

MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

VOLUME SIX

MAY 1970

NUMBER TWO

Table of Contents

APPROACHING ISLAM: A DIGRESSION	G. E. von Grunebuam	127
STUDENTS AND POLITICS IN TURKEY	Joseph S. Szylowicz	150
THE SUDAN, EGYPT AND BRITAIN 1899-1916	Gabriel Warburg	163
HEALTH RITUALS AT A LEBANESE SHRINE	David Howell	179
URBAN ELITES AND COLONIALISM: THE NATIONALIST ELITES OF ADEN AND SOUTH ARABIA	A. S. Bujra	189
RECENT SOVIET BOOKS ON TURKEY	Jacob M. Landau	212

BOOK REVIEWS:

Robert Geran Landen , <i>Oman Since 1856: Disruptive Modernization in a Traditional Arab Society</i>	J. B. Kelly
Wendell Phillips , <i>Oman: A History</i>	
Abdul Amir Amin , <i>British Interests in the Persian Gulf</i>	
Gavin Maxwell , <i>Lords of the Atlas</i>	E. Gellner
Briton Cooper Busch , <i>Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914</i>	R. L. Greaves
Malcolm H. Kerr , <i>Islamic Reform, the Political and and Legal Theories of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridā</i>	P. J. Vatikiotis
P. M. Holt , ed., <i>Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt</i>	Malcolm Kerr
Leon Carl Brown , <i>The Surest Path: The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth-century Muslim Statesman</i>	Clement H. Moore

OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Published by

FRANK CASS & CO. LTD.
67 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON WC1

Recent Soviet Books on Turkey

Jacob M. Landau

In recent years, numerous works about Turkey have been published in the Soviet Union, including books and articles about the philosophy, literature and history of Turkey. A growing number discuss the history and policies of nineteenth and twentieth century Turkey, as well as contemporary developments. Not only scholarly works but also popular books and pamphlets draw heavily on Turkish-language publications. One gets the definite impression that even the newest Turkish publications (governmental, academic, and private) find their way into the libraries of the Soviet Academies of Science and the universities. Some idea of this may be obtained from a recent catalogue. Edited by A. X. Rafikov, it is named *Istoricheskaya literatura na turetskom yazike xranayashchayasya v bibliotekax Leningrada* (*Historical literature in Turkish, preserved in the Leningrad libraries*), Leningrad, Soviet Academy of Sciences: 1968; 267 pp. It lists 1,398 Turkish works, published from 1729 to 1963, indicates their location in Soviet libraries, translates their titles into Russian and briefly summarizes their main topics.

Turkish-Russian relations is a matter of obvious interest to Soviet historians who, for their research, make use of the extensive Russian archives, as well as of books and newspapers (many of which are out of print). A good example is Sh. V. Megrelidze's *Voprosi Zakavkaz'ya v istorii Russo-Turetskoy voyni 1877-1878* (*The problems of Transcaucasia in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878*), Tiflis, Gruzinian Academy of Sciences, Metsniyeryeba Press: 1969; 144 pp. After ritually proclaiming that the war 'played an immense, progressive role in the life of the peoples in the Balkan Peninsula and in Transcaucasia' (p. 3), the author describes and analyses it. Based on extensive historical research in Russian, Gruzinian, German and French (but not Turkish) materials, the book is markedly patriotic. Megrelidze accuses the Turks of inciting the Muslims in the Caucasus to rebel against Russian rule; the author maintains that the Turks had designs on the Caucasus, to compensate for territorial losses elsewhere. This, he implies, was the chief cause of the war. On the other hand, the Russians are presented as fighting a defensive (or preventive) war. This presentation of history as a battle between villains and heroes, while not necessarily accurate, makes fascinating reading. A little-known description of the various groups of militiamen—many of them Muslims—is given, with details of their military exploits, all documented. Indeed, this account is more original and revealing than the author's account of the San Stefano peace-treaty or of the Berlin Congress.

Noveyshaya istoriya Turtsii (*The recent history of Turkey*), Moscow, Nauka Press: 1968; 396 pp. is quite another type of work. It was prepared

by a team of scholars, headed by A. M. Shamsutdinov, one of the best Soviet experts on Turkey. The book is based largely on Turkish sources, which perhaps explains its empathy for Turkey and its people. Another reason for this attitude is the emphasis on internal Turkish history rather than on foreign policy or Turkish-Russian relations. The book starts with the Turkish War of Independence in 1918 and traces Turkey's history up to 1967, including a thirty-page chapter on the post-1960 period. A lengthy, useful chronological table lists main events and developments for the years 1917–1967. The bibliography is rather brief, listing books mainly and there is an index of personal names and one of places (but no subject index). While well-disposed towards Turkey, the book denounces Menderes and the leadership of the Democratic Party, reproaching it for neglecting Turkey's problems in order to perpetuate itself in power. For example, it accuses them of instigating and organizing 'the bloody pogrom against Greeks, Jews and Armenians in Istanbul and Izmir early in September 1955' (p. 268). Not only is this exaggerated (the riots were against the Greeks only), but it is also naïve, for the Menderes régime had everything to lose and nothing to gain from such disorders. Moreover, it was probably too shrewd to set such a trap for itself. Evidently, according to this work, the cardinal sin of Menderes and the Turkish Establishment was their pro-American stand which, in the final analysis, is held responsible for anti-leftist measures and for the continuing deprivation of Turkish workers and peasants.

The class-struggle is a topic of absorbing interest to Marxists; the case of Turkey is no exception. This is expressed in U. N. Rozaliyev's *Klassi i klassovaya bor'ba v Turtsii: burzhuaziya i proletariyat* (*Classes and the class-struggle in Turkey: bourgeoisie and proletariat*), Moscow, Nauka: 1966; 168 pp. In some respects, this is a remarkable work. It covers the period from the 1960 Revolution to the success of the Justice Party in the elections of October 1965. The way Rozaliyev sees it, 'The whole economic and political life of contemporary Turkey develops under the impact of the intensification of antagonisms between labour and capital and under the impact of the rise in the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat' (p. 3). So far so good. However, the author goes a step further, conceding that aggravated antagonisms within the bourgeoisie itself have determined much of Turkey's recent history. He thinks that these antagonisms (along with what he considers 'the exploitation of the workers') are to blame for Turkey's economic situation. But then Rozaliyev limits the direct effect of the 'antagonisms' to the ranks of the bourgeoisie and attributes the 1960 Revolution, in the main, to 'the serious socioeconomic changes within Turkey' (p. 9). The rest of the book is an examination of Turkey's social and economic problems, based on great familiarity with the Turkish press as well as books and periodicals in Turkish, Russian and other languages (the book lacks a bibliography and an index, but this is partially compensated for by copious notes). It is in this respect, as well as in details of the increase in the strength of the workers' movement, that the main value of this work lies. Indeed, Rozaliyev does not show conclusively any correlation between the class-struggle in Turkey and the 1960 Revolution, except for rightly pointing out at a fairly widespread sense of discontent and unease. Nor can he prove that the general situation in Turkey was radically affected by the 1960 Revolution—because it was not.

A work exclusively devoted to the workers' movement in Turkey is

R. P. Korniyenko's *Rabocheye dvizheniye v Turtsii 1918-1963* (*The workers' movement in Turkey, 1918-1963*), Moscow, Nauka Press: 1965; 176 pp. The book is based on Russian and West-European sources, as well as on an extensive perusal of both Communist and anti-Communist publications in Turkish—many of them not easily available. In addition to chronologically tracing the socioeconomic and political situation of the Turkish proletariat and listing their increasing demands, Korniyenko has included some useful addenda: Russian translations of several 'workers' laws' (from 1921, 1923 and 1947) as well as a detailed list of the main trade unions in thirty-three of Turkey's cities and towns (48 unions in Istanbul alone). In this type of historiography the historian identifies himself with the struggle of his subject—the Turkish workers—against what he calls 'the capitalist entrepreneurship in Turkey' (p. 101). Thirty-five per cent of the industrial proletariat lives and works in five cities—Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana and Eskişehir; they are least numerous in the Eastern and South-eastern provinces. According to Korniyenko, 22 per cent of all industrial workers in Turkey are women and children; if true, this would appear to be a source of weakness. Strong or weak, the workers' movement has, indeed, grown to about 200,000, organized in a trade-union conference (p. 148). It is also much more articulate than formerly, despite the ban on the Communist Party. Hence the author's ending note that, 'In contemporary Turkey, the perspectives of the struggle for the social and political progress of the country are increasingly linked with the development of the worker's movement'.

On the other hand, a book dealing with the Turkish bourgeoisie has recently been published. It is V. I. Danilov's *Sredniye sloi v politicheskoy zhizni sovremennoy Turtsii* (*The middle classes in the political life of contemporary Turkey*), Moscow, Nauka: 1968; 152 pp. This book is chiefly concerned with the petite bourgeoisie, including farmers, artisans and small-scale merchants. The period under discussion is before, during and after the 1960 Revolution, which Danilov, along with others, persists in calling 'the 1960 coup d'état'. Rozaliyev, whose book on class struggle is reviewed above, labelled it 'the 1960 Revolution' and attributed it to socioeconomic pressures. He was chided by reviews in the Soviet press for this approach. In a way, Danilov's book is both an account and a re-appraisal of the events in Turkey in 1960, their prelude and aftermath. Since the Soviet interpretation of this uprising did not deem it a popular revolution, but rather a struggle within the bourgeoisie, it was—according to Danilov—inevitably doomed. Historical inevitability aside, the account of events is vivid, dramatic and well documented (mainly from the Turkish press). As the book is a case-study of the Turkish bourgeoisie in politics, relevant data about the middle class are adduced, but sparsely, mainly in the Conclusion (pp. 132 ff.). The author implies that financial straits encouraged the bulk of this group to support the coup d'état. If so, it is difficult to understand why they obtained no meaningful redress in the past decade. Another point the author makes, without proving, is that the military have been very unhappy with the new situation in the 1960s. If correct, it is difficult to understand why they have not intervened again.