

leather chair in Ann Arbor, Michigan, I concur with his judgment about those who sought life in a new land after death in the old country: "America is an environment that banished memory and, in its own way, was as harsh and relentlessly uncertain and insecure (in an economic and social sense) as what they had faced in Anatolia" (p. 153).

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Onur İşçi, *Turkey and the Soviet Union during World War II: Diplomacy, Discord and International Relations*. London: I.B. Tauris 2019, xi + 241 pages.

This book investigates the crucible of Soviet–Turkish relations during World War II when a renewed fear of Russia (with a distinctly anti-Soviet spin) returned to the forefront of Turkish politics (p. 2). In fact, the book makes an important contribution to the analysis of Turkish–Soviet relations during World War II, which is an under-researched topic, using the archival documents of both countries. Most of the works on Turkish–Soviet relations focus on the Cold War era and form a part of books that deal with general Turkish foreign policy. Few works analyzing Soviet–Turkish relations emphasize the Straits issue as the starting point. Concerning the Straits question, Onur İşçi rightly observes that although many accounts maintained the opposite view, diplomatic records show that the Soviet–Turkish partnership remained intact after the Montreux Convention of 1936. Therefore, notions of historic enmity exist more in the works of scholars than in the words of historical actors.

The year 1939 was not only when World War II broke out but also when the agreement was reached between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. As the author correctly argues, this agreement played a crucial role in shaping Turkey's wartime neutrality. For instance, World War II put an end to the existing Turkish belief in the interwar period that the Bolshevik regime was different from Tsarist Russia. Thus, this work starts analyzing Turkish–Soviet relations from the crucial date of 1939 to the end of World War II. Yet İşçi obviously felt the need to discuss the historical background of the relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union. The first two chapters cover the interwar period, mainly "the changing international equilibrium surrounding Soviet–Turkish relations" (p. 8) after the 1936 Montreux Convention. Two sections in the first chapter are worth

emphasizing: one is on “Mare Nostrum” which analyzes Mussolini’s policy in the Mediterranean; the following section is on “Mare Clausum” (the Black Sea), whose status is closely related to that of the Mediterranean, and which helps us to understand that the Straits serve as the key strategic but also trading route for the Black Sea littoral states. Chapter 2, titled “Turkey’s Eastern Question,” deals with Syria, especially Alexandretta, and also inevitably with France. Therefore the author, in discussing Turkish–Soviet relations, also gives us the regional context without forgetting the roles of Italy, France, and Britain who were the main rivals in the interwar period in the Mediterranean region.

Chapter 3 examines two related issues from the Turkish point of view: the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and the Anglo-Turkish declaration of May 1939 that led to the signing of the British-Franco-Turkish Treaty in October of that year. As the author emphasizes, a central episode in this chapter is the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact which put an end to the Turkish–Soviet friendship of the interwar era. Since the Moscow talks in September failed, Ankara for the first time moved toward an alliance treaty with two great European powers, England and France. The chapter ends with the fall of France (an ally of Turkey) to Hitler’s armies. Chapter 4, dealing with the period between the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and Hitler’s “unleashing” of Operation Barbarossa, explains Germany’s attempts to cultivate “Turkey’s historic fear of Russia, which had a new distinctly anti-Soviet hue” (p. 9). This chapter provides detailed information about the Massigli Affair, the “nadir” of Turkish–Soviet relations, to show the Turkish fear of the Soviets and the Nazis. In his conversation with Turkish Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu in early 1940, the French ambassador in Turkey, René Massigli, “understood the Turkish government to have tacitly consented to opening their airspace to bomb Soviet territory” (p. 78). The author’s comment that Massigli’s telegrams “made abundantly clear Turkey’s significance for the Soviet Union’s security” (p. 79) is worth underlining. In taking the narrative from the Massigli Affair to the outbreak of the Nazi–Soviet war, İşçi demonstrates how the İnönü government came to the conclusion that it could not expect help from Britain under the 1939 treaty. This also leads to the process reaching to the conclusion of the Nazi-Turkish Non-Aggression Pact in 1941 by the end of the chapter.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore Turkish diplomacy from Hitler’s unleashing of Operation Barbarossa until the Soviet victory at Stalingrad. In Chapter 5, İşçi demonstrates that after the Anglo-Soviet occupation of Iran in 1941 anti-Soviet propaganda of the Nazis had consent in Ankara. In addition, a Soviet submarine attack on the SS *Struma* in Turkish territorial waters and the failed assassination attempt on Franz von Papen by Soviet agents

in Ankara are examined in the chapter as incidents damaging further Turkish–Soviet relations. An interesting section in this chapter titled “Russophobic Neutrality” explains well the feeling of the time in Ankara toward Moscow. On the one hand, “the Turkish General Staff still believed that the capture of Stalingrad would be the key objective of German operations in 1942,” according to İşçi (p. 119). On the other hand, the author makes clear that there was a deviation from the “Kemalist establishment to disambiguate Turkism from a racial ideology like Pan-Turanism” (p. 121). Under the title of Turanian fantasies, Chapter 6 is tied to the previous chapter. Although this topic was investigated by Cemil Koçak in his book *Türkiye’de Milli Şef Dönemi*, the triangular relations between the Turks, Tatars, and Nazis are closely examined by referring to primacy sources by İşçi. He demonstrates well how “Russophobia continued to be a defining feature of Turkish foreign policy long after 1945” because of the effects of Nazi efforts feeding Turanian fantasies in Turkey (pp. 128–43).

The seventh chapter is devoted to negotiations between Turkey and the Anglo-Soviet bloc during the conferences held in Adana, Tehran, Cairo, and Yalta after the Soviet triumph in Stalingrad. In analyzing them, the author looks at recently declassified Turkish diplomatic records. The epilogue follows smoothly from the last chapter as it deals with the Soviet demands in the immediate aftermath of World War II over the Straits and the three Eastern provinces of Turkey, which is “a source of controversy among Turkish historians” (p. 10). Here it is important to mention the author’s argument that the incident in Kars helps us to understand the roots of Soviet–Turkish animosity. On March 27, 1943, the commanding officer in Kars had “reported that a Turkish patrol had spotted two Soviet planes flying at low attitude near the border” (p. 1). According to İşçi it is not a coincidence that, two years after the incident in Kars, Moscow made its well-known demands to Ankara regarding the repatriation of Kars which Lenin had returned to Turkey after Brest-Litovsk.

This book is a meticulously researched and well-written work. It is a product of careful research using documents from both sides: Turkey and the Soviet Union. It will have lasting value for researchers in a wide range of disciplines interested in the history of Turkey and the Soviet Union as well as international relations. It is mainly a contribution to the bilateral relations of Turkey and the Soviet Union, which has suffered from a lack of detailed research mainly based on primary sources.

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