the two extremes of which are argued to be occupied by the "anti-systemic" elements of radical right and left movements. On the left were the rather disparate Marxist organizations of various kinds whereas on the

right were the monolithic political organizations of the Ülkücü movement and the Islamist *Akıncılar*.

I shall note that this bipolar analysis was shared by other authors such as Birand[80] and Keyder[81]. As I will deal with a different approach in Chapter 3, the problem of defining the Ülkücü movement as an "anti-systemic" organization is that such an analysis is only possible when one takes legality as the litmus paper of the political analysis. It is true that Ülkücü movement was in many aspects an organization pursuing illegal acts, especially in the political turmoil of the late 1970s and had the agenda of a government overthrow.[82] However, as it is one of the main tenets of the present work, its ultimate function was far from antagonizing the "system." Often, it was not the state policies or the strategy of the hegemonic bloc which triggered the political activity of the Ülkücü militants. Rather, it was the "communist activity" that empowered and legitimized the violent acts of the movement as they were interpreted by the paramilitaries as blocking the daily flow of the "system" (with strikes, school occupations, so on). In this sense, I am inclined to think, going beyond such a bipolar analysis is crucial.

Feyizoğlu's *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket*[83] is a useful non-analytical work for those who want to examine the years 1966-1973 as it provides a selection of historical data such as meeting records, Ocak declarations and news. It also carries significance for the Ülkücü historian insofar as it is seen as an "objective" study by the movement members themselves. The key here is that the book consists largely of archival data and bears almost no interpretation or analysis by its author. It is

[80] Birand, *Saat 04:00*.

[81] Keyder, *State*.

[82] Legalism of Türkeş and its reflection in the discourses of the militants are important traits of Ülkücü history, although my interventions in this regard are rather limited. I shall note that the legalistic discourse of the militants is rather the object of an ethnographic study; the interviews I held proved to be more open in this trait than did the memoirs.

[83] [tr.] "Ülkücü Movement in Stormy Years."

important to note that any attempt at "analysis" is even today seen as "highly subjective" and therefore "unrealistic" by the movement members.[84]

Ayşe N. Çağlar's work on the Ülkücü movement is the most similar study in the literature to the present thesis in terms of its methodology and analytical objectives. Her essay[85] aims to understand the ideological and political world of the Turkist youth through a reading of the works of Atsız[86] and its reception by a limited number of high ranked militants (which are published writings of movement sympathizers[87]). Although she acknowledges that Atsız's works cannot constitute a view of the mental world of the young activists and attempts to analyze the reception of these works by the militants, one deficit in her study is that she overlooks the fact that the activity of reading and its logical consequence in ideological awareness was not a common trait among the militants of the base. As I will elaborate in the next two chapters, the publications presented to the militants did not attract them as much as the narratives told by elder militants, and for many of them it was as late as the prison years of post-1980 for serious engagement with the works of Turanist thinkers and other political/intellectual resources.

An example regarding the outcome of this methodological mistake is her conclusion regarding the organization structure. As she sees strict military obedience as the basis for *türe* (convention) and hence for the Ülkücü movement and takes this granted for the daily lives of the militants,[88] she inevitably disregards the fact that this discursive phenomenon was only part of the movement's image to the outsiders

[84] In the interviews I conducted, I came to realize that it is a common tendency among the ex-militants to see these works as foreign-rooted sources which were built in order to damage the dignity of the movement. I have attempted to analyze the working of a similar mentality in the section on Anti-Internationalism.

[85] Çağlar, "Greywolves."

[86] These include his articles published in *Orhun* and *Atsız* magazines.

[87] Some examples are Necdet Sancar, *Türkçülük Üzerine Makaleler* (Ankara: Töre-Devlet Yayınları, 1976); Akkan Suver, *Nihal Atsız* (İstanbul: Su Yayınları, 1976).

[88] Çağlar, "Greywolves," p. 91.

and did not reflect what was going on inside at a material level. As I will explain in Chapter 2, “total idleness” is a more accurate description than “strict militarism” to define a day from the Ülkücü militant’s life. I here attempted to overcome such possible misdirection by investigating memoirs and confessions that inevitably provide subtexts for the daily lives and practices of the paramilitaries. However, before passing on to the discourse analysis of these texts, let us provide the organizational background of the Ülkücü movement.

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING PROCESSES

Rapid expansion is the most appropriate definition to define the first one and a half decade of the Ülkücü movement. In the late sixties, the Ülkücü cadres were limited to the nationalist youth of the universities in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Throughout the following years, they expanded to other universities and high schools, and with the politicization of Turkey's youth in general, the 1970s witnessed the opening of hundreds of Ocaks in cities and towns. While in 1966 the movement started with tens of men, in 1980, the cadres were considered to number 100.000 paramilitaries[89] gathered around 1,500 Ocaks[90]. This speedy development and the resulting quantity of men were, on the one hand, the most significant leverage of Türkeş's power strategy throughout his political quest in the 1970s, and on the other were what gave the characteristic to the structuring of the organization. This last point was the fact which bestowed the movement with idiosyncrasy in contrast to Turkey's radical leftist organizations of the same era and to the classic fascist paramilitary organizations of the interwar years.

As I pointed out in the Introduction, my take on the "discursive formation" is of a Foucauldian bent and it is a twofold process. It is taken as the sum total of a specific discourse and its non-discursive conditions of possibility. The analysis of the former is the task of the next chapter. Here, I will deal with the "non-discursive conditions," as I set forth the institutions, processes and practices which supported

[89] Landau, "The NAP," p. 594.
[90] Ayşe N. Çağlar, "Greywolves as Metaphor," p. 85.

and sustained the Ülkücü discourse.[91] More specifically, here I will deal with the non-discursive conditions which opened up the possibility for the movement's discourse on "the self-proclaimed elect status;" the idea which I will argue to be central to Ülkücü discourse. I will attempt to do so through an examination of the existing literature on the organization and the narratives of the militants.

As the rest of the thesis does, this chapter has at its center the second half of the 1970s, and speaks of the other years as far as they contribute to the understanding of this half a decade. In addition, I must note that an accurate analysis of the organization and the grassroots for the indicated era has already been made by Bora and Can,[92] so what I will present here is more likely to reveal the paramilitaries' own understanding of this structure. Here, I must point out two reservations regarding the present chapter. First, it is a difficult task to ascribe an organizational structure to the Ülkücü movement of the 1970's; not only because its associational model was patchy, but also with regards to the fact that the militants' conceiving of this edifice carried an utmost ambiguity. Hence such ascription of a structure on my part bears the risk of being unjust to the organization, in terms of forcing it to be an understandable entity. Second, as did the previous section, the present chapter provides a rather insufficient historical account guided by selective and focused points. Its aim is not to provide a history of development, but rather to make use of historical details in order to lay the ground for a political analysis.

With these reservations in mind, I first will present a brief overview of the organization, and then will address the dynamics of the recruitment process. Later I will analyze the top-down structure of the organization, and finally I will show how

[91] I use this two-fold schema as above all an analytical tool. Following Foucault, I admit that the two are intertwined.

[92] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, pp. 52-68.

the education of the militants was pursued in diverse spaces of training. All of these points will be taken so as to constitute the so-called non-discursive conditions.

A Brief Overview of the Organization

Legally, the Ülkücü movement organized under the status of voluntary associations (*dernek*), and until the trials after coup d'état, special attention was paid by its members to conceal its organic bond to the NAP. Although it was a known fact before the public, Türkeş and the Ocak leaders insistently denied such relation;[93] despite the fact that commando camps were publicly embraced by Türkeş in their foundation. Later they were repudiated by him thanks to the growing public attention to their similarity to the European fascist organizations of the interwar years. Due to legal sanctions experienced in between 1966 and 1980, there emerged many different associational umbrellas for the movement. The best known were the *Ülkü Ocakları Derneği* (Idealist Hearths Association), active until 1978; the *Ülkücü Gençlik Derneği* (Idealist Youth Association), active between 1978 and 1980; and the *Ülkü Yolu Derneği* (Idealist Path Association), active in 1980 until the coup d'état of September. The opening of one new association followed the closing down of another.

Along with the names given to the organization, the 14 years before 1980 more or less witnessed two generations of militants. The first was mostly active on the political scene between the foundation and the military intervention of 1971 and it was formed by militants born in the late 1940s and early 1950s. 1971's military act ended up with the closing down of the Idealist Hearths on an official plane, yet the gatherings of militants almost never paused. The second generation, which is the

[93] As militants recount, to this end even the militants were advised to have wall writings for the two in different colors. See Tanlak, *İtiraf*, p. 75.

subject of the present thesis, was mostly active after 1974,[94] and it was formed by militants born in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the late 1970s the first generation, as I will explain below, pursued their "career" outside (or rather on the borders of) the paramilitary scene, so as to serve in the party organization or devote themselves to the education of the new recruits. For the indicated era, the associated foundations, the *Milliyetçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* (Nationalist Worker Unions Association), and the *Ülkü-Bir: Ülkücü Öğretim Üyeleri Derneği* (Idealist Scholars Association) among many others, were also filled with the militants of the earlier generation who were now parts of the family institution and, as they started participating in the market workforce, parts of the class structure. Although resources close to the movement claimed that the age range of the militants was between 18 and 25,[95] the number of late adolescent paramilitaries was reported by *The Observer* at that time to have been "substantial"[96] and for the second generation, it went down to 15 years of age.[97]

The NAP's Party Youth Organization had its center in Ankara and had a branch in almost every location where the Ocaks existed. The PYO had older managers (they were mostly former militants) compared to the managers of the Ocaks though real managers were never recorded in the legal papers.[98] Apart from the centers of big cities (where the youth branches and party buildings were as effective as Ocaks as gathering places for the militants), Ocaks were the places where the gatherings of the militants mostly took place, and it was again the Ocaks

[94] I take the murder of leftist student Şahin Aydın in December 1974 to mark the rebirth of communist-Ülkücü opposition for it was recorded as the first instance of political violence since the military intervention of March 1971. See Mehmet Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Belgeseli*.

[95] Metin Turhan, *Ülkü Ocakları 1968-1980* (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2010). 18 was also the legal age for the legitimate entrance to the associations.

[96] "Grey Wolves Salute Their Ailing Leader" *The Observer* (August 1981)

[97] Örsan Öymen "Politika Kazanı," *Milliyet* 23-24 August 1980 [interview with Ali Yurtaslan]

[98] This had its practical reasons such as freeing the senior paramilitaries from paperwork and providing them the leisure they need for political acts.

which provided the relations between militants a political dimension.[99] The party, on the other hand, was seen as a "far away" entity. The demands from it were often minor. The militants' complaints regarding the party usually addressed the party bureaus in the towns, not the members of the top cadre.[100] Türkeş's leadership was almost never questioned and his not-very-well-known political goals (which I tried to elaborate in the previous chapter) was only a relief for the thousands who were happy with the fact that someone was making decisions on behalf of them.

Unlike the cases of Italy and Germany, the Ülkücü movement did not exhibit the properties of a "bottom-up"[101] movement. On the contrary, they manifested a top-down decision mechanism and a related structure which can be argued to have been more similar to non-fascist authoritarian movements. There were no democratic tendencies even within the top cadre (with regards to Türkeş's supreme authority), yet this does not mean that there was a simple, one-sided power relation between the leader and the rest of the movement. The grassroots' understanding of this mechanism was far beyond a commander/orderly relation. To understand what sort of relation the militants envisaged between themselves and the leader and the party we should first focus on the recruitment process and what the leader and the party promised them.

Recruitment

As discussed above, the movement was least selective in the recruitment of militants in the second half of the 1970s. This was a concession that has to be made for a political party like the NAP that relied on the strength of its paramilitary forces

[99] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 62.
[100] *Ibid.* p. 61.
[101] Mann, *Fascists*, p. 358.

in its bargain with the hegemonic historical bloc. This promiscuous manner towards the new human resource also brought with it a rather patchy organizational model where the party was not in full control of its militants, yet had their loyalty as to employ them in political deeds at every level of violence, ranging from simple protests of government to the mass murders of the late 1970s. However, this promiscuity performed by the party was not visible to the paramilitaries of the second generation (the elders should have been aware that now everyone was welcome to the movement). On the contrary, there was a gang-like initiation process for each militant so as to bestow movement membership with an element of challenge and to give the idea that not everyone was able to become an Ülkücü paramilitary.

This was not surprising considering the militants' ultimate belief in their elect position vis-à-vis the rest of society.[102] One apparent dilemma regarding this belief was between the understanding of this position as an innate category given to the militants by nature,[103] and the need for hard work to occupy this position in the first place. The famous saying of those days, as Kırcı tells in his memoirs, "working to be an *Ülkücü*,"[104] designated an ambiguous time interval in which the militant decided for himself the so-called completion of ideological and moral protocols and affirmed his own membership in the movement (at the end, no willing participants were declined by the movement). *Working* was doing what the militant was ordered to do: drudgery work, street combat or more. How each understood this work was another issue. Besides the peer pressure and the need for the new militant to prove himself before the eyes of the elders (I will elaborate these below), the acceptance to the

[102] I shall restate that this point will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

[103] An exemplary narrative is given by Terzioğlu when he depicts the god-given natural endowments in himself, in his semi-autobiographical novel. Terzioğlu, *Komando* pp. 9-10.

[104] Haluk Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken* (Istanbul: Burak Yayınları, 1998), pp. 15-16. *"Ülkücü olmaya çalışmak."*

movement carried first and foremost an element of self-judgment. However, this judgment never culminated in militant's affirming of his incapacities, but always in self-recognition as an Ülkücü militant, the member of a "glorious" squad and the savior of the nation.

Temporally, the recruitment to the Ülkücü movement might be said to have taken place in two junctures. The first was regarding the rural context and the urban shantytowns and had at its disposal adolescent militants at the age of secondary schools. These boys either nurtured as militants in their hometowns and stuck to their close environment, or went to the big cities for education or job opportunities and continued their "careers" in their new habitat. In terms of territory, the recruitment of a pre-political youngster was due partly to where he lived and hence his close environment. The "liberated areas" as defined by the communists and later employed by the Ülkücü movement were decisive in young men's choosing of their political stances. The second temporal juncture was regarding those university youth who were rather latecomers to political arena. They met the *Ülkücü* ideology mostly in their freshman or sophomore years. These men's choice of political outlook was as arbitrary as that of the first group, often caused by their will to recognition or the desire to feel safe in the city jungle as part of a larger community.[105] Now, let us turn from the question of at what age to the question of how the recruitment took place.

Like the fascist organizations of Germany and Italy of the interwar era, role models played a great role in the attraction of young men to the movement, especially for the subjects of our analysis, the second generation militants. For the rural context, these were usually elder brothers, or other older youths of the militants'

[105] When Birand asked the question "who is the terrorist" and answered for youth's reasons to be one (leftist or nationalist), he put forward three points; (1) to be treated as a man (2) to be protected by the association (3) material/moral support after the political deed. Mehmet Ali Birand, *12 Eylül Saat 04:00* (Istanbul: Karacan Yayınları, 1984), pp. 77-81.

close environment,[106] who had studied in the big cities and returned to their towns or cities as teachers or engineers.[107] Stereotypically, these older men were either first generation militants, or just sympathizers of the Nationalist Action. Now they returned to the town with their newly acquired social statuses. As they attended and constituted the social environment of the Ocaks, they rendered these places as centers of attraction for the younger men. These men owed their exemplary position to their social status more than their ideological commitments. A fine example of such a role model was described in the autobiographical novel of Terzioğlu, a militant from the rural context of Trabzon:

> He asked and they said "engineer." "Forest Engineer." All these forests here are said to be under his responsibility. What he says is a command. He is a man like the law. Besides, he wears a tie and a suit. Ahmet saw his [engineer's] gun through the opening of his jacket. This man, this forest engineer, suited exactly his father's definition of the "educated man." Apart from that, forests, soil, tree; whatever Ahmet liked was under the control of the engineer. That day, Ahmet decided: "I'll be a forest engineer."[108]

Terzioğlu's confusing imagery had characteristics which frequently appear in the Ülkücü memoirs: An ontological/social status that puts the young man in command of nature and other men; strength adorned with the use of weapons; virility embodied in masculine dress codes and behavioral patterns. These characteristics were above all interpellative to the pre-fascist condition of Turkish youth, with their

[106] Mitchell's psycho-historical approach to the role of local group elders in SA recruitment is highly explanatory. See: Otis C. Mitchell, *Hitler's Stormtroopers and the Attack on the German Republic, 1919-1933*, (North Carolina: McFarland &Company, 2008), p. 128.

[107] Not so much of a coincidence, Ülkücü militants often came to study in the Faculties of Education and departments of Agriculture and Forest Engineering. This had its reasons: First of all, the aforementioned institutions accepted students with relatively lower grades. Second, the occupational possibilities in these fields were higher for the young men who would return to the rural environment.

[108] Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 31. "*Sordu. "Mühendis" dediler, "Orman Mühendisi". Bütün buradaki ormanlar ondan sorulurmuş. Onun dediği olurmuş. Kanun gibi adammış! Üstelik kravatlıydı. Takım elbiseli. Ceketinin açıklığından tabancasını da gördü Ahmet. Bu adam, bu orman mühendisi, babasının "Okumuş adam" tanımına tam olarak uyuyordu. Üstelik ormanlar, arazi, toprak, ağaçlar, Ahmet'in sevdiği ne varsa mühendisin kontrolündeydi. O gün karar verdi Ahmet. "Ben, orman mühendisi olacağım!""*

clear kinship to the images of men drawn by militarism and normative traditional masculinity. The Ocaks were most successful at promising the young men that they would develop such characteristics and acquire such statuses. Günay, a militant from the rural context of Konya, described his own entrance to the movement in his recent memoir as follows:

> The reason why a mass movement attracts supporters and expands is not based on the power of the doctrine it puts forward, but rather on the fact that it gives hope, and proposes a safe place for refuge, a perfect personality and an honorable life. This is why I was involved in an ideological mass movement and became an Ülkücü.[109]

The Ocaks succeeded in proposing these with the militaristic image they created, if they did not achieve fulfilling all of their promises.[110] Revealing the true character of this image created by the ocaks and the movement, I believe, is a key to understanding the bigger picture regarding the Ülkücü movement. As Bora and Can write, the most common misunderstanding about the ocaks emerged due to the narratives regarding the image of strict discipline within the movement. This depiction both found place in the analyses of the left and the narratives of the movement members. Such arguments, claim Bora et al., were highly insubstantial; instead there was "total idleness"[111] at the grassroots level, especially after the rapid expansion in the late 1970s. However, the picture of the movement in the eyes of the public and those of the newcomers contradicted this reality. As for the public representation, marches in single file or ascriptions of Hitler Youth were effective in

---

[109] Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*, p. 11. "*Bir kitle hareketinin süratle taraftar çekmesi ve büyümesi, o hareketin ortaya koyduğu doktrinin kuvvetinden daha ziyade, insanlara umut dağıtmasından, sığınacak güvenli bir yer, mükemmel bir kişilik ve şerefli bir hayat teklif etmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. İdeolojik bir kitle hareketine bu yüzden katılmış ve Ülkücü olmuştum.*"

[110] Maybe only "hope" and a relatively "safe place" were what the *ocak*s were able to offer. This secure condition had to do with material and phenomenal reasons at the same time. As for the latter, being part of an ideological crowd intensified the young militants' self-confidence, especially for the newcomers in the urban context. To the former, the ocaks performed a redistributive function and received refugees with open arms; they were places to gather, eat and spend the night.

[111] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 82.

creating such an image.[112] As for the newcomer youth, this ungrounded image was created through the paramilitary protocols performed within the *ocaks*. Standing up in the presence of senior militants (*reisler*), the buttoning up of jackets in certain conditions, knocking heads instead of the still conventional kiss on either cheek, crying "Yes sir!" after receiving orders were some of the many protocols which turned the ocaks, places which were physically indiscernible from coffee shops, into military-like institutions.[113] Yet as I will show in the section on organization structure, the discipline and hierarchy display was only an effect that rendered the movement more attractive to the youth and more terrifying to the non-right wing public. This was one of the most significant reasons underlying the temptation of the ocaks and the acceleration of their recruitment in the late 1970s.

The violent struggle between the radical leftists and the Ülkücü paramilitaries went further to include the recruitment of university's newcomers. For sure, as of the late 1970s, in many schools the domination of one group already had been established and there was an asymmetry regarding the competition between the rivals. Even so, one might speak of psychological warfare between the Ülkücü militants and radical leftists that was shaped around the domination over territories. Ideological writings on the wall, the setting of tables in front of the university buildings, the quantity of crowds entering to the school (rival political groups entered and exited the schools collectively, both for their security and for showing their strength in numbers) were elements, which showed the domination of one group over the others and these were some of the most effective ways to propagandize. For the apolitical sophomores and juniors, it was mostly a matter of chance to enter one of

[112] Yalçın Küçük tells that he criticized the echoes of disciplined Ülkücü organization in the leftist press since it helped the movement foster the image it created. *Türkiye Üzerine Tezler/3* (Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1986) pp. 502-503 quoted in Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 81.

[113] Kırcı's narrative regarding his entrance to the movement might be helpful. See Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 45.

the rival groups. Such knowledge turned the recruitment practices of the rival groups into political violence and marked the universities of the late 1970s as dangerous battlegrounds rather than education institutions. For now, let us turn our attention to the power relations *within* the movement as we attempt to portray the movement's structure.

The Organizational Structure

The NAP indictment that was prepared after 1980 coup d'état criticized the NAP (hence, the Ülkücü movement in general) for its extra-parliamentary agenda. One of the arguments which grounded the allegation was a depiction regarding the paramilitary formation of the organization:

> The MHP [NAP] Headquarters, the youth branches, all the idealist [Ülkücü] associations and their 'oba' (a term borrowed from Central Asian lore originally referring to nomad encampments) organizations in schools, neighborhoods, and government offices and the units of the 'oba', constituted a centralized totalitarian pyramid stratified from the top down, where military discipline reigned.[114]

This legalistic description carried elements of truth as well as of falsity. As has been discussed, the convictions concerning the rigid discipline within the organization were highly insubstantial. It is true that the top cadre, including Türkeş himself, was of military origin and had such militaristic desires, but this was a wish that was never fulfilled. As for the form of the organization structure, one can easily speak of a pyramid, yet it is hard to call it as totalitarian, for what I understand by this term is at the very basic the immobilization of the subjects (in our case, the militants); quite the opposite of what Türkeş had in mind and applied.[115] To reveal the true character of

[114] *MHP İddianamesi*, quoted in Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," pp. 194, 198.

[115] One rich resource to understand Türkeş's ideological outlook is his *Türkiye'nin Meseleleri* in which he proposes a fascist/quasi-fascist utopia based on the mobilization of the whole nation,

this pyramid, let us take a look at the functioning of and the power relations in the organization.

Almost all works upon the NAP stress a dominant characteristic of the Ülkücü movement, which was the distance between the party top cadre and the grassroots. Though it was not apparent in the first years of the ocaks, the expansion we have been describing necessarily caused such a gap, especially in the late 1970s. This distance primarily appeared to be on a material level; the supervision mechanisms of the party were insufficient in the top cadre's attempt to fully control the grassroots. One should note that this was also a deliberate sacrifice on the side of Türkeş, who in return enjoyed the utmost devotion from his paramilitaries. Apart from the big political acts that marked the late 1970s where the decisions were made at the crest of the organizational edifice, most of the political violence was exerted by the decision makers of the lower ranks without the need for affirmation from the top cadre. The decision makers multiplied as we go downward in the movement and the organization structure was in this sense highly "decentralized."[116]

There was also a second aspect to the distance between the party and the movement, which might be said to have been on an ideological plane. The understanding of the NAP ideology by the grassroots not only differed from that of the party top cadre, but also manifested heterogeneity within itself.[117] The distance primarily was due to the fact that the militants were often not eager regarding their intellectual development. This had to do with the unqualified human resource and, arguably, with the fact that politics (in the very limited sense of the word,

---

though he was only able to apply his ideas in terms of the movement. I intend to differentiate between such politics of action from totalitarian politics. I also must note that some memoirs written by the militants "admit" such totalitarian aims, yet what is meant by *totalitarian* is more likely to be *authoritarian*. The two are often used interchangibly. See Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*.

[116] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 63.

[117] I will attempt to explain this heterogeneity and give examples in the upcoming chapter.

parliamentary or electioneering activity) was subordinated to action in the discourse of the paramilitaries. What might be called the trans-political aspect to the movement was a characteristic *Ülkücü* men shared with many of their fascist counterparts in Europe.[118] As will be seen in the upcoming chapter, the exaltation of political action over political knowledge or debate was one moment in the ignorance of the masses of what is done by the party top cadre.

To narrow down this occurring gap between the apex and base of the pyramid, Gün Sazak, the second man of the party, found the solution in establishing the Educators Unit in 1977, which was comprised of a hundred men of mostly the first generation.[119] This unit was supposed to link the party top cadre to the grassroots not only on an informative but intellectual and ideological manner. One of the educators' fundamental aims was to render the militants of the base active people of political propaganda, bestowing them with the intellectual capacity to accomplish such a task. The educators were mobilized to visit ocaks throughout the country, organize seminars, constitute information channels and many times they were ordered to start the most notorious and "big" political deeds. This intermediary position of the educators bestowed them with unique characteristics which neither belonged to the top cadre nor to the grassroots. Hüsnü Galib, a former militant, described these people as follows:

> …There was a second group [the educators], although they were initially seen as inessential, the party could not do without them over time….They could neither become Muslim, nor Western. They were far from liberal or socialist [*toplumcu*] radicalism. They could not get on even between themselves. Because they were not lead soldiers like

[118] Although it is beyond my limitations for comparative analysis, I shall suggest the British fascist experience for the exploration of this point. See Philip M. Coupland, "The Blackshirted Utopians," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 2 (April, 1998), pp. 255-272.

[119] "Eski Ülkücü Hüsnü Galib'in Okuyucu Mektubu," *Yeni Gündem*, 27 Aralık 1985, referred to in Bora and Can, *Devlet*, pp. 81-82.

> the ones in the first group [the top cadre], after September 12 each of them went on his own path…[120]

It is significant that while Galib portrays a two-sided picture in the middle of which stood the educators, he posits the top cadre as Westerner and arguably non-Muslim, and the grassroots as counter-Western believers. The idea regarding the top cadre might have emerged from the more secular lifestyles and ideology of the military-origin party leaders (after all, it was his political pragmatism which had drawn Türkeş to a less secular discourse), though we must note that this was not a common opinion. Many militants, especially those from the rural context saw him as the leader of a utopian and *nizam-ı alemci*[121] state.

To come back to educators, we must say that they stood at the juncture Galib depicts, where they took the roles of moral leadership and drew closer to the grassroots and at the same time followed the orders of the top cadre and got away from the base militants. Hence, they were neither able to excel before the grassroots nor able to fulfill what was expected from them by the top cadre. As they could not fulfill their potentialities in the movement, these men could not envisage a future in the NAP, and after the coup they were drawn to center-right parties and influenced many former militants to do so.

However, the "failure" of the educators also had to do with the political turmoil of the late 1970s and the capacities of the militants. The educators' later

---

[120] *Ibid*. "*İkinci bir grup vardı ki, önceleri tümden lüzumsuz görülmelerine rağmen, parti onlarsız olamaz hale geldi zamanla…. Ne Müslüman olabildiler ne Batılı, ne liberal ne toplumcu radikallik onlara, onlar da radikalliğe çok uzaktı. Birinci gruptakiler gibi kurşun asker olmadıklarından, 12 Eylül sonrası her biri kendi yolunu çizdi."*

[121] Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*, p. 71. *Nizam-ı Alem* (Universal Order) meant to the militants a world order that would be established by the truly Islamic and apparently expansionist state. The name was later used by the spin-off party of the NAP, the Great Union Party (GUP) to denote the new hearths of this party. Günay's depictions here of the Islamic revolution are worth seeing if not examplary for the totality of the movement.

declarations put forward an important feature of the Ülkücü paramilitaries; that is, unlike their counterparts in *Sturmabteilung* and *Camicie Nere*, the grassroots were not able to act as propaganda tools despite the (supposed) hard work by the educators. A first generation militant and a later educator, Namık Kemal Zeybek, recalled those days as following:

> We tried to take them [the paramilitaries] back among the people in order for them to spread propaganda. However, we were trying to do something in the above [upper level of organizational pyramid], but it was boiling down below [grassroots].[122]

To be sure, it is difficult to believe in the ultimate sincerity of these words, for it was again the educators who were addressed[123] as the people who ordered (or served as instruments to the top cadre in) the most violent political deeds of the pre-1980 political scene. Moreover, the power strategy of the NAP, hence its extra-parliamentary agenda, rendered such propaganda activity ancillary vis-à-vis the creation of social turmoil by means of political violence. It is clear from the national newspapers' narratives that the credibility of the Ülkücü movement, as it made its appearance through the acts of its militants, decreased before the public and the anti-communist bloc each and every day the military coup approached.[124] The mission of political propaganda which we can attribute to the first generation militants dissolved for the second, as they straddled the political violence and power relations.

To come back to the configuration of the organizational pyramid, one feature of the top-down structure was that titles were given to militants at every level. This

---

[122] *Keşke Olmasaydı*, "Ülkücüler," (Kanal 24: 2007) [documentary]. *"Biz sokaktan halk arası siyasi propogandaya çekmeye çalıştık, ama biz yukarıda birşeyler yapıyorduk, lakin aşağısı kaynıyordu."*

[123] Yurtaslan's and Tanlak's confessions point out many of these events. See Ali Yurtaslan, *MHP Merkezindeki Adam Ali Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı* (İstanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1980); *İtiraf* İstanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1980 [Ömer Tanlak's confession].

[124] An imam's depictions on this issue are exemplary. See Oğuzhan Cengiz, *Bir Yıldız Kaydı*, (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2005), pp. 63-66.

paramilitaristic feature worked to render a phenomenal (in the sense that it was insubstantial) military-like hierarchy and functioned to gain the commitment of grassroots,[125] since the militants were supposed to work hard to deserve their titles and strive for higher ranks. One might claim that this practice proved effective, since it can still be observed in the present-day Ülkücü movement. The practice was neither visible in the paperwork of the organization (the titles were not written in the organization records) nor there was a rigid basis for such appointments. The daily needs and aims of the branches (hence, *reisler*) defined these titles as they did the tasks of the militants.

The Ülkücü headquarters were almost always located in Ankara (except for brief periods when they were shown to be elsewhere due to legal or strategic necessities), there were the chairmanships in cities, towns and usually in neighborhoods; some zones [*bölgeler*] were formed where middle rank militants were determined to be in charge of a few towns and/or neighborhoods. The ranking of militants went down so far as to include high schools, corridors and classes.[126] A former militant of the bureaucratic cadre said that the zone chairmanships were seen as obstacles after 1978; the fact that political deeds were appointed and informed through a series of ranks rendered the organization weak in terms of secrecy. The militants in between tended to speak easily when forced by the public authorities.[127] For this matter, starting in Ankara, a new model—which was tried out before by some notorious team leaders—began to be used to link the militant of the deed directly to the chairmanship, to let no other agents be informed about the action. Sub-organizations like ETKO, TYO and TİT[128] were founded in this regard to form

[125] Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, pp. 36-37.
[126] Tanlak, İtiraf, p.36.
[127] Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, p. 72.
[128] See also Chapter 3

action squads receiving orders directly from the chairmanship. However, many times it was the spontaneous acts by these teams which ended up with the killing of many leftist militants and public figures. The different names adopted by these subsets were also meant to misdirect the authorities from the organization, though they were not successful in this second aim.

Roughly speaking, the third layer of the organizational pyramid consisted of two equivalent ranks, the militants of the bureaucratic apparatus and the team leaders (the first two layers being the top cadre and educators). Yet we must note that these two positions should not be seen as strictly distinct positions, for many times administrative people were also active team leaders and team members also tended to participate in the bureaucratic decision making. For those at the very base of the pyramid (say, the fourth layer), these two positions constituted the highest place to which they could ascend, although what the militants envisaged for their future was far beyond these. Before acquiring such positions, one had to execute tedious tasks. Among the duties of the bottom militant were the taking down of the enemies (mostly nonfatal street fights), writing propaganda on walls, handing out manifestos and selling movement magazines.[129] To give up such drudgery and move to other positions such as "desk work" or "underground militancy", paramilitaries had to follow the necessary protocols for upward mobility. Güner told of his own example of gaining seniority as follows:

> Finally, I had a duty at one of organization's desk jobs. Had there not been the coup of 12 September, I would have ascended [to] higher [positions]; I would either have passed to the administrative class and move to the management board of the ÜYD [Idealist Path Association] or have been deemed appropriate for the belligerent class and move to the equivalent lines in the underground. Outshining, career and

[129] Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*, p. 106.

> ascendance in the organization took place like this, moving step by step and ingratiating oneself to the chiefs [*reisler*].[130]

The upward mobility in the movement was mostly dependent upon the recognition of the militant by his seniors. Such recognition was determined by qualities such as being willing, courageous and knowing-your-place, and because it was at the chiefs' discretion, a militant's ranking was to a major extent arbitrary.

The bureaucratic cadres Günay describes largely consisted of experienced, urban-origin, university-student militants. The position meant above all a distance from the street combat, and authority over information channels and over those who actually fought. Despite the more "innocent" image of this position, which contrasted with the Ülkücü myths of warriors and martyrs, this rank was attractive to many militants for its relatively less dangerous nature and for what it proposed to a militant for his future. As I will further investigate in the upcoming chapter, the utopian Ülkücü state, was envisaged by the militants, partly as a state apparatus filled with themselves; for this matter, the administrative apparatus of the movement meant the state administration tomorrow.

Arguably, the structure of the organization is significant for the analyst for the fact that it represented a future model of state in the eyes of the militants. The *particular* management and decision mechanisms and the inner power relations of the organization, as they were conceived by the militants, were *universalized* on a national scale as to envision a state mechanism which was to emerge after the Ülkücü movement took over the state power.[131] In this schema, Türkeş was seen as

---

[130] *Ibid.* p. 108. *"Artık küçük de olsa teşkilatın bir masasında görev almıştım. Eğer 12 Eylül darbesi olmasaydı daha yukarılara tırmanacak, muhtemelen idari sınıfa geçip ÜYD'nin yönetim kuruluna ya da muharip sınıfa uygun görülerek yeraltındaki paralel hatlara geçecektim. Teşkilatta sivrilme, kariyerve yükselme böyle oluyordu. Adım adım ilerleyerek ve reislerin gözüne girerek."*

[131] See also Chapter 3; and Mann, *Fascists*, pp. 25-31.

the ultimate leader yet the NAP and its non-paramilitary cadres were not present, because of the militants' tendency to subordinate these people's parliamentary and electioneering activity to what the militants did on the battleground.[132]

Coming to the team leaders, one might claim that these were the militants who rose among their ranks as they gained experience in street combat and exhibited courage, practicality and determination. As they did so, they were given charge for a group of men, with whom they formed a master-apprentice relation. Once a member of the team (the apprentice) was sufficiently nurtured, he had the chance to form his own team, though certain teams never split up, and even acted as illegal mobs after the coup of 1980.[133] For sure, it was not the easiest thing to join the "successful" teams. Militants had to prove themselves to their seniors (hence, also before their peers) before doing so. A former militant, Kırcı, described these teams as "the militant-wing" of the organization, stressing their willingness to fight with the communists and to perform the most violent political acts as they were destined to.[134] However, a man had to do a lot to prove such willingness, first and foremost show his eagerness to use firearms against the enemy and take the burden of the most difficult deeds [*icraat*].

Günay tells us that every militant who saw himself under the threat of communists was allowed to carry weapons, yet its use in the name of the organization was restricted.[135] This is a quite true yet insufficient description. The carrying and the use of the heavier weapons was above all a performance of force,

[132] This is an issue to which Bora and Can draw attention. Because Türkeş had many times made use of this perception, there was an inclination by the militants to reduce the party apparatus to the handling of paperwork such as saving arrested militant from the police or supplying the material resources needed by the grassroots. Bora and Can, *Devlet*, pp. 59, 82.

[133] Ülkücü movement was publicly condemned as the primary human resource of mobs emerging in 80s and 90s which did not only pursued illegal activities but also had close ties to state intelligentsia. Many late memoirs addressed these groups and the notion of Ülkücü mafia as contaminations to the movement. Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*, pp. 102 – 105.

[134] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 116.

[135] Günay, *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*, pp. 41, 79-80.

for many militants it meant the heavier the gun, the stronger one was. The passage from the use of big sticks (called constitution [*anayasa*] by the militants) for the firearms meant an upward mobility to the militant—this was another moment in the self-judgment of the militant—primarily on a recognitional level and secondly on an organizational plane. For the former, it was both self-recognition and recognition by the members of the organization which raised the militant. For the latter, the movement always had a hunger for the courageous boys to undertake violent tasks.[136]

Recognition within the movement also meant recognition of the militants before the public. As just mentioned, the more the militant was recognized for his deeds, the quicker his upward mobility was within the movement. For a public actor as Ülkücü movement such mobility also meant for the young militant upward movement within society. For most of the paramilitaries, independent of their social, cultural and economic origin, *will to recognition* was the master driving force in their political activity. Many memoirs speak of young men reading newspapers in order to see their names and/or the deeds after the day they had exerted political violence. Besides the fact that "terror aimed at publicity"[137] was a fascist paramilitary classic, and that the Ülkücü militants were encouraged to act so, the accomplishment of a violent task was many times an individual victory for the militants. This was an open paradox for a paramilitary organization like the Ülkücü movement, at the bottom of whose ideology was the idea of self-transcendence; eliminating of all individualistic motifs for the sake of the organization (hence, the nation).[138] The idiosyncratic structure of the late 1970s' *Ülkücü* movement and its unique position before the

[136] The test prepared by the Ocak in Ankara for measuring the willingness of the militants to participate in street warfare is exemplary. See: Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, p. 79.

[137] Mitchell, *Hitler's Stormtroopers*, p.132.

[138] For a deeper analysis of the idea of self-transcendence in the fascist youth organizations of Germany and Italy, see Mann, *Fascists*, pp. 14-16.

public were two of the foremost characteristics which made it a center of attraction for the youth of the anti-communist bloc.

In this way, we have a sketch of the movement pyramid of the late 1970s: at the top stood the unquestionable authority of Türkeş, around whom there were the members of the top cadre, the chairmen of different sub-organizations (trade union [MİSK], police union [POL-BİR] and so on). Below there were the extension of the party apparatus in the cities and towns. Between the top cadre and the base, there was the educators unit. The grassroots had its own layers; roughly divided into two: at the upper layer the bureaucratic cadre and the militant-wing; at the very bottom, the crowd of simple militants. As will be shown in the next chapter, the upper layer of the grassroots was significant for the fact that their understanding of the self, movement ideology, communist enemy, state and alike differed from those of the base. Before moving to the next chapter to deal with this heterogeneity, let us lastly deal with the spaces of training and their function within the Ülkücü organization.

The Spaces of Training

One unexplored and misunderstood dimension in the Ülkücü movement literature is the issue of education, or rather, the training of the militants. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the movement made its first noticeable public appearance with the commando camps in 1968. The similarity of these camps to the notorious examples in Germany and Italy was recognized not only by the Turkish media, but also by the international press.[139] The alternate name for the Ülkücü militant—*komando*—was coined at that time and until 1980 the press, even those

[139] "Right-Wing Turks Go Militant" *The Guardian* (February 1969) "Turkish Commandos with Nazi Ideas," *The Guardian* (August 1969).

close to the movement, often referred to the militants by this name. There emerged a public opinion which might be argued to have lasted to this time that the militants (or *komando*s) were primarily indoctrinated and made ready for street battle in these commando camps. However, as I will argue in this short section, there were plenty of spaces where the training of the militants took place and the commando camps functioned to bestow the "lucky" militants with a mystical authority more than to give them paramilitary education.

By the end of the 1970s, among many other questions, the press in Turkey raised two: How the weapons was supplied to the militants of right and left wing youth, and how the militants of both sides were rendered capable of using these weapons, preparing bombs and planning "sophisticated" political violence (in short, "how they became terrorists"). I will briefly deal with the question of weapon in the next chapter. For the training and to raise the question from the side of the *Ülkücü* movement, we must put forward the unique conditions of the Ülkücü militants which determined the forms of training into which they enter.

The romanticization of guns, glorifying the militants' relation to them, and the connotations of manhood in the usage of weapon have been popular themes in and integral parts to the Ülkücü novel, poetry and biography writing. This has its roots in the era with which we have been dealing, when the gun became an object of desire for the militants and a necessary constituent of their identity. In the late 1970s, the rural background of the majority of the militants had already given them an acquaintance with firearms. Although initially many of them were not able to use guns professionally, they were at least eager to put one in their holster. Kırcı described his own engagement with guns and the form of training he received as follows:

> ...nobody taught me anything regarding the [use of] guns. I recognized and learnt some properties of it through my own love, curiosity and efforts. In contrast to what was frequently written and said those days, we did not have camps or special education places. Militants did not flourish in those places and were not trained by anyone, but [learned] because of and inside the events.[140]

We have referred to Kırcı's depiction for two reasons. First, it is symptomatic of the rural Ülkücü youth's sympathy towards the using of weapons, which was already apparent even before they were recruited into the paramilitary ranks. Second, and despite its inability to reveal the whole truth, it addresses a very important space of training within which the militants were nurtured; what might be called on-the-job-training in the streets. Despite the actual didactic aims of Türkeş (which I will elaborate below) because of the late 1970s political turmoil, the education of many militants took place on the streets in master-apprentice relation rather than collectively at the commando camps as envisaged by the leader. Although Kırcı's description addresses a solitary development on the side of the militant, as the rest of his and other militants' memoirs clearly show, the nurturing of the militant took place in the presence and with the active involvement of elder militants. Among many other "qualifications" they had, these *reisler* knew Ülkücü behavior, street combat, where, when and how to attack the communist enemy, how to represent the movement to the people. As the young militant spent time with the elder, attended his social environment, attacked communists with him, listened to ideological lectures and so on, these properties made their way to the second generation. The becoming of a young militant and the properties he was to acquire were largely dependent on the qualifications of his master, and/or other role models around him.

[140] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, pp. 25-26. "*Yani tabanca hakkında kimse bana bir şey öğretmemişti. Ben, sevgim ve merakım sayesinde, kendi çabalarımla onu tanımış ve bazı özelliklerini öğrenmiştim. O zamanlar sık sık yazılıp söylendiği gibi, komando kamplarımız veya özel eğitim yerlerimiz yoktu. Militanları, ne kamplar, ne de birileri yetiştiriyordu. Bu işlere giren herkes, olaylar sayesinde ve olayların içinde yetişmekteydi."*

The political stance as well as the human characteristics of the new militants thus varied according to his narrow environment. This condition reinforced the heterogeneous character of the grassroots not only on the level of morals, but also on an ideological and political plane.

A second drastic moment in the training of the militants was a rather late phenomenon. At the end of the 1970s (especially after 1977), the militants of Ülkücü movement and radical leftist organizations started to fill up the prisons throughout Turkey. These were not necessarily cold-blooded killers but many times ordinary militants accused of small crimes. The short periods these militants spent in prison, especially those of the Ülkücü militants, gave them the opportunity to become more professional in terms of the political violence they tended to exert. As interviews and memoirs show, many simple militants who entered into the prison came out not only more ideologically motivated than ever, but also as fully fledged paramilitaries who knew how to prepare bombs, plan assassinations and create social turmoil.[141]

The funding of the Ülkücü prisoners and the special attention paid by the party to the organizations within the prisons were most effective in this, although such moral and material support was cut many times for short periods. The education behind the bars was form-wise akin to those on the street; there were neither organized seminars nor collective applied training. Yet it is significant that the ordinary militant had the chance to take over the experience of those master paramilitaries on the militant wing, the paramilitaristic qualities and the more

[141] "What you call prison is professional activism institute… for both sides [communists and Ülkücü militants]… people who go in for putting up posters go out as bomber militants" Örsan Öymen "Politika Kazanı" *Milliyet* 23-24.08.1980 [interview with Ali Yurtaslan].

revanchist attitude towards the communists,[142] and apply what he has learned as he came out.

The two spaces of training we have depicted as to be the most important in the nurturing of the militants did not represent what Türkeş had in mind when he had set forth the commando camps and tended to nurture paramilitary forces to assist him in his march to power. There were three reasons for this deviation in the quest of Türkeş. The first was the unqualified human resource, as it did not allow for collective trainings. Even for the most ordinary seminars, the militants were forced to attend many times against their will. Second, from the beginning there was a public pressure on Türkeş for his seemingly fascist pursuit and he had to withdraw (or pursue clandestinely) every sort of practice which legitimized these opinions (commando camps were the most apparent of these). Third, the political turmoil of the late 1970s and accompanying expansion in the movement made it impossible to have every single militant trained calmly and in accordance with the idealistic schema Türkeş envisaged. The solution was sought in the immediate alternatives outlined above. However, one might provide a sketch of the camps to describe the desired training of the paramilitaries, although such aims never came true on a material level or on the level of paramilitaries' understanding.

The notorious commando camps were usually a fifteen to thirty day education process held on the outskirts of the cities in the countryside, with tens of tents supplied from the state's Red Crescent and other requirements from the wealthy anti-communist men of the relevant towns and cities. They usually were managed by retired soldiers or experienced paramilitaries. Historically, the camps emerged in the Ülkücü movement two times, as in our differentiation between two generations: first,

[142] The fact that the imprisonment of Ülkücü militants became more frequent in the government of Ecevit also had its share in the growth of such feelings.

before the 1971 military intervention and second, in the last half of the 1970s. The major difference was that the second appearance was more clandestine and had at its disposal fewer militants than the first. This was quite natural since, as already discussed, Türkeş was definitely more careful in the late 1970s about the publicity of his agenda.[143] The camps were definitive of Türkeş's militaristic desires for his squads: the militants wore uniforms, age and seniority were given priority, and the behavioral protocols were more military-like with regards to the lives of the militants at the ocaks. What might be contrasted in the camps to the experience of Türkeş himself in the military was that every camp had its imam to direct the collective prayers.

The day at the camps[144] started with the dawn prayer. It went on with the morning exercises, singing of the anthems and marching. After the physical exercise there were the seminars on communists, the duties of the nationalist youth and alike. The midday prayer was followed by lessons in boxing, wrestling, judo and karate. Between the afternoon and evening prayers, there was the discussion on daily politics, criticism of the press and book reading time. Night prayer was the time to sleep with alarms given during indefinite nights for night drills. This was the daily program at the camps as determined by the party.

The en masse nature of the program aimed at creating a sense of collective identity among the militants. The fact that the physical exercise and the martial arts were at the center of training was symptomatic of an anti-communist paramilitary force. While the prayers had to do with the origin of the militants (it would be naïve to explain this with the ideal militant in Türkeş's mind), the collective intellectual activity was to reinforce the anti-communist sentiments and to establish an

[143] As mentioned before, he prevented militants from using the term nationalist-socialist after the public charges of pursuing Nazi-like politics.

[144] Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 195.

ideological unity among the militants. The night drills gave the sense of an army and it reminded the militants of the immediate nature of the war with the communists.

This was the ideal way for Türkeş and the party top cadre to create the perfect paramilitary squads, always ready to physically engage with and stop the activity of the communists, able and willing to propagandize the NAP ideology among the public, soldierly loyal to the authority of the party so as to perform what was commanded without resistance. However, the function of the commando camps turned out to be different than what was expected. First, only an advantaged minority had the chance to attend the camp program. Hence, the majority of the militants were indoctrinated and paramilitarized in more spontaneous ways. The dream of the party to create militants homogenous in their political character did not come true. Second, and most importantly, this privileged position to have been at the camp was employed by the lucky militants to acquire prestige within the movement and reinforced the power relations among themselves. These were the elect of the elect; the unattainable position of the camps bestowed the "genuine" komandos with a mystical authority. Especially in the eyes of the second generation, those who were trained in the camps of Muğla (which were the first camps of the late 1960s) acquired an epic position, dangerous and respected. This was a quite natural effect for the *Ülkücü* movement considering its rapid growth. It was only seven years after the "legendary" Komando Mustafa organized camps in Muğla in 1968, when a 14-year old militant-to-be Haluk Kırcı read his mythologized life story in the Ülkücü magazines and decided to follow his path.[145]

The important thing is, however, the education in different spaces of training revealed the true character of the organization as did its unique structure: The

[145] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 14.

militants were convinced in their elect position vis-à-vis the rest of society. The organizational structure functioned as both the initiator of this idea and the ground on which the militants practiced. What reproduced and ensured the permanence of the belief in difference from the rest of society was the inside mechanisms of the organization, which repeated such a play of differences among the militants themselves. For the militant, the members of his organization were elect. Only, some were luckier. The analysis of this position on a discursive level is our task for the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 3

ANTI-COMMUNISM AND THE MAKING OF *ÜLKÜCÜ* PARAMILITARY IDENTITY

> Fascism in many countries was unable to make a revolution but….the fascists, even when they were only making punitive expeditions against working class organizations, serving the stability of the old order, behaved emotionally and subjectively, as if they were living through a real revolution.[146]

From the very first day of their organizational formation, the threat of communism, as was embodied in the political deeds of leftist militants and the class-based opposition of the larger segments of society, was by all means the raison d'être of and most forceful motivation for the Ülkücü youth to emerge as a militant political force. This most dynamic and in many respects most effective community of the larger anti-communist bloc of Turkey in the late 1960s and 1970s did owe much of its political (and for reasons to be explained, paramilitary) identity to the opposition to this imagined threat. Today, as we see from the memoirs and the interviews of the militants, for many of them *Ülkücülük*[147] did not really mean anything; though the reasons for the entrance into the organization varied, it was "knowing that they were against communism"[148] that attracted most of the militants to the movement in the first place and held them together until the end of their paramilitary activity in the coup d'état of 1980.

While the enemies put forward by the movement members exhibited diversity in the beginning (Masons, capitalists and the West, among others), it was as early as

[146] Words of Dionisio Ridruejo, a former fascist. *Escrito en Espana* (Buenos Aires, 1962) quoted in Juan J. Linz "Some Notes toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective," in *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, W. Laqueur ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976) pp. 22-23.

[147] [tr.] "Being an Ülkücü" and/or "idealism."

[148] Örsan Öymen, "Politika Kazanı," *Milliyet*, 23 August 1980.

1969 that the communist activity was targeted as the chief source of evil and the normative locus of nationalist opposition.[149] The remaining years of the movement almost never witnessed political activity directed at the aforementioned adversaries. If many militants were ignorant of the motives of their own organization, their knowledge regarding communism or leftist politics in general was also limited. Such knowledge initially was built upon the discourse of their (often conservative) narrow environment. The esprit de corps they experienced in the Ocaks gave the final form to their understanding of communism and the communists. In many cases, the reaction of the militants to social and economic injustices was quasi-leftist in character, and it was the party and the Ocaks that succeeded in funneling this response to leftist activity of all kinds.

Nearly all of the memoirs regarding the militants' early youth address anti-communism as an almost innate category (as if they were born with the hatred of communists). The movement's capacity and historical significance largely lay here when it succeeded in interpellating these pre-fascist identities and constituted new forms of reaction. The communist identity and the dystopian future associated with the outcome of its activity represented to Ülkücü militants and to the large segments of the conservative population the reversal of the existing state of things and the destruction of the traditional moral values. Yet this similarity in the understanding of communism did not mean a similarity in the forms of opposition. I argue that the *Ülkücü* paramilitary identity was constituted on this ground where the militants were articulated to the larger society under the banner of opposition to communists and where at the same time they developed a unique form of reaction, a sui generis, paramilitary anti-communism.

[149] *Devlet*, 07.04.1969.

To recall the Derridean formula I have referred to in the Introduction, I take "communism" as the constitutive outside of Ülkücü identity, as its very condition of emergence. By the same token, the idea of communism in the Ülkücü discourse is taken not only as the reason behind Ülkücü movement's emergence as a political community, but also as the determinant of the principles/content that constitute the inside of the movement. While I set forth the distinct voices raised within the movement and attempt to show the reason behind these differences with regards to the heterogeneity of movement's human resource, I point out and make use of "communism" as determining the ground for militants' minimum consensus, their shared symbolic space, in short, their identity.

In the previous chapter, I attempted to show the processes, institutions and practices which enabled the Ülkücü discourse exist. Here, I will analyze the discourse itself. As said, I do not refer to the identity formation of the Ülkücü movement as a simple positive act whereby it would be enough to refer to the manifestos by the members which define what it is to be an Ülkücü. I also do not refer to the idea of communism, as it is manifested in the Ülkücü discourse, as the dialectical negation of Ülkücü identity; it is not taken to determine the internal principles of the movement with a simple negative act. Beyond these, the constitutive outside is taken as a catalyst that helped movement attach themselves to the larger segments of society while at the same time enabled them to develop a sui-generis opposition, paramilitarism.

Following the literature on fascism in Italy and Germany, I call this initial attachment to and subsequent departure from the larger society as producing a "self proclaimed elect status." While anti-communism is set forth as the first moment in the formation of Ülkücü identity, the paramilitary reaction is taken as its

differentiating outcome. The two then, are taken to share an indivisible nature. My analysis of the memory texts of the militants showed that the anti-communist, paramilitary reaction of the Ülkücü paramilitaries appeared in rather different forms. Among them, I chose to deal with the ones I determined to appear most frequently: statism, anti-internationalism, anti-cosmopolitanism and the masculine self.[150] These four grounds of minimum consensus (or four constituents of the militants' shared symbolic space) are taken to show how the Ülkücü paramilitaries constituted a self-proclaimed elect status via the different forms of opposition they developed towards their arch enemy.

Statism

The statism of the Ülkücü movement appeared in the ideological plane of Alparslan Türkeş in different yet intertwined meanings. The "Nine lights doctrine" that was proposed as the societal recipe of the Nationalist Action Party was written by the "Colonel" so as "to protect the last independent Turkish state from foreign ideologies" [151] in the mid-1960s. This doctrine, which had taken over "the ideological heritage of state idolatry"[152] from Kemalism without question, put forward two dominant understandings of the state. One regarded its corporatist function in the economic activity of the nation, and the second was its role as the authoritarian guarantor of nation's social and moral development. In both meanings, state power

[150] I have named these different forms after movement members' own vocabulary; ultimately, my aim was to allow the militants to speak for themselves. Although these forms are closely intertwined, I dealt with them under different headings to provide a more straightforward narrative.

[151] Alparslan Türkeş, *Millî Doktrin Dokuz Işık* (Istanbul: Hamle Basın Yayın, Genişletilmiş Birinci Baskı), p. 15.

[152] Keyder, *State and Class*, p. 222.

emerged as object of worship, and its existence as something to be protected from the schismatic communist activity.

Although the doctrine was still popular among the militants and accepted by them as "the best and newest method that should come to power"[153] in the second half of the 1970s, the function of the state in the proposed economic model had in fact slowly disappeared from Türkeş's discourse as we approach to the mid-1970s, probably as a result of the compromises he had to make before the hegemonic capitalist-military-civil bureaucrat bloc. What was left in his discourse was the state's function as the cement of nation and the incapacity of the changing governments to grant it with the authoritarian, powerful expression that it deserved. Such granting, argued Gün Sazak (the second man in the party after Türkeş), was only possible via fulfilling the positions in the state apparatus with "qualified" Ülkücü militants. Only then, he claimed, could one speak of a Father State that was just towards the nation.[154]

To speak of the grassroots, the state's functioning in the economic activity was present in the publications of the first generation Ülkücü militants. Yet it would be difficult to propose that arguments concerning the economy and the state occupied the daily discussions of these first generation militants. The role of ideologue (which can be equated to writing articles in Ülkücü publications) was cast to a minority aged twenty-five and older, and the recognition of this group (hence, their ideas) would disappear as more militant elders started to take on the role model positions. For the second generation, on the other hand, according to their memoirs, such discussions

[153] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 46.

[154] Gün Sazak, "Devlet Baba Telakkisi Yeniden Hâkim Kılınacaktır," *Devlet*, 15.10.1973. In an interview I concluded with a famous former militant of urban origin, it was claimed that there was a perception regarding the Ocaks that they trained cadres for the state apparatus. Such perception, as I will argue below, belonged to a minority composed of relatively educated members and the radically militant wing of the organization.

concerning economics were totally absent. Yet the sublimity of the state, the danger surrounding it and the state's incapacity to protect itself seemed to be among the most frequent ideological themes between the Ülkücü comrades.

Before discussing what kind of role statism played in the Ülkücü militants' relation to the communists, I shall speak of the sort of relation the militants deposited in the category of state. For our present purposes, I would like to confine my focus to the second generation militants. As we approach to the end of the 1970s the state seems to have had a fragmented nature (or a double appearance) in the eyes of the militants. The first was the abstract and distant category which can be described as an impersonal conceptualization of the state (this was "idealism" in the vulgar sense). The communist threat, when it was directed at the destruction of the state's well being, was usually not seen as being directed at the state apparatus, but rather at an abstract category that was equated with the nation, its social and moral structure. In this sense, the state represented a single uniform will which was externally threatened by communist activity; knowing what it was did not mean a lot to the militants, since the leader was going to narrow this gap with his "state experience [in the army and administration], notion and knowledge."[155] A former militant argued that "[t]heir [the top cadre] biggest skill was their mastership in employing the moral authority of Father State myth upon the masses."[156]

The second appearance of the state was its closer representation in the repressive apparatus with which the militants acted, were recruited into, and from time to time fought against. The NAP's participation in the Nationalist Front cabinets after 1975 paved the way to a rapid networking in the police departments which already had been divided within themselves between leftist-oriented policemen (in

[155] Bora and Can, *Devlet,* p. 65.

[156] "Hüsnü Galib'in Okuyucu Mektubu," *"En büyük becerileri "Devlet Baba" efsanesinin (iyi saatte olsunlar) manevi otoritesini kitleler üzerinde kullanma ustalıklarıydı."*

POL-DER) and right winger cops (in POL-BİR). Starting from 1975, "qualified" militants who had been trained in the Ocaks and commando camps filled the repressive apparatus and made up an unignorable population within it.[157] Apart from the militant-like activity of these ex-paramilitaries/new police officers (such as the arbitrary killings of communists), they represented to the Ülkücü paramilitary forces a schism within the repressive apparatus with which they act in accordance, such as acting within territories knowing that the relevant police headquarters were filled with people close to the movement.

Nearing 1980, the joint behavior of the Ülkücü paramilitaries and the repressive state apparatus became more visible in the state actions in Fatsa and Tunceli, and the Çorum massacre (all these provinces had large communist influences). In Fatsa and Tunceli, for instance, masked paramilitaries were present on the side of the gendarmeries and policemen in the searching of people. In Çorum throughout the massacre which lasted for days, the city gates were kept by Ülkücü commandos who performed ID checks.[158] Of course, despite these radical moments and other less visible joint actions throughout the country, one cannot speak of a happily ever after marriage between the Ülkücü militants and the repressive apparatus throughout the country.

As for the big cities, the joint activities of the policemen and the paramilitaries were more limited, because of the hybrid recruitment of leftist and right winger policemen, and the visibility before the public. The repressive apparatus began to be viewed as a handicap before the actions of Ülkücü militants. Yet even in

[157] The founder of POL-BİR, Cemil Ceylan spoke of the organization as to reach 22,000 members only three months after its foundation. Working within the Ankara Society Police, he claimed that out of 2559 policemen working in the unit, 1800 were members of POL-BİR as opposed to 100 policemen associated under POL-DER. Murat Karal, 5 March 2006, *Pol-Bir Nasıl Kuruldu?* Available [Online]: http://www.benimblog.com/muratkaral/10079/+POL-B%DDR+NASIL+KURULDU+%3F.html Also see Birand, *Saat 04:00*, p. 45.

[158] Birand. p. 216.

more public confrontations with communists, the policemen acted more moderately towards the Ülkücü commandos who were claimed to be on the same side as them. This manner was not only visible to the paramilitaries, but to the public opinion in general.[159] In Ankara, for instance, a special team of paramilitaries was assigned as to split police cordons which constituted barriers between the paramilitaries and the communists. [160] However, the increasing arrests of the Ülkücü militants, especially at the end of 1970s, became their reason to grow suspicion of the state apparatus.

The "civil back-up to state power"[161] mission occupied the agenda of Türkeş and his colleagues in the party as a leg of their political power strategy since the foundation of Ocaks until the coup d'état of 1980. The reason behind this might have been to earn the sympathy and support of the military and civil bureaucrat cadres and to create the conditions of subscribing the NAP in the political field after a possible interference by the army.[162] Such subscription was expected to happen via the NAP sympathizers within the military despite the fact that the senior management was always distant to Türkeş and his colleagues.[163] What is important to us, however, is what sort of repercussions this party politics had on the level of the paramilitaries. Haluk Kırcı writes about the state and the role assigned to the Ülkücü militants:

> Some people, in certain epochs, took roles in the state's perpetuity. If the authorized and effective people who contributed to the state's survival had once proceeded together with civil people for the sake of state's honor, what is wrong about this?

He continued by commenting on the incapacity of the repressive state apparatus:

[159] Ibid. p. 216
[160] Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, pp. 18-19.
[161] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 48.
[162] For a deeper discussion on NAP's approach to military see: *Ibid*. p. 73.
[163] Keyder offers a slightly different formula in which the NAP is said to have strived for civil war conditions in which it would emerge before the public as the sole agent that can "bring a solution," thanks to its paramilitary forces. See Keyder, *State and Class*, p. 218.

> ....We do not have a serious structure and system of state. The state does not hold the eligible mechanisms to protect itself.[164]

As said, in its impersonal manifestation, the state was worshipped by the militants. This was largely a consequence of the party discourse, which successfully appropriated the conceptualization of the state in Turkish nationalism through the myths and beliefs regarding the idea of the Father state. Making state idolatry their banner, the militants found the functioning of repressive state apparatus as desperate and needy in the face of communist activity. The idea of incapacity and its natural outcome of assigning roles to the civil nationalist youth vis-à-vis the communist threat occupied a significant part in the making of the Ülkücü paramilitary identity.

Backing up the state via political violence on the streets created the illusion (and in a sense, the reality) that the state also sponsored the militants. This belief in the Turkish state's sponsorship found solid ground especially after 1975, with the foundation of the first Nationalist Front Cabinet, as already mentioned, when the NAP captured successively two and five ministries and started a speedy networking in the public institutions and police headquarters with its militants. The presence of the NAP in the cabinet also meant that many of the violent practices of the Ülkücü militants would be unpunished, via the domination of police headquarters by the NAP ministers.[165] Such unpunished violence, on the one hand, reinforced the belief that the militants were really on the same side as the state in the struggle against the

---

[164] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, pp. 173-174. *"Bazı insanlar, bazı dönemlerde, devletin bekası konusunda rol oynarlar. Devletin ayakta kalmasına malzeme olan yetkili ve etkili kimseler, bir dönem, devletin onuru için sivil insanlarla beraber bir mesafe almışlarsa, yanlışlık bunun neresindedir? ….Ciddi bir devlet yapımız ve sistemimiz yoktur. Devlet, kendini korumak için yeterli mekanizmalara sahip değildir."*

[165] "For example, there was an event. Three people [Ülkücü militants] were arrested with a gun. One person went to the party headquarters or to the youth branch to report on how they had been arrested, how they had been interrogated and to which police station they had been taken. Soon, the NAP deputies and senators would get involved and get in touch with the police station or ministry." Tanlak, *İtiraf*, p. 42.

communists, and on the other, intensified their self image of occupying an elected status vis-à-vis the rest of the society.

This "self-proclaimed elected status" was also a common characteristic of the fascist paramilitary forces that emerged in post-World War I Europe.[166] The anti-communism of the Ülkücü militants, their opposition to the threat of the dissolution of the state acquired a unique form as they constituted a different and idiosyncratic relation to the state than the larger anti-communist bloc. They acted for and beside the state, and for most of them, until their final disappointment after coup d'etat (when 588 members were charged with inciting 600 murders[167]), their statist anti-communist identity often would find itself a legitimate and material ground in their interrelation with the state apparatuses.

To be sure, not all militants suffered from the military act of 1980. As Bora and Can argue, the militants who benefitted from the networking in the state apparatus were the most eager Ülkücü groups in consubstantiating with the coup d'état. The ones in the repressive apparatus were in the foreground in the torturing of radical leftist militants.[168] The militant wing and the relatively more educated groups seem to have recruited such positions if not had they served the movement at higher ranks. Such segments of the organization shared the party's approach to the state, as to develop a strategic relation towards it. Militants of higher rank and the radical wing were aware that the state itself was a power machine; they shared the success of the party in the rapid networking and were capable of making use of these networks both in the bureaucratic apparatus, the police and the army.[169] These more informed segments were groups active in Ankara and Istanbul. Yet the base in the rural areas

[166] Mann, *Fascists*, p.17.
[167] Tim Jacoby, *Social Power and the Turkish State* (London: Frank Cass Publishers), p. 144.
[168] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 92.
[169] See: Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, pp. 19-21, 41-42, 96.

was not capable of developing such strategy vis-à-vis the state. A former militant, Nihat Genç, explained the ignorance of this base and their disappointment after 1980 "…because they were not able to analyze what the state was yesterday, after all these heavy consequences, they became stunted as children."[170] Genç's words displayed not only an intellectual incapacity on the side of the militants, but a politically mistaken path that had been chosen. For most of the movement, this path did not reflect a conscious political decision. However, for many of the higher ranking militants, this was a political gamble.

Anti-Internationalism

Anti-Internationalism was another significant aspect to the perception of communists in Turkey and later played a major role in the making of anti-communist paramilitaries. The concerns regarding the situation of the Turkic nations in the Soviet Union and the resulting forms of anti-communism were present in the writings of many early Turkist ultranationalist writers even before World War II, yet this was a position occupied by a small group of elites.[171] The cold war era in Turkey witnessed widespread indoctrination against communism and foreign communist regimes if not as part of the national education, as through the press, the discourse of government leaders and high officials, and the anti-communist organizations that had begun to flourish.[172] Both the prevalent discourses and the relevant organizations put forward the USSR as the biggest threat to the nation by way of stressing a long-run

[170] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, pp. 99-100. *"Dün devletin ne olduğunu tahlil edemedikleri için, bunca ağır sonuçlardan sonra devlete bir çocuk edasıyla küstüler."*

[171] Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," pp. 186-187.

[172] A former militant, Alaaddin Aldemir, described those days as follows: "Celal Bayar [the 3rd president of Turkish Republic] used to make statements as "This winter communism might come." We would invest all that we have into the guns." *Keşke Olmasaydı* [Documentary].

Russian-Turkish opposition and the eternal imperialist agenda of Russians as to reach to the Mediterranean. The marriage between the anticommunist state officials and these organizations made their most known appearance when President Cemal Gürsel became the honorary chairman for the Association for the Struggle against Communism (*Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği*) which was one of the most significant organizations that provided cadres to the Ocaks in their foundation.

As briefly mntioned, the Ülkücü movement certainly enjoyed the ideological and associational possibilities opened up by cold war anti-communism[173] and took anti-internationalism as one of its founding elements. This anti-internationalism happened to have two interrelated manifestations, both in the discourses of Türkeş and Ülkücü youth and their publications and later memoirs. The first and less significant one was to be opposed to all kinds of foreign ideologies.[174] This idea had the assumption that the "Nine lights doctrine" or "Turkism" was a homemade societal receipt organically bounded to the social structure and the needs of Turkish society. It brought with itself the idea that capitalism, communism, socialism, fascism and all other "non-Turkish" originated systems of thought were unlikely to meet the needs of the Turkish nation. Their establishment would even have devastative effects on the Turkish people and the state. One Ülkücü militant went further and added that foreign ideologies and particularly communism were "opposed to human nature."[175] One might realize the rhetorical (and agitative) power such thinking/narrative carries with itself, as it convinces people of the originality and Turkishness of itself, and as it relates sets of ideas with particular nations and equates them with their sole interests.

[173] I dealt with this issue in detail in Chapter 2, where I provided a historical background upon which the movement was born.

[174] Cengiz, *Bir Yıldız Kaydı*, p. 55; Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 131.

[175] Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 183. *"Komünizm insanlık dışı, insan yapısına hiç uymayan bir sistemdir."*

The second manifestation of anti-internationalism concerned the practices of these ideologies within the nation, specifically the activity of the communists. As already mentioned, at the beginning of their formation, the Ocaks defined capitalism and capitalists as one of their enemies. One second generation militant who later wrote a biographical novel about a first generation heroic militant (the famous Komando Mustafa) stated his views concerning the USA through the methods of communists as they recruited comrades for themselves:

> The guys were writing, drawing and playing….The number of materials they were using were of variety, and they were even speaking about rightful topics, for instance they were forging American enmity. What kind of nationalist would be against the opposition to America?[176]

The hatred of the USA and capitalists did not fade away among the militants as *Başbuğ* [the leader] abandoned such opposition from his discourse as of the 1970s. Yet this hatred existed silently and almost never turned into a public political action. The most important reason for this was not the close pursuit of Türkeş's political maneuvers by the paramilitaries, but rather the fact that "American imperialism" had never embodied itself in visible enemies as did "the imperialism of the USSR and China" in the eyes of Ülkücü militants.

In the militants' memoirs, these visible enemies of the Ülkücü paramilitaries appear in two different forms and expose a heterogeneity among the militants with regards to the understanding of their enemy. Both understandings work through an appearance-essence dichotomy. One takes the communist militant as seemingly

[176] *Ibid*, pp. 139-140. *"Adamlar yazıyorlar, çiziyorlar, yönetiyorlar, oynuyorlardı. Mizah yaparak işliyorlardı fikirlerini. Resim çizerek anlatıyorlardı. Gazetelerde, köşelerinde yazıyorlardı. Kitaplar basıyorlardı. Kullanacakları meta o kadar fazlaydı ki, üstelik haklı konulara el atıyorlar, mesela Amerikan düşmanlığını işliyorlardı. Hangi milliyetçi karşı olabilirdi ki Amerikan karşıtlığına."*

naïve, one of "us" in his/her social positioning yet essentially evil,[177] working clandestinely for the imperialist agenda of the USSR or China (depending upon whether he/she is a Leninist or Maoist). The other takes the communist militant again as naïve, but this time a misinformed and ignorant tool of the same imperialist calculations. Now the hidden evil is behind the visible enemy, embodied in the cosmopolitan rich, the leftist cosmopolitan press people and the Russian and Chinese imperialists who, by way of deceiving, fool the members of the Turkish nation.[178] This second manifestation of enemy (which is a more common theme than the first one in the memory-texts) not only equated the communist praxis with an unknowingly betrayal, but also granted the Ülkücü militants with an epistemological superiority vis-à-vis their communist peers/enemies, hence bestowing on them the national role of showing the communist youth what reality is behind all those political phenomena either by way of intellectual debate or (since the communist would not let the former) by force.[179]

Anti-internationalism was not only an aspect of militants' anti-communism, but a significant part of their cognitive structures. The militants proved receptive to any form of argumentation which tended to associate the social, cultural and economic problems of the nation with the agenda of some foreign power mechanisms. As its logical consequence, such thinking brought with itself the idea of

[177] "Our idiot friends would immediately draw near to them. They haven't seen anything before. They wouldn't recognize the hyena inside the sheepskin…How would they? They are just out of their villages. If a [communist] teacher takes care of them, he would be the best. Besides what he speaks of would be accepted as truth. Later this thing would spread out as illness!" *Ibid*, p. 49. *""Bizim salaklar da hemen yanaşırlar! Bir şey görmemişler ki. Koyun postunun içindeki sırtlanı görmezler!" dedi Süleyman, "Nasıl görsünler? Daha köyden yeni çıkmışlar. Onlarla bir hoca ilgilenince, o, en iyi hoca olur. Üstelik o hocanın bütün söyledikleri kabul edilir. Sonra hastalık gibi yayılır bu iş."*

[178] For example see: Oğuzhan Cengiz, "Sonsuzluk Kervanı" in Cengiz, *Bir Yıldız Kaydı*, pp. 11-18.

[179] Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 139. To be sure the claim to epistemological superiority was not peculiar to the Ülkücü paramilitaries, but also a definitive feature of the Marxist militants. This, I believe, was one of the most significant reasons for the impossibility of compromise between the groups.

the existence of betrayers inside the nation, who for the paramilitaries were no one but leftists of all kinds. The fact that many radical leftist groups adopted an internationalist ideology was employed as a means to strengthen this argument. One important dimension to this mentality and its effective functioning was (one may argue that it still is) *localism* which rooted itself in the parochial thinking of the movement members. Many Ülkücü texts show militants accuse communists for being obsessed with problems on an international scale and thus (purposefully) ignoring the problems inside the nation. For an organization largely composed of young men of rural origin, localism carried a significant rhetorical strength.

Anti-internationalism was again a theme which was not peculiar to the Ülkücü movement. Another significant reason behind its emergence as definitive of the anti-communist reaction was the idea of "class-transcendence" offered by the movement ideology. The transformation of the class struggle into the struggle of nations would eventually end up with defining enemies on an international level; the class struggle of Marxist militants and larger population was destined to be interpreted with regards to this war of nations. In the case of Turkism, the equation of communist activity with the workings of the USSR and China found its ground for agitation in the colonial activity of the Soviet Union in the Central Asian Turkic regions, which on the one hand made use of the old Turkist idea of "Russification of Turks"[180] (hence, identification of communism with assimilation, the loss of Turkish character), on the other, built up the ground for the Turkist ideal of *Turan* (the integration of all Turkic nations) and bestowed on the movement a utopian character.

The "captive Turks issue" was a frequent seminar topic for Ülkücü militants and represented a dystopian example for what would happen if communism were

[180] Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right," p. 169; Landau, *Radical Politics*, p. 198.

established in Turkey, if not it stood for a forceful motivation for the Turan utopia. In fact, it worked for nothing but reinforcing the hatred of communists in Turkey; in many cases, fighting against the enemy in the homeland represented to the paramilitaries a fight against the Russians themselves. The Maraş massacre was lighted when an Ülkücü militant provocatively bombed a movie theater in which Ülkücü militants were watching *Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak?* (When Will the Sun Rise?), a movie about Russian cruelty and the situation of captive Turks. The interruption was followed by a soon call for jihad against Moscow by the Ülkücü paramilitaries.

Sub-organizations which were named by the militants at the grassroots level also carried names regarding the situation of Central Asian Turks, such as *Türk İntikam Tugayı* (Turkish Revenge Brigade) and *Esir Türkleri Kurtarma Ordusu* (Army for Saving Captive Turks). On an agitative level, these organizations opposed Russian tyranny yet on the practical level channeled their violence solely toward the Marxist people of Turkey.[181] This was one definitive aspect of the movement's paramilitarism; seeing their paramilitary formation, and the struggle inside as a mirror image of the military structure, and the war between Turkey and the imperialists.[182] The movement's anti-communism happened to emerge as a violent opposition that was directed, above all, towards the Russian themselves.

[181] There were also material reasons for this opposition. The Turkish Communist Party (TKP) was known to be affiliated with the USSR and by the time of the peak of political violence, when the press was asking the source of weapons used in the youth events, the attention was usually directed to USSR and Bulgaria, and there seemed to emerge a serious public opinion that the USSR was chiefly responsible for the political upheaval. Birand, *Saat 04:00*, pp. 75-76. The militants I interviewed emphasized the more threatining position of the USSR than that of China (for its geographical closeness) and their actions as to be primarily channelled to Leninists rather than Maoist organizations.

[182] One may recall the fascist banner "Paramilitarism at home, militarism abroad". See: Mann, *Fascists*, p. 47.

Anti-Cosmopolitanism

Anti-Cosmopolitanism was another significant aspect in the creation of the communist image and the making of the Ülkücü militants' identity. In the publications of the first generation, the term "cosmopolitan" designated people, ideas and lifestyles of urban origin and was stressed for its threat of cultural degeneration. The cosmopolitan life meant impiety, lack of nationhood, the dishonoring of women, the forgetting of manhood, selfishness, and ignorance of the lives of the poor. In short and in the Ülkücü vocabulary, a non-Turkish and non-Muslim way of living. In these early writings, the lifestyles that were called cosmopolitan were targeted not only on a cultural plane, but sometimes on the grounds of class position. Riding in luxury cars or living in expensive neighborhoods were emphasized as to degrade these ways of living and to render the bearers of these lifestyles as objects of opposition (certainly there was no objection to the "pious" and rich notables of Anatolia who ideologically and financially supported the NAP).

Yet even when we can speak of a minimum class-based sensitivity in Ülkücü thinking, for the first generation, the line of thought never took the form of a demand for class based resistance of the militants or the lower classes. The class content usually served pragmatically to return the weapon of the communists to themselves; the fact that the Labor Party of Turkey had most of its votes from upper class neighborhoods was employed to associate communism with the rich cosmopolitan[183] (hence, with the source of cultural corruption) and to claim insincerity on the side of leftists, who claimed to defend the rights of the poor. Although it was not definitive

[183] For example see: "Komünist Kim?," *Devlet,* 21 July 1969. Behind the association of communists and the cosmopolitan lifestyles there was also an anti-internationalist mentality that evaluated communism first and foremost as a foreign ideology. Hence, the appropriate lifestyle would be an imitation of those who "created" these ideologies.

for the totality of the movement, a more leftist discourse was to emerge in some segments of the second generation, despite the party and due to the worsening economic conditions of the late 1970s.

The second generation took over this hasty equation of the cosmopolitan rich with communism without too much questioning, moreover, in many of their fictitious creations, they idealized (in a pejorative manner) even the communist militant on the streets as a representative of the degenerate city life. A fine example, *Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak?*[184] the only Ülkücü propaganda film known to us had at its center a captive Turk who flees to Istanbul—"the heart of Turkness"—from the USSR (and who by nature of things joins the movement) and a degenerate communist girl who has disrespectful attitudes towards her father; habits such as partying, wearing low cut dresses and listening to foreign music, and a tendency to humiliate the rural origins of the captive Turk. In addition to the stereotypical imagery of a bourgeoisie girl, her walls are covered with posters of Che Guevara, her table is filled with books of socialist bent and her vocabulary is affected by a clumsy leftist discourse. The story starts with a romantic tension between the girl and the captive Turk. The girl resists the charms of the rural man with difficulty yet for a long time degrades him in all the ways she can, through his village origins and intellectual incapacities. As the story unfolds, as a consequence of her romantic feelings towards him (and the resulting admiration of his cultural/political personality), she gives up her degenerate attitudes towards her father and towards the captive Turk, and strives to become the ideal-type women in his eyes. Her walls are now covered with Ülkücü posters, she wears more traditional clothes, and speaks less and works hard. Besides its androcentric romanticism which is apparent in every single Ülkücü text (whether in

[184] *Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak,* (1977). The film was written by Tufan Güner, a second generation and 21 year old militant in Journalism School, and directed by Mehmet Kılıç, a 25 year old militant of probably similar background.

biographical or fiction form), the film tells the story of a return to the sacred identity of tradition. The woman no longer wills to participate in the riots on urban streets but wants to stay at home. She no longer wants the foreign lifestyle, yet does what she is supposed to do.

In addition to what it says about womanhood and the associated forms of machoistic man (which I will deal in the section on the masculine self), the film puts the male audience (for Ülkücü propaganda was directed towards only men) at a certain vantage point in which it forces him to see the societal relations through an urban-rural dichotomy, where the latter represents a sacred essence as opposed to the former's temporal yet dangerous profanity. Neither the girl nor his conservative father know about the true living, so the militant is the one who shall address the rest of the nation the pursuit of happiness. He belongs to an elect community which derives its epistemological superiority from its members' whole-heartedness. The Ülkücü man is just like the idealized image of *SturmAbteilung* man as he is "simple and straightforward" as opposed to the "guileful"[185] men of the existing order; he would prefer rural naivety over urban malevolence, morality over intellect and modesty over social rank. This is where the militants found sincerity to themselves and to their organization (which was comprised of men like them); the movement increased its interpellative strength as it managed to dignify the weaknesses of the rural men (and its members) and transformed them into cultural/moral virtues.

The rural world view the audience was forced to subscribe in the film and the resulting criticism of the urban lifestyle was by no means a coincidence when one considers the origins of the grassroots, especially the second generation. Though we lack empirical data like membership records (many were burned following the coup

[185] Mitchell, *Hitler's Stormtroopers*, p. 122.

d'état, if not lost) which would shed light on the origins of militants in a more precise manner, we know from the memoirs and the interviews held that even the cadres in the big cities were to a large extent filled with young people either from rural areas (coming to study at university or to find proper jobs) or from shantytowns that had been formed only one, seldom two generations earlier. A former militant from Ankara who wrote his views regarding the organization in a reader letter to *Yeni Gündem* under the pseudonym Hüsnü Galib in 1985, gave clues regarding the demographics of the organization and the relation of these demographics to the type of opposition formed by the Ülkücü militants:

> I find the claims to "emerge in opposition to communism" simplistic. It was the abusing of the potential existent within the "Periphery." It [the movement] was the emotional reaction of the "Children of the Periphery" to the rapidly development and settling process of Westernization movement, to the forced "Anti-Islamic" and "Anti-national" political cultural practices and to the political mentality which saw the people as a herd to be shepherded. The reactionary and emotional aspects of the movement are an intertwined totality.[186]

Hüsnü Galib was rightful in his determination that there was an emotional response on the side of the Ülkücü militants to the alienating aspects of pro-Western lifestyles. In the rural areas, where Islam was more determinant in the making of the militants' moral and cultural identities,[187] this responsiveness was derived either from the discourse of conservative families where a reaction to the republican values always already existed or through the stories narrated by older young men who had experienced "degenerate" city life and returned to their hometowns as engineers or teachers. For the militants who went to cities themselves, this reaction was more

[186] "Hüsnü Galib'in Okuyucu Mektubu." *"...Söylendiği gibi "komünizme karşı ortaya çıkmış olma" iddialarını basit buluyorum. "Çevre"nin içinde varolan potansiyelin istismar edilmesiydi), gelişme ve yerleşme süreci hızlanan Batılılaşma hareketine, "Anti-İslami" ve "Anti-Milli" siyasi-kültürel zoraki uygulamalara, halkı güdülmesi gereken bir sürü olarak gören politik zihniyete, merkezce dışlanmış "Çevrenin Çocukları"nın duygusal reaksiyonuydu. Hareketin reaksiyon olma özelliği ile duygusal olma özelliği içiçe bir bütün."*

[187] Bora and Can, *Devlet*, p. 53.

intense as they were isolated vis-à-vis the urban life, which they found incomprehensible and exclusionary. As discussed in the previous chapter, the new "outsiders" of the city became "insiders"[188] as they overcame this alienating feeling at the Ocaks. Turan Güven, a former militant who went from his town to Ankara for the university, described this outsider stance in his memoir as follows:

> We arrived in Ankara with our local values and determined cultural patterns. When we encountered a degenerate city culture, we experienced perplexity and dissonance. We felt psychologically abased and marginalized. Comparing the life from which they had come from and the lives of people living in Ankara, these friends of ours were producing enmities out of visible antilogies. In a time when the majority of the population was living in the rural areas, the people who came to cities from these regions were too quick to judge that "villagers produce, urban people consume."[189]

As I have briefly mentioned, the opposition of the second generation, at least the reaction of some was of a more leftist in character.[190] This had its reasons. The economy grew worse in the second half of the 1970s, the rhetoric of the Marxists became more and more relevant to the students and the working class, and the Ülkücü cadres spread out as to include, and strived to recruit, the lowest segments of society. The aforementioned propaganda film, which was written by the relatively more intellectual militants of this tendency, offered solutions to the ongoing economic turbulence almost in a Marxist tone as to defend "factories owned by the workers who build them". Yet the film and other propaganda texts put forward these sort of dictums with an emphasis on their "originality" (there was a Turkish way of

---

[188] Mitchell, *Hitler's Stormtroopers*, p. 119.

[189] Turan Güven, *İnsan Gelecekte Yaşar* (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz Yayınları, 2009) quoted in Özcan Yeniçeri, "Önsöz", Metin Turhan, *Ülkü Ocakları: 1968-1980*, (Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz Yayınları, 2010) p. x. *"Ankara'ya yerel değerlerimiz ve belirli kültür kalıplarımızla gelmiştik. Yozlaşmış bir şehir kültürü ile karşılaştığımızda bir şaşkınlık ve uyumsuzluk yaşadık. Kendimizi psikolojik olarak aşağılanmış ve dışlanmış hissetmekteydik. Bu arkadaşlarımız; geldikleri yerde yaşanan hayatla, Ankara'da yaşayan insanların hayatını mukayese ederek, görünen tezattan düşmanlıklar üretiyordu. Nüfusun büyük bölümünün kırsal kesimde yaşadığı bir zamanda, bu kesimden büyük şehre gelen insanlara alelacele şu yargıya varıyordu; köylüler üretir, şehirliler tüketir."*

[190] Bora and Can go further to add that for many Ülkücü militants it was a matter of coincidence to become Ülkücü or find expression in radical leftist organizations.

solving problems) and on not having been offered by the communists who were "distant" from the "real problems" of the nation. This lack of knowledge (or in some cases, deliberate ignorance) regarding the agenda of the radical leftists was definitive of Ülkücü propaganda. To the less informed militants, if the cosmopolitan rich were the source of evil, the Marxist militants on the streets were vehicles of this evil. Hence, they were held accountable for the immediate problems of the Ülkücü men and their narrow environment. Keyder notes that:

> More than an abstract idolatry of the state, which was the common denominator within the cadres, it was frustration within an ill-understood transformation and the social rigidities that severely restricted the expression or sublimation of this frustration, that united the militants. The pretence that activities of a rival group were responsible for their problems became a useful fiction to legitimate mostly gratuitous violence, especially in the case of fascist right. Such a conviction also created its own fractious inclination and graced all implicit rivalries with the gloss of political vocabulary.[191]

As we approach the late 1970s and, hence, the peak of political violence, for many Ülkücü militants it was the easiest thing to blame the communist militants for their difficult life standards. They were interrrupting the usual flow of daily life with strikes and other political deeds and thus were responsible for the damaged economy. If not they had an organic link to the actual reason, the cosmopolitan communist rich.

The communist militants, when there was no strong anti-fascist resistance, were also the easiest targets, there was almost no other societal segment against which violence would be publicly condoned by the bureaucratic and repressive state apparatuses. It is not difficult to presume that whenever trapped in the power territory of the Ülkücü militants, the "snob" cosmopolitans had their share of the Ülkücü violence. One repentant militant told of Ülkücü militants who had beaten

[191] Keyder, *State and Class*, p. 216.

each other in the absence of communists within territories fully dominated by NAP sympathizers.[192] The grudge developed by the militants against the urban rich should not be underestimated as well as the party's capacity to direct this hatred to the communist enemy. In his fugitive days, Haluk Kırcı says, he passed through the upper-class neighborhoods and became curious about the fact that the violence in the streets was not affecting the lives of these people:

> As I saw the life of the inhabitants of the Bosphorus in arcadia, I was both getting angry with and envying them. Sometimes I was revolting against what I saw and spoke to myself: "Enjoy ladies and gentlemen, enjoy! Let us see when we come to power and establish the just order, if you will be enjoying like this!" Sometimes I chose a residence for myself and imagined owning it when we came to power.[193]

These "revolutionary" feelings Kırcı had and probably shared with other lower class militants are the key to understanding the Ülkücü reaction of the late 1970s. In Kırcı's case, the envy of and anger towards the cosmopolitan rich transformed itself into the strangling of seven young TİP (Labor Party of Turkey) militants on the order of higher ranking paramilitaries (and via them, by the leader[194]). This is the point addressed in the quotation referred to in the beginning of this chapter; the subjective and emotional condition of the paramilitary forces during the times of "revolution" was what gave the movement its dynamism; this dynamism

[192] "Again, we were dominant in the school. Because there were no leftist left in the school, people were fighting among themselves. These fights were usually caused by girl issues and the drunkenness caused by too much drinking. Then, everyone has ….. started to attend lectures drunk and drink in the class. After these days I started not to come to school. In a coffee in Aşağı Eğlence we were sitting all day and performing Ülkücü-ness." Tanlak, *İtiraf*, p. 37. *"Okul içinde yine bizler hakimdik. Bu arada millet okulda solcu kalmadığı için kendi arasında kavga ediyordu. Bu kavgalar genellikle kız konusunda ve fazla içkinin verdiği sarhoşluk nedeniyle oluyordu. Artık herkes işin tadını kaçırmış, sınıflara sarhoş girmeye, sınıflarda içki içilmeye başlanmıştı. Bu günlerden sonra ben de okula gelmemeye başladım. Aşağı Eğlence'de kahvede bütün gün oturup ülkücülük yapıyorduk."*

[193] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 139. *"Boğaz sakinlerinin bu asude hayatlarını gördükçe, bir yandan onlara kızıyor, bir yandan da gıpta ediyordum. Bazen gördüklerim karşısında isyan ediyor ve kendi kendime söyleniyordum: "Eğlenin hanımlar beyler, eğlenin! Bakalım, iktidara geldiğimizde ve haklının hakkını aldığı düzeni kurduğumuzda, gene böyle eğlenebilecek misiniz." Bazen de kendim için bir yalı beğeniyor ve iktidara geldiğimizde bu yalının sahibi olmayı hayal ediyordum."*

[194] Ali Yurtaslan had claimed that Alparslan Türkeş has said "Bahçelievler must be rendered safe." Yurtaslan, *Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*, p. 66.

reproduced itself as the left distorted the existent order through strikes and other political acts, and as the Ülkücü paramilitaries struggled to return it where it belonged. The NAP's success at funneling the lower class political/cultural reaction to the communist militants depended upon first the communist image it appropriated and recreated (and let the grassroots developed), and second the utopian social structure it offered after the bypassing of the communist militants.

The Masculine Self

The amoral condition attributed by the Ülkücü militants to the communist regimes and to the sympathizers of communism revealed itself also in the gender identity of the paramilitaries. As already seen from the anti-cosmopolitanism of the militants, communism became the ultimate target of an initially quasi-leftist response of a mostly rural base, as it was bestowed with a non-Turkish and non-Muslim character and a total lack of morality. In this image, the Ülkücü militants' positioning of women and the resulting forms of masculine selfhood were definitive of the imaginary of communism whereas the communist image helped define "the normative representations of masculinity and femininity."[195] The image of communism as it related to these normative representations appeared on two interrelated axes: first and more apparent, in the concerns regarding "women's honor," and second and less visible, in what might be called the fear of "the reversal of gender roles."

The issue of women's honor was maybe the foremost hesitation regarding communism in Turkey before the NAP began to mobilize this fear. This hesitation of

[195] Sandro Bellassai, "The Masculine Mystique: Antimodernism and Virility in Fascist Italy" *Journalof Modern Italian Studies*, 10(3) 2005, p. 314.

what we have been calling the anti-communist bloc, had already been based on the idea of a moral decay associated with communism thanks to the right-wing political language in Turkey before and during the NAP's political activity. Yet the thoughts and myths regarding the moral/cultural character of communist regimes were nurtured and multiplied by the Ülkücü movement. The fears of assimilation and loss of conventional masculine and feminine characteristics had never been invoked as much as when they became the hottest conversation topics among Ülkücü militants for at least one and a half decades. If such concerns of militants were initially derived from the discourse of their families and narrow conservative environment, the second big moment had to do with the NAP's appropriation of this political vocabulary.

From the very beginning, the ruralism of the NAP, which we partly dealt in the previous section, performed a contradictory character. While the seventh principle of the Nine lights doctrine "*köycülük*" (ruralism, or peasant care) proposed a developmentalist and modernizing vision for the future of villages and towns, the party's discourse on culture presented a deeply anti-modernist attitude shaped around the preservation of traditional gender roles and the exaltation of family, which could be found in the uncorrupted rural way of living.[196] This was not an extraordinary insight considering the nature of right-wing politics in Turkey, yet the novelty of the NAP discourse was its emphasis on Turkish manhood, which was linked to the Turkish "warrior" tradition and history. The publications close to the party did not hesitate to employ the sensitivity of the conservative population in unhandsome ways, sometimes going so far as to show pictures of Demirel (leader of Justice Party and prime minister for the indicated era) family drinking alcohol with the Italian prime minister, Mariano Rumor, and emphasize the supposed intimacy between

[196] We must note that the vote base of the NAP could never spread out to the villages, yet mostly dominated by the electinoneers of towns, which I associate with the rural character. For the demographics of NAP voters for the indicated era see: Bora and Can, *Devlet*, pp. 51, 69-70.

Rumor and Demirel's wife. Demirel implicitly was accused of not being "man enough," as he "allowed" his wife to perform the role of westernized womanhood.[197] The Demirel family, as they betrayed the conventional representations of masculinity and femininity, was regarded as being divorced from the tradition and the moral character of Turkness. This mentality was symptomatic for understanding the discourse of the party's later years.

The more important thing was, however, how these underlined gender protocols were interpreted at the grassroots level. For the base in the rural areas, this party discourse and the "normative representations" were effective as they invoked what the militants saw as endangered with the "Westernization process." In the urban areas, the militants were more obsessed with the exaltation of virility, for it strengthened and legitimized their exaggerated macho behavioral patterns. The first generation, whose political activity was to a major extent limited to the big cities, had made one of their first public political appearance when they attacked to a birth control seminar in Ankara. Their deed was declared to have been against the imperialist Russians and Americans, who wanted to "castrate the Turkish nation."[198] This act had to do both with the pre-natalist policies of Türkeş, who had proposed a "Great Turkey of a Hundred Million" utopia, and with the anti-internationalist cognitive structure of the Ülkücü militants who from the beginning made it their banner to "analyze" inter-societal relations with reference to hidden foreign power centers. For the second generation, as the USA fell off of the party's chief enemies list and as the paramilitaries moved on to more serious issues than birth control, communism and the communists on the streets became the sole threat vis-à-vis the traditional masculinity and femininity.

[197] *Devlet*, 16.03.1969
[198] "Komandolar Doğum Seminerini Bastılar" *Milliyet*, 08.04.1969

The considerations regarding communism's threat to women's honor made up the most salient aspect of the militants' pre-fascist identities as well as that of the larger conservative population. As we see from the memory texts (and indeed as we may still experience in Turkey today), there was a widespread belief in the myth of the "equal distribution of women" among men in communist regimes. For the militants, this vulgar dictum regarding the loss of Turkish women's honor represented the moral decay *par excellence* and bestowed a possible communist regime with a dystopian nature. Kırcı's words on the issue were exemplary:

> What the heck would I be after education? What worth would it have to be a scholar if the communists were going to capture the fatherland? Sometimes me and my friends were discussing what we could do if communists came to power. I would immediately answer: My friend, nothing will change for me. I'd shoot bullets into the heads of my sisters, then I would go up to the mountains….Supposedly I was going to secure my honor by killing my sisters. And I was going to go up to the mountains to fight the communists.[199]

The idea that communism would interfere with women's purity with its "collectivism"[200] was a thought the Ülkücü militants shared with the Italian fascists. Neither hesitated to assign themselves the role of this honor's savior. The extensity of the belief in the "collectivism of the communists" in the anti-communist bloc was one opportunity for the NAP to recruit the young men of the conservative regions. Yet as these young men took their places in the Ülkücü movement, the relation between them and communism and the communists transformed itself into a unique form that was different than their past pre-fascist response. The idea of the threat to

[199] Kırcı, *Zamanı Süzerken*, p. 68. *"Okuyup da ne olacaktım! Komünistler vatanı ele geçirdikten sonra, alleme olsam ne faydası vardı! Bazen arkadaşlarla, komünistlerin iktidara gelmeleri halinde ne yapabileceğimizi konuşurduk. Ben hemen cevabı yapıştırıyordum: "Arkadaş, benim için bir şey yazmaz! Kız kardeşlerimin kafalarına birer mermi sıkarım; sonra ver elini dağlar…"….Güya kız kardeşlerimi öldürmekle, namusumu emniyet altına alacaktım. Ve dağlara çıkıp komünistlerle savaşacaktım…"*

[200] Marla Stone, "The Changing Face of the Enemy in Fascist Italy," *Constellations* 15, no. 3 (2008), p. 346.

the family's sanctity, which was the initial conceptualization of the communist activity, changed especially during the street battles of the late 1970s. The selfhood of the militants derived from the traditional father image was turned into the Ülkücü masculine self, which went beyond the conventional morality of the fathers in the rural areas.

*

Ülkücü movement was above all a masculine political act; while it never succeeded in becoming a mass party, it also failed at interpellating women both as movement members and as their electioneering base. Although the branches in the universities had few women members, branches in the rural regions were never "places for girls". As it is seen in the confessions, there were more men than women even in the conferences regarding "the position of Turkish women in society"[201]. The contrasting demographics of the leftist groups were interpreted as weakness; some militants even blamed communists for "making use of their women's charm" to recruit comrades and claimed a moral value in "not putting forward women in the political struggle"[202]. As seen from the quotations, women were thought to be at Ülkücü militants' or communists' disposal; though it was difficult to assign gender neutral structures to many communist organizations, it was peculiar to Ülkücü movement that normative femininity was considered to have nothing to do with the political struggle in the public sphere.

[201] Tanlak, *İtiraf*, p. 47.

[202] Terzioğlu, *Komando*, p. 196. *"Ülkücü Hareket, kızılların yaptığını yapmaz, eylemlerde kadınları ve kızları öne sürmezdi."* The chief enemies of traditional manhood and womanhood were no one but the communists on the streets. This was where the communist militant of similar socio-economic background (to the poor paramilitary) gained similarity to the cosmopolitan communist. This traditional gaze upon gender roles was also the point where Ülkücü militants invoked implicit political/cultural vocabulary; the fact that Alevis have always been the object of such accusation of being beyond the traditional gender roles was "successfully" employed by Ülkücü provocateurs as to alarm large populations against Alevis in the massacres of late 70s and 80.

If women's honor issue was the most outspoken aspect to the image of communism in Ülkücü thinking, the fear regarding the "reversal of gender relations"[203] was the more self-effacing yet equally important dimension to the minds of the militants. Such fear was initially based on the differing appearances of Ülkücü militants and radical leftist groups. The physical appearance of the communists and Ülkücü paramilitaries was one significant way for the both parties to codify enemies, friends and apolitical agents. For the paramilitaries, it carried meanings as to explain the gender relations in a communist organization and through that, a communist regime. The Ülkücü paramilitaries were proud of being clean-shaven and having short hair (this was one self-deceiving aspect to their insubstantial military discipline) as opposed to the bearded and long-haired communists, who were "non-differentiable from women." On the other hand, the communist women were considered to be masculinized with their clothing styles and "man-like" public attitudes.

The propaganda film to which I referenced is a good example for understanding these normative codes of appearance and behaviors as it narrates the social feminization of a communist woman. The starring communist woman who has the dress codes of a stereotypical "bourgeois girl" does not hesitate to make public leftist propaganda, treats her father and his visitors from the rural area disrespectfully; in short the family institution. In her every manner, she fulfills a representation of the degenerate, Westernized, modern city woman. After her engagement with the leading Ülkücü man, she submits to the woman imagery of the latter and her gender identity undergoes through a radical change. The transformation of the woman happens on a cultural/moral axis. She starts to wear traditional clothes,

[203] I borrow the term from Stone, "Changing Face."

starts to cook, develops a desire for the wedding dress. To put it simply, she accepts all forms of male subordination in this new traditional womanhood imaginary. The relation between her and the militant turns out to be grounded in traditional gender hierarchies and in a strictly pre-modern way. The Ülkücü man, on the other hand, is pleased with the traditional mother role the woman is put into, yet not satisfied with its counterpart in the traditional patriarch; the ex-communist woman and the *Ülkücü* man do not pursue a conventional family life, for the Ülkücü paramilitary is devoted to a higher cause, to save the nation.

The opposition of the Ülkücü militants to communists was shaped around this thought regarding the upside down change in the traditional gender roles. While, as apparent in the film, the communist women were regarded as having forgotten their femininity, the communist men were portrayed as effeminate in their political activity. The attacks by the communists were usually described with slangy womanish terms.[204] While womanhood was associated with malice, cowardliness and perfidy, and communist men were regarded as carrying these "womanlike" properties, the image of the pure, honest and warrior-like Ülkücü man of total virility came to the surface. This was not a surprising line of thought for the paramilitaries, who regarded war as, to use Bellassai's words, "a therapy for masculinity."[205] If the macho cult inside the gang-like structure of the militant groups was the first reason for their exaggerated, ready-to-fight masculine behavior, it was the state of war with the communists that constituted the ground to perform this manhood.

The conventional patriarchal family that was seen as at stake with the communist activity legitimized the Ülkücü response not only for themselves, but also in the eyes of the larger anti-communist bloc. Yet the so-called defense of traditional

[204] Lütfi Yıldız's narrative is a good example of this sort of portrayal. See: Cengiz, *Bir Yıldız Kaydı*, pp. 107-112.

[205] Bellassai, "Masculine Mystique," p. 316.

masculinity and femininity did not mean that the Ülkücü militants saw these gender protocols as normative representations. It was true that for many militants, the ideal woman-type was constructed upon their own experience of the mother image.[206] Yet as the militants differentiated themselves from the rest of the nation and went beyond the conventional morality, instead of the family-father image, the normative masculinity found its role model in the martyrs and heroes of the movement who were produced with reference to the Islamic praise of martyrdom and Turkic myths about the warrior nation.[207] While on an idealized level the masculinity was derived from the image of the warrior (who was successful in the battle against the effeminate communists and possibly was killed in his struggle for the cause), on a material basis the understanding of masculinity found expression in the exaggerated masculine behavior. The war with the communist enemy became a possibility for militants to prove their virility; the moments of crisis even witnessed ethically unconventional behavior such as raping communists during Maraş and Çorum massacres[208] and the sodomizing of infiltrators when detected.[209]

[206] Terzioğlu, *Komando* provides a fine example to mother-like, rural and pre-modern properties of "ideal women" in militants' imagination.

[207] Detailed analysis of Islamic contribution to Turkism can be found in Çağlar's work. See Çağlar "The Greywolves," pp. 79-102. Also see Ağaoğulları, "Ultranationalist Right."

[208] *Nokta Dergisi*, no: 22, (08 June 1986).

[209] Tanlak, *İtiraf*, p. 85.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Michael Haneke once said that horror films derive their power from what they do not show as opposed to what they provide us as fearful images. No matter how scary a monster can be portrayed, he added, it will carry an element of ridicule and this way would be dysfunctional in terms of terrorizing the audience. When the source of horror is kept away from the screen, he concluded, such absence then must be fulfilled by the audience with regards to the latter's own repertoire of fear and terror. The idea of communism in the Ülkücü discourse functioned in a similar form. The fact that communism had no clear manifestation but was some ambiguous idea invested meaning through the fables narrated to them rendered it the most effective catalyst of nightmares. The present thesis analyzed the contents of these nightmares, their constructiveness upon Ülkücü paramilitary identity and the resulting political violence.

This study started with the idea of revealing the communist dystopia in the Ülkücü paramilitaries' minds. In this way, I assumed, the political violence exerted by the latter would be more intelligible to an outsider like me. As my study continued, I realized that the dystopian image of a communist future was only one factor in the making of the Ülkücü paramilitary identity and the militants' subsequent violence. The opposition to communists did not only represent to the militants a battle that will bring peace to the country with the elimination of the enemy. It also served as an instrument that helped the paramilitaries develop an elect status vis-à-vis the rest of the society and provided them with a cause that heralded a utopian future. I came to notice that while the militants attached themselves to the "nation"

under the "task" of defending the country, their paramilitary anti-communism enabled them to differentiate themselves from what they believe they were protecting.

Hence the task before me turned out to have a multi-echelon structure: to reveal the function of anti-communism in the Ülkücü discourse, to show the discursive elements that granted the movement with a ground for political consensus, to address the ways in which the paramilitaries were articulated to and differentiated from the "nation," and to indicate what sort of future the militants envisaged as a result of the paramilitary activity they conducted. In order to accomplish this quest for Ülkücü paramilitary identity, I made use of Derrida's ideas on the notion. My take of the idea of communism/communists in the Ülkücü discourse as the "constitutive outside" of Ülkücü paramilitary identity enabled me to address the "inside" of the community. I showed how the act of exclusion performed against the "communists" bestowed the Ülkücü movement with an internal consensus and hence became the most fundamental tenet in the making of Ülkücü collective political identity. My take on the movement as a "discursive surface" enabled me to follow this collective identity through the discourse of the movement. I first set out to provide the non-discursive conditions of possibility for the Ülkücü discourse and later set forth and analyzed the discourse itself.

In Chapter I, I historicized the Ülkücü movement with reference to its ideological and associational antecedents and the socio-political context of the 1970's. While doing so, I provided a selective literature review of the academic works on Ülkücü movement, and Italian and German paramilitary experiences. This way, I attempted to enrich the historico-political narrative with the most known examples of the topic. I started to lay out the historical framework with addressing

the antecedents of the movement that enhanced and in certain ways restricted the movement's development. My explanation of anti-communism and Turkism in Turkey was followed by a section on Türkeş's political quest. After setting the era preceding the movement, I analyzed the socio-political context of 1970s whereby the movement made its biggest mark. Following the section in which I provided a brief explanation of movement's class characteristics, I showed how the Ülkücü movement fitted into the historical context of late 1970s and addressed their relation to the socio-political crisis of the era. Finally, I described Türkeş's power strategy and the function of his paramilitaries in this agenda.

In Chapter 2, I dealt with the institutions, processes and practices that functioned so as to produce, support and sustain the Ülkücü discourse. As I employed the term "discursive formation" as the sum total of a specific discourse and its non-discursive conditions of possibility, I reserved this chapter to the so-called non-discursive conditions vis-a-vis Chapter 3, which dealt with the Ülkücü discourse itself. In this regard, I started the chapter with a brief description of the Ülkücü organization. Here, I analyzed the nucleus phase of the movement and its rapid expansion in the late 1970s. In the following section on recruitment, I elaborated this expansion with regards to the social character of the movement's paramilitary base. Further, I dealt with the questions of initiation, role models' function in attracting the youth to the Ocaks, the movement's image before the pre-fascist youth and the conflict with radical leftists in recruiting militants. In the section on organizational structure, on the other hand, I analyzed the organizational edifice of Ülkücü movement, and addressed the power relations accompanying this pyramid. I addressed the organizational structure's effects on the form of politics pursued by the paramilitaries and showed how this structure represented to militants a mirror image

of the utopian Ülkücü state. I further described the power relations among the paramilitaries with reference to themes as recognition by elders, upward mobility and duties entitled to different layers of the organizational pyramid. In the last section on the spaces of training, I explained how the education of the militants was pursued in diverse spaces of training; Ocaks, prisons and streets. I showed how the Ülkücü youth were trained as paramilitaries through master-apprentice relation, as opposed to the militaristic ideal of Türkeş to raise them in commando camps.

My contribution to the Ülkücü literature lies, if not anywhere else, in Chapter 3, in which I showed the different forms of the anti-communist, paramilitary reaction, as they were manifested in the Ülkücü discourse. My historiographical move here was to narrate via sections, the titles of which were chosen with regards to the paramilitaries' own vocabulary. The sections on statism, anti-internationalism, anti-cosmopolitanism and the masculine self helped me depict the exteriors of the movement from which it derived the internal coherence and the external boundaries of the Ülkücü paramilitary identity. The main locus of the chapter, the constitution of the self-proclaimed elect status, was portrayed with regards to the inseparable traits of the Ülkücü identity, anti-communism and paramilitarism.

In the section on statism, I showed how the opposition to communists helped the paramilitaries develop a distinct relation to the state and its apparatuses. The idea of a state the well being of which was threatened by the communist activity and which was unable to protect itself ended up in the presumption that the Ülkücü militants were endowed with the mission of defending the state, hence the nation. The idea of "backing up the state," as it was employed in the leader's and party's ideology, gave the paramilitaries the sense that they were on the same side with the state and its apparatuses. The networking of the Ülkücü paramilitaries in the state

apparatuses, and their unpunished violence towards the communists gave this idea a material ground. As they exerted violence to communists, and this way protected the state and the nation (as the terms were understood by them), the militants felt as they belonged to a larger community. As they developed the idea to form a minority that is responsible for the integrity of the state and the nation, and as they attached themselves to the state in a particular fashion, they bolstered the idea to occupy an elect status vis-à-vis the rest of the society. This, I argued, was central to Ülkücü movement's paramilitarism.

In the section on anti-internationalism, I addressed how the paramilitaries equated the communist activity in Turkey with the political agenda of USSR and China and how this sort of mentality deeply structured their understanding of the world. In addition to the naïve idea of opposing to foreign ideologies, this form of anti-communism manifested a worldview that equated the social, cultural and economic problems of the "nation" with the hidden agenda of foreign power mechanisms. Since the working of these foreign actors tended to have a clandestine character, the nation should have carried elements that either purposefully betrayed the nation and state, or unknowingly serve to the interests of the same alien mechanisms because they are misinformed and ignorant. In the case of the communists, their class struggle was interpreted by the paramilitaries as the extension of a war of nations, and the anti-communist, paramilitary reaction of Ülkücü movement was perceived by the militants as a mirror image of the war in the battlefield. This form of anti-communism, I argued, not only manifested the popular fascist view of class-transcendence (to perceive the society as a classless, organic entity), but also concluded in the supposed epistemological superiority of Ülkücü men to communists and to the larger segments of the anti-communist bloc. Since

only the Ülkücü movement was able to see what is behind the social and political phenomena, it was their duty to show the rest of the society the true way of conducting politics, and it was their right to hold the power.

In the section on anti-cosmopolitanism, I explained the movement discourse which equated the "cultural degeneration" caused by the cosmopolitan rich with the activity of the communist militants, and the resulting processes in which the quasi-leftist reaction of the poor Ülkücü youth to the socio-economic injustices was transformed by the movement into anti-communist violence. This form of anti-communism, I argued, made use of the emotional and reactionary character that is shared by the paramilitaries with producing the pretense that communist activity was responsible for the ongoing problems in the country. While the class-based problems of the society were often interpreted by the militants on a moral and cultural axis, it was the movement discourse which "succeeded" in equating these moral/cultural problems with the activity of the communists and in funneling the reaction of the right wing youth to the followers of this political bent. As the political opponents of the Ülkücü movement were tended to be perceived through a cultural/moral hierarchy, the paramilitaries's self perception coincided with the top of this hierarchical structure. In this context, the transformation of the image of simple and straightforward man into a moral and cultural virtue was used as a tool to attract the uneducated men of the rural context and urban shantytowns, and it was further employed by the militants to construct the aforementioned moral hierarchy between them and the rest of the society. Accordingly, this novel moral standpoint brought with itself the idea of the right to a better living after the Ülkücü revolution, bestowing upon the Ülkücü discourse a utopian character.

The final section on the masculine self addressed the normative representations of masculinity and femininity in the Ülkücü discourse, and explained how the image of communists was effective in the construction of these gender protocols. As the imagined "threat to women's honor" was a famous anti-communist theme that preceded the foıundation of the movement, it was not difficult for the paramilitaries to appropriate it into their discourse. While this myth was very effective in producing anti-communist reaction among the conservative youth, the accompanying idea of the "reversal of gender protocols" determined the very gender outlook of the militants. In the Ülkücü discourse, the issue of women's honor was associated with the presupposition that communism would bring with itself a "collectivism" that would interfere with the women's purity. This myth bolstered the self-proclaimed role of savior of the nation and strengthened the moral/cultural perspective the Ülkücü militants were keen to appeal in their political conflicts. The appearance of the communist militants and the active participation of women in communist praxis were interpreted by the paramilitaries as the loss of conventional masculinity and femininity, thereby entitling them to protect the traditional gender roles from the upcoming moral decay. I argued that, while the conventional femininity of the mother-image was a normative representation for the paramilitaries, its counterpart in the traditional patriarch was far from Ülkücü men's self-depiction of masculinity. The normative masculinity rather found its role model in the Islamic praise of martyrdom and the Turkic myths of the warrior nation.

In all four sections, I portrayed how the Ülkücü paramilitaries' anti-communism helped them articulate to the "nation" and at the same time enabled them to differentiate themselves from this imagined community. The Ülkücü paramilitary identity, I argued, was constituted on this ground of articulation and

differentiation, whereby the paramilitaries developed for themselves a self-proclaimed elect status. With statism, they created the illusion that they protected the state and the nation while at the same time they endowed the movement with an idiosyncratic politico-ontological status. With anti-internationalism, they claimed a privileged access to political truth, whereby they developed an epistemological superiority over the communists and the rest of the nation. With anti-cosmopolitanism, they claimed to defend the tradition, while at the same time they developed a new morality for themselves. With their objection to the imagined communist gender protocols, they claimed to defend the traditional family structure, whereby they found the normative representation of masculinity on the outside of this institution. These four forms of anti-communism set up the ground for the making of Ülkücü paramilitary identity.

The future historico-political investigators of the Ülkücü movement's pre-1980 era, I believe, have before them at least three unrevealed (or insufficiently documented) dimensions, which I could not accomplish in the present study for reasons I pointed out in the Introduction and Chapter 1. The first is to reveal the class dimension of the identity of the paramilitaries. Such an attempt is inevitably bound to the emergence of new data. I believe only the surfacing of some unexpected party and Ocak records might enable such a future study. Second, a gender analysis which makes use of the voice of the Ülkücü women of the indicated era, remains vital not only for the understanding of the *Asenas*[210] and the movement in general, but also for the particular analysis of Ülkücü men in their relation to the inside of the organization and to their ethicopolitical stance vis-à-vis the women. Such an investigation is dependent upon the emergence of memoirs by the relevant historical

[210] [tr.] "She-wolf"; the name given to *Ülkücü* women.

agents or an ethnographic study which will be conducted with the same subjects. Third, a study which has at its disposal a comparative analysis of Ülkücü youth and the other politically active youth (in particular, the radical leftists and Islamist *Akıncılar*) will carry further the results of the present work, providing us a more clear vista for the political objectivity of the era. The present thesis lacked but in certain ways tried to substitute these three dimensions.

After the coup d'état of 1980, the vice-president of the NAP made his famous quote, which was not back then conceived as seriously as it was: "Its [the Ülkücü movement] ideas are in power, itself in jail."[211] The tortures and the years in prison succeeding the military coup affected a significant number of Ülkücü militants, and it took a while for the movement to arrange itself as an ideological and associational meeting point for the right-wing population. However, there was truth to Güner's quote. The post-1980s witnessed the shifting of the "the center of gravity of acceptable politics"[212] to the right and the ideological specter of the Ülkücü movement began to be felt not only in the institutional re-arrangement of the state but also with regards to the political culture of society. The new posts of the ex-militants in the emerging centrist right-wing parties and their networking activity in the state apparatuses transformed this specter into a material condition of Turkey's politics. The rest of the Ülkücü militants' lives is beyond the scope of the present work. However, I want to believe, the narrative here regarding the making of their identity as young men might enable us to reflect upon the old actors determining the politics of Turkey today.

[211] "*Fikri iktidarda, kendi zindanda*." The quote belonged to Agah Oktay Güner.
[212] Keyder, *State*, p. 224.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Articles

"Eski Ülkücü Hüsnü Galib'in Okuyucu Mektubu." *Yeni Gündem*. 27 December 1985.

"Komandolar Doğum Seminerini Bastılar." *Milliyet.* 8 April 1969

"Komünist Kim?" *Devlet*. 21 July 1969.

"Grey Wolves Salute Their Ailing Leader." *The Observer*. August 1981.

"Right-Wing Turks Go Militant." *The Guardian*. February 1969.

"Turkish Commandos with Nazi Ideas." *The Guardian.* August 1969.

Ağaoğulları, Mehmet Ali. "The Ultranationalist Right." In *Turkey in Transition,* ed. I. Schick. New York: Oxford University Press. 1987.

Akyel, Uğur. "Komando Kampında 24 Saat." *Günaydın*. 30 July – 1 August 1969.

Andreski, S. L. "Some Sociological Considerations on Fascism and Class." in *The Nature of Fascism,* ed. S. J. Woolf. New York: Vintage Books, 1969.

AP Hükümetinin 1970'te Hazırlattığı MHP Raporu. Istanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1978.

Aral, İnci. *Kıran Resimleri*. Istanbul: Can Yayınları, 2000.

Aretxaga, Begona. "A Fictional Reality: Paramilitary Death Squads and the Construction of State Terror in Spain." ed. Jeffrey Sluka, *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2000.

Bellassai, Sandro. "The Masculine Mystique: Antimodernism and Virility in Fascist Italy." *Journalof Modern Italian Studies*, no. 10 (2005).

Bildirici, Faruk. "Davadan Dönen Ülkücü Tanlak'ın Anıları." *Hürriyet*, 3-5 December 1996.

Bora, Tanıl and Can, Kemal. *Devlet Ocak Dergah: 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1991.

Bracher, Karl Dietrich. *The German Dictatorship*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

Boratav, Korkut. *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009*. İstanbul: İmge Yayınevi, 2011.

Can, Kemal. "Ülkücü Hareketin İdeolojisi." In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce 4: Milliyetçilik*, eds. T. Bora and M. Gültekingil. İstanbul: İletişim, 2008.

Çağlar, A. Neviye. “The Greywolves as Metaphor.” In *Turkish State, Turkish Society*, eds. A. Finkel and N. Sirman. London: Routledge, 1990.

Çakır, Ruşen. *Nereye Gitti Bu Ülkücüler?* İstanbul: Metis, 2003.

Calhoun, Craig. "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology." In *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. T. J. McDonald. Ann Arbor: Michigan State University, 1996.

Carsten, Francis L. “Interpretations of Fascism.” In *Fascism: A Reader’s Guide*, ed. W. Laqueur. California: University of California Press, 1978.

Cengiz, Oğuzhan. *Bir Yıldız Kaydı*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2005.

Cengiz, Oğuzhan. *Kapıaltı*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2004.

Cengiz, Oğuzhan. *Yanık Kale*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2009.

Coupland, Philip M. “The Blackshirted Utopians,” *Journal of Contemporary History*. 33, no: 2, (April 1998), pp. 255-272.

Davis, Natalie Zemon and Starn, Randolph. ”Introduction.” *Representations: 26,* Special Issue: Memory and Counter Memory, 1989.

Drury, Ian. *German Stormtrooper 1914-18*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 1995.

Eley, Geoff. *From Unification to Nazism: Reinterpreting the German Past*. London: Routledge, 1986.

Feyizoğlu, Turhan. *Fırtınalı Yıllarda Ülkücü Hareket*. İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2003.

Fraser, Nancy. *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the “Post-Socialist” Condition*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Gill, Stephen. *Power and Resistance in the New World Order*. New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2002.

Günay, Tuncer. *Kayıp Bozkurtlar*. Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2011.

Güven, Turan. *İnsan Gelecekte Yaşar*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2009.

Hancock, Eleanor. *Ernst Röhm: Hitler’s SA Chief of Staff*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

İtiraf, İstanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1980 [Ömer Tanlak’s Confession].

Jacoby, Tim. *Social Power and the Turkish State*. New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004.

James E. Young, "Toward a Received History of the Holocaust," *History and Theory*, vol. 36, No. 4, Dec, 1997.

Karal, Murat. "POL-BİR Nasıl Kuruldu?" Available [online]: http://www.benimblog.com/muratkaral/10079/+POL-B%DDR+NASIL+KURULDU+%3F.html

Karpat, Kemal. *Turkey's Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959.

Kater, Michael. *The Nazi Party*. Cambridge. Mass: Harward University Press, 1983.

Kenger, Ökkeş. *Kahramanmaraş Olaylarının Perde Arkası*. Ankara: Doğuş Yayınları, 1989.

Keyder, Çağlar. *State and Class in Turkey*. London: Verso, 1987.

Kırcı, Haluk. *Bırak Eşkiya Bellesinler*. Istanbul: Burak Yayınları, 2000.

Kırcı, Haluk. *Kalemimi Asamazlar*. Erzurum: Taş Medrese Yayınları, 1997.

Kırcı, Haluk. *Zamanı Süzerken*. Istanbul: Burak Yayınları, 1998.

Kuhn, Annette. "A Journey Through Memory." In *Memory and Methodology,* ed. S. Radstone. New York: Berg, 2000.

Küçük, Yalçın. *Türkiye Üzerine Tezler/3*. Istanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1986.

Landau, Jacob. "The Nationalist Action Party in Turkey." *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17, no. 4 (Oct., 1982) pp. 587-606.

Landau, Jacob. *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974.

Linz, Juan J. "Some Notes Toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective." In *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*. ed. W. Laqueur. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

Mann, Michael. *Fascists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Miliband, Ralph and Liebman, Marcel. "Reflections on Anti-Communism." *Socialist Register 1984: The Uses of Anti-Communism.* 21, (1984).

Mitchell, Otis C. *Hitler's Stormtroopers and the Attack on the German Republic, 1919-1933*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2008.

Mouffe, Chantal "Democratic Politics and the Question of Identity." In *The Identity in Question*, ed. John Rajchman. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Mouffe, Chantal. *The Democratic Paradox*. London: Verso, 2000.

Nadia Seremetakis, “The Memory of Senses.” In *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, ed. N. Seremetakis, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Öngider, Seyfi. *Milliyetçilik, Faşizm ve MHP*. İstanbul: Aykırı Güncel, 2002.

Öymen, Örsan. “Politika Kazanı.” *Milliyet*. 23-24 August 1980. [interview with Ali Yurtaslan]

Poulton, Hugh. *Top Hat, Grey Wolf and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Rochat, Giorgio. “The Fascist Militia and the Army.” In *The Ax Within: Italian Fascism in Action*, ed. R. Sarti. New York: New Viewpoints, 1974.

Rorty, Richard. “Justice as Larger Loyalty” In *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Sancar, Necdet. *Türkçülük Üzerine Makaleler*. Ankara: Töre-Devlet Yayınları, 1976.

Sazak, Gün. “Devlet Baba Telakkisi Yeniden Hâkim Kılınacaktır” *Devlet*, 15 October 1973.

Smith, Dennis. *The Rise of Historical Sociology*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.

Stachura, Peter, “The Nazis, the Bourgeoisie and the Workers during the *Kampfzeit*.” in *The Nazi Machtergreifung*. ed. P. Stachura. London: Allen & Unwin, 1983.

Stone, Marla. “The Changing Face of the Enemy in Fascist Italy.” *Constellations*. 15, no. 3, (2008), pp. 332-350.

Suver, Akkan. *Nihal Atsız*. İstanbul: Su Yayınları, 1976.

Taussig, Michael. *Law in a Lawless Land*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 2005.

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Terzioğlu, Ahmet Haldun. *Bizi Fırtına Vurdu*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2009.

Terzioğlu, Ahmet Haldun. *Komando.* Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2010.

Tijani, Hakeem. “Britain and the Foundation of Anti-Communist Policies in Nigeria, 1945-1960.” *African and Asian Studies*, 8 (2009), pp. 47-66.

Togliatti, Palmiro. *Faşizm Üzerine Dersler*. Ankara: Bilim ve Sosyalizm Yayınları. 1978.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.

Türkeş, Alparslan. *1944 Milliyetçilik Olayı*. İstanbul: Arkın Yayınevi. 1977.

Türkeş, Alparslan. *Milli Doktrin Dokuz Işık*. İstanbul: Dokuz Işık Yayınevi, 1977.

Türkeş, Alparslan. *Türkiye'nin Meseleleri*. İstanbul: Milli Hareket Yayınları, 1969.

Turhan, Metin. *Ülkü Ocakları 1968-1980*. Istanbul: Bilgeoğuz, 2010.

Waldron, Jeremy. "Cultural Identity and Civic Responsibility." In *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, eds. W. Kymlicka and W. Norman. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 155-174.

Yanardağ, Merdan. *MHP Değişti mi? Ülkücü Hareketin Analitik Tarihi*. İstanbul: Gendaş, 2002.

Yalçın, Soner and Yurdakul, Doğan. *Reis: Gladio'nun Türk Tetikçisi*. Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2003.

Yurtaslan, Ali. *MHP Merkezindeki Adam Ali Yurtaslan'ın İtirafı*. İstanbul: Aydınlık Yayınları, 1980.

Documentaries and Films

12 Eylül Belgeseli, 1998. (documentary)

Keşke Olmasaydı, 2007. (documentary)

Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak, 1977. (fiction)

Periodicals

Devlet Dergisi (1969-1979).

Milliyet Gazetesi (1966-1980).

Nokta Dergisi no: 22 (08 June 1986).