

CRITIQUE OF EUROCENTRISM IN *KADRO* JOURNAL

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ABSTRACT

CRITIQUE OF EUROCENTRISM IN *KADRO* JOURNAL

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Considering the history of the interactions between Turkey and the western countries, it might be stated that a substantial intellectual accumulation had been formed from the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire until the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. In parallel with the modernization steps undertaken, a remarkable anti-western discourse has been formed among the Turkish intelligentsia. The emergent reaction to the West, which has lasted for at least two and a half centuries under several forms stands as an interesting social research subject. This research will examine one of the late examples of this reaction in a journal, namely, *Kadro*. *Kadro* journal was published between the years of 1932 and 1934, and based its discourse on the opposition of the West. Having been called as *Kadro movement* afterward, the journal aimed to provide an ideology to the Turkish revolution, which allegedly lacked any systematic program and ideology. There is a remarkable specialty of the *Kadro* journal among Turkish intelligentsia. This is the use of the concept of *Eurocentrism*, which was brand new for both Turkey and the world literature at that time. *Kadro* journal formed its ontological basis on the criticism of Eurocentrism. Accordingly, it will be examined in this study that how the term was conceptualized and by which dimensions it was criticized in the journal. In this

sense, it will be argued that the concept Eurocentrism occupies a central place in the analyses of *Kadro* regarding political, economic, social, and cultural domains.

Keywords: *Kadro* Journal, Eurocentrism, Turkish revolution, Anti-Westernism.

ÖZ

AVRUPAMERKEZCİLİĞİN *KADRO* DERGİSİ İÇİNDEKİ ELEŞTİRİSİ

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Türkiye ile Batılı devletlerin etkileşim tarihi dikkate alındığında, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son iki yüz yılından Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kurulmasına kadar geçen sürede bu etkileşime dair ciddi bir entelektüel birikimin oluştuğu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda, birbiri ardına gelen modernleşme adımlarına koşut olarak, dikkate değer bir batı karşıtı söylem bir kısım Türkiye aydını arasında kendisine yer edinmiştir. Batıya karşı tepkinin neredeyse iki buçuk yüzyılı aşkın bir süredir çeşitli biçimler altında sürmüş ve halen sürmekte olması, ilginç bir toplumsal araştırma konusu olarak belirlemektedir. Bu çalışmada, sözü edilen tepkinin bir örneğinin *Kadro Dergisi* içindeki yansımaları tartışılacaktır. Kadro, 1932-1934 yılları arasında yayımlanmış olan ve temel söylemini Batı karşıtlığı üzerinden kuran bir düşünce dergisidir. Sonradan Kadro hareketi olarak da adlandırılacak olan dergi, sistemli bir programı ve ideolojisinin olmadığını iddia ettiği Türk devrimine bir ideoloji oluşturmak gayesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır. Kadro dergisinin, ona Türkiye entelijensiyası içinde son derece önemli ve özgün bir yer kazandırdığı düşünülen dikkate değer bir özelliği bulunmaktadır. Bu özellik, o tarihlerde gerek Türkiye ve gerekse dünya literatürü için çok yeni bir terim olan *Avrupamerkezcilik* kavramının dergideki çeşitli makalelerde kullanılmış olmasıdır. Kadro dergisi ontolojik temelini

Avrupamerkezcilik olarak tanımladığı dünya görüşüne getirdiği eleştiri üzerinden oluşturmaktadır. Dolayısıyla çalışmada, bu terimin Kadro dergisinde nasıl kavramlaştırıldığı ve hangi boyutlarıyla eleştirildiği incelenecektir. Buradan hareketle, Avrupamerkezcilik kavramının, yayın hayatı boyunca Kadro dergisinin politik, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel alana ilişkin analizlerinde merkezî bir yeri olduğu iddia edilecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Kadro* Dergisi, Avrupamerkezcilik, Türk devrimi, Batı karşıtlığı.

To the memory of good people who tried to make the world a better place

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, one of the leading figures of the Kadro Journal, begins the foreword of the second edition of his book, *İnkılâp ve Kadro* [Revolution and Cadre], with the following statements:

Maybe in 2000, the researchers who intend to analyze the structure and the nature of the Turkish National Liberation Movement could be in a dissensus. In so much that these researchers might be confused about whether Turkey had experienced a revolution movement or all the events were common affairs which had been conducted by the interventions of a superior leader (2011: 1).

Aydemir was concerned about Turkish revolution's failure to create its own ethos. However, the thoughts reflected in the Kadro journal, which discussed the peculiarities and the meaning of the Turkish Revolution with regard to the West, were not widely adopted by the intelligentsia of the 1930s.

There are various reasons for the fact that intellectuals have fundamentally different views on the Turkish revolution although they had similar experiences. First, it seems that they had different perceptions of the West, which should be analyzed to have a better understanding of their perspectives on the Turkish revolution. At this point, the question Niyazi Berkes asks is critical: "What do we understand from the Western civilization?" (2017: 206). There has never been a consensus on the meaning of it. Similarly, the question that asks the extent to which the Western civilization should be adopted remains unanswered.

The Ottoman Empire's endeavor to maintain relationships with the Western countries is noteworthy. With the decline of the Empire, the relationships with the West turned out to be "problematic". The western influence or sanctions over the

Ottoman Empire had not been observed until that time.¹ The period of decline began with a series of military defeats, which reinforced the idea that the West had some superior peculiarities.

The debates around modernization have always held a great place in academic and non-academic circles. Also, in Turkey, modernization has been a debatable topic since the 19th century. Moreover, in Turkey, modernization was mostly equated to westernization because of the rising domination of western countries over the empire. This created reactions to the West, which has lasted for at least two and a half centuries under several forms. This study analyzes one form of these reactions, which was conceptualized in *Kadro Journal* in the early 1930s under the concept of *Eurocentrism*.

Eurocentrism, in the widest sense, describes an ethos, which overtly or covertly posits European history and norms as “normal” and superior to others, thereby helping to [re]produce and justify Europe's dominant position within the global world system. Karl Haushofer first used the term (*Europa-zentrisch*) in 1925 in his book *Geopolitik des pazifischen Ozeans* (Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean) (Turan, 2014: 93). The term has been widely used since the 2nd World War, especially within the era of decolonization, and has become a concept which denotes the negative aspects of the cultural and political domination of Europe over the non-European societies.

1.1 A Conceptual Inquiry on Eurocentrism

When considered within a larger historical scale, the politically and culturally dominant position of today's Europe is somewhat surprising as the countries which constituted Europe had lagged well behind the Eastern empires up until the late Middle Ages. Indeed, Asia amounted to the 80% of the world economy in 1775, and

¹ The term ‘influence’ indicates a manner defining the West as a superior model to be followed by the Ottomans. However, there are slightly different assessments. For instance, Halil İnalçık argues that Ottoman legislators saw copying Christian Europe's armament and instruments as a vital problem even in the very first times of the Empire. Therefore according to him, westernization is a process which we can follow in every era of the history of the Ottoman Empire (See İnalçık, 2001).

the two-thirds of the world production was supplied by India and China (Marks, 2002:81). Therefore, the conquest of a large southern island of Australia by the people living in the British Isles in 1770 was quite extraordinary.

Various studies on the so-called worldwide triumph of the West have been conducted. Some focus on the importance of its intellectual aspects such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the so-called cultural norms inherited from the ancient Greek and the Roman Empire. Others analyze the development of Europe by trying to reveal the background of the political economy in a materialist view. However, most of the related studies underline the time zone between the late 14th and the early 15th centuries, for some political, economic, intellectual, and social events occurred then, which could be counted as the breaking point of the historical process and an inevitable historical momentum which still affects the world affairs in favor of Europe. Actually, by the help of its military, technological, and economic domination, Western Europe had already manifested itself as the greatest power of the world prior to the First World War.

Democracy, civil rights, property rights, the belief in the progress of thought, science, and technology are unquestionably the integral elements of the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human beings. However, it is also undebatable that those concepts, for some reason, refer solely to the "European values". Under these circumstances, the peoples of Western Europe, their cultural norms, political organizations, and economic orders have eventually become the only and inevitable goal for the entire world. At the expense of what those values belong to Europe is generally ignored by the scholars. Indeed, several studies strongly recommend the peoples of the non-European world that they become "European" and provide them with prescriptions for this.

Eurocentrism has two characteristic features. One of them is about historiography to which the development of the European societies and states is central. This type of historiography underlines the European dominance of the modern world, which is a consequence of particular European historical achievements. Europeans have

undoubtedly dominated the world in political, economic, and military aspects in the last two centuries. They have ruled over the most powerful countries in terms of both economy and military. They have created and held the most advanced technology. All the achievements of the West have, thus, created its own social organizations, legal norms, political institutions, and economic structures.

Another aspect of Eurocentrism is its universalism. Since Europe has achieved the greatest political, economic, and technological advancements, well-proven by the Eurocentric historiography, the values, norms, and all the other specialties of Europe have become the supreme goals for the entire humanity. They have, so to speak, become universal for individuals, societies, and states.

Wallerstein puts it as “universalizing thought”, which helped universalism spread over the domains of culture and ideology, not only economically and militarily but also politically, after the British hegemony was established approximately in 1815. It was a vulgar translation of “universalizing thought” that made the British path the model of a universal path: “This thesis had two implications: that the advantages the British enjoyed they had earned; and if others were to earn parallel advantages, they must perforce imitate the British” (Wallerstein, 1991: 192). What is interesting was that this “whig interpretation of history” had permeated everywhere, and it dominated the minds of those who denigrated the harms of British imperialism. According to Wallerstein, it was such an effective and pervasive ideology that when the United States overcame the British hegemony in the twentieth century, American scholars simply adopted the ideological tools and canons of the British intelligentsia.

Historiography and universalism are the most characteristic aspects of Eurocentrism as they concentrate on European societies and states, institutions, and norms.² Also, they are in a way inter-connected. Eurocentric universalism is valid only if the imposed Eurocentric historiography is fully adopted. As will be discussed in the following chapters, Kadro’s critique of Eurocentrism focuses mainly on these

² Claiming that social sciences were also Eurocentric, Wallerstein adds three other elements to the scope of Eurocentrism: The concept of European civilization, orientalism, and progressivism. (See Wallerstein, 1997: 23).

two aspects. As manifested by the writers, Kadro was in a search of constituting the ideology of the Turkish revolution, a unique and a sui-generis one. Motivated as such, their critique of Eurocentrism was an effective agent in that it distinguished Kadro movement from other movements of thoughts.

1.2 Historical Context and Literature Review

As already noted, the concept Eurocentrism was first used in Turkish literature in Kadro (cadre) Journal. Kadro was a monthly journal, which published 36 issues between 1932 and 1934. The historical context of the journal's publication life presents important peculiarities. First, the beginning of it was quite uncommon as it was up and running under difficult circumstances. At the international level, *the Great Depression (1929)* had extremely negative impacts on the international economic system. Like other countries, Turkey's economy was also negatively influenced by the depression. The dramatic downfall by nearly 15% in the worldwide gross domestic product escalated the populist-totalitarian discourses all around Europe, which led to the decline of democratic discourses. However, as a result of the Great Depression, national economies *de-linked* from the international economic system. In Turkey, the government introduced an industrialization plan, and the principle of *Etatism* was incorporated in the constitution in 1931. Additionally, there was another important development led by the government. The officials and some scholars formulated a history thesis, called the Turkish History Thesis. This thesis claimed all civilizations emanated from the Central Asia and Turks were pioneers of great civilizations. Under such circumstances did Kadro start its publication life.

Eurocentrism was a new concept for Turkish intelligentsia and the international academy. Until the publication of Kadro journal, criticisms directed towards Ottoman/Turkish modernization were generally expressed by two terms, "imitative westernism or occidentalism" [*iktibasçı garpçılık/garbiyatçılık*], in the Ottoman-Turkish literature.³ These terms have also similar connotations with Eurocentrism.

³ Ottomanism and (later on) Islamism were the primary schools of thought before the proclamation of the Republic. They both had their own views and criticisms about occidentalism.

However, Eurocentrism had some major differences. Through the concept of Eurocentrism, the Kadro Journal managed to articulate a more systematic criticism of Westernization and Western domination over the rest of the World and Ottoman/Turkey. Moreover, Eurocentrism enabled Kadro to produce counter arguments against economic liberalism and liberal democracy. Additionally, Kadro's concept of Eurocentrism drew on criticisms of Marxism and socialism as a social system. Interestingly, the main arguments of Kadro Journal about Eurocentrism remarkably overlapped with those of the Dependency School⁴, which would be established almost thirty years after Kadro.

Although many years passed after its publication, Kadro maintains its reputation and importance for the Turkish intelligentsia and academia. It is still essential to understand the issues discussed in the journal. According to the data of the Turkish National Thesis Center, nearly 25 academic studies, i.e., master's theses and doctoral dissertations, have focused on the Kadro Journal between 1986 and 2019.⁵ More precisely, the journal has become a research subject once per year by average for the last nine years. Moreover, plenty of articles have been written on the Kadro journal and Kadro movement. One of the most comprehensive studies was carried out by İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin.⁶ This voluminous study is a detailed history of the journal, which includes personal letters written by the Kadro writers, transcribed extracts from interviews, related articles from various newspapers, findings of content analyses, and general narratives about the Kadro movement. Another contribution to the literature was made by Mustafa Türkeş.⁷ His studies pertain to both the ideological aspects and economic proposals of the journal. He sees Kadro movement as one of the deep-rooted and most influential intellectual movements of

⁴ Dependency school was established between the 1960s and 1970s, and generated an ideology around which newly independent countries, faced with the problems of the economic relics of colonialism could coalesce (Hills, 1994).

⁵ For the list of studies, see <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/giris.jsp>

⁶ Tekeli & İlkin, 2003.

⁷ Türkeş, 1998, 2001, 2009.

Turkey, and he argues that almost all studies concerning Turkey somehow refer to the movement and its imprints. The ideology of the journal, according to him, was patriotic-leftism, which tried to propose a third way between capitalism and socialism. Among the journal's economic proposals, the most important element was its non-capitalist and etatist development strategy. Yet another study about Kadro was the master's thesis of Merdan Yanardag, a Turkish author and journalist. His work, which was published in a book subsequently,⁸ might be counted as a critique of the movement from a leftist perspective. Contrary to Turkes, Yanardag thinks that Kadro was a rootless and a "ratified" movement to the extent that nobody ever advocated the journal after the end of its publication. It was a volatile adventure rather than an efficient movement.

Despite making important contributions to the literature, none of the aforementioned studies problematizes the concept of Eurocentrism and sees it as the main argument of the Kadro journal although it was repeatedly emphasized in several issues of the journal. Only the study of Ömer Turan includes some aspects of the concept Eurocentrism with regard to different modernization models inherent in Kemalist regime. Although some brief explanations regarding Kadro are included, the subject of his study is not directly related to the journal.⁹ However, inspecting the conceptualization and criticism of Eurocentrism in Kadro has utmost importance to understand the Kadroist discourse, its historical basis, future projections, and how it differentiated itself from the other movements of thought.

1.3 Purpose and Methodology

As brought up in the previous section, there are few if any studies on Kadro Journal, which points to an important gap in this field. Although some researches deal with Kadro, including limited discussions of westernization, there is hardly any study over how Kadro established its discourse on the criticism of Eurocentrism. Mainly motivated by this deficiency, this research first aims to examine the

⁸ Yanardağ, 2008.

⁹ Turan, 2012.

conceptualization of Eurocentrism and how it was criticized. Secondly, the methodological framework of the journal will be under inspection. Having started its publication life with the aim of forming the ideology of the new regime (the Republican regime), Kadro Journal declared that its world perspective was based on *dialectic materialism*. It was an interesting confluence worth examining in this study. While Kadro attributed to itself being the ideologue of the new regime, the leaders of the regime are not believed to have leaned towards materialism, which was, at those times, affiliated mainly with Marxism. A relation of antilogy might be established if the dialectic materialism of Kadro was positioned against the positivism of the leaders of the regime. In this sense, it is critical to find out on which basis Kadro could establish its ideological consistency despite the essential difference between the two worldviews.

Analyzing the history of the interaction between Turkey and the West involves intrinsic difficulties in various respects. Probably the major problem is the loss of the scientific quality due to political concerns. Unfortunately, studies which were unable to exceed mere enthusiasm or were based on anachronic “evidence” constitute the majority of the studies which examine the West problem (Mardin, 2014: 237). For that reason and as required by scientific method, considerable effort was put into keeping the distance between different political and ideological stances throughout the study. However, a direct implementation of the scientific method is sometimes not enough. Indeed, understanding the background of a social phenomenon requires a special quality of mind, which is defined by Mills as “sociological imagination” (1959).

Sociological imagination, as Giddens asserts, involves both historical sensibility and critical sensitivity (1986). Therefore, a proper sociological analysis requires the hermeneutical reconsideration of the socio-historical background of the 1930s, which had most probably shaped the mindset of Kadro writers. In addition, the intellectual accumulations and personal experiences of the writers should be taken into consideration to comprehend the intellectual archeology of the Kadro movement. For these reasons, a document analysis has been adopted as the method of this study. It

incorporates an analysis of related articles of the journal particularly, criticisms and polemics published in various newspapers, and (auto)biographies of the writers. For a sound implementation of this method in the domain of sociology, this study devotes special attention to understanding the Kadroist discourse, rather than making judgments within the context of today's political perspectives.

The next chapter presents brief but inclusive data on the story of the Kadro Journal. The third chapter examines how Kadro conceptualized and criticized Eurocentrism. This chapter particularly inspects how Kadro Journal became related to the two aspects of Eurocentrism mentioned above, the historiography and the universalism. The need for a national identity in the face of Eurocentric historiography, and the Kadroist universalism against the capitalist and socialist models will be discussed. In the fourth chapter, it is examined whether the Kadroist discourse could generate an original trend of thought and whether it was beyond the scope of Eurocentrism. In this context, some scholars both from Turkey and abroad, whose ideas are aligned with the Kadroist worldview, are referred to. The Kadroist sense of dialectic materialism will also be under inspection since, as claimed throughout the study, without the help of dialectic method, it is impossible to bring together the two supposedly antagonistic worldviews, capitalism and socialism, under the same concept, Eurocentrism. The conclusion chapter presents the findings of the research. The discourse generated around Eurocentrism, its consistency, the dialectic worldview of the journal, and its implications are evaluated in relation with the data collected in this research.

CHAPTER 2

KADRO (CADRE) JOURNAL

The criticisms around the concept Eurocentrism took a completely different and an original shape in the journal. In this sense, the essential element that differentiated Kadro from its predecessors in the sense of originality regarding its critique of Eurocentrism should be searched in their life paths which began in conservative families and proceeded to Turkist, Marxist (except for Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu) and finally reached to the Kemalist thought. Brief information about their life stories would not only help us comprehend why they exerted much effort on forming a more thorough analysis on Eurocentrism, but will also make it easier to grasp the substance of their thoughts regarding their comments on the Turkish revolution, on the modernization, and finally on their viewpoints regarding the West.

Most of the Kadro writers were born in the 1890s. There is almost a considerable amount of age gap between them and the founders of the Republic of Turkey, who were born in the 1880s. Born in different regions of the Ottoman Empire, the upbringings of the Kadro writers were bounded by the conditions of the second Constitutional era [İkinci Meşrutiyet] promulgated in 1908. Their life stories were very dynamic that their lives were not abided by their places of birth. They walked through different paths in wide areas, either domestic or abroad, up until the 1930s. The course of their movements was determined not by their fates, but by their own seekings. Getting the chance to be acquainted with different cultures where they had visited made them search for ‘the new’, by relieving them of being obliged to the traditions. Different lifelines of these people coincided in Ankara at the beginning of the 1930s, creating the conditions which made possible for Kadro to be published (Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: Preface).

2.1 Contributors

The contributors of Kadro journal were Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin, Burhan Asaf Belge, Vedat Nedim Tör, and Mehmet Şevki Yazman.¹⁰ There is almost a consensus on the issue that it was Aydemir who constructed the ideology of the journal. A strong sign with respect to that consensus is that a regular chapter which took place in every issue of the journal was titled as “ideology of the revolution” which was written by Aydemir. Likewise him, other three contributors, Tör, Tökin, and Belge had been involved in the revolutionary socialist movement in Moscow and Germany, had become both members and managers of Communist Party of Turkey [TKP], and finally had been under investigation in a series of detentions conducted after the proclamation of the Republic, between 1925 and 1927.¹¹ Yet the emergence of the journal as a “legal” movement could only be possible after Karaosmanoğlu joined to the cadre. He was a trusted person who regularly attended the dinners held by Atatürk. With Karaosmanoğlu being the grant holder of the journal, the legitimization of the Kadro movement was realized in the eyes of the regime.

The contributors of the Kadro, who had various areas of interest, wrote regularly on their own pursuits bounded by a division of labor. The ideologic stance of the journal was generally reflected by Aydemir. Belge wrote on the issues of foreign policy. Besides, Tor wrote on economics, Tökin on the rural structure and monetary analyses, and Yazman on technological advancement and energy. The topics regarding the literature were handled mostly by Karaosmanoğlu, and partly by Belge and Tör.

¹⁰ Yazman was a captain of engineering in Turkish Armed Forces, who began contributing to the journal as from the thirteenth issue.

¹¹ Aydemir had been found guilty and subjected to ten-year confinement. One and a half years after his confinement had begun, he was amnestied. In 1927, however, he was interrogated for the second time for the same case but was acquitted. Tör, on the other hand, had been under inspection along with Aydemir. With the help of special and detailed information he had given to the officials about the activities of the Communist Party of Turkey, Tör was given four-month confinement, after which he was released immediately. It should be stated that some figures in the left-wing labeled Tör as “informant”, including a prominent poet, Nazım Hikmet. His poem about Tör has a remarkable title: “The Father of the Informants: Vedat Nedim the Secretary-General” (See Küçük, 1988: 28).

In a general outlook, it might easily be realized that all of the writers seem to share some common traits. However, all of them came from a different geographical part of the Empire. Aydemir (1897-1976), was the son of a landless peasant family from Edirne, who was bred to be a teacher, served on the Caucasian front during World War I, and worked as a teacher in Nuha, Azerbaijan, from 1919 to 1921.

Karaosmanoğlu (1889-1974) was born in Cairo, the capital of Egypt. He was a son of an aristocratic family [Karaosmanoğulları], who had his secondary schooling in Cairo. He enrolled at the Faculty of Law at Istanbul University. He was a Member of Parliament from 1923 to 1931 and served as a member of the legislature's Foreign Affairs Commission. From 1932 until he was appointed as the ambassador to Albania in late 1934, he was the licensee of Kadro journal.

Tör (1897-1985) was born in Istanbul. He was the son of Nedim Servet Tör who was the first secretary to the chief of staff of the army. After his graduation from the Galatasaray Lycee in, in 1916, he continued his studies on economics at the University of Berlin. He wrote his doctoral thesis, "How Turkey Became a Subject of Imperialism", under the supervision of Werner Sombart, a famous social scientist from Germany.

Belge (1899-1967) was born in Damascus as the son of a governor [mutasarrıf] and completed his primary-school education in Beirut. He then attended and graduated from the Galatasaray Lycee in Istanbul. He studied civil engineering in Berlin during World War I. After graduating in 1922, he worked as a correspondent for the Anatolian News Agency in Bucharest until 1924.

Tökin (1902-1994), was from Istanbul as the son of a middle-class family. He graduated from the Austrian Lycee in Istanbul, and in summer 1922, after having received a scholarship from the Soviet embassy in Turkey to study in Moscow, he enrolled in the KUTV along with Aydemir, Vala Nurettin, and Nazım Hikmet. He was in a very close relationship with the mentioned persons to the extent that between them was also a relation of "comradeship".

Yazman (1896-1974) was born in Elazığ as a child of a peasantry family. He attended the military school and was brought to the Dardanelles War [Çanakkale Savaşı] prior to his graduation. He was a captain of engineering [mühendis yüzbaşı] in the army when he joined the contributors of Kadro.

Moving through the various parts of the Ottoman Empire and beyond that, through central Europe, Russia, Caucasians, and the Middle Eastern region, they had come across different cultures until they came together for the journal. It might be supposed that their life experiences which came from such a large geocultural interaction might have affected their mindsets through all those years.

Most of them did not have a sufficient income or any family inheritance when they came to Ankara. Even if the families of some were wealthy at some time, they were grown up in a time when all that wealthiness were disappeared by the time the Empire was being dissolved. Nevertheless, under the favor of both the state opportunities and partly coming from middle-class families, they could receive a good education. All of them knew at least one or more foreign languages apart from Turkish. This accounts to four in Belge with Arabic, French, German, and English (Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: 117). No doubt that their education levels and the foreign languages they knew contributed to publishing such a journal in which crucial world affairs such as international conferences, some important articles, negotiations of disarmament were seriously handled.

2.2 Ideological Origins

Their life experiences and the different cultures they had met manifest themselves in their perception of modernization as well. The intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire were impressed by the French culture to a large extent, especially after the second half of the nineteenth century. The examples of French in particular and central Europe, in general, were always archetypal cases for the modernization of the Ottoman Empire. However, the contributors of Kadro, notwithstanding most of them knew the French language, had serious experiences in both Germany and

Russia. In this respect, Kadro could form a different perception of modernization which involved different cultures.

In the 1930s when all those writers had come together, Turkey was suffering from the negative outcomes of the Great Depression (1929) as well as the entire world. The political elites of the regime were in search of a solution. The economic vision which was outlined in the Economic Congress of Turkey (1923) [İzmir İktisad Kongresi] had become highly questionable. Kadro also participated in those discussions, but, more important, that Kadro appointed itself to undertake the task of developing a theoretical framework to interpret the Turkish revolution and to propose a development strategy (Türkeş, 2001: 94).

The educations and life experiences of all of the Kadro writers made them Turkish nationalists. Their nationalism contained various sources. One of them was Turkish hearths [Türk Ocakları] which were connected to the ruling party of that time, namely, Party of Union and Progress [İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası]. As will be mentioned in chapter four, Ziya Gökalp was the theoretician and a prominent figure of the party. It might readily be stated that most of the intellectuals along with Kadro writers were under the influence of Gökalp. Maybe more important than that, it was the great losses in Balkan Wars, the miserable years afterward, and finally, the victory of the National Liberation War which strengthened their trends towards nationalism. Those tough experiences might have formed a nationalism which was coupled with anti-imperialism.

An important and a valuable source which reflects his long journey amongst various ideologies is Aydemir's autobiographic book, *The Man Seeking The Water* [Suyu Arayan Adam] (Aydemir, 2004). In his book, Aydemir photographs the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, the downfall of the "great" Empire and movements of thought which were believed to save the country from disintegration. Growing up in a devout community, Aydemir's future steps slide into Pan-Turkism, which, later on as Aydemir commented, was impossible due to his impressions and experiences regarding the realities prevalent in the areas

where he was brought on duty. Henceforward his acquaintance with Marxism comes forward when he had enrolled in KUTV (Communist University of the Workers of the East), in 1921. In fact, he had given up his earlier Pan-Turanist ideals in favor of socialism while in Nuha, Azerbaijan before he went to KUTV. He attended the Bolshevik-organized Congress of the Peoples of the East [Doğu Halkları Kurultayı] in Baku in 1920 as a representative of the teachers of Nuha and subsequently joined the Turkish Communist Party.¹²

As could be seen above, the writers of the Kadro journal had both similar and different characteristics. They had come from different regions of the Empire and different types of classes. However, with the downfall of the Empire, the nationalism which was represented by Ziya Gökalp had impressed them as it had impressed many of the entire intellectuals as well. Leaving aside their pan-Turkist ideals when they faced the realities of Anatolia and other regions of the downfalling Empire, four of them (as we can not trace any direct contact with Marxism regarding Karaosmanoğlu and Yazman) began to seek solutions in socialism. Yet, the following developments forced them to leave their political commitments such as management of the Communist Party of Turkey, and its media organ, namely The Light [Aydınlık]. However it did not mean that they abandoned Marxist formation completely, on the contrary, they tried to reconcile Turkish nationalism with the historical materialist worldview.

It might be argued that the life experiences of the Kadro writers which were constructed by many extraordinary events have affected their perception of the West. Wherever they had gone for a different purpose, they had come across a set of realities, which could be explained neither by orthodox liberal theses nor by mainstream Marxist theories. As will be clarified in the following sections, one of the

¹² Only three of the Kadro writers had written their autobiographies, they are Karaosmanoğlu and Tor, along with Aydemir. Although he praised historical materialism in some of his articles in Kadro, there is no direct connection between Karaosmanoğlu and Marxism. Despite he tried to ignore his leftist background in his autobiography (Yıllar Böyle Geçti, İstanbul, 1976), Tör was the general secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) after Şefik Hüsnü went abroad. Tökin and Belge did not write autobiographies, however, their relations with the Communist Party of Turkey and its media organ, namely Aydınlık, are well known.

most critical argumentations, which they thought would best fit the realities of Turkish society and the state, was the critique of Eurocentrism which also separated Kadro writers from many of the intellectuals of that time.

Kadro journal, discussions, polemics, and future visions made by its authors, and finally the criticisms which were published during and after it had been liquidated have all created a trend of thought, namely *Kadro movement*. After thirty-six issues, Kadro has ended up its publication by itself and silently. In fact, the end of the Kadro movement was as interesting as its beginning. When they had first gone to the officials of the ruling party in order to take permission for the journal, they were refused by Recep Peker, the secretary-general of the Republican People's Party (RPP). However, when Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu went to Ataturk for the same proposal, he was granted permission. He then became the licensee of the journal since he was a regular attendee of Ataturk's official dinners. It is an interesting coincidence that, just as the journal was granted permission by means of Karaosmanoğlu, the cease of the journal was realized via him, too. According to Karaosmanoğlu, his appointment to Tirana as an ambassador was a kind solution for ending off the journal (Karaosmanoğlu, 2018: 18). Even if Kadro seemed to cease its publication by its own decision, there is no doubt that it was liquidated by the directive of the government officials.¹³

¹³ It was declared in the 34th issue of the journal in October 1934 that the journal was to suspend its publication for a while since Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, who was the licensee of the journal, was appointed to a foreign country as a representative of the government.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND CRITICISM OF EUROCENTRISM

Eurocentrism was an original conceptualization as it was a brand-new concept for the world literature and the Turkish intelligentsia at the time although it may be rejected by some, especially the Pan-Ottomanists and the Pan-Islamists, on the grounds that criticisms towards the West or Occidentalism had started well before Kadro. A preeminent representative of the Ottomanism was Namık Kemal, who clearly opposed to the Eurocentric theses.¹⁴ He was a very influential figure, whose ideas were widely acclaimed by intellectuals. Though acknowledging his good intentions, Berkes (1964) criticizes Kemal for being a typical Tanzimat era intellectual, who unintentionally served the 33-year-long despotism of the Sultan Abdulhamid II instead of the modernization of the Ottoman Empire, and for not anticipating the infrastructural foundations of the western modernization.

Other criticisms were directed by Islamist thinkers at Occidentalism and the West and were based on two categorical arguments. The first argument was that the Islamic countries were obliged to defend themselves against the offensive West. The second one was that the successive defeats against the West were believed to be due to the loss of ancient Islamic traditions. To become dominant again, the solutions had to be searched in the old times, namely the Golden Age [Asr-ı Saadet], and the Islamic traditions had to be reestablished in the community. Historically, Turkism was a newer concept compared to the above movements of thought. Partly because of this reason, Ziya Gökalp, who was a prominent contributor to Turkism, tried to reconcile the arguments of both the Pan-Ottoman and Pan-Islamist thoughts.

¹⁴ For his objections to the orientalist views see Kemal, Namık; “Renan Müdaafaaamesi” [A Defense Against Renan], 2014.

3.1 A Groundbreaking Manifesto: “Liquidation of Europacentrism”¹⁵

The most significant discussion of the journal seems to be its call for the liquidation of Eurocentrism. The article which is the focus of this section presents a short historical summary of the political economy which Europe had pursued until the First World War. Though other articles published in the same journal deal with similar issues,¹⁶ the thesis focuses on this particular article, which systematizes the arguments effectively and compose them consistently.

Another feature that made this article influential is the analogy that Aydemir proficiently made between the two concepts in the prologue of his article. The analogy was drawn between geocentric model¹⁷, which refers undoubtedly to a wrong perception of the universe, and Eurocentrism. Eurocentrism then was a new concept although its components had been discussed earlier under the names of ‘Westernism/Westernization’. When Aydemir published this article in 1932, it had been seven years since *Geopolitik des pazifischen Ozeans* (1925) of Karl Haushofer was published, which is considered to be the first text to use the term Eurocentrism as “europazentrish”. In a similar way, the book named *L’eurocentrisme (Eurocentrism: Critique of an Ideology)* of Samir Amin was to be published almost fifty years later (Turan, 2014: 93). Aydemir identifies a parallelism between the two concepts, which both end the suffix *centrism*. Thus, he claims that like geocentric model, Eurocentrism was based on wrong premises:

Geocentrism was a misconception which had reigned over the human cognition for twelve centuries, beginning from Ptolemy who had made geocentrism a science until Copernicus who took it out of science. For all those centuries, the earth had been counted as the center of the universe,

¹⁵ (The term was used as "Europacentrism" in those times. However, it was transformed into Eurocentrism in time. (See Aydemir, 1932b).

¹⁶ See Belge, 1932b; Editorial, Kadro, 1933, I.19; Aydemir, 1933e.

¹⁷ The geocentric model is attributed to Ptolemy who had made a superseded description of the Universe in which the Earth was at the center. Geocentric description proposed that the other celestial bodies e.g. Sun, Moon, stars, and planets all orbited Earth. The geocentric model was a widely accepted description of the cosmos in many ancient civilizations, from Ptolemy to Aristoteles. The geocentric model was falsified by the heliocentric model of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler.

although it was only a small and a dependent piece of the great cosmic system. All of the searches, provisions, and realities were only for the Earth and were according to the Earth. Eurocentrism is such a misconception, too. Though Europe has rendered social sciences as a subject matter for laboratories, this misconception still dominates the human cognition. [...] Despite it is a small and a dependent piece of the world history, the history of Europe is counted as the axis and the center of the former. All of the searches, provisions, and realities are only for Europe and are according to Europe (1932b: 5).

However, Aydemir certainly knew that those two terms were, in fact, different from each other in terms of content and background. Thus he, too, was aware of the problem with doing an analysis with an analogy between these two different concepts. Indeed, geocentric model refers to a misconception about the universe which was adopted by people for centuries and which can still be encountered in some cults. However, Eurocentrism was discussed as a subject of history in this text. Aydemir might have wanted to strengthen his ideas by equalizing Eurocentrism and geocentrism although the latter was proved to be wrong six hundred years ago.

In Aydemir's opinion, dividing the history into particular time sections was also a Eurocentric attitude: "Separation of human history into some ages like first age- medieval age- new age- modern age is brand new in fact. [...] The first quality of this dissection is that it is Eurocentric" (1932b: 8). This separation, according to Aydemir, made Europe a geocultural center, and it either ignored the entire elements or subordinated them. However, this classification was inaccurate as it was not based on the general development trends of the world civilization and the characteristic periods of Turkish history: "A history which begins and ends with Europe is both a narrow vision and a wrong viewpoint in which our feature has always been either to be exiled beyond history or being excluded from civilization up to now" (1932b: 5).

Some particular events were explained later on in the text in Eurocentric historiography, and the place and the significance of Turkish history were inspected in general human history. The endeavor to compose an original and rooted Turkish history instead of the mainstream Eurocentric narrative is noticeable here. Aydemir posits that Migration Period [Kavimler Göçü] is critical to understanding world

history, and he asserts that this peculiar event had different meanings in Eurocentric history narrative and Turkish history thesis. According to a European historian, the Migration Period was a phenomenon which could only be explained in a Roman viewpoint which showed the role of Turkish people solely as negative and destructive.

However, according to Aydemir, the Migration Period was a civilizing run, which started at prehistoric times when Europeans were in a dark disfigure and which spread the primitive techniques of stock farming, plant growing, and mining to all over the world and particularly to Europe. By this means the Migration Period gave rise to the first confederate civilizations in the world in respect of its origins and qualities. This explanation was, and still is, contrary to the narrow and abstract explanation of Eurocentric historiography. Nevertheless, it was completely realistic as regards the formation of world civilization (Aydemir, 1932b: 8).

Tekeli and Ilkin think that Kadro writers adopted the Turkish history thesis because the First History Congress, held between the second and the eleventh of July 1932, coincided with the publication of this article (Tekeli & Ilkin, 2003: 199). The sessions of the Congress about history education were held in Ankara People's House [*Halkevi*]. The teachers and academy students were given special cards to facilitate their participation so that the history thesis could reach the related subjects. Kadro was contributing to these efforts with this article. Thus, the aim of “*sustaining the revolution*”, a motto which Kadro had declared to be its basic motivation, was being realized not only in terms of economy but also in the ideological sphere.

3.2 Search for a National Identity in the Face of Eurocentric Historiography

Kadro overtly declared that its aim was to ‘*constitute the ideology of the Revolution*’ as early as in its first issue. Although it was a journal having a specific methodology and regarding social problems within an economic perspective primarily, it manifested its ideological position at the very beginning. It can hardly be a coincidence that such an article was published when Turkish History Congress was being held. As a matter of fact, the theses defended in the congress overlapped with

those of the article. Tekeli and Ilkin's discussion, thus, seems to reflect the truth to a large extent, yet asserting that the adoption of the theses of the History Congress was an effort to gain the political support of the regime would be a hasty conclusion. Likewise, the ideological affinity on the related subject should not be presumed as a decision taken by the Kadro Journal specifically at that time and for political purposes because, in his autobiographic book, Aydemir states that he was introduced with the idea of a genuine Turkish history well before this article was published:

We the Turks could never define ourselves with our ethnicity. We either did not know or would deny our ethnic identities. Turk was a rude, uncouth, and untalented being according to general opinion. For the first time I have seen this disparaged being presented with completely different quality in a journal.¹⁸ It was before the days of the Balkan War. According to this journal, there was an unknown but a great Turkish nation. The history of this nation was not beginning either from Söğüt where Osman Ghazi had set up a tent or from Domaniç tableland. Also, the first entity of the nation did not consist of people in only three hundred tents. [...] We are not just Ottomans. We were already Turks before the Ottoman Empire. We are also Turks today. If we go back more and more through our history, we would learn our new heroes: Oghuz Khan, Bilge Khan, Cengiz Khan, Timurlenk [Tamburlaine], Babur Khan and so forth (2004: 56-59).

Many intellectuals of the time shared such ideals reflecting how nationalism and Turkish identity started to be formed. During the downfall of the Empire, bureaucrats and intelligentsia adopted Turkization, instead of Ottomanism, in addition to Islam and Westernization (İnalçık, 2001: 3). The latest identity which burgeoned among several other ethnic communities of the Empire was Turkishness. Probably, the most important reason for the rise of nationalist trends was the defeats in Balkan Wars. The experience of the First World War seems to have reinforced these trends; moreover, it made Aydemir adopt pan-turanist ideals. Thus, he perceived being sent to Caucasian Front as a door to Turan¹⁹, which he had dreamed of. According to him,

¹⁸ The aforementioned journal was *Türk Yurdu*. It was a 32-paged fortnightly journal published between 1911-1918.

¹⁹ Turanism was an ideology which proposes the coalescence and the unity of the peoples of Turan (an unidentified heartland in the steps of middle-Asia). Thus Jacob M. Landau thinks that Turanism was a broader concept than Panturkism in the sense that it involved Hungarians, Finns, and Estonians other than Turks. However, with the contributions of Ziya Gokalp, the ideal of Turanism evolved to Turkism which focused primarily on the common language, religion, and culture. Therefore, the

the foundation of Turan, which depended on the unity of history, language, and will of a unified nation, was the essential duty of Aydemir's generation (Ünver, 2009: 466).

However, it is notable that Kadro's dealing with the question of Eurocentrism in its seventh issue and performance of works of Turkish History Thesis were almost simultaneous. Turkish History Thesis was set forth in order for the constitution of Turkish identity and for the self-confidence needed for the national culture. Belge, one of the contributors to the journal, states the following:

The thesis aimed to give a new direction to history surveys and have European aspect of the history subject to scientific inspection. By proving that the origins of Eurocentric historiography were fictitious, arbitrary, and unscientific, the purpose was to put back pre-historic era (a European classification) into historiography on behalf of Turkish humanism (1933: 24).

Being one of the latest nationalisms among its counterparts, Turkish nationalism lacked historical basis. One of the major concerns after the War of Independence was to create a nation, to make it acknowledged by the world, to establish a sound basis for its future. A community which drifted away from history should find its place in history by its own discretion. Neither the history of Islam, nor of the Ottoman, nor of the West could give any historical direction to it because none of these historical categories involved Turks as a nation (Berkes, 2018: 235,236). Therefore, it could be concluded that somewhat political acts were undertaken. In fact, every order is political and based on some form of exclusion (Mouffe, 2005: 26). The excluded part in this context was the Ottoman historiography the way it was written in Europe. The new historiography was certainly expected to write the history of the new Turkish nation which "aimed to be a useful, hardworking, and an easygoing element of the international family", such that Europe would acknowledge.²⁰

concept of "national culture" has become the essential tool of Turkism. (See, Tokluoğlu, 2012: 108,137)

²⁰ See Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal. "Opening Speech" for Republican People's Party's 4th Congress, 1935.

In his same article, Aydemir states that Turkish history had already completed its Renaissance in the era when European historiography qualified as middle age. From a scientific point of view, this statement and such claims made under the Turkish history thesis may not be found realistic. For instance, Fuad Koprulu, one of the contributors to the book, *The Essentials of Turkish History* [Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları], which Atatürk had pioneered, states that it was a romantic nationalist perception of history which constituted a reaction against European historiography that involved negative and unsubstantial ideas about Turks (Köprülü & Barthold, 2014: 22).

At this point it should be asked whether the question of national identity could be subjected to scientific criteria, or to what extent it could be done so. This study argues that the concept of national identity is rather related to the domain of belief system. According to Weber, ethnical sense of belonging is the part of a subjective belief which becomes functional only in the political sphere:

The belief in group affinity, regardless of whether it has any objective foundation, can have important consequences especially for the formation of a political community. We shall call 'ethnic groups' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (1978: 389).

Weber's ideas overlap with those of Aydemir's to a certain extent:

The Greek Miracle, which was supposed to be an original substance (for Europe) up to now, reveals its non-European elements via sufficient analyses on Greco-Roman civilization and pure German blood. The Arianism of the 19th century which had given almost a religious excitement to scholars of that time diminishes gradually (1932b: 10).

3.3 The Classical Narrative of Modern Europe: The Greek Miracle

The term Greek miracle is immanent in the concept of the *Renaissance*. *Renaissance*, which meant 'rebirth', was popularized as a historical term in the 1820s by Sainte-Beuve and was introduced to literature by the works of Michelet (1855) and Burckhardt (1860).²¹ The 'rebirth' was traced in the ancient Greek civilization, and the Greek texts which had been translated by Arabic scholars were carefully examined. This new epistemology began to unsettle the authority of scholasticism. The western historiography, which tells the story of the foundation of a world-wide power beginning from Renaissance till its maturation in the 19th century, explains the concept of 'Greek (i.e., European) miracle' at the very beginning and concentrates on it:

That Europeans have done something meritorious and different from peoples in other parts of the world. [...] Europeans have launched the industrial revolution or sustained growth, or they have launched modernity, or capitalism, or bureaucratization, or individual liberty (Wallerstein, 1997:2).

However, the concept of miracle cannot satisfactorily explain why this enormous political-economic power was to be established in Europe instead of any other parts of the world:

We must then explain why it is that Europeans, and not others, launched the specified phenomenon, and why they did so at a certain moment of history. In seeking such explanations, the instinct of most scholars has been to push us back in history to presumed antecedents. If Europeans in the eighteenth or sixteenth century did x, it is said to be probably because their ancestors—or attributed ancestors, for the ancestry may be less biological than cultural, or assertedly cultural—did, or were, y in the eleventh century, or in the fifth century BC or even further back (Wallerstein, 1997:3).

It is essential to analyze these scientific activities both to identify a developmental trend in phenomena and to establish a causal relation between them. Yet, it would not be scientifically reliable to look for the norms, bases,

²¹ Retrieved from <https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=rönesans> .

and mindset of a community who lived 2500 years ago to seek an answer to the questions why and how Europe would be successful in dominating the world. In fact, Eurocentric historiography posits that a miraculous and unique set of events paved the way for modern Europe, which is both unconvincing and unscientific. In addition, the concept of “Greek miracle”²² does not suffice to elucidate both the political-economic development path of western societies and their conversion into an imperial power in the 19th century.

It is also commonly thought that the dominant power of Europe is the product of the enlightenment both in religion and in mind. This concept of enlightenment takes its momentum from the Renaissance and Reform movements. Though a movement called ‘enlightenment’ emerged and dominated philosophical thought throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, it can hardly be claimed that movements of thought like religious enlightenment had an impact on that political-economic power. According to Berkes, not a single society has ever developed by means of religious enlightenment. If there was ever such a thing as religious enlightenment, it was certainly not the initiator of development in a society, but the product of a development which had already begun (2018:254).

It is ambiguous to what extent modern Europe can be counted as the product of Renaissance and Reform. Assuming those two categories as the beginning of the whole process leads to wrong inferences, or presumptions making it harder to see the continuous change in societal level in Europe. As a result, being under the influence of Eurocentric historiography, non-western intellectuals pay greater attention to the movements of thought (e.g., Enlightenment, Renaissance, Reform, Calvinism, and Protestantism)²³. This attitude, however, arrives at ‘Greek miracle’ in the final

²² For a different point of view, see Ibn Khaldun, 1977: 130 (Even if he does not see the matter as a miracle, Khaldun thinks that only the ancient Greek culture and science could have reached to his time, 13th century. According to Ibn Khaldun, it had been possible by successful attempts of Khalifa Me’mun who had those Greek texts be translated and who had granted a generous budget for those translation movements).

²³ Being a western sociologist and an intellectual, Max Weber, in his famous work, *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), pays more attention to cultural-religious aspects than economic factors considering modern Western Europe. According to him, instincts such as

analysis more often than not. Probably because of this reason, Kadro rejects 'miracles' when explaining Europe, providing different suggestions within its own methodology.

3.4 An Explanation Alternative to 'Miracles'

The opposition to the hegemony of Eurocentrism is overall noticeable, and often stiff, in the journal. The writers seem to have reached a consensus over political-economic issues about Europe. Of their many articles, two will be dwelled on here, for they reflect the unity among their ideas about the formation of contemporary Europe.

The first article, "Tortuous Affairs of the Deceased", is rather an ironical narrative written by Burhan Asaf Belge in 1932. The prologue of the article, which basically describes Ottoman debts, is about the relations between the Ottoman state and Europe as the debtors were European countries. Belge created a storyline while describing the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and made a political analysis of the Ottoman debts (Yılmaz, 2018: 51). "The Deceased" stands undoubtedly for the Ottoman manager. Like in many other articles, the consideration of Europe is primarily political-economic in this text. It seems as if everything started all at once with the discovery of the machines:

Once upon a time, there were shrewd subjects of god as many as foolish ones. One day, the former had discovered a thing called 'machine'. Under favor of that discovery, they had been able to produce any human needs like cloth, leather, and pottery centuplicate as much after that time. So much production as they had done that their own markets were not capable to receive any product anymore. They thought that they might as well sell those products to others in order to make money. Wandering all around,

possession, profit, earning the maximum money could not be counted as the spirit of capitalism by themselves. Those instincts take place in all kinds of people all over the world. Capitalism was evident in China, India, Babylon, Egypt, and Mediterranean in ancient times, and in the middle ages. However, contemporary western type of capitalism had different peculiarities which stemmed from the rational organization of the workforce and free entrepreneurship. In this way, apart from historical materialism, Weber suggests a cultural reading in understanding modern capitalism. Thus, his aforementioned study tries to find out the basis of the dominant rationalism of the contemporary western world in Protestantism, especially in Calvinism and Puritanism.

finally, they had piled their goods on the ports of the Ottoman Empire (Belge, 1932a: 22).

The subject matter here is the surplus production due to machines and the search for new markets, rather than Renaissance, Reform, etc. This period, which Wallerstein conceptualized as "modern world-system", was completely different from its predecessors. This system is a capitalist world-economy which emerged in Europe and the American continent in the late 16th century. Immediately after it had fortified itself, it followed its inner logic and structural needs for geographic expansion (Wallerstein, 2006:59). The new era which Belge starts with the 'machine' might be considered not only in terms of the relations between production and market but also in terms of the emergence of new war machines invented ostensibly for the sake of technology. Doubtlessly, the military and technological superiority of Europe based on new war machines is a major factor that led to Europe's geographical expansion: "Those shrewd gentlemen got pleased when they saw the sorrowful weakness of the 'Lion' who was once thwacking Wiener walls. They had planned a trap" (Belge, 1932a: 22). What Belge characterized as 'trap' was the Imperial Edict of Gulhane [Gülhane Hattı Hümayunu/Tanzimat Fermanı], which was promulgated due to the problems with internal affairs and the pressure of European countries. The law seems quite ordinary today in that it involved the equalization of non-Muslim communities to Muslim people, ensuring private ownership rights and so forth. However, according to Belge, behind this law was Europe's desire to release the surplus goods into free circulation in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, native sales booths were closed, so the native craftsmen became poorer. Consequently, brand new wealthy neighborhoods started to be established in every small Turkish town. Some were called the Armenian neighborhood, some Roman, and some Frankish (Belge, 1932a: 23).

Berkes seems to agree with the above ideas about the Tanzimat era, which was a cornerstone in the late history of the Ottoman Empire and European states relations. The most characteristic feature of the Tanzimat regime was that, while a wealthy bourgeoisie was developing in Christian communities (especially in Rum and

Armenian societies) by means of free trade relations with the western countries, no such class developed among Turks who could speak on behalf of the people and who could function as a bridge between the state and the governed (Berkes, 2015: 246).

Ottomanism became functional with the promulgation of the law, though it could not realize its promise about economic modernization. However, the non-Muslim bourgeoisie developed, and correspondingly, nationalist movements, which were previously observed in Europe, started to become widespread in those non-Muslim communities. In return, the Muslim-Turk element of the Empire was confined to poverty because it lost its status of producer due to the adopted regulations, let alone making any progress. Ottoman officials attributed the failure of Turks to "the laziness and ineptitude of Turkish element", not noticing that "the Imperial Edict of Gülhane was the sentence of death for both the Turkish economy and thereby Turkish nation" (Belge, 1932a: 23).

Another explanation of the formation of modern Europe is provided in a series of articles written by Aydemir.²⁴ Being a part of the polemic between Aydemir and Ağaoğlu²⁵, these texts present useful data on different arguments related to Europe. Ağaoğlu's criticisms against the ideas championed in Kadro, which were published in *Cumhuriyet* [Republic] newspaper constituted the beginning of the polemic. Disapproving Kadro's perspective to Europe, democracy, individual rights, and freedoms, Ağaoğlu remarked "Kadro religion was not as tolerant as even Islam" (as cited in Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: 238). He criticizes Kadro writers for not analyzing why the Eastern countries made no progress while the Western countries developed continuously. This question, in fact, is connected with the question raised at the very beginning: Why Europe?

²⁴ See Aydemir, 1932c.

²⁵ Ahmet Ağaoğlu, also known as Ahmet Bey Ağayev (December 1869 – 19 May 1939). Ağaoğlu (1869-1939) emigrated from Azerbaijan to Istanbul in 1909, was detained in Malta from 1920 to 1921, and joined the war of liberation and became MP and director of Press and Publishing for a short period until joining the FRP (Free Republican Party). His major works include *Devlet ve Fert* (Istanbul, 1933) and *Serbest Firka Hatıraları , Sii Mezhebi ve Membaları*, published in French (France); *Türk Hukuk Tarihi* (Istanbul); *Türk Medeniyet Tarihi* (Istanbul); *Hukuk-u Esasiye* (Istanbul); *Serbest İnsanlar Ülkesinde* (Istanbul); *Üç Medeniyet* (Istanbul); and *İngiltere ve Hindistan* (Istanbul)

Both Eurocentric and anti-Eurocentric views have their own answers to the question of how Europe or the West have dominated the world system. However, they fail to clarify why it is particularly the Europeans instead of any other part of the world. For Ağaoğlu, it was a matter of freedoms; freedoms granted to the individuals made Europe the master of the world. One should realize that the freedoms, which supposedly only existed in the West, could only become viable if the backwardness is eliminated. Thus, Ağaoğlu asserts that the primary objective of the Turkish revolution had to be freeing individuals from all kinds of domination in the East. Ağaoğlu thinks that Kadro did not thoroughly examine the historical process of the Turkish revolution nor did they analyze the spoken or written discourse of revolution leaders. According to him, the so-called "ideology of the Revolution"²⁶ was nothing but personal thoughts and ideals of Kadro writers, which attributed unrealistic and subjective beliefs to the Turkish revolution.

Though Aydemir had already replied to those criticisms in the same newspaper, he chose to clarify his ideas once again in Kadro by facing Ağaoğlu's 'liberal' theses regarding how the Turkish revolution ought to be. Ağaoğlu was portrayed both as an intellectual of Ottoman university [Daru'l Fünun] and a representative of the Tanzimat era by Aydemir. According to Kadro, the university fell behind the times and knew little about the society, of which it was the product. It failed to anticipate the state of affairs: "Unfortunately, however, our university chairs have never given any piece of work about our Revolution affairs among social sciences, from the beginning of the Revolution until now" (Aydemir, 1933c: 8).

In Kadro's point of view, Ağaoğlu was a typical liberal intellectual who thought that the societal regulations of Europe including politics, economy, and jurisprudence were accurate, essential, and inevitable for all humanity: "A new, national order cannot be imagined apart from the needs of classical democracy such as clash of individuals, clash of political parties, clash of classes, and clash of countries" (Aydemir, 1932c: 39). Aydemir made a similar assertion which was published in

²⁶ "Ideology of Revolution" is the main title of the texts written by Aydemir, all along the periodical.

Cumhuriyet [Republic] newspaper. He stated that Aġaoġlu himself was the charming representative of devotion to democracy, which had not yet found its true meaning, which had not been crystallized in terms of its boundaries, and which in time had become a mediocre and fictitious concept (1932d).

The period between the two world wars is very characteristic process in terms of political ambiguity and rising totalitarian discourses. In addition to the well-known Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy, in other parts of Europe, authoritarian-totalitarian political discourses were in vogue. Masses of people found those discourses appealing for several reasons. The first and probably most important issue was the Great Depression (1929). During this period, the high unemployment rates and widespread impoverishment were the most peculiar realities people had to bear. Another issue was the fact that the treaties of peace imposed upon the defeated countries were humiliating and impoverishing.

The demagogues seized this opportunity, which stemmed from disappointments, the lack of self-confidence, and impoverishment due to the treaties. While exploiting the inner feelings of the masses by ethnic and religious means, they came to power, as well as purging the opposition. In a period when international distrust and armament activities escalated and liberal parliamentary discourse was almost unfashionable, Aġaoġlu still expected democracy to be the fundamental objective of the Turkish revolution and thus was criticized by Kadro. Essential differences regarding outlooks on issues such as democracy, parliamentarism, and market economy lead us to the crucial question of this chapter: How was Europe formed? As far as we could see, the answer provided by Kadro was different from that provided by Aġaoġlu, who sought the answer in individual rights, freedom, free market, and parliamentary democracy: "Current Europe could not come into being if colonies have not been pillaged and if machines have not been invented" (Aydemir, 1932b: 6).

3.5 Critique of Eurocentric Universalism

A thorough analysis shows that ideas such as liberal economy and parliamentary democracy, which were defended by Ağaoğlu, imply universalist connotations. More accurately, those allegedly European norms and values are defended since they were for the benefit of all humanity. Universalism basically means that realities exist that are valid across all times and spaces. Attributing this concept only to modern times would be a deficient assessment. Indeed, it can be traced far back to Plato and even earlier times. The basic and irrevocable assumptions today are the fundamental human rights and the freedoms, which were in fact long-standing well before the French revolution. However, with the Enlightenment era and with the positivism of the 19th century, universalism gained such a great momentum that it still dominates our thoughts. Notwithstanding the progress in natural sciences and the emergence of newer modes of production and classes due to technological advancements parallel to the degradation of scholasticism, the tradition of universalism seems to have been kept alive. Similarly, universalism might be observed in belief systems, especially in all kinds of monotheisms. In monotheist religions, one can see similar connotations claiming unchangeable truths for humans and for the universe. Syncretism of Hellenism formed the basis for Christianity and Islam, both of which brought new universalist messages (Amin, 1993: 44). What we can call as *religious universalism* uses the holistic methodology, in which the abstraction of the particular arrives at an absolute universal.

Along with the determinist positivism of the 19th century and afterward, a belief category was developed which argued that the causalities detected in natural sciences could also be observed in social sciences. According to Karl Popper, the naturalist revolution against God, which was before the historicist revolution, substituted 'god' for 'nature'. Almost everything apart from that remained the same. Theology gave its place to natural science; laws of the god to laws of nature; will and power of the god to will and power of nature; and finally the order and judgment of the god to the natural selection. Natural determinism superseded theological determinism; that is,

the omnipotence of nature took over the omnipotence of the god. Then, Hegel and Marx substituted the goddess of nature for the goddess of history. Thus, history laws, history powers, currents, plans, and the omnipotence of the historical determinism came to existence (Popper, 1948: 12).

According to another argument, the merge of the Cartesian line of thought and Newtonian science influenced social sciences. Social scientists thought that they might discover the universal processes that explain human behavior, and whatever hypotheses they could verify were thought to hold across time and space or should be stated in ways that they would hold true across time and space (Wallerstein, 1997: 24).

Towards the 1930s, the throne of the European empire seemed to be under threat for several reasons. The treaty of peace signed after the First War was far from seeking economic solidarity even in allied states, nor could it repair the broken financial systems of France and Italy. It was also far from establishing an economic equilibrium between the old world and the new world (Keynes, 2018: 191). Having begun in the West, the Great Economic Depression spread through the world. Correspondingly, the impoverishment rate was very high in Europe and the rest of the world. The Great Depression not only affected Turkey but also many underdeveloped countries such as Latin America, in a similar way.²⁷ Political instability made it easier for chauvinist nationalism and totalitarian discourses to attract supporters from all over the continent. On the other hand, Russia, who was experiencing Bolshevism at that time, was positioned as a new actor against liberal capitalism prior to the Second War, which the world was rapidly sliding in. As Aydemir summarized, "Europe in the 1930s, looked like a witch doctor that cannot control his bogles anymore." Thus Europe was about to be drowned by the forces which Europe itself had created. National liberation movements which were a natural

²⁷ Those countries (including Turkey) were connected to the world economy in a free trade/ open door relationship. They exported raw materials and imported industrial goods (usually consumer products) in return. The Great Depression had lowered the prices of raw materials more than that of industrial goods. Under such circumstances, it was hard to maintain free-trade or open-door policies because they caused chronic stagnation in underdeveloped countries by forcing them to follow the outcomes of the financial crisis experienced in capitalist countries. (See Boratav, 2015: 63).

reaction to the colonial exploitation created their natural crises in this order. Being the product of an abnormal density of industry, class conflicts made their structural alterations as well.

In such a context was the universalism being scrutinized by *Kadro* Journal. Due to the crisis of the liberal economic system, fascism was gaining power against parliamentary democracy on the one hand, and socialism was on the rise against the hegemony of the former, on the other. Europe, which was in an economic, social, and political crisis could not be a model for Republican Turkey under those conditions: “When the universalism of capitalism and the idea that the world was under the hegemony of Europe was under suspicion, it began to be understood that the political and social institutions of capitalism, that is to say, the norms and ventures of the European regime were proper only for Europe” (Aydemir, 1932c: 42).

European sciences were also subservient to the established order, yet in spite of the racist currents in the 1930s, *Kadro* did not seem to be convinced with the idea that there was a hierarchy between races: “The valid reasons for some nations to live like slaves under the hegemony of some other nations had almost been established scientifically” (Aydemir, 1933b: 8). He further claims that the democracy and human rights had been transformed into something which veiled racism and thievery in the name of science:

Motivated by the ideal that all the people are free and equal, the scientific truths, which -in the name of humanity and democracy- favor one and a half billion people of colonies and semi-colonies to work for the sake of two hundred and fifty million people of industrial countries, no more satisfy anyone (1933b: 9).

In other words, *Kadro* not only objected to the political and economic aspects of European universalism, but it also refused to adopt the dominant science paradigm of that time. Though, it would not be accurate to state that this paradigm had totally dominated Europe. Considering the fact that there were many scholars who tried to escape from Nazi Germany (Third Reich) to several different regions of the world including Turkey as well, racism cannot be south in the basis of European perception

of science. Maybe Kadro, with such a dubious attitude, wanted to signal that sciences were in command of political-economic hegemony of Europe and the duty of sciences was to legitimize that hegemony across the world.

It should be noted that there was - and still is - a dualist view regarding sciences among Turkish intellectuals. While Kadro writers thought that science was the cornerstone of imperialism, which meant colonizing all of the Eastern countries for the sake of Western people, liberal Turkish intellectuals of the time perceived the matter differently. According to them, science belonged to the entire humanity although it had been invented in Europe. For example, Celâl Nuri,²⁸ who lived at that time, wrote on the Turkish revolution. To show that Western civilization was for the sake of all humanity, he gave the example of Pasteur and indicated that, without using the methods of Pasteur, epidemics would break out in India. By this account, Celâl Nuri attributed a strong universality to European civilization and appropriated Europe as the sole and ultimate source of knowledge (Turan, 2012: 261).

3.6 A Universal Contradiction: Metropolis-Colony Conflict

As stated above, while Kadro writers opposed to all kinds of Eurocentric universalisms, they also suggested a new universalism which they thought was the real and inevitable historical occurrence. Implementing the dialectic materialism while inspecting worldwide developments, Kadro thought that the *conflict between metropolises and colonies* was a unique product of 20th century's socio-historical context. Although there were hardly any countries gaining independence apart from Turkey at that time, they nonetheless believed that a new era had been opened in which colonized countries would throw off their imperialist dependencies.

Both capitalism and socialism were Eurocentric according to Kadro for certain aspects. In fact, the First World War was an outcome of the crisis of capitalism, which was motivated by the search for new markets for the surplus products. The

²⁸ İleri, Celal Nuri (1881-1938) was a journalist and politician. He started his journalism career in Currier d'Orient in 1909. Having supported the Turkish Liberation Movement in his newspaper, Forward [İleri], he worked as an mp until 1934 in Republican Turkey.

latter was the consequence of unplanned production. Two main reasons played major roles in the crisis of capitalism. The first one was that open markets had run out. Few existing were already shared by the winners of the First World War.²⁹ The other factor was the existence of the organized social classes which, as time passed by, had been gaining more and more importance in the political arena. Correspondingly, political and economic tools of capitalism like parliamentary democracy and liberal economics were under suspicion as well.

Another concept which involved universal claims was Socialism. It came into being as a reaction to capitalism. Kadro seems to have adopted a Marxist line of sight when defining reactionary socialism. However, when it comes to the universal claims of Socialism, Kadroists think differently from the orthodox Marxist trend of thought. According to the writers, all of the economical assessments of Marx involved solely Europe where great capital and industry had accumulated. Therefore the class struggle, which was the core element of the Marxist critique of political economy, was valid only for the European countries. The universal claim of Marxist thought that the world was divided into two antagonistic camps (bourgeoisie and proletariat) was therefore rejected by Kadroists.

It should also be noted that Kadro's rejection was on the claims of universality, rather than on the existence of the classes: "It is apparent that today there are different social classes in Europe whose economical faiths are different and contrary to one another" (Aydemir, 1933c: 15). Kadro writers confirmed both the remnants of pre-capitalist classes and cores of capitalist classes in Turkey as well (Akar, 2016: 245). However, it would be hard to mention about the existence of a monotype proletariat all over the world. To their opinion, the living standards of a European or an American industrial worker were much greater than that of the underdeveloped countries. The most important aim of the proletariat in Europe and the USA was to

²⁹ This argument is based on the Kadroist discourse claiming that capitalism was in a crisis because the national liberation movements were preventing the exploitation of national markets by the imperialist states. Even if the so-called movements played a role in the crisis of capitalism it should not be exaggerated, since, apart from Turkey, it is hard to argue that there was any colonized or semi-colonized country which could gain its political independence completely.

continue and raise their living standards as well. This was only possible at the expense of the impoverishment of colonized and semi-colonized countries' people. After assessing that not all the workers were the same in terms of living standards, Kadro rejects the so-called universality of class struggle.

There are some assessments claiming that Kadro denied the existence of classes in Turkey. On the contrary, Kadro virtually accepted the existence of pre-capitalist classes. According to Tökin, one of the contributors of the journal, these classes were feudal lords and agrarian elites, peasant entrepreneurs, small landowner manufacturers, sharecroppers, village laborers, and land-slaves (Tökin, 1934: 21). Notwithstanding the existence of the classes, Kadro writers were claiming that capitalist class formations and class struggles should and could be prevented by an efficient etatism.

Kadro writers, unlike many other intellectuals, opposed to the universalism of *historical stage theory* which proposes all of the non-western nations would trace the same way the Western nations did. All stage theories—whether of Comte or Spencer or Marx were resolutely universalist in the sense that whatever it was that happened in Europe in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries represented a pattern that was applicable everywhere, either because it was a progressive achievement of mankind which was irreversible or because it represented the fulfillment of humanity's basic needs via the removal of artificial obstacles to this realization. What is seen now in Europe was not only good but the face of the future everywhere (Wallerstein, 1997: 24).

As contemporary order, which had been founded on the ruins of the feudal era, failed to abolish the class conflicts in capitalist countries, a potential socialist victory which will be founded on the ruins of contemporary Europe seemed to be lacking the power to liquidate the conflict between industrial countries (metropolis) and raw material producer countries (colonies and semi-colonies). Thus, according to Kadro, the universal claims of a presumed socialist order are obliged to disappear by themselves.

Rejecting both the universalisms of capitalism and socialism, Kadro suggested a third way: National liberation movement [*Milli Kurtuluş Hareketleri*]. This new movement, which was believed to bring a solution to the major and essential contradiction between countries, would take the first place in determining the course of events. The third way or national liberation movements had their historical roots far back almost in the 15th and 16th centuries when European plunders over colonies had started. However, the industrial revolution had helped these movements to mature. The crucial motivation of national liberation movements was to react against the colonialist and imperialist aspects of capitalism.

As is seen from the above arguments, Kadro was centering its focus on the question of Eurocentrism in its seventh issue which coincided with the works of newly-established Turkish History Institution. While premediating a firm etatism against the liberal economy, it developed an authoritarian sense of rule³⁰ against parliamentary democracy. The universal order “imposed upon people” in historical, social, cultural, and scientific aspects was rejected. In fact, the main opposition of Kadro was copying the elements mentioned above and trying to implement them in Turkey exactly the same way. On the one hand, those phenomena were only special to European societies and states and, Turkey, on the other hand, was experiencing a revolution which was based on its own realities and which stemmed from its own structure. Fascism, which was considered to be another face of the capitalism, and socialism, which constituted the anti-capitalist front, were both rejected on the grounds that they were based on a ‘class-power’ and both claimed to be universal. In return, ‘National Liberation Movements’, which emerged as a reaction to the actual universal contradiction, namely, *metropolis-colony* contradiction, was being advised as a third way. According to Kadro, this final movement was itself a universal phenomenon because it not only abolishes the main contradiction (“metropolis-colony”) but also becomes a source of inspiration for similar countries.

³⁰ Aydemir’s thoughts on democracy were usually negative. He stated that the reform movements practiced up to that time on behalf of democracy had created disappointments and those reforms had people become slaves for the sake of other people. According to him, the 19th century which was believed to be the triumph of classical democracy had created great class conflicts in Europe and had established a master-slave system all around the world. (See Aydemir, 2011: 147).

3.7 Particularism or “Anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism”

In his notable work, Samir Amin draws attention to what he calls particularism or nativism. He states that anyone who rejects westernization for a future, which is based on *sui generis* and invariable values, had the same particularistic attitude just as of Eurocentrism (Amin, 1993: 11).³¹ Likewise, Wallerstein conceptualizes this issue as *anti-eurocentric Eurocentrism* (Wallerstein, 2006: 59). Accordingly, the one who adopts this manner, anti-eurocentric Eurocentrism, accepts exactly the same intellectual frame which was imposed by Europe, rather than setting forth the epistemological questions.

Attributing universalism to Turkish national liberation on behalf of other poor countries while stating that this movement was unique and solely based on Turkey’s realities was criticized by other writers for it was a contradiction. One critic who depicted this contradiction was Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın. He was also publishing a journal at the same time, namely *Movements of Thought*³². Just as it entered into polemics with Ağaoğlu, Kadro also opposed to Yalçın who according to the journal was a firm defender of the imitation of the west. In one of the essays which he wrote to answer the critiques of Kadro, Yalçın underlines the aforementioned contradiction. He criticizes Kadro as it emphasized the uniqueness of the Turkish Revolution while at the same time stating that it was a universal and an exemplary revolution for all of the poor nations in the world (Koçak, 2018: 256). Ağaoğlu was another figure who criticized Aydemir in this respect as well. According to him, Aydemir neither inspected nor interpreted properly the history of the development of the revolution, nor did he read the essays and speeches of the leaders of the revolution. What Aydemir called as ‘the ideology of the revolution’ was nothing but his own ideals and his subjective opinions that he tried to attribute to the revolution (Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: 238).

³¹ It should be noted that even though he rejected both the Eurocentric universalism and regionist particularism, Amin stated that he supported the ideology which involved the universalism of progressivist ideals of the enlightenment philosophy.

³² This journal (*Fikir Hareketleri*) had been published between 1933-1940 by Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın.

It should be stated that the idea crystallized in the thought of Aḡaoḡlu anticipated modern Europe as a combination of social, political, and economic elements. To him, the major factor regarding the formation of nations was the momentum created by the unity of race, language, and culture; rather than the economy. On the contrary, Kadro saw those factors as the agents which imperialism had used to exploit the entire elements of the world. The current great technology and culture were the products of huge capital accumulation and exploitation (Aydemir, 1932c: 40). Gathering all of the technology and the means of production, this system provided cheap raw material and workforce it needed from countries it had colonized. The assumption that the consisted system was universal for humanity was itself contrary to the inner logic of the system. Because the dissipation of this great technology on an equal basis across the world meant modern Europe to lose its capital accumulation and the hegemony of colonialism which provided great technological and cultural domination. In conjunction with this, by means of the machine-based production, acquiring raw materials inexpensively from colonies and selling products to them caused both the labor become cheaper and activities such as production, craft, and trade get weak in those countries: "In everywhere, the primary concern of occupation troops, diplomatic representatives, and missionaries was to defend and legitimize that new capitalist mechanism which was based on both getting cheaper and selling expensively" (Aydemir, 1933b: 5). In this way, the legitimacy of imperialism regarding its universalism was considered to be imposed upon the world under the favor of the invention of machines.

In a brief consideration, the seemingly dualistic attitude of Kadro in the face of Eurocentrism might appear as a contradiction. Even it may be claimed that it was a sort of eclecticism. The following question is, therefore, needs to be answered: Considering Amin's conceptualization mentioned above, did the writers of Kadro adopt a kind of particularist attitude regarding their perception of universalism? In order to answer this question, it should be ascertained whether the analyses in Kadro were based on realities. It should primarily be stated that Kadro accepts capitalism as the universal exchange mechanism regarding the level it had reached at the 20th

century. Yet, the structure of the society and the reciprocal relations of the classes were left out of that universality. For that reason, it was impossible for the property relations over the high technological means to take a universal character with regard to the system itself, since the structure of capitalism relied on few countries to become industrialized while many others were to be deprived of industry (Aydemir, 1932c: 42). In this respect, Kadro sees class conflicts as phenomena special only for industrialized countries. Capitalism, as Kadro discussed, created problems of class struggle and internal disorder, whereas the Turkish revolution, because it had begun with a national structure, which was not divided into “antagonistic social classes”, would reject and take measures to make such divisions impossible. Kadro's conclusion was that the Turkish revolution should develop a “non-capitalist capital-accumulation” strategy (Türkeş, 2001: 102).

What Kadro asserted as the essential contradiction was the great divergence between *the metropolis and the colony*. By gaining its political independence, Turkey had become the pioneer of the *national liberation movements* which were expected to liquidate that essential contradiction. Kadroist claim of universality which seemed like a discrepancy or eclecticism is closely related with the concept of *third way* which Kadro tried to generate. Universal claims of both capitalism and the communism were rejected. However, the third way against both of the doctrines should also have a claim of universality. Yet, Kadro writers faced an important problem regarding this issue. It was the lack of data which made it impossible to generalize and test their assumption. They only make generalizations with regard to the example of Turkey.

Rather than adopting a particularist/nativist line of sight, and by means of their critical attitude against Eurocentric universalism, Kadro seems to have generated an original discourse which was based on the realities of a period in which political, social, and economic impacts were gradually intensified. The originality attributed to Kadro in this study is grounded on the journal's systematization of its critiques under the name of Eurocentrism. Though some critical argumentations they have made regarding the causes of the underdevelopment of the Ottoman Empire were not

unprecedented at all. In fact, it is possible to notice an approach similar to Kadro in the articles of Alexandre Helphand (Parvus) in *Türkyurdu* [Turkish Homeland] journal between 1912 and 1914. Being a Russian theoretician who had also been involved in Russian Revolution in 1905, Parvus thought that the reason for the underdevelopment of the Ottoman Empire was due to the fact that the Ottoman state had become a semi-colony of Europe. The Ottoman agriculture, trade, natural resources, railways, and customs were under the hegemony of European economic powers. These problems could not be solved by means of foreign assistance or external loans. On the contrary, those palliative measures would only deepen and accelerate the downfall of the Empire.^{33,34}

The Kadroist look on the related subject involved new horizons which were, at that time, out of the frame of mainstream social sciences. Many contemporary readers of Kadro have found early argumentations of the future theoretical frameworks. For instance, Ayse Bugra Trak finds similar connotations in the articles of Aydemir with the arguments of economic development literature. Haldun Gulalp sees Kadro as a movement of thought which formed an early Dependency theory by incorporating the concept metropolis-colony as the central argument for its analyses (Turan, 2012: 251). The following developments such as the events in Latin America, the experiences of colonies who were to gain independence after the Second World War, the Cuban and the Chinese revolutions, and the ideas generated by the Dependency School after the 1960s strikingly confirmed the claims and assumptions of Kadro.

³³ Karaömerlioğlu, 2001-2002: 86; Berkes, 2015: 466-468.

³⁴ For the life of Parvus, see Zeman Z. A. B. and Scharlau W. B. “The Merchant of Revolution: The Life of Alexander Israel Helphand (Parvus), 1867–1924; Oxford University Press, 1965.

CHAPTER 4

BEYOND THE LIMITS OF EUROCENTRIC ANALYSES

It might be readily stated that the dialectic method and the historical materialism were the general lines of the perspective adopted by Kadro. One of the contributors of the journal, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin, states that dialectic method constitutes the basis of all of their analyses (1933:29). However, the implementation of this method could vary. To understand why Kadro adopted materialism for their own line of thought, a closer look at their articles, their arguments, and conceptualizations is needed. The previous chapters have shown us why Kadro opposed to Eurocentrism. In this chapter, the implementation of dialectic materialism by the journal is discussed so that the basis of the counter-arguments generated on Eurocentrism in the journal can be comprehended. In this context, while focusing on the debates about idealism and materialism in the journal, this chapter will also focus on the thoughts expressed in the journal about the development of the state, society, and classes.

Because Kadro writers did not attempt to analyze the structure and background of the Turkish-Ottoman state and society in detail, notwithstanding their claims on the differences between the East and the West, this chapter refers to some related scholarly works to amplify the arguments of Kadro. In this way, the role of the dialectic/historical materialism in constructing a “third way” as a fulcrum, which was the *raison d’être* of Kadro as well, is clarified. The importance of Kadro lies in part in its intellectual originality, which stemmed from the journal's somewhat unconvincing attempt though not convincing, to elaborate a "third way" between capitalism and socialism. Quite as important was the sources of Kadro's intellectual inspiration, most of which were previously unknown to intellectual discussion and debate in Turkey (Türkeş, 2001: 94-95).

The last section of this chapter covers the debates in the journal about an influential intellectual, Ziya Gökalp. It is hoped that an examination of the arguments will help comprehend the viewpoint of Kadroist materialism regarding the solidarism, which was represented by Gökalp and adopted later on by the founders of the Republic. How the methodological divergence of Kadro writers from the regime, namely dialectic materialism and Durkheimian positivism, manifests itself is analyzed in the articles written about Gökalp.

4.1 Historical Materialism against Idealism

Kadro made itself clear from the very beginning of its publication in terms of methodology. According to the writers of Kadro, an intellectual should have first and foremost a specific and a consistent world-view. In other words, every intellectual should have a general understanding of the processes within nature and history.

The introduction of the third issue of the Kadro Journal is almost a manifesto which outlines the methodology of the journal. It addresses one of the main problems of philosophy, i.e. the relation between the idea and the substance. Prior to manifesting its own perspective, Kadro begins its introduction by elaborating on the ideas which assumed that cogitation came prior to the material. Such ideas were called as theology by Kadro. As shown above, Kadro used analogies to clarify its ideas once more. To establish a theological connection, the bible was referred to: "The bible begins as such: 'There was the word at the outset'. Faust, after many centuries, would have been saying that 'first there was the action.'" Saint John and Faust, who lived in different centuries, stated almost the same thing as shown here. Both wanted to put something before nature, namely before substance (material), and "this theological description of the world reigned over the intellectual history of human being, from Plato to Hegel" (Editorial, 1932: 3).

The reason behind all of the mistakes, miseries, and calamities in history was this kind of comprehension, which opened a huge gap between the subject and the object. From the point of Kadro, this leak in the human intelligence had first paved the way for a "world of hallucinations and superstitions full of fake idols, rounder evils, and

horrible monsters by favor of the religions" (Editorial, 1932: 3). While the real world lived with its own elements and was subjected to its own laws, humanity was suffering in the hell which was the product of humanity as well. Just as Kant emphasized in his famous work that it was the immaturity of people which obliged them to remain in darkness for centuries, Kadro underlined that this hell was formed by the hands of the humanity itself (Kant, 2016: 17).

Idealism was considered to be the continuation of the ancient and superstitious theology in the same article. Indeed, it was stated that idealism had its own myths like the ancient religions. It was also argued that an idea which stayed only in the domain of abstract concepts and which repeated itself continuously was worthless in the domain of reality. By objecting to both theology and the idealism after having made their definition in its own way, Kadro states that "first there was the body, the substance. Words, ideas, and actions are the products of the substance" (Editorial, 1932: 4). In this way, it is reminded that humankind should not lose its control over the object and the idea. Cartesian perspective also relates to this syllogism. According to Kadro, the famous saying of Descartes, "I think, therefore I am" should be transformed into "I am, therefore I think" (Introduction, 1932: 3).

It is obvious that the worldview which Kadro writers were in opposition to was idealism. Tekeli and İlkin's content analysis shows us that the two main worldviews adopted by the Kadroists were dialectic materialism and historical materialism (2003: 513). In other words, Kadro writers adopted the general law that the universe was "dialectic". For they were materialists, they acknowledged that the universe was a material fact, that people could get to know this fact, and eventually they could change this fact. They were historical materialists as well because they had applied the dialectic method on society. According to the findings of the content analysis mentioned above, Kadro writers used concepts such as "historical materialism", "dialectic materialism", "socialist-materialist Dynamique philosophy", "dialectic of development", "determinism/historical determinism", and "realism" frequently with positive connotations. On the contrary, concepts such as "metaphysics", "metaphysician", "idealism", "fetishism", and "Bergsonism" were used with negative

connotations.³⁵ That being the case, Kadroists were naturally expected to oppose idealism, which allegedly neglects the phenomenal world and accepts only the ideal categories and pure reason.

Kadro journal, in a way, is a publication in which many polemics took place. As the writers of Kadro stated, they had been criticized by conservative/Islamist, leftist/socialist, and western/liberal fronts.³⁶ When responding to those criticisms, Kadro usually accuses its opponents of siding with idealism. For instance, as regards notions such as democracy, freedoms, Europeanization, and so forth, those who admired or favored "out-dated and broken concepts" were called as idealists. Besides, it was stated that "the logic of motion and contradiction"³⁷, in other words, the dialectic logic would always be implemented against those "fossil assessments and lifeless principals" (Aydemir, 1933d: 11). Even from time to time, the people who were criticized by Kadro in this sense were labeled as "opportunist, mental reactionary, and enemy of the revolution".³⁸ When they received criticism from the left, in Aydemir's words, from the "old comrades", materialism, which was claimed to be proper for the needs and conditions of the revolution, was adopted by abstracting materialism from its orthodox Marxist base, which was claimed to be Eurocentric.

4.2 Negation of Negation or the Development of Capitalism

While criticizing his liberal opponents and the university professors of the time, Tökin asks the question: "What do we understand from the state?" (1933: 26). He both criticizes the 'incarnation of reason' [aklın tecessüdü] argued by Hegel and the 'pure expression of the *geist* [spirit]/ argued by neo-Hegelians. According to these

³⁵ Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: 514; see Table-3.

³⁶ According to Aydemir, Kadro had been accused of being communist, fascist, national communist, national socialist, social fascist, neo-Hitlerist, anarchist, nihilist, etc. These categories according to him were arbitrary and superficial epithets because they were already confuting one another (See Aydemir, Kadro, I.18, 1933, p.5-6).

³⁷ Hareket ve tezat mantığı (In Turkish)

³⁸ Fikir mürtecisi, inkılap düşmanı (In Turkish).

idealistic definitions, the state was a spiritual entity which was isolated from the actual social life. For this reason, he initiates a discussion about *form and substance*. Inasmuch as the substance determines the form, the former is more important than the latter because it is the social body of the state as well. Thus, he asserts that a state comes into being and maintained by the ‘variation of interests’ [menfaat ayrılıkları] in a society. Seeing the matter only in terms of the relation between rulers and ruled was not enough. Property relations were inevitably crucial to define the state. Tökin notes that, whenever the ruler and the ruled owned a property, the state came into existence (1933: 27). Formation of the state begins with the differentiation of interests of the ruler from interests of the ruled.

The context of differentiation is combined with the two main struggles of human: the struggle amongst human beings in a society and the struggle between human beings and nature. This schematic explanation henceforward gives place to the development theory. In this theory, the development of a society is explained with the variation of interests, or rather contradictions within society. In the history of a society, these contradictions play a vital role in the phases of the development. Each phase is both an expression of an inner contradiction and a contradiction with the previous phases. Tökin, who at the beginning of his article criticizes Hegel for his idealism, now seems to support his formulation of dialectic:

Each phase, to put it in Hegelian terms, is the negation of the previous phases, and the following phase is the negation of the negation. [...] Every social phase is either a thesis or an antithesis, which negates the former, or a synthesis. Each phase, being a synthesis at the same time, always includes a germ of a new thesis. If we inspect the state by means of the dialectic logic, that is to say, analyzing phenomena in terms of development and opposite equivocal interests, we cannot explain either state or the development course of state with metaphysic which ignores the causal laws between occurrences and which assumes state only as a quantitative accumulation (1933: 28).

After making such long explanations about the state and the development law, Tökin stresses that the state is not only a quantitative formation but also a concrete mechanism that forms in a particular phase of society. According to him, the

opponents of Kadro, who were mainly liberal/western/conservative intellectuals, were thinking unmethodically because they regarded the state only as an evolutionary quantitative formation in history. Tökin indicates that Ağaoğlu's ideas, especially those expressed in the polemics between Ağaoğlu and Aydemir, were good examples of the misconception he mentioned.

Tökin's long article tries to show us that today's 'European empire' and its political and social institutions were temporary and were the product of certain historical contradictions which matured in the 19th century. The period after the war was another new period which was formed by new political and social contradictions of interests. He perceived the state as a dialectical entity rather than an evolutionary development. To him, states took several forms in certain periods and under certain conditions. For that reason, the 19th century Europe cannot be identified as an eternal entity. The events of the 20th century were disaffirming the Eurocentric misperceptions after all. To understand Kadro's challenge to imperialism, it is essential to perform a deeper analysis of explanations of the modern state, i.e., capitalism, addressed in Tökin's article.

Tökin describes **absolutist state** [mutlakıyet devleti] as the beginning of the modern state and society. Giving reference to Sombart³⁹, he states that absolutism was the subordination of a multitude to an emperor/prince and to his will and interests. An absolutist state had interior and exterior behavioral patterns. In terms of exterior relations, an absolutist state always wanted to expand and conquer. To this aim, modern armies were established. In its interior domain, the state wanted to regulate and rule all the social areas as well. The main quality of this kind of state was *l'état gendarme*.

The period of the absolutist states nurtured its own theoreticians according to Tökin. These theoreticians established the concept of '*souveraenitaet*' with the help

³⁹ Sombart, Werner. German sociologist (1863-1941) and one of the leading Continental European social scientists during the first quarter of the 20th century.

of Roman law: “Bodin (1530-1596) was laying the basis for ‘*L’etat c’est moi*’⁴⁰ by describing sovereignty as the sum of the principals of rulership” (1933: 30). Accordingly, the ruler was not subjugated to any law because the existence of law involved the existence of a solid and monolithic will which was represented in the ruler's will solely. Being the owner of the state, the ruler is also the owner of properties and people.

In fact, nearly a century before Bodin, Machiavelli⁴¹ had stated similar things. Machiavelli's *Prince* was about an absolute sovereign to whom history assigned a decisive task: 'giving shape' to an already existing 'material', a matter aspiring to its form – the nation. Machiavelli's *New Prince* was thus a specific political form charged with executing the historical demands 'on the agenda': the constitution of a nation (Althusser, 1999: 13). It should also be noted that, almost a hundred years before Machiavelli was born, a Tunisian historian, Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) had stated similar things about the ruler. According to him, it was in the human nature to behave like a god when he becomes a president. Thus, the ruler feels he should not share his authorities with others nor should he share the authority to reign and subjugate the ruled. Besides, the state policy requires a regnant authority which involves being one and only (1977: 374).

The absolutist state was based on a paid army and excessive bureaucracy. For their sustainability, the state was obliged to further increase its budget, which meant obtaining more valuable resources. For this reason, the state undertook direct economic enterprises. In short, it operated mines, sold merchandise, invested in shipping, i.e. it resorted to all means to increase revenues. Meanwhile, the newborn mercantile interests were supported by the state. The ruler and the capitalist became allies since they aimed at the same thing: to earn money. Besides both bore mutual

⁴⁰ *L’etat c’est moi*: I am the state. A saying attributed to Louis 14th of France, which expresses the spirit of a rule by which the king held all political authority.

⁴¹ Kadro’s opinions on Niccolo Machiavelli should be noted here. According to the journal, Machiavelli had formed the ideology of Cesare Borgia who left the legacy of disastrous murders to his successors. Machiavelli’s famous book was nothing but the story of what Borgia had done. The Europe of the 20th century still kept that young and strong-willed dictator alive whom Machiavelli had commentated (See Introduction, Kadro, I.34, 1934, p.4).

enmities against the Middle Age's feudal order and the guilds [lonca teşkilatı] of towns. On the one hand, the ruler was the enemy of feudal lords because the latter were preventing the expansion of the influence and dominance of the former. Actors of the capitalist interests, on the other hand, complained about the restrictions of guilds and interior customs (tariffs). Henceforth, the state became the protector of the capitalist interests. Asserting that it was the first age of capitalism, Tökin stated that it was the mercantile policy, by which the state intervened every aspect of social, political, and economic domains. The etatism implemented under this policy was *fiscal etatism* (1933: 32).

It might be argued that even modern sovereignty is somewhat a European concept in that it developed primarily in Europe parallel to the evolution of modernity itself. The concept became so to speak the cornerstone of the construction of Eurocentrism. In Hegel, the theory of modern sovereignty and the theory of value produced by the capitalist political economy is finally synthesized, and his work reflects a complete realization of the union of the absolutist and republican aspects, namely the Hobbesian and Rousseauian aspects of the theory of modern sovereignty. The Hegelian relationship between *particular and universal* smoothly connects the Hobbes-Rousseau theory of sovereignty and Smith's theory of value. Modern European sovereignty is capitalist sovereignty, a form of command that overdetermines the relationship between individuality and universality as a function of the development of capital (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 87).

The second half of the eighteenth century was remarkable as industrial interests were aroused in addition to commercial interests. While struggling with the restrictions of feudal guilds and local authorities, the absolutist state itself became a threat to the industrial interests since they called for the abolition of the state restrictions and prerogatives which resembled feudal/middle age order. Briefly, these brand new industrial interests demanded a completely free trade which did not allow for state intervention. Now that the capitalist interests became as strong as they were self-flowable, it was not necessary for the state to intervene the economic issues

anymore. The maxim of the industrial bourgeoisie became *laissez-faire, laissez-passer*.

The interests that emerged in the second age/the middle age of capitalism contradicted with the jurisprudential relations of the first age as well. Realizing this fact, the new theoreticians and thinkers established a brand new ideology, namely the *natural rights*. The starting point of this ideology was the individual rather than society. In other words, the individual was born with particular, natural, and inalienable rights. As it took part in the bill of rights in 1789, all the people were to live both independently and equally. Under the influence of the ideology of natural rights, economists established *liberal economics*. According to the new point of view, the state was only to protect the country from exterior threats rather than intervene economic processes. Proposing a neutralized position, this liberal conception of the state and economics rendered the state a *night watchman* and was, in Hegelian terms, a reaction (*negation*) to the mercantile state (Tökin, 1933: 33).

The changes in the structure of capitalism continued to take place until the end of the 19th century as a reaction to the old system. The source of these structural changes, according to Tökin, was the accumulation of capital, which was a consequence of free competition, individualism, or in brief, liberal economics. Giving some examples and specific numbers from Germany, Tökin underlined the growing influence of monopolist organizations such as cartels and trade unions (syndicates), which were evidence to the denial of individual enterprise. While monopolist views gained power against free competition, the state once again started to intervene in economic issues, which Tökin calls *neo-mercantilism*. Nevertheless, the only difference neo-mercantilism introduced was that it demanded that the state policy be determined by capitalist interests: “Once, the state used to rule the economy whereas it is now ruled by the latter” (1933: 35).⁴² The intervention of the state was obviously to protect its own cartels against the influence of foreign countries, which Tökin refers to as *cartel protectionism*. By protecting its own capitalist benefits and implementing colonial policies [müstemleke siyaseti], the neo-

⁴² Tökin cited this quote from Werner Sombart.

mercantile state tried to gain global economic power. To serve the interests of the finance capital, the state started to implement an aggressive imperialist policy, which formed the third phase of capitalism, namely **imperialism**.

A remarkable character of imperialism was that while the liberal economic policy was shrinking in the domain of national markets the imperialist states were forcing dominions to implement liberal policies. This was fair enough concerning the structure of capitalism; its expansion and free exploitation of the colonies demanded both the freedom of world markets and the abolition of customs walls.

Parallel to these developments, a brand new social class came to existence: the proletariat. Another factor which changed the liberal face of capitalism was the organization of this class which was getting crowded. Just as liberalism and natural rights theory were reactions to the fiscal etatism, socialism sprung in the form of a societal movement refuting the capitalist economic system. The interests of the proletariat were the core of this movement. Marx was the preminent theoretician of socialism, who scientifically showed that modern capitalist system was based on the exploitation of the working class. Therefore socialism should aim to abolish the capitalist system, which was based on exploitation. In this way, by liquidating private properties, a classless socialist society could be established. The state had already started to regulate sanitarian and economic issues in favor of the proletariat. In sum, the state, with the financial organizations on the one hand and with labor unions on the other, reverted to an organized regime instead of an individualistic and liberal one. In this phase, the state ceased to be a mere watchman of capitalist interests, becoming a means of governing economic and social processes in favor of and under the influence of certain interests (Tökin, 1933: 36).⁴³

As can be seen above, Tökin - and Kadro in general - were analyzing the development of the capitalist system not in a linear fashion, but depicting the perpetual tension between various interests. As can be followed from the

⁴³ Tökin, ideas of whom were briefly addressed for this study, discussed the development of the modern state in detail all along the journal. His articles usually included hard data and statistics.

development stages outlined by Tökin, the tension was between the monopolies or states, and the free market. The market is considered to be the key element and defining feature of capitalism when compared with feudalism and socialism. As previously stated, Kadro found the stage theory somewhat Eurocentric, which proposed the same linear development path for all the nations. The tension between monopolies and the market which Tökin brought up was quite different from the orthodox theoretical frame in which the market is the operator of capitalism.

It is a notable coincidence that another influential thinker and a historian, Fernand Braudel⁴⁴, made similar revisions of the existing orthodox thoughts within the works of Annales (Annals) school almost fifty years after Kadro Journal. What he tried to do was reformulate the relationship between the monopolies and the market. Braudel argued that it was the monopolies, which was the key element of historical capitalism, rather than the free market. This was quite contrary to the intellectual perspective of the time. Monopolies defined the capitalist system and distinguished capitalism from feudal society - and perhaps from an eventual world socialist system that has gone unnoticed up to now (Wallerstein, 1991: 203).

Wallerstein argues that both Adam Smith and Karl Marx agreed on one thing: competition which was immanent in capitalism. However, the monopolies were so exceptional that they were usually the largest accumulators of the capital who controlled the monopolies. Thus, controlling the monopolies required a political authority which would establish barriers in front of the market, impose excessive prices, and entice people to buy things they do not need at all. In this way, the state which created and controlled monopolies became the constitutive element of the capitalist system. The next step then determines the course of the debate, in which the following question is raised: Who will be the beneficiaries of the state inference? In fact, it is all about the continuous struggle of the benefits explained by Tökin,

⁴⁴ Fernand Braudel (1902-1985), French historian and author of various major works which affected many scholars. Braudel introduced new concepts such as *l'histoire structurelle* (structural historiography) and *longue durée* (historical time). Having led Annales school after the 2nd World War, Braudel became one of the most influential historians of the 20th century.

which in the final analysis tried to dominate and control the political power, and consequently, the monopoly created by it.

Braudel's approach to the two antagonistic worldviews of the nineteenth century, classical liberalism and classical Marxism, was as unusual as the Kadro writers'. Braudel disagreed with most liberals and Marxists that advocated the necessity of free and competitive market for capitalism. According to him, capitalism was the system of anti-market [*contre-marché*]. His reconceptualization of capitalism was, therefore, quite in contrast to the orthodox liberalist and orthodox Marxist thoughts, both of which proposed inevitable progress:

For liberals, when completed, this process would culminate in a sort of utopian apotheosis. For Marxists, when completed, this process would culminate in an explosion, which in turn would lead to new structures that would arrive at a sort of utopian apotheosis (Wallerstein, 1991: 216).

On the other hand, rather than a linear progression, Braudel saw it as a perpetual tension between the powers of monopoly and the forces of competitive markets which involved self-controlled economic activities.

4.3 The Distinctive Development Path of the East

Tökin's ideas reflect Kadro's general approach to the development of the capitalist state structure until the end of World War 1 and are clearly influenced by the Marxist analysis of the political economy. However, the dialectic materialist methodology of Kadro separates itself from orthodox Marxism hereafter, especially as to the claim of the universalism of class conflicts. As discussed in the universalism chapter, Kadro's main argument, which also contained universal claims, was that neither capitalism nor socialism could be universal for the entire world. Because the East or the colonized/semi colonized countries which constituted the largest portion of the world population did not trace the same development path as the western countries did. Thus, states, societal forms, institutions, and social classes are grounded on different realities in eastern states and societies. The most important

difference between these two entities (eastern and western states) emerges in the property relations.

Although Kadro explained the development of the capitalist state, it did not attempt to analyze the socio-economic formation of the Ottoman Empire. However, one of the strongest arguments of the journal, as seen in the former sections, was the dissemblance between the western and the eastern societies and states. All of their critiques of Eurocentrism assumed a kind of difference between those two categories. Based on this difference, Kadro formed its intellectual frame, through which it opposes both to capitalism and socialism. Since socialism was a reactionary outcome of capitalism, its origins belonged to Europe. In this sense, socialism was Eurocentric, too. Nevertheless, to make factual comparisons and to reach consistent findings, a thorough analysis of the development path of the East and the analysis of the Ottoman Empire at least had to be made. Without it, their claims to be "unlike" the East and the West were bound to be ignored eventually, let alone be worthy of being subjected to scientific investigation. However, Kadro writers evidently have hesitation analyzing the background of Turkey and the Ottoman state and society. Even so, the theses which supports the "uniqueness" of the Ottoman society and state (or its difference from the West) will briefly be examined to clarify the underlying differences between the East and the West. By this means, it will be easier to test the accuracy of Kadro's arguments about Eurocentrism.

The Ottoman system was different from the traditions of both Greek and German, which were based on a rulership involving private property ownership. It was also different from the Middle Age's feudal societies, in which feudal lords reigned and exploited the labor of villagers (Berkes, 1969: 25). What Berkes calls as Asia/Eastern Despotism⁴⁵ was neither feudal nor theocratic state, nor could it be explained in other

⁴⁵ In his voluminous work (The Development of Secularism in Turkey), Berkes gives etymological details on despotism. Although the word had come from ancient Greek, it was Hobbes who, for the first time, used the term properly to its substance. According to Hobbes, the source of the state was the power imposed on people which was based on seizure and conquests and which also was perceived as a heritage descending from father to son. In other words, the state was counted as 'father property'. Additionally, Hobbesian ideas on the source of power manifest themselves in Samir Amin's

western schemes. This state model involved a political power which relied on alienated subjects [yabancılaştırılmış kul kütlesi / devşirme sistemi]. This was contrary to the traditions of both classical Greek and feudal Western Europe (2015: 25). Berkes thinks that one of the most convincing explanation of this model was in the Introduction⁴⁶ of Ibn Khaldun. He showed us the despot reaches the ultimate level by creating a mass of subjects around him. These subjects were gathered from foreigners, outside the local society and outside the emperor's dynasty. Having been plucked from their roots, the subjects unconditionally served the despot (Berkes, 1969: 96). In despotic states like the Ottoman Empire, political power relied neither on land ownership nor on slaveholding. Rather, it relied on continuous conquests and pillages. What had utmost importance in such systems was the surplus value, which was confiscated by the emperor and which was utilized to feed the army and bureaucracy rather than invest in production.

The disconnection between state and society, which Berkes underlined as a typical characteristic of the despotic state model, is worth considering. Here, the state does not stem from a societal organism, rather it diverges from it. As communities do not have organic ties with states, they do not have any right or will against them, either. People or villagers were not included in politics and legislative affairs. Since the state was not based on people or classes, it did not represent the will of people. By this means, it lacked both the basis of and reliance on classes (Berkes, 1969: 54).

Another historian and thinker that tried to ascertain the difference between the east and the west was Kemal Tahir (1910-1973), who is a famous novelist in Turkey. When his opinions concerning the subject of this study are inspected, his efforts to create an original thesis attract attention. Being a Marxist, however, he tried to show that Ottoman Empire's development path was different from that of the western

arguments, as 'conqueror and extortioner state', discussed in his famous book, "Eurocentrism: Critique of an ideology".

⁴⁶ Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). "Mukaddime".

countries⁴⁷. Using the Marxist methodology, he conceptualized an east-west conflict paradigm aiming to clarify which special historical and societal processes outside of the west affected the development path of Ottoman society. Assuming the difference between eastern and western societies, Tahir showed that production and property relations of Ottomans differed completely from those of the western countries, and this is attributed to geographical and historical causes (Kaçmazoğlu, 2012: 10-11).

Like Berkes, Tahir thought that property relations of the nomad, slaver, feudal, mercantilist, bourgeoisie, or proletariat did not dominate the Ottoman society. He rejected the stage theory as Kadro did, claiming that the structure of the Ottoman society did not fit to the western schemes. Had it gone through any of the evolutionary steps of the west, it would have continued after all. The dissimilarity of its property relations to the western countries' indicates that Ottoman society was not a class society in the western meaning. Feudality, nobility, bourgeoisie, or property rights never existed in Ottomans. It was a 'state of employees' [memur devleti], which was governed centrally. Due to these reasons, the most important element in the west was the notion of class whereas it was the notion of the state in the east. Sanctity of property is crucial in the west while the sanctity of the state comes even before the religion in the east (Kaçmazoğlu, 2012: 12).

Since it was anti-feudal, the Ottomans were opposed to stratification, i.e. the accumulation of capital. According to Tahir, Ottomans could not found a class-state for two particular reasons. First, they were not comprised of one particular nation and they did not count any one of the nations as the dominant one. Second, Ottomans did not systematize exploitation to prevent stratification. These two peculiarities had accelerated both the expansion and the downfall of the empire.

Although it was an eastern country, the Ottoman Empire was neither adopted despotism nor was it fully based on an Asiatic mode of production. Given this, it could be concluded that Tahir is closer to ideas of Kadro and opposed to those of

⁴⁷ Tahir was a friend of Aydemir when Kadro journal was being published. A letter which shows that he thought like Aydemir with regard to his criticism of Aġaoġlu Ahmed was released in Tekeli and İlkin's book. See Tekeli & İlkin, 2003: 574.

Berkes. According to Tahir, the Ottoman *sultan* [emperor] was never a single-handed despot. It is noteworthy that Tahir uses the term 'despot' in its ancient Greek meaning unlike Berkes, who abstained from it. What Tahir defined as a triad structure ruling the country involved sultan, army, and *ulema* [scholars].

The sultan was one of the three elements of this structure in which any element could not claim superiority to one another. Besides, Ottoman structure did not represent a classical state of the Asiatic mode of production (AMP). In the Ottoman model, the property belonged to the God. The Sultan, the *khalifa* [representative] of the God, may rent lands to pretenders on behalf of the God. In return, he confiscates the surplus value, which would meet the needs of the state. People were the work force while the state was the administrative force. The state ensures the continuation of production by protecting people from foreign attacks in return for the taxes/surplus values it confiscated. In order for this system to continue, people give their residual values to the state. This structure of the state is defined as *kareem state* [gracious state]. The Ottoman society neither experienced feudal production relations, nor did it generate a bourgeoisie class. In other words, according to Tahir, not having feudality in the 14th century, the society did not accept bourgeoisie in 1839⁴⁸. Ottoman people were accustomed to live in a 'day-long' life basis since they had worked for peanuts. The *reaya* [society] found it unnecessary to know their gain or loss because they lacked both the consciousness of private property and the belief that they could save what they had earned. By drawing a picture of a classless society which is outside of and alienated to the state, Tahir seems to agree with Berkes, who concluded that Ottoman society was a static community.

Concerning the period in which the European influence was profound, especially the beginning of the 18th century, another important question, namely, nationalism arises. The emergence of the nation-states after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire does not exactly resemble the West European pattern of nation-state formation. Therefore, the different developmental patterns of Western and non-Western states

⁴⁸ A set of regulations had been enacted in 1839, under the name of Rescript of Gülhane [Tanzimat Fermanı]. These laws gave some restricted freedom in terms of private ownership.

are worth considering. However, a significant Western influence is evident in the formation of modern nation-states. In the Ottoman case, each of the newly formed nation-states was influenced by secular European nationalism by varying degrees. Nevertheless, it is hard to define Ottoman transformation as a process of pure Westernization in this context. Economic, religious, and political unrest together with Western influence played a vital role in this process. Additionally, the nationalities in the Ottoman Empire were grounded on both religious and ethnical communalities, each of which was called *millet* [nation].⁴⁹ The problem of nationality in the Ottoman state is a special form of nationalism, and thus is different from both the Western European and Asian and African examples (Tokluoğlu, 1995: 37).

Although there are slight differences between the ideas of the Kadro writers and those of the thinkers mentioned above, their opinions on the state, society, and classes are similar. Their criticism generally focused on misunderstandings which stemmed from attempts to analyze an eastern state/society by means of western concepts. Both Kadroists and the above thinkers were materialists in the sense that they all refused idealistic views which proposed same historical processes regarding eastern and western societies.

It was indicated in the above sections that Kadro wanted to position itself in a different place among other thought patterns. The dialectic method was a helpful tool for them to oppose to the deterministic ideal that all of the other nations and states would pass through the same route as the capitalist or the socialist nations and states did. Thus, Kadroists implemented the dialectic method to elaborate their considerations over the capitalist state, and this helped them generate a different projection about the future development of Turkey. They called this model as *national liberation etatism*⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ The term *millet* refers to a religious community.

⁵⁰ In "national liberation etatism," as Kadro argued, the state did not belong to any special class or act for the sake of any particular class. On the contrary, the state was run by a 'conscious cadre' who would act in favor of the nation and in the benefit of the whole nation. Kadro stated that the principles of "national liberation etatism" were the defense of national interests against foreign powers and ensuring that the national economy was functioned for the good of the whole nation.

4.4 Ziya Gökalp⁵¹ and Solidarism in Kadro Journal

Ziya Gökalp appears to be one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century. Indeed, some publications attribute to him the foundership of sociology in Turkey. As discussed in the previous chapters, the Ottoman-Turkish intellectuals contemplated solutions that would uphold the Empire. Gökalp (2017), especially after the First World War, was trying to reconcile the three important social-political thoughts which he had successfully formulated as “Turkization, Islamization, Modernization”. This short but influential text included his ideas on topics such as the emergence of Turkishness as an identity, language, culture, civilization, nationality, and Islam. Discussing all of Gökalp's ideas certainly exceeds the scope of this study. However, those related with the subject, Eurocentrism, will be discussed to a certain extent. For example, one of the articles written by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir about Gökalp⁵² will help clarify how Aydemir as a historical materialist saw the sociology of Gökalp. In particular, as it concerns the subject of the study, this section compares their outlook on the West.

Before attempting a further discussion it should be noted that Aydemir begins his article by expressing his admirations for Ziya Gökalp. According to him, many intellectuals of his time had somehow been influenced by Gökalp's ideas⁵³. Gökalp was truly unique at his time because he himself had made the history, philosophy, politics, poetry, and legend of the ideology he represented. He was not a mere imitator of the western schools of thought. Although he adopted the Durkheimian

⁵¹ Gökalp, Ziya(1876-1924). Turkish intellectual and sociologist. His studies adapted Durkheimian sociology to the social cases of Turkey. Preeminent figures of the Party of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki), and Republican intellectuals (and officials) had been influenced by his ideas.

⁵² Aydemir, 1932a.

⁵³ In his autobiographic book, *Suyu Arayan Adam* (The man seeking for the water), Aydemir tells about the long story of his Turkist years. As it may be expected, Gökalp is one of the most impressive figures in the sense that he inspired Turkist/Turanist ideas in Aydemir's thought. He had cited one of Gökalp's famous couplets to imply his ideas at that time : “Homeland for Turks is neither Turkey nor Turkistan/ Homeland is a great and perpetual country:Turan!...” [“Vatan ne Türkiye'dir Türklere, ne Türkistan/ Vatan, büyük ve müebbet bir ülkedir: Turan!...”] (Cited in Aydemir, 2004: 146.) The poem is written by Ziya Gökalp in 1911 (See in Gökalp, 2017: 64). However, as Tokluoğlu (2013: 121) argues, the poem actually belonged to Hüseyinzade Ali Bey. His poem, *Turan*, was published in 1906 in *Füyuzat* journal in Baku.

sociology in general terms, he did not attempt to use it directly on the social issues of Turkey. Rather, with the help of those foreign concepts, he tried to establish a ‘national social science’.

The experiences of long-lasting wars and subsequent defeats instilled nationalist thoughts into him:

Both the east and the west of the world clearly show us that this century is the century of nationalities; the most effective force on the consciences of this century is the ideal of nationality. [...] Turks, who, for the sake of keeping the elements of the empire together, said that ‘I’m an Ottoman, not a Turk’, had sadly understood that it was not enough to prevent the downfall of the empire (Gökalp, 2017: 15).

However, it should also be noted that Gökalp’s approach to the ideal of nationality did not stem from a romantic motivation. It was rather an outcome of historical-sociological realities that prevailed in the entire world. For instance, the below sentences might surprise Turkish nationalists to a large extent:

There is an inner germ that for a hundred years crumbled Ottoman Empire, which is the last hope for the world of Islam. This germ was the enemy of Ottomans up to now and it damaged to Islam, too. But today it tries to compensate its damages by turning in favor of Muslims. This germ is the idea of nationality (Gökalp, 2017: 77).

Gökalp developed a dualist conceptual analysis considering the relations with the west. This conceptual analysis was twofold: culture [hars] entailing an inner peculiarity each nation inevitably had and civilization [medeniyet] meaning a universal concept. Thus, there were changeable and unchangeable specialties for nations. Technology and the science of the European/western civilization, for example, could be adopted by Turks since these developments were the common property of all peoples. However, the culture was the cement of a nation, which could not be imported. It was specific and inherent to each nation. Thus, Gökalp rejected a full adaptation to the western civilization⁵⁴. In other words, modernization

⁵⁴ Berkes’ notes on Ziya Gökalp is worth considering here since they clarify Gökalp’s opinions vis-à-vis Eurocentrism. According to Niyazi Berkes, Gökalp thought that apart from primitive and primeval civilizations, there were also far-eastern, eastern, and western civilizations which were different from one another. Every civilization belonged to a distinct system. Thus, Turkish sociologists, on the one

was only possible if the elements of both Islam and Turkishness (nationality) were preserved. Concurrently, this ideal reflected an inclusive modernization. In the words of Aydemir, the essence of a nation, which was a discordant crowd up until that time living under a cosmopolitan regime, was processed by Gökbalp under the principle of “unity in language, in religion, and in will”. He gave the society a name, which had been forbidden even to utter up to that time. After finding its name, Gökbalp placed this nation among other nations, religious communities, and civilizations by making its legend, history, and sociology. Subsequently, he endeavored to establish the cultural and the moral principles for this historical category, which was Muslim in terms of religion, western in terms of civilization, and Turk in terms of nationality (Aydemir, 1932a: 34).

However, after the foundation of the new state, the Republic of Turkey, a new era started according to Aydemir. This period of revolution differentiated itself from Gökbalp's time in terms of politics, economics, philosophy, and so forth. The problems and conditions of the former were different from those of the latter. Some important political and social cases which Gökbalp had problematized were solved. Gökbalp belonged to the pre-First World War generation of Turkish intellectuals, whose demands for such social reforms as the unification of religious and non-religious education, women's participation in economic life, and secularization had already been realized by the Turkish revolution (Türkeş, 1998: 93). For instance, as Aydemir puts it, the trilogy of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism, or complex questions such as occidentalisation and orientalization, which had great importance in the minds of the intellectuals at that time, had clearly been solved by the realities of life.⁵⁵ Also, all the religious agents and the religion itself had fully separated from

hand, should determine which phase of social evolution Turkish nation involved in, and to which civilization Turks belonged to. On the other hand, by inspecting the social laws determining the development of societies, they should study eliminating those elements which prevent the Turkish nation to improve and progress (See Berkes, 2015: 248-249).

⁵⁵ Even though Aydemir thought that those matters mentioned above had lost their significance, there are plenty of articles and polemics written on those topics in *Kadro* journal. Even today in the 21st century, let alone losing their importance, the publications on the West/westernization problems hold a large place among studies of social sciences in Turkey.

the state mechanism in such a way that it would even serve as a model for all revolutions, including the Russian revolution. As far as the Turkish revolution, which aimed at advanced technology and homogenous and classless ["sınıfsız-tezatsız"] society, was concerned, the dichotomy of orientalizing-occidentalizing had lost its meaning. Therefore, as for Aydemir, the Turkish Revolution had already realized the ideals and superseded the views of Gökalp.

4.5 A Marxist Plea against Gökalp's Sociology

After a general overview of Gökalp, Aydemir criticizes his methodology. Even though he was a successful researcher of Durkheim, Gökalp was wrong when he had put Durkheimian 'social idealism' [içtimaî mefkûrecilik] against Marxist historical materialism. On the Marxism case, Gökalp had reached narrow and superficial outcomes that did not fit the sociology of Marxism, namely historical materialism.

Gökalp argued that all of the social events apart from the economic sphere were called "epiphenomena" [gölge hadiseler] by Marx. However, religion, morality, aesthetics, and so forth reflected the reality just as the economic events did. Thus, defining the former as the shadows of the economic domain meant ignoring the objective reality (2015: 100-101). Aydemir objects to this view of Gökalp and claims that there were no epiphenomena in historical materialism. On the contrary, relations of production, rather than ideals, played a crucial part in explaining social occurrences. Thus, in terms of reflecting the social realities, Gökalp's sociology lacked tangible and scientific evidence.

Yet another criticism Aydemir directed at Gökalp was his conception of the nation. Gökalp conceived of the nation as a voluntary unity with cultural, religious, linguistic, ethnic, and geographical properties. However, it was an impartial viewpoint, falling short of explaining the modern social structures. Aydemir gives the example of modern European nations to explain this limitation. Although their way of living had been historically, linguistically, and culturally different from each other two centuries ago, the dominant factor which stimulated the modern and integrated European development was the economic cooperation. Nevertheless, the

economic remarks did not play an important part in any of Gökalp's analyses (Aydemir, 1932a: 38).

Finally, Aydemir's critique on Gökalp focuses on his economic ideas, more precisely, on one of his chapters, Economic Turkism [İktisadî Türkçülük], of his famous work, *Fundamentals of Turkism* [Türkçülüğün Esasları]. Here, Gökalp's opinion on private ownership is under debate. Having accepted both etatism and individual enterprise, his ideas shifted closer to the government's. According to Aydemir, even if these ideas recalled etatism, they were not based on the realities of the republican Turkey⁵⁶. Now that new Turkey had abolished all the economic restrictions imposed by the western capitalist powers, it had to pursue a firm and revolutionary economic program based on the realities of the 'new society'. According to Kadro, this program was national liberation etatism [Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği]⁵⁷.

According to Gökalp, private ownership was possible only if it was based on social conscience. By this means, the social ideal of Turks was not abolishing private ownership, and it was preventing usurpation of social wealth by individuals. However, Gökalp's economic Turkism was far from being a transformative program in the sense that it was based on such an abstract concept as 'social conscience' [içtimaî vicdan]. It was not possible to call it an economic etatism, either. Aydemir

⁵⁶ It may be claimed that in this expression, Aydemir implicitly criticizes economic viewpoint of the government through Ziya Gökalp. Etatism conception of the former was more radical and firm one. Related with the liquidation process of the journal, Aydemir accused Celal Bayar (then minister of economy), Mahmut Soydan (MP of Siirt province), and some other figures as such. According to Aydemir's assertion, these liberal politicians and businessmen had changed Ataturk's mind against Kadro by disparaging it.

⁵⁷ As may be recalled, while rejecting universal claims of both capitalism and socialism, Kadro had offered another universalism, namely "national liberation movements". The economic program of this 'universal' regime was National Liberation Etatism.

regarded this line of thinking as a mere copy of ‘solidarism’, which represented itself in French socio-politic discourses.⁵⁸

However, it is not possible to state that Kadro explicitly rejected or accepted Durkheim's solidarism. The writers of the journal never commented on the solidarism of the Republican Peoples' Party (RPP). Apparently, Kadro abstained from commenting on Durkheim and solidarism probably because of a potential conflict with the RPP, which had adopted solidarism in its party program. As a matter of fact, throughout its existence, Kadro encountered tension between its own ideal and the existing official reality: Kadro may well have aspired to achieve a classless society, but the existence of social classes and the RPP's adoption of solidarism were the undeniable facts (Türkeş, 1998: 94).

Actually, after a careful reading of economic Turkism, it could be concluded that the solidarism of Gökâlp resembled a sort of romanticism, especially in economic matters. He offered a kind of ‘guild socialism’ [lonca sosyalizmi], which was a middle-age corporation that developed against the aggression of imperialism. He modernizes this outdated tradition by the idea of vocational representation which he took from Durkheimian solidarism. This standpoint reveals Gökâlp's imaginary and idealized worldview, which differed from the scope of socialist worldview. At the very least, his “socialism” was idealistic, rather than materialistic.⁵⁹ Becoming a nation could only be attained mentally according to Gökâlp, so he created ideals [mefkûre] for intellectuals only.

Overall, one can see that there are different understandings of Turkish modern thought. Gökâlp was, doubtlessly, one of the most influential thinkers for a particular

⁵⁸ Social solidarism is one of the key concepts of Durkheimian sociology. As being a follower of Durkheim, Gökâlp separated populism from Marxist socialism. In this way, Gökâlp brought populism together with solidarism [tesanütçülük] and vocational representation (See Berkes, 2018: 212).

⁵⁹ It should be stated that Gökâlp's opinion on socialism was rather negative: "If there is an idea contrary to the national interests of Turks, that is undoubtedly socialism. Because it's the enemy of the idea of nationality. Yet, only the latter can save Turks from annihilation. In addition to this, socialism stems from the great industry. However, Turks did not proceed insomuch as to create that industry" (Gökâlp, 2017: 60-61).

time. It could be claimed that even Kadroists were influenced by his ideas. With respect to Eurocentrism, however, Gökalp and Kadro thought differently. In fact, maintaining the Turkish culture was more of a Kadroist principal. However, while keeping their culture, Turks had to adopt western civilization according to Gökalp⁶⁰. This dualist outlook was criticized by Kadro:

Ziya Gökalp distinguished culture from civilization. He said that civilization was universal while culture was rather national. The events do not falsify Gökalp's opinions. [...] For instance, in Japan, a primitive culture can live with an advanced, sophisticated civilization. We can follow Gökalp thus far. However, when we attempt to define culture and civilization as different categories from each other, there are many contiguous issues that we hardly separate. If the civilization meant the triumph of humankind over nature, how can we call culture other than being the accumulation of rational agents that had made it possible? [...] It is obvious that separating those two concepts, culture and civilization, becomes harder gradually (Karaosmanoğlu, 1933: 25).⁶¹

Karaosmanoğlu thus makes a direct connection between culture and civilization. Therefore, by giving the example of Japan, he tries to show us that even if it seemed to belong to European civilization, the advanced technology could flourish in a far eastern country. Certainly, the sign of being a developed country was to have advanced technology, rather than having democracy, freedoms, etc. for Karaosmanoğlu and for Kadro in general. From this viewpoint, Gökalp's ideas were Eurocentric when compared to Kadro's point of view in the sense that, for the former, Europe symbolized the sole civilization that Turks should adopt. For the Kadro writers, however, it was essential to have advanced methods and technology. Thus, it was unnecessary to draw a solid line between culture and civilization. To put it more precisely, making culture the focus of a developed civilization was an idealistic attitude. In fact, it was the production relations based on an advanced technology that created civilization.

⁶⁰ Europe is a significant category of civilization in Gökalp's thought. It should be remembered that he had indicated Europe as the sole example of civilization for 'Muslim Turks'.

⁶¹ It should be noted that Karaosmanoğlu was the only member of the journal who did not come from the Marxist tradition of thought.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study created arguments around the concept of Eurocentrism in Kadro Journal by examining the articles and polemics it published. Since the concept commonly has negative connotations through the West or the process of westernization- one of the controversial topics in Turkish intellectual history, it is significant to understand the phases of the intellectual accumulation of the Turkish socio-political life. This study intends to show that Kadro movement is more prominent than the movements of thought, which emerged after the *Tanzimat Fermanı* [Proclamation of Imperial Edict of Gulhane] and were kept alive until the 1930s.

The results of this study demonstrated that the ideological existence of Kadro was based upon its discourse, which mainly involved an opposition to the West. Kadro manifested its stance against the West in an article by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir titled “Liquidation of Europacentrism” (Aydemir, 1932b). By this article, he challenged the Eurocentric historiography, in which the Turkish nation was excluded from human civilization. Eurocentric historiography excluded not only Turks but also the non-Western societies in general because this approach claimed that these societies had never contributed to the development of human civilization. Thus, the Europeans were to be the creators of the history, and the history was to be written only for them whereas the non-Europeans had to be counted as ahistorical entities. When all the non-European elements of the human civilization were excluded, the answer to the question of how Europe dominated the world was searched in the traditions of ancient Greek. Whether it was the rediscovery of the "Greek miracle" which paved the way for European domination is a popular scholarly debate even today. Though never explicitly stated, Kadro’s answer to this

question was affected by the Marxist critique of the European political economy, and it was quite simple and direct. It was neither the Greek/European miracle nor the cultural heritage of the peoples of Europe. Rather, it was the outcome of the relations of production (i.e., industrial revolution) which ultimately led to a clash of interests in the West and subsequently throughout the entire world.

Kadro's criticism of Eurocentrism involves two complementary aspects. First, they regarded European historiography to be Eurocentric because it focused its approach on the European peoples, excluding other national elements. This particularistic aspect of Eurocentric historiography did not only manifest itself by doing so. It also ignored the potential interactions and cultural transitivity between states and peoples. In brief, this particularistic nature of the European historiography was severely criticized by Kadro writers.

Additionally, some efforts were being made to create a Turkish History Thesis when Şevket Süreyya Aydemir wrote the aforementioned text, which seemed more than a coincidence. However, that the criticism regarding the European historiography was a political tool which enabled the Kadro writers to be approved by the elites of the regime would be a sweeping statement. This view, which is also asserted in some academic studies, does not fully reflect the reality. In fact, Aydemir's previous writings in various platforms at different times show that he had already had a clear conception of the subject well before the publication of Kadro Journal, and after all, the writers in general seem to have a similar understanding of the related subject.

The other element of Eurocentrism criticized by Kadro was its claim to be universal. This study showed that Kadro writers did not oppose to universalism ontologically. Their objection was to the Eurocentric universalism. However, while rejecting both liberalism and communism, since they were Eurocentric social theories, they suggested another seemingly universal theory, namely national liberation movement.

The arguments offered in the journal indicated that the concept of Eurocentrism was one of the most effective tools Kadro employed to differentiate itself from other movements of thought. For instance, when the journal was accused of being fascist, the writers systematically used anti-western rhetoric, which had prevailed in both the Ottomanist and the Islamist thoughts since the Tanzimat reform era. Another example was the texts including counter-arguments against the liberal theses. As was examined in this study, the polemics which were written against liberalist thinkers accused the latter of being mediocre imitators of the West. However, according to the Kadroist thought, for the new Republican Turkey of the 1930s, the technological advancement and societal development were much more important than such ideals as democracy and freedom.

Kadroist criticism of Eurocentrism and the Islamist rhetoric sometimes had similar elements in that both views had some sort of reactive outlook on the West. Unlike the Islamist thinkers, however, in none of these criticisms did Kadro attempt to romanticize the long past nor did they dream of turning back to the good old days of the so called *asr-ı saadet* [golden age]. Their efforts towards generating solutions were always in accordance with the circumstances of the time. They believed in a reasonably foreseeable future, rather than trying to revive the imaginary good old days.

As might be expected, Kadro was criticized by the left, though; they hesitated to touch upon those leftist criticisms in detail. Instead, they simply stated that they knew Kadro journal was accused of being a renegade because of the Marxist backgrounds and pro-government articles of the writers. Interestingly, the critique of Eurocentrism was found to be a crucial agent also in helping Kadroists to reject the Marxist claims of universality since the Marxist critique of political economy was based on the European factual circumstances. Unlike the Ottomanist and Islamist rhetorics, Kadro seems to have benefited from the Turkist/nationalist discourse when opposing to the universalist claims of Marxism.

The above arguments could lead to the conclusion that Eurocentrism was instrumentalized by the Kadro writers. However, this would only be partially correct considering their justifications against accusations. On the other hand, the role of this semi-political instrumentalization should not be overestimated, or else it can overshadow the intellectual content of those arguments. For an accurate content analyses and a better focus on the subject matter of this study, it was necessary to find out how Kadro could generate such original and systematic arguments.

The findings of this study showed that the originality of the ideas put forward in the journal stemmed partly from the individual experiences of the writers. Most of the Kadro writers had met various intellectual cornerstones from nationalism to socialism, so they were well-equipped to test the validity of the social theories with the geopolitical and societal realities of their time. By the help of such complementary faculties of the Kadro writers, as well as their several different intellectual formations, they were able to elude the trap of naivety which Ottomanist and Westernist thinkers had fallen into. They were also realistic to the extent that they had to put an end to their Pan-turanist dreams under the coercion of the realities. Once for all, by objecting to the universality claims of class conflict, the most important argument of Marxism, they tried to create brand new, original, and realistic solutions for the problems of Republican Turkey.

The idea of total independence, which Kadro saw as the most crucial goal to be attained, was only possible if Turkey could have its own advanced technology and if Turkey could gain its economic independence. As for the former, the role model was undoubtedly the West. However, it was not possible to reach such an advanced level by what the Turkish liberals advocate, i.e. imitating the Western norms and codes. To become an entirely developed nation, the individuals were to be aware of their own historical roots. Therefore, although it was belated, people became aware that Turkish identity was crucial to gain self-confidence and to become a nation. Nevertheless, this identity never claimed superiority to any other nation, nor did it propose imperial or irredentist visions similar to those of the Pan-Turkists. In addition, Kadro sharply differentiated between the West and the East, each of which

had its own state types, societal formations, norms, and other realities. Besides, it was easy to anticipate the imperial aims of the West regarding the East by a realistic historical analysis. Consequently, Kadro writers were well aware of the need for an original fulcrum to resist the aggression of the Western imperialism. Nonetheless, this fulcrum was not to be searched in the origins of the Islam or in the traditions of the past. Rather, it was to be derived from the realities of the time being which would also present solutions for the future.

Clearly, Kadro drew on various movements of thought but never was aligned with one particular group. For this reason, some researchers found the journal eclectic. However, partly because of this eclecticism, Kadro could create original arguments resembling to the discourse of Dependency school almost thirty years earlier. Emerging in the historical studies concerning the Latin America in the 1960s, the Dependency Theory became a popular conceptual tool for understanding the countries which were called "underdeveloped", "backward", or "third world" countries. Rejecting the Eurocentric modernization theories, the Dependency Theory proposed that an economic development would be impossible in Latin America, as long as the political and economic relations with the developed countries prevailed. As this study showed, the theses of Kadro were not less sophisticated than that of the Dependency Theory. Similar to the theoreticians of Dependency, Kadro writers saw the essential contradiction in external factors rather than internal affairs. The problem primarily stemmed from the external system of exploitation rather than the historical process and societal structure.

Another original discourse generated by Kadro manifested itself in its perception of the development of capitalism. As discussed previously, the point that Europe had reached at the beginning of the twentieth century was never counted as a final stage by Kadro. Nor was it the "end of the history". Kadroists saw the development of capitalism as a perpetual process, in which reciprocal interests and cyclical powers had continuously competed with each other.⁶² This study also showed that one of the

⁶² Tökin's article (1933) which was taken as the central text for this section consisted substantially the ideas of Werner Sombart. However, some ideas of Lenin (Imperialism, The Highest Stage of

influential thinkers of the Annales School, Fernand Braudel, has expressed similar views on the development of capitalism nearly fifty years later. Braudel's reconceptualization of capitalism was quite divergent from the orthodox liberalist and orthodox Marxist thoughts. Just like Kadro, Braudel's view on capitalism was based on a historical accumulation which entailed various competitive interests.

The issue of dialectic materialism, for which Kadro overtly declared its affinity, is probably the most obvious element that any reader may notice when glancing through the journal. However, the results of this study suggested that it might be their dialectic materialism which linked Kadro to the theses of Dependency Theory and the ideas of Fernand Braudel as to their analyses of world affairs. It was their use of dialectic method which helped them test the theories against the realities of their time. Thus, the dialectic materialism probably helped them generate sophisticated but both observable and testable theories rather than deterministic grand theories, which are impossible to be falsified.

Many studies argue that, while adopting materialism as a methodology, Kadro writers tried to distance themselves from Marxist social theories. A major characteristic of Kadro concerning this issue is its objection to the universal claims immanent in the dichotomy of bourgeoisie-proletariat, a central argument of Marxist grand theory. Some researches and theses suggest that Kadro writers had diverged from the Marxist essence of the materialism because they were in search of a political legitimation, which they hoped to be granted by the leading figures of the regime.⁶³

However, as might be inferred from the life stories outlined in Chapter Two, almost all of the Kadro writers had been influenced by nationalist worldviews before they participated in socialist movements. Their minds had been shaped by the realities of the last years of the Empire and the World War One. Obviously, they did

Capitalism) manifest themselves in the final analysis, though their source was never openly acknowledged.

⁶³ Yanardağ's arguments about this issue might be seen as an example of the mentioned thought (See Yanardağ, 2008: 128).

not give up nationalist ideals even after taking part in socialist movements. Therefore, it can be concluded that it was the pressing realities of the time which caused them to do so, rather than an effort to gain political shelter. Thus, Kadro journal in a way tried to show the Turkish intelligentsia that both the liberal capitalist and Marxist socialist grand theories were questionable and testable. Those theories should be subjected to the historical context and social realities for every special conjuncture. It was the only way to understand if the theory worked properly or not.

The final section analyzed the ideological consistency of the Kadro Journal to elucidate to what extent the Kadroist worldview came to terms with that of the state officials, who had adopted Ziya Gökalp's solidarism within a positivist perspective. To this end, the ideas of Kadro with regard to Gökalp were inspected. The results showed that Kadroists adopted the nationalist ideas which were carefully formed by Gökalp. However, their approach to the societal problems and vision of future differed from Gökalp's solidarism since the latter reflected the pre-War scene of Turkey.⁶⁴ However, the realities of the post-War era, Kadro argued, could not be explained, and the problems of the young Republic, therefore, could not be solved by the model which Gökalp had introduced.

Although particular interactions could be observed within each thought, ideas of neither Gökalp nor Kadro were fully adopted by the regime. One claim was that Kemalist westernism put its "excessive modernist" program into practice by abandoning Gökalp's separation of 'culture and civilization'. In this way, Islamism and Turanism were the losers while the Westernism was the only winner (Emiroğlu, 2015: 310). This was partially accurate as it states that the separation of culture and civilization was liquidated. However, since the aim of the norms and codes adopted from European countries was to gather people under a national identity, the

⁶⁴ It should be noted that concepts such as solidarism and occupational representation were highly adopted and promoted by the founders of the Republic. In one of the speeches, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk states that, "One of our fundamental principles is to define our society as the totality of various occupations in terms of division of labour, rather than divided into antagonistic social classes" (See "Atatürkçülük- I", Turkish General Staff, Milli Eğitim Press, 1988, p.95).

committed revolutionary actions in the early Republican period cannot be considered as pure Westernism.⁶⁵

Kadroist discourse displayed traces of affinities with particular movements of thought such as Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism, each of which had prevailed in the intellectual life of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Nevertheless, it is hard to say Kadro affiliated itself to any of those movements completely. As the results of this study show, their critique of Eurocentrism focused on various elements of the aforementioned trends of thought. In this way, Kadro tried to show its readers that the grand theories such as Liberalism, Fascism, and Socialism were Eurocentric, i.e., schematic formulations were generated solely for the European, or the developed/industrialized countries, and they did not have the ability to reflect the development path of Turkey. Therefore, they used the dialectic method for both analyzing the historical realities of Turkey and testing the accuracy of the pre-existing social models. Within this frame, they tried to generate a "third way" besides capitalism and socialism, namely *Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği* [National Liberation Etatism], which proposed a rapid industrial development, as well as an extensive and advanced technology. Having no imperial visions at all, Kadro writers argued that this model could only be applied by the coercive power of the state.

Since the end of the journal, the intellectuals have been producing various opinions concerning the Turkish revolution. As Aydemir (2011: 11) acknowledged in 1968, it can barely be asserted that the Kadroist theses were adopted by the majority of the Turkish intelligentsia. Some concepts such as “classless society”⁶⁶ [sınıfsız-tezatsız millet] are not only reductionist future visions, but they also indicate that Kadro writers cannot help considering some problems within the frame of idealism, even if they criticized it. Nevertheless, it is a notable fact that some core

⁶⁵ According to Berkes, it was Atatürk who anticipated that there were some elements hindering to become a nation in the concept of culture [*hars*]. Therefore, partly with the enforcement of him, the Swiss civil code was adopted. This was neither a westernization move nor was it a civilizing moment. In fact, it was becoming a nation in terms of the legal system (See Berkes, 2018: 220).

⁶⁶ The intellectual foundations of this notion might be followed in Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit [Phänomenologie des Geistes](1976), whom the Kadro writers both criticized and adopted from time to time.

arguments such as the dichotomy of metropolis-colony, the notion of economic independence, development proposals, and national liberation etatism had found voice in the Kadroist discourse almost thirty years before they became known within the works of the Dependency school. Therefore, it might be argued that Turkish intelligentsia had missed the opportunity to introduce those new sets of concepts in international intellectual space because they ignored the Kadroist theses.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKKÇE ÖZET

Batı ile ilişkiler kavramı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son birkaç yüzyılına etki eden ve aynı zamanda modernleşme sürecini de işaret eden bir tarihsel süreci tanımlamaktadır. Aynı kavram bugünün Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin gerek dış politikası gerekse siyasî tarihi açısından da önemini korumaktadır. Burada Batı ile kurulan ilişki, Batının Osmanlı devleti açısından bir sorun olarak tanımlandığı on yedinci yüzyıl başlarından itibaren günümüze değin gelen süreci kapsamaktadır. Bu süreç, Osmanlı devletinin Avrupalı devletler karşısında uğradığı bir dizi askerî yenilgi ile başlamış, ülkeye davet edilen Avrupalı askerî uzmanların nezaretinde ilkin Osmanlı ordusunun modernleştirilmesi çabaları öne çıkmıştır. 1839 tarihli Tanzimat Fermanı ile Avrupa kurum ve normlarını hedefleyen bir dizi modernleşme hamlesine girişilmiş, devletin yörüngesi siyasî, kültürel ve ekonomik alanlarda Avrupa eksenli bir düzleme oturtulmuştur. Batı ile ilişkilerin ve modernleşme hamlelerinin Osmanlı devleti açısından öngörülemeyen iki sonucu olmuştur: Birincisi, verilen ekonomik imtiyazlar sebebiyle modern bir devlet olmaktan ziyade Batı sanayisi için ucuz fiyatlarla hammadde üreten bir uydu devlet haline gelinmiştir. İkinci olarak, modernleşmek amacındaki İmparatorluk, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda yine Batı ülkeleriyle savaşmak zorunda kalmış ve ağır bir yenilgi alarak parçalanmıştır.

Tüm bu tarihsel süreci irdeleyen akademik ve bilimsel çalışmalar, Türkiye sosyal bilim literatürünün de önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmaktadır. Adına modernleşme veya Batılılaşma, ne denirse densin, sürecin hiç de amaçlanmayan bir dağılma ve parçalanma ile sonuçlanması, Batı'ya/Avrupa'ya karşı bir tepki doğurmuştur. Yaklaşık iki yüz elli yıllık bir tarihi olan Batı karşıtı söylemin bugün dahi çeşitli biçimlerde sürebiliyor olması enteresan bir toplumsal araştırma konusu

olarak belirmektedir. Bu çalışmada, sözü edilen tepkinin, erken Cumhuriyet döneminde hayat bulmuş olan *Kadro* dergisindeki tezahürü ele alınacaktır.

Kadro, 1932-1934 yılları arasında yayımlanmış, aylık bir düşünce dergisidir. Daha çok iktisadî konular hakkında yazılmış olsa da reelpolitik ve uluslararası siyasete ilişkin analizler de kendisine yer bulmuştur. Derginin çıkış bildirisinde, Türkiye'de bir devrimin yaşanmakta olduğu, ancak bu devrimin sistematik bir programa ve ideolojiye sahip olmadığı iddia edilmekte ve bu boşluğu doldurmak amacıyla yayın yapılacağı belirtilmektedir. Bu amaçla her sayıda, düzenli olarak "İnkılabın İdeolojisi" başlığı altında makaleler yayımlanmıştır. Bu makaleler Şevket Süreyya Aydemir tarafından kaleme alınmıştır. Aydemir aynı zamanda çeşitli yazarlarla fikir tartışmalarının yapıldığı polemik yazıları da kaleme almıştır. Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Burhan Asaf Belge, Vedat Nedim Tör, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin ve Mehmet Şevki Yazman, *Kadro* dergisinin diğer yazarlarıdır. Karaosmanoğlu genellikle edebiyat ve kültür konularında yazmıştır. Belge ve Tör güncel politika ve ekonomi konularında yazılar kaleme almışlardır. Tökin ise toplumsal ve ekonomik analizler ile teorik konular üzerinde durmuştur. Yazman, dergiye sonradan katılmış olan bir Mühendis Yüzbaşı olup güncel ekonomi ve üretim meseleleri üzerinde durmuştur.

Tüm yazarların izlenim ve yaşam tecrübeleri itibarıyla milliyetçilik ve Turan fikirlerinden belli ölçülerde etkilendiklerini söylemek mümkündür. Sadece *Kadro* yazarlarının değil, dönemin pek çok entelektüelinin milliyetçi söylemi paylaştığı iddia edilebilir. Bunun çeşitli sebepleri olmakla birlikte en önemlisi, Gökalp'in de dile getirdiği gibi, çağın milliyetler çağı olmasıdır. Dünyanın, özellikle Avrupa'nın hemen her yerinde milliyetçilik fikirleri yükselmekte, ulus kimliklerine dayalı üniter devletler oluşmaktaydı. Osmanlı imparatorluğunun Balkanlarda yaşadığı büyük ve hazin kayıplar bu fikirleri güçlendirmekteydi. Ancak, *Kadro* yazarlarının ilginç serüvenleri onları Turancılık ve milliyetçilikten sonra bir de sosyalizm mücadelesiyle tanıştırmıştır. Hayat öykülerinden takip edebildiğimiz kadarıyla, Karaosmanoğlu ve Yazman hariç diğer tüm Kadrocular Moskova'da bulunmuş, sosyalist liderlerle

tanışmış, Türkiye Komünist Partisi (TKP) ve yayın organlarında yöneticilik de dahil olmak üzere pek çok görev almışlardır.

Karaosmanoğlu, derginin imtiyaz sahibidir. Başlangıçta, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Genel Sekreteri Recep Peker'den dergi için onay alınmaya çalışılmıştır. Ancak Peker, inkılâbın ideolojisini yapmak görevinin partiye ait olduğunu söyleyerek dergi için onay vermemiştir. Bunun üzerine Karaosmanoğlu, doğrudan Atatürk'e başvurmuş ve biraz da aralarındaki yıllara sâri dostluğun etkisiyle dergi için gerekli izni alabilmiştir. Derginin yayın hayatına başlamasında olduğu gibi son bulmasında da Karaosmanoğlu araç kılınmıştır. Kendisinin Zoraki Diplomat'ta (2018) anlattığına göre, yurtdışına elçi olarak atanması, iktidarın derginin kapatılması yönündeki iradesini göstermekteydi.

Kadro dergisi, ontolojisini Avrupamerkezcilik (Eurocentrism) olarak tanımladığı birtakım politik, ideolojik, sosyal ve kültürel önkabullerin eleştirisi üzerinden kurmaktadır. Bu kavram, 1930'lu yıllar düşünüldüğünde, hem ulusal hem de uluslararası literatür için oldukça yenidir. İlk kullanımına 1925 yılında, Alman jeopolitikçi Karl Haushofer'in kitabında "Europazentrish" olarak rastlanmaktadır. Bu tarihten yedi yıl sonra ve Türkiye yazını açısından ilk olarak Şevket Süreyya Aydemir (1932e) Kadro dergisinde "Europacentrism'in Tasfiyesi" adıyla bir makale yayımlamıştır. Dünya literatürü açısından da Avrupamerkezciliğin ilk kavramsallaştırma örneklerinden biri sayılabilecek bu makale ve dergideki benzer diğer yazılarda öne sürülen tezler, neredeyse otuz yıl sonra, Bağımlılık Okulu ve Latin Amerika üzerinde yapılan çalışmalarda öne sürülen fikirlerle önemli benzerlikler göstermektedir. Bu açıdan Kadro'da yapılan birtakım analizlerin öncü ve son derece orijinal olduklarını iddia etmek hatalı olmayacaktır. Kadro dergisinde dile getirilen fikirler ve yapılan analizler, derginin yayınına son verildikten sonra da entelektüel alanda etkisini sürdürmüştür. Bu fikir ve düşünceler bütünü, daha sonra Kadro hareketi olarak adlandırılmıştır.

Kadro dergisi hakkında bugüne kadar bir çok çalışma yapılmıştır. Bunlar arasında büyük çoğunluğu derginin ve yazarların ideolojik konumlarını ortaya

koymak veya politik tutumlarını eleştirmek gibi çabalar oluşturmaktadır. Bunların dışında, Kadro ile ilgili bugüne değin yapılmış en kapsamlı çalışma İlhan Tekeli ve Selim İlkin (2003)'in çalışmasıdır. Bu çalışma bir yönüyle derginin tarihini ve yazarların hayat hikayelerini kapsayan çok yönlü bir kültür tarihi çalışmasıdır. Mustafa Türkeş'in (1998, 2001, 2009) makaleleri de konuyla ilgili detaylı bilgi sunan, zengin içerikli çalışmalardır. Diğer önemli bir çalışma Merdan Yanardağ'a (2008) aittir. Yanardağ'ın lisansüstü tez konusu Kadro hareketidir. Daha sonra kitap olarak da yayımlanan bu tez, Kadro'nun soldan bir eleştirisi olarak okunabilir. Her ne kadar ayrıntılı bilgi üretseler de, bu çalışmalarda Kadro'nun büyük önem atfettiği "Avrupamerkezciliğin eleştirisi" üzerinde yeterince durulmamıştır.⁶⁷ Bu çalışmada, literatürdeki bu eksiklik giderilmeye çalışılmıştır. Çalışmada metot olarak söylem analizi benimsenmiştir. Bu kapsamda konuyla ilgili dergide yayımlanmış yazılar birincil odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. İkinci olarak, Kadro'da yayımlanan ve bu araştırmanın konusunu ilgilendiren yazılara karşı kaleme alınmış eleştirel yazılar ve polemikler de çalışmanın kapsamına alınmıştır. Son olarak, yazarların yaşam öyküleri, kişisel izlenim ve deneyimleri de dikkate alınmıştır.

Benimsenen metot izlenirken Mills'in "sosyolojik tahayyül" olarak ortaya koyduğu çerçeve gözardı edilmemeye çalışılmıştır. Giddens'in altını çizdiği gibi, bu çerçeve tarihsel bağlam ve eleştirel hassasiyet gibi unsurlardan oluşmaktadır. Bu sebeple, çalışma öncelikle tarihsel bağlamına oturtulmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu maksatla, çalışılan dönemin, yani 1930'ların iç ve dış gelişmeleri kısaca hatırlatılmış ve Kadro dergisinin hangi politik ve toplumsal şartlarda hayat bulduğu kısaca anlatılmıştır. Çalışmada ulaşılan sonuçlar tartışılırken, tarihsel bağlamın zorunlu kıldığı ve sosyolojik imgelemin temel unsurlarından olan eleştirel hassasiyete mümkün olduğunca riayet edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bugünün politik referanslarıyla 1930'larda hayat bulmuş bir dergi hakkında peşin hükümler koymak elbette bilimsel çabanın dışındadır. Aynı zamanda, tarihsel bağlamı gözardı edip olaylar arasındaki nedensellik ilişkisini yok saymak, hatalı sonuçlara sebep olacağından bu hususta da

⁶⁷ Ömer Turan (2012)'in doktora tezi Avrupamerkezcilik konusunu işleyen detaylı bir çalışma olup Kadro Dergisi ile ilgili kısmî bilgi de mevcuttur.

gerekli özen gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma politik-ideolojik yargılarda bulunmaktan çok, Kadrocu söylemi anlamaya çalışmıştır.

Avrupamerkezcilik (Eurocentrism), tarihin merkezine Avrupa'yı koyan, tüm dünya tarihini Avrupa kıtasındaki devletlerin tarihiyle sınırlayan; toplumların merkezine ise Avrupa'da yaşayan milletleri koyan ve burada üretilen (politik, ekonomik, kültürel ve sosyal) norm ve sistemlerin tüm dünya devlet ve milletleri için geçerli, gerekli ve evrensel olduğunu iddia eden tutum ve ön kabulleri ifade etmek için kullanılan bir kavramdır. Bu tanımdan da anlaşılacağı üzere, Avrupamerkezciliğin iki temel unsuru bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki tarih yazımı (historiography), ikincisi ise evrensellik (universalizm) iddiasıdır. Avrupamerkezci tarih yazımı, insanın ve uygarlığın tarihini Avrupa'da başlatmakta, tarihin bütün ilerleyişini Avrupalı toplumların ilerleyişi olarak sunmaktadır. Bu tarihsel çerçevenin üzerine kurulan Avrupamerkezci evrenselcilik ise, Avrupa'da üretildiğini iddia ettiği sistem, kural ve değerlerin tüm insanlık için geçerli ve kaçınılmaz olduğu iddiasındadır. Çalışmada gösterildiği üzere Kadrocu söylem, yukarıda açıklanan teorik çerçeve üzerinden Avrupamerkezcilik kavramsallaştırması geliştirmekte, daha sonra da bunun sistematik bir eleştirisini yapmaktadır. Bu kavramlaştırma ve kurulan söylem, 1930'lu yıllar dikkate alındığında son derece orijinal olduğu kadar, Kadrocu söylemi diğer düşünce hareketlerinden ayıran en temel özelliklerden biridir. Bu sebeple çalışmanın ilk kısmı (3'üncü bölüm) Avrupamerkezciliğin dergide nasıl kavramlaştırıldığı ve hangi boyutlarıyla eleştirildiğinin bir analizi olarak görülebilir.

İkinci kısımda ise (4'üncü bölüm) Kadro yazarlarınca benimsenmiş metot olan diyalektik materyalizm ve bu çerçevede yapılan analizlerin özgün olup olmadığı mercek altına alınmıştır. Kadro dergisi, daha ilk sayılarında diyalektik materyalizmi metot olarak benimsediğini duyurmaktadır. Aynı zamanda derginin iddiası, Cumhuriyet devrimlerinin ideolojik programını oluşturmaktır. Ancak burada problem, Cumhuriyet devrimlerini yapan kadroların materyalizmden çok pozitivizmi ve Ziya Gökalp'te temsil olunan Durkheimci dayanışmacılık (solidarism)'ı benimsemiş olmalarıdır. Öyleyse Kadro yazarları söylemlerini tutarlı bir zeminde nasıl kurabilmiştir? Bu, önemli bir sorudur ve cevaplanmaya çalışılmıştır. Sonuç

bölümünde, yukarıda bahsi geçen her iki kısım ile ilgili ortaya çıkan sonuçlar tartışılmıştır.

1930'lu yıllar, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın yıkımları üzerine kurulmuş dünya ekonomi-politiğinin tıkanıp, öngörülebilir olmaktan giderek çıkan, Avrupa'da artan silahlanma ve politik istikrarsızlık sebebiyle iki savaş arasındaki belirsizlik dönemidir. 1929'da ortaya çıkan Büyük Buhran, dünyayı olduğu gibi Türkiye'yi de olumsuz etkilemiştir. Hızla kötüleşen ekonomik durum, Avrupa'da otoriter-totaliter politik söylemlerin halk nazarında itibarını artırmakta, demokratik söylemin alanı ise giderek daralmaktadır. Aynı dönemde Türkiye'de 1923 İzmir İktisat Kongresi'nde benimsenen görece liberal ekonomi perspektifinin de gözden düştüğünü, sanayileşme planlarının yapıldığını, nihayet 1931'de Devletçilik ilkesinin Anayasa'ya eklendiğini gözlemlemekteyiz. Avrupa'nın yeni bir paylaşım savaşına doğru koşar adım gittiği o yıllarda, siyasî bağımsızlığını kazanmış genç Cumhuriyet bir yandan iktisadî gelişme için çabalamakta diğer yandan da dünyanın hür ve eşit uluslarından biri olma çabasındadır. Bu sonuncu amaç, yani uluslaşma ülküsü çerçevesinde Türk Tarih Tezi isimli bir çalışma da yürütülmektedir. Kadro dergisi, yukarıda kısaca özetlenen iç ve dış olayların, koşulların içinde yayın hayatına başlamıştır.

Kadro hareketini diğer düşünce hareketlerinden ayıran en önemli özellik onun, söyleminin merkezine Avrupamerkezciliğin eleştirisini koymuş olmasıdır. Bunun için önce bir kavramlaştırmaya ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Bu kavramın Kadrocu söylemdeki yeri ve önemi nedir? Kadro neden böyle bir dünya görüşüne ihtiyaç duymuştur? Bu ve benzeri sorular, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir (1932b)' in "Europacentrism'in Tasfiyesi" isimli makalesinde cevap bulmaktadır. Dahası bu yazı, gerek Türkiye gerekse uluslararası entelektüel alan için Avrupamerkezciliğin ilk kavramsallaştırma denemelerinden, örneklerinden biridir. Bu yazıda Aydemir, yüzyıllar önce yanlış olduğu ispatlanmış Geocentrism (Yermerkezcilik) ile Eurocentrism (Avrupamerkezcilik) arasında zekice bir analogi kurmaktadır. Evrenin çok küçük ve doğal bir parçası olan dünyanın yüzyıllarca merkez olarak görüldüğü, güneşin ve diğer gök cisimlerinin dünyanın etrafında döndüğü varsayımı, Galilei, Kepler ve Kopernik'in çalışmalarıyla yanlışlanmıştır. Aydemir, tıpkı dünyanın,

evrenin çok küçük ve doğal bir parçası olması gibi, Avrupa tarihinin de insanlığın küçük ve doğal bir parçası olduğunu savunmaktadır. Halbuki Avrupamerkezci tarih, uygarlık tarihini Avrupa’da başlatmakta, bu tarihi ilk-orta-yeni-yakın çağlar olarak tasnif etmektedir. Bu tarihin içinde Çin, Hint, Mısır, Türk vb. Avrupa dışı medeniyetler yoktur. Bunlar ya tarih öncesi olarak anlatılmakta ya da “barbarlar” olarak tarihin dışına sürülmektedir. Aydemir burada Kavimler Göçü hadisesini örnek olarak vermektedir. Bu hadise, Avrupa historiyoğrafyası tarafından tamamen olumsuz, Türk Tarih Tezi açısından ise Türklerin insan uygarlığına olan olumlu katkılarını imleyen bir hadise olarak ele alınmaktadır.

Avrupamerkezci tarihyazımının gelip dayandığı söylemlerden biri de “Yunan mucizesi” söylemidir. Buna göre 19’uncu yüzyılın sonlarında dünyanın mutlak hâkimi konumuna gelen Avrupalılar, binlerce yıl önceki “atalarının”, yani antik Yunanların norm ve sistemlerini yeniden keşfetmişler ve “aydınlanmışlardır”. 19’uncu asır aryanizmine ve genel olarak ırkçı tezlere de kaynaklık eden bu söylem Avrupamerkezci tarihyazımının özcü (particularistic) yapısına da uygundur. Buna karşılık Aydemir’in ve genel olarak Kadro’nun önerdiği ve savunduğu tez, Avrupamerkezçiliğin özcü ve yerelci sınırlarını aşan, dünyanın çeşitli medeniyetlerini de insan uygarlığına dahil eden Türk Tarih Tezidir. Bu tez, ana ekseninde Türklerin olması sebebiyle bilim dışılıkla tenkit edilmiştir ve halen de edilmektedir. Fakat dönemin koşullarında, bir ulus benliği kazanma çabasının öne çıktığı böyle bir zamanda amaçlanan şey Avrupalı uluslar arasında eşit, hür ve barışçı bir ulus özgüvenine sahip olan bir toplum bilinci oluşturmaktır . Bu da bilimden çok bir “inanç” konusudur.

Gerek Avrupamerkezci tarihyazımı gerekse Kadro’nun buna yönelik eleştirisi, temelde şu soruya yanıt aramaktadır: Avrupa devletleri bugünkü politik, ekonomik ve kültürel egemenliğine nasıl erişmiştir? Birincisine göre sözde Yunan ataların medeniyeti keşfedilmiş ve Rönesans süreci başlamıştır. Buradaki kültürel uyanışı dinsel aydınlanma, yani Reform süreci takip etmiştir. Sonraki dönemde Fransız Devrimi ile eşitlik, özgürlük, kardeşlik ilkeleri tüm dünyayı etkilemiştir. Temel insan hakları ve hümanizm üzerinden insanmerkezci (anthropocentric) bir düzen

kurulmaya başlamıştır. Demokratik sistemler ve parlamentarizm ise politik sistemin en son ve en mükemmel yöntemi olarak benimsenmiştir.

Kadrocu söylem, Avrupanın hakim durumunu başka türlü açıklamaktadır. Kadro'ya göre Yunan mucizesi, Rönesans, Reform gibi kavramlar birer sebep değil, başlamış bir tarihsel sürecin sonuçlarıdır. Avrupamerkezci tarihyazımı, Avrupa'nın bugünkü hakimiyetini izah etmek için yeterli değildir. Bu hakimiyet ancak kapitalizmin tarihiyle açıklanabilir. Bu sebeple İsmail Hüsrev Tökin (1933)'in makalesi bu tarihin ayrıntılı bir dökümünü içermektedir. Tökin kapitalizmi üç devreye ayırmaktadır: Mutlakiyetçilik, Liberalizm, Emperyalizm. Bir devirden diğerine geçişler her zaman çıkarların çatışması ve güçler arasındaki sürekli bir mücadele sonucu gerçekleşmektedir. Her devir kendi hukukunu ve etik normlarını yaratmaktadır. Tökin bu süreci Hegel diyalektiğiyle (tez-antitez-sentez) olarak açıklamaktadır. Sonuçta Avrupa, sanayi devriminin getirdiği üretim fazlasını satabilmek için yeni pazarlar edinme zorunluluğu duymuş, bunu emperyalist ve sömürgeci politikaları ve askeri gücü sayesinde başarmış ve dünyaya hakim olmuştur.

Tökin'in makalesi Avrupamerkezci tarihin anlattığı şematik basamak teorisinden farklı bir hikaye anlatmaktadır. Gerçekten de gerek ortodoks liberalizm gerekse ortodoks Marksizm, toplumsal teorilerini inşa ederken böyle indirgemeci bir model kurmuşlardır. İkisinin de kabul ettiği ortak nokta, kapitalizmin ana unsurunun serbest piyasa olduğudur. Halbuki, 1980'lerde Braudel'in (Wallerstein, 1991: 203) de altını çizdiği gibi, tarihsel kapitalizmin ya da Avrupa hegemonyasının ana unsuru serbest piyasa değil, tekel ve kartellerdir. Braudel'den elli yıl önce benzer fikirler geliştiren Tökin'e göre, kapitalizmin tarihi, liberal kapitalist veya Marksist teorilerin savladığı gibi doğrusal bir ilerleme şeklinde değil, devamlı suretteki menfaat ve güç odaklarının mücadelesi olarak okunursa daha doğru anlaşılabilir.

Avrupamerkezci tarihyazımının ürettiği önermelerden biri de evrensellik iddiasıdır. Avrupa'nın dünya üzerinde kurduğu eşitsiz ve sömürgelere dayalı politik-ekonomik düzenden de istim alan Avrupamerkezci evrenselcilik, Avrupalı

toplumların ürettiği varsayılan politik, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel öğelerin tüm toplumlar için gerekli ve evrensel olduğu iddiasındadır. Bu anlayış Türkiye’de Tanzimat sürecinden bu yana değişik zamanlarda ve farklı gruplarca eleştirilmiştir. Osmanlı-Türkiye literatürü incelendiğinde eleştirilerin genellikle Avrupa’nın toplumsal ve kültürel özelliklerinin odak noktasında olduğu bir “batı taklitçiliği” kavramıyla ifade edildiği anlaşılmaktadır. Gerek Osmanlılık gerekse İslamcılık akımlarında batı eleştirisinin Avrupa’nın kültürel hegemonyasına karşı bir reaksiyon, bir oryantalizm karşıtlığı şeklinde tezahür ettiği iddia edilebilir. Bütün bunları içermekle birlikte Kadrocu söylemi, sözü edilen düşünce hareketlerinden ayıran özelliği, hem yeni bir kavram kullanması hem de içeriğinin çok daha geniş olmasıdır. Kadro’nun Avrupamerkezcilik eleştirisinde hem liberal kapitalizme hem de Marksist toplum teorisine eleştiriler vardır. Liberal kapitalizmin öngördüğü demokrasi ve parlamentarizm ile serbest piyasa ekonomisi Kadro tarafından eleştirilmektedir. Çünkü Kadro’ya göre Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun çöküş sebebi bizzat bu mefhumları salt taklit etmekten ibaret politikalar uygulayıp Avrupa’nın sömürgesi haline gelmesidir. Kadrocu söylem, Marksist toplum teorisinin evrensellik iddiasını da reddetmektedir. Bilindiği gibi bu teorinin merkezinde burjuva-proletarya çelişkisi üzerine kurulan ve sınıfsız toplumu amaçlayan bir gelecek vizyonu vardır. Kadro, Marksist teorinin vurguladığı bu ana çelişkinin evrensel olduğu iddiasına karşıdır. Çünkü Marksizm, Fransız sosyalizmi ve Alman idealizmine dayalı ve İngiliz ekonomi-politiğini eleştiren bir kuramdır. Bu yüzden Marksist toplum teorisi, sadece Avrupa devlet ve toplumlarının durumunu izah edebilmektedir. Türkiye’de kapitalizm öncesi sınıf tortuları olmakla beraber ne burjuva demokratik devrimi ne de sanayi devrimi deneyimlenmiştir. Bu yönüyle teori Avrupamerkezcilik olup dünyanın diğer toplumlarını ve devletlerini içerebilecek, sorunlarını çözebilecek nitelikte değildir. Kadro’ya göre asıl evrensel çelişki, burjuva-proletarya çelişkisi değil, “metropol-müstemele” çelişkisidir. Bu çelişki, 400 milyon nüfuslu Avrupa halkları ile bu halkları besleyen 1,5 milyar nüfuslu sömürge ve yarı sömürge ülke halklarının oluşturduğu çelişkidir. Buna göre İngiltere’deki bir fabrika işçisinin görece yüksek hayat standardı, Hindistan’daki, Çin’deki veya Türkiye’deki bir

hamalın, köylünün, çiftçinin emeğinin sömürülmesine bağlıdır. Dolayısıyla tüm dünyanın işçilerinin kaderi ve davasının aynı olduğu varsayımı gerçekçi değildir. Kadrocu söylemin savunduğu bu evrensel çelişki çözülmeden dünyada huzur ve barışın egemen olması mümkün değildir.

Kadro, tüm dünyanın asıl çelişkisi olarak öne sürdüğü metropol-müstemele çelişkisinin çözümünün sömürge ülkelerin emperyalizmi ülkelerinden kovarak bağımlılık ilişkilerine son vermesi ile mümkün olacağını iddia etmektedir. Bu çerçevede siyasî bağımsızlığını kazanmış olsa da iktisadî tam bağımsızlığına henüz erişememiş olan Türkiye için bir çözüm önerilmektedir. Bu çözümün adı “Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği” dir. Kadrocu söyleme göre Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği, ne burjuva sınıfının hakim olduğu liberal kapitalizm (1930’larda Faşizm) ne de işçi sınıfının hakim olduğu Marksizm davası güdebilir. Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliğinin asıl amacı “sınıfsız ve tezatsız, kaynaşmış bir millet” oluşturmaktır. Böylelikle Kadro, her ikisini de Avrupamerkezci olmakla itham ettiği liberal kapitalizm ve Marksist sosyalizm arasında üçüncü bir yol önermektedir. Bu yol, Türk devriminin tarihsel birikimine ve toplumsal ihtiyaçlarına uygun, gerçekçi bir çözümdür.

Gerek kapitalizm gerekse sosyalizm hakkında Kadro dergisinde savunulan tezler, ileriki yıllarda Bağımlılık Okulu (1960’lardan itibaren) teorisyenleri ve kimi düşünürler tarafından (Fernand Braudel, Andre Gunder Frank, Samir Amin, Immanuel Wallerstein vb.) benzer biçimlerde ortaya konulmuştur. Kadrocu söylemin, zamanına göre öncü ve orijinal bir içerik geliştirdiği kabul edilirse analizlerde takip edilen yöntem ile dünya görüşlerinin ne olduğu soruları önem kazanmaktadır. Kapitalizm ve sosyalizm gibi birbirine zıt iki tarihsel süreci Avrupamerkezilik ortak paydası altında buluşturmak, her iki toplum teorisinin evrensellik iddialarını benzer gerekçelerle reddetmek hangi yöntemle mümkündür? Bu sorunun doğrudan cevabı olmasa da hangi metodu benimsedikleri sorusuna Kadro yazarları açıkça cevap vermişlerdir: Diyalektik materyalizm.

Bazı çalışmalarda Kadro’nun benimsediği diyalektik materyalizm “eklektik” bulunurken kimi çalışmalar ise Kadrocu materyalizmin Marksist özünden kopuk

olduğunu öne sürmektedir (Yanardağ, 2008). Bu önermelerin ikisinde de doğruluk payı mevcuttur. Sözelimi Tökin'in (1933) kapitalizmin tarihsel gelişimini incelediği makalesi, ana hatlarını Lenin'in ortaya koyduğu emperyalizm analizinin etkisi altındadır. Fakat iş evrensel toplum teorileri noktasına geldiğinde burjuva-proleter karşıtlığı reddedilmektedir. Dolayısıyla Kadrocu materyalizm bir miktar seçmecilik içermektedir. Ancak yapılan analizlerin orijinalliği, zaman içinde gelişmelerin Kadrocu perspektifin çizdiği eksenle örtüştüğü dikkate alınır, bu seçmeci tutum Kadro'nun diğer fikir hareketlerine nazaran nasıl daha isabetli tezler ve gelecek vizyonları oluşturabildiğini açıklamaktadır.

Avrupamerkezcilik kavramlaştırmasını Yermerkezcilik (Geocentrism) ile kurduğu karşıtlıkla yapan Aydemir, materyalizmi de idealizmin karşısında konumlandırmaktadır. Aydemir'e göre "Önce söz vardı" diyen Aziz Yuhanna ile "Önce hareket vardı" diyen Faust (Goethe) temelde aynı hataya düşmektedir. İkisi de maddenin öncesine bir şey konumlandırmaktadır. Bu öyle bir hatadır ki, Plato'dan Hegel'e kadar bütün düşünce dünyasında hüküm sürmüş; korkunç mitleri ve efsaneleri doğurmuş, insan aklını yüzlerce yıl karanlığa mahkum etmiştir. Halbuki önce madde vardır, her süreç; düşünce, tarih, uygarlık hep maddeden türemiş ve maddenin sonucu olmuştur. Bu bağlamda Aydemir, Descartes'in ünlü "Düşünüyorum, o halde varım" sözünün, "Varım, bu yüzden düşünüyorum" biçiminde yeniden düzenlenmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Başlangıçta vurgulandığı gibi Kadro Dergisinde benimsenen tarihsel/diyalektik materyalizm metodu, Cumhuriyet devrimlerini yapanların benimsediği dünya görüşünden farklıdır. Bilindiği gibi Cumhuriyet devrimcileri, Ziya Gökalp'in Durkheim'den uyarladığı dayanışmacı toplum görüşünü (Solidarism) pozitivist bir çerçeveye benimsemiş bir asker-bürokrat grubudur. Diğer taraftan, Kadro Dergisi, "inkılabın ideolojisini yapmak" gibi bir gayeyle ortaya atılmıştı. Yöntemler arasındaki farklılığa rağmen yayın yapmanın ve aynı zamanda tutarlı bir söylem geliştirmenin zorluğunun farkında olan Kadro Dergisi, ikinci sayısında Ziya Gökalp hakkında geniş bir makale yayımlamıştır (Aydemir, 1932a). Çünkü Gökalp hem Cumhuriyeti kuran kadroların üzerinde ciddi etkisi olan bir düşünür hem de ortaya

koyduğu esasların bir kısmı Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası programına dahil edilmiş önemli bir figürdü.

Makalede Aydemir, Gökalp'in Birinci Dünya Savaşı öncesinde Türk entelektüel dünyasına fikirleriyle damga vurduğunu, hangi görüşten olursa olsun zamanın pek çok aydınının Gökalp'in fikirlerinden az ya da çok etkilenmiş olduğunu belirtir. Öyle ki Gökalp, temsil ettiği ideolojinin tüm unsurlarını; efsanesini, şiirini, sanatını, tarihini, felsefesini ve siyasetini herkese rağmen ve tek başına yaratmıştır. Aydemir'e göre fikirlerinin etki sahası itibarıyla Türk tarihinde Gökalp kadar verimlilik gösteren bir başka düşünce insanı bulmak zordur. Gökalp'in etkisini ve önemini kabul ettikten sonra Aydemir, onun Birinci Dünya Savaşı öncesi Türkiye'sinin bir düşünürü olduğunu, fakat bugünkü (1930'lar) Cumhuriyet'in savaş öncesindeki devletten farklı olduğunu, dolayısıyla bugünün sorun ve çözümlerinin de Gökalp'in önerdiklerinden farklı olacağını savunur. Aydemir'e göre Ziya Gökalp, Türk fikir hayatının gelişim seyri içinde geriye dönüp dayanılacak bir tefekkür sistemi değil, ileriye gidip işlenecek ve tamamlanacak bir anlayış tarzıdır (Aydemir, 1932a: 35).

Bu görüşlerini paylaştıktan sonra Aydemir tenkitlerini sıralamaya başlar. İlki Gökalp'in Marksizm eleştirisi üzerinedir. Gökalp, Marks'ın ekonomi-politik eleştirisinin tamamen iktisadî alanı merkeze aldığını, sosyal, kültürel, dini, ahlakî alanları birer “gölge hadise” (epifenomen) olarak gördüğünü söyleyerek Marks'ı eleştirir. Gökalp'e göre diğer alanlar da en az iktisadî alan kadar önemli ve somut unsurlardır. Aydemir, Gökalp'in Marks üzerine yaptığı bu çıkarımın doğru olmadığını, tarihsel materyalizmde epifenomenlerin olmadığını savunmaktadır. Tam tersine, Gökalp'in Durkheim'dan aldığı “içtimai vicdan” (social conscience) gibi soyut mekanizmalar, tarihsel materyalizmin odaklandığı üretim ilişkilerinin yanında gölge hadise olarak kalmaktadır. Buradan hareketle Aydemir, Gökalp'in millet tanımını da eleştirir. Gökalp'e göre millet, dilsel, dini, ırksal, kültürel, coğrafi yakınlıklar üzerinde kurulmuş gönüllü bir birliktir. Fakat Aydemir'e göre bu tanım modern toplum yapılarını izah etmek için yetersizdir. Avrupa örneğini veren Aydemir, sadece iki yüz yıl önce birbirinden farklı pek çok siyasi, kültürel, dini

topluluklar halinde yaşayan Avrupalı toplumların bugünkü modern birliğinin ancak “ekonomik işbirliği” ile açıklanabileceğini düşünmektedir.

Ekonomik unsurun modern milletlerin oluşumundaki önemini altını çizdikten sonra Aydemir, Gökalp’in “İktisadî Türkçülük” başlığı altında yazdıklarını da eleştirir. Gökalp devletçiliğin yanı sıra özel teşebbüsün de merkezde olduğu bir nevi karma ekonomi öngörmektedir. Bu politikanın hükümet tarafından da paylaşıldığı anlaşılmaktadır. Aydemir’e göre ise böylesi bir devletçilik Türkiye’nin ihtiyaçlarına cevap veremeyecektir. Emperyalizmi ülkesinden kovup devrimler çağını başlatan yeni Türkiye çok daha katı ve devrimci bir iktisadî politikaya gereksinim duymaktadır. Bu politikanın adı, yukarıda da bahsi geçen “Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği”dir. Aydemir’in bu eleştirisi, dikkatle bakılacak olunursa, Gökalp üzerinden hükümete, özellikle hükümetin uyguladığı ekonomi politikalarına yöneltilmiştir. Derginin kapatılma sürecinde de bu ve benzeri eleştirilerin etkili olduğu iddia edilmektedir.

Sonuç olarak, üç yıl gibi kısa yayın hayatında Kadro Dergisi, etkileri bugün dahi süren fikirler ortaya atmıştır. Özellikle, Avrupamerkezcilik kavramlaştırması ve eleştirisi, dönem için son derece yeni ve özgün bir tartışmadır. Başlangıçta vurgulandığı gibi, Kadrocu söylemin odak noktasında Avrupamerkezciliğin eleştirisi yatmaktadır. Bunun doğru anlaşılması hem Kadro hareketini ve günümüze uzanan yansımalarını hem de Kadrocu söylemin diğer düşünce hareketlerinden nasıl ayrıldığını anlamak konusunda faydalı olacaktır. Kadro yazarlarını oluşturan aydın grubu, yıllar sonra dünya literatüründe önemli tartışmalar açacak bazı önemli kavramları çok önceden görüp işlemiş fakat ne yazık ki kendi ülkesinin aydınlarınca yeterince benimsenmemiş, gereği gibi işlenip dünyaya tanıtılmamıştır. Bu anlamda Türk entelijansiyası, uluslararası literatürde bu konuda öncülük etme şansını kaçırmıştır.

Kadro Dergisinde yayımlanan analizlerin gerçeklikle olan kuvvetli bağının iki sebebi olduğu düşünülmektedir. İlki yazarların Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun değişik yerlerinde yetişip yine imparatorluğun pek çok farklı noktasındaki çarpıcı realiterle

temas etmiş olmalarıdır. Bu durum onların farklı düşünce ve ideolojiler karşısında daha esnek olmalarını sağlamıştır. İkinci sebep, onların her yeni durum ve konjonktürde, var olan ya da benimsemiş oldukları teorileri sorgulamış olmalarıdır. Bu durum, bazı kişilerce seçmecilik (eklektizm), bazen de “döneklik” olarak itham edilmiştir. Ancak gözlemler/gerçeklikle sınanmamış ya da sınanamayan hiçbir teori bilimsel faaliyetin unsuru olamaz. Dolayısıyla Kadro yazarları gerek liberal kapitalizmin gerekse Marksist sosyalizmin sorgulanamaz olmadığını, her ikisinin de Türk toplumunun tarihsel birikimine ve toplumsal realitelerine uymayan yanlarının bulunduğunu, Cumhuriyet devriminin kendine özgü gelişme ve kalkınma programının yapılabileceğini Türk aydınına göstermeye çabalamışlardır.

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