CHAPTER 6

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND THE SOVIET RUSSIA IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE, SCIENCE AND AVIATION DURING ATATÜRK'S ERA

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ABSTRACT

The establishment of treaty relations between the government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic in 1921 favoured the development of friendly and cooperative relations and opened up opportunities for the establishment of contacts between two countries in the fields of culture, science and aviation. For instance, the famous Russian artist Evgeniy Lansere stayed in Turkey from June to October 1922 and made drawings and sketches with scenes of life in the Turkish cities he visited. After returning from Turkey, Lansere presented the works he made in Turkey to the public in Moscow and Petrograd and helped to acquaint the people of Soviet Russia with the life and traditions of the people of Turkey in its historical days. In the 1920s, a number of events made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of cultural and scientific relations between the Republic of Turkey and the USSR. These included the first flight between Moscow and Ankara in the history of the relations between Turkey and Russia (1926), the expeditions of the Russian botanist and plant-grower Pyotr Zhukovskiy to Turkey in 1926-1927 and activities of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries [Vsesoyuznoe obshchestvo svyazey s zagranitsey]. One of the most important examples of cooperation between the two countries in the field of culture and science in the 1930s was the arrival of a Turkish government delegation headed by Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey İsmet Pasha [İnönü] in the USSR in 1932.

Keywords: Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Evgeniy Lansere and Turkey, first flight Moscow-Ankara, Pyotr Zhukovskiy and Turkey, Soviet-Turkish relations in the field of culture

In 1920, the government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey [the GNA of Turkey] in Ankara, which at the time was waging the National Struggle for the liberation and independence of Turkey under the leadership of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha, established diplomatic contacts with the government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic [RSFSR]. On 19 July 1920, a delegation of the government of the GNA of Turkey arrived in Moscow for talks with the government of Soviet Russia. The delegation consisted of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Bekir Sami Bey [Kunduh], the Minister of Economy Yusuf Kemal Bey [Tengirşek], the deputy of the GNA Osman Bey [Özgen] (Tengirşek, 1981, p. 141), and two military advisers, Doctor Ibrahim Tali Bey and lieutenant colonel of the General Staff Seyfi Bey (A. N. Heyfets, 1964, p. 114). As a result of these talks, both sides drafted and initialled a Soviet-Turkish Treaty on 24 August 1920. The articles of this treaty defined the basic principles of relations between the two countries.

In March 1921, as a result of the development of diplomatic contacts between the two countries, authorised representatives of the government of the GNA of Turkey and the RSFSR signed the friendly and fraternal 'Treaty between Russia and Turkey' in Moscow, which had great significance for both countries ((1959), *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. III, pp. 597-607). In addition, the 'Treaty of friendship between the Armenian SSR, the Azerbaijan SSR, and the Georgian SSR, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other, concluded with the participation of the RSFSR' was signed in the Turkish city of Kars in October 1921 ((1960), *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IV, pp. 420-429). In this regard, it should be noted that in the process of the establishment of treaty relations between the government of the GNA of Turkey and the government of the RSFSR, delegations of both governments visited Soviet Russia and Turkey and, in doing, contributed to better mutual knowledge and understanding, strengthened trust between Turkey and RSFSR and developed further relations between both countries. These treaties opened up opportunities for the establishment of contacts and cooperation between Turkey and Soviet Russia in the fields of culture and science as well.

For example, it is worth mentioning the Extraordinary Embassy led by Mikhail Frunze, a well-known statesman and military leader of Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine, who arrived on a visit to Ankara on 13 December 1921 ((1960), *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IV, p. 472). On this trip, Frunze represented both Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine. The government of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic [the Ukrainian SSR] had formed a military alliance with Soviet Russia in June 1919, and the Defence and Economic Commissariats of Ukraine and Russia had merged on 28 December 1920. Moreover, the government of the RSFSR believed that Frunze's visit to Turkey would also serve as a

symbol of the close friendship between Soviet Russia and Turkey ((1960) Missiya M. V. Frunze v Turtsiyu. *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'*. 7, p. 156). The Extraordinary Embassy included diplomats, representatives of economic institutions, and military specialists (I. F. Chernikov. (1984). O nekotorykh materialakh po istorii Sovetsko-Turetskikh otnosheniy. In V. I. Danilov, P. P. Moiseev, & S. F. Oreshkova (Eds.), *Turtsiya: istoriya, ekonomika, politika*, p. 125).

While waiting in Ankara for the return of Gazi Mustafa Kemal and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Kemal Bey from a working trip, Frunze met with the Vice-Chairman of the GNA Adnan Bey [Adivar], the head of the government of the GNA and Chief of General Staff Mustafa Fevzi Pasha [Çakmak], the Deputy Foreign Minister, Hikmet Bey [Bayur], as well as with the Afghan ambassador in Ankara, Sultan Akhmed Khan (A. N. Heyfets, 1968, p. 179). On 20 December, Frunze was received by the Chairman of the GNA Gazi Mustafa Kemal (A. N. Heyfets, 1968, p. 180). On the same day, Frunze addressed the deputies of the GNA of Turkey (A. N. Heyfets, 1968, p. 179). On 2 January 1922, a Ukrainian-Turkish conference in which Frunze participated ended with the signing of a 'Treaty of friendship and brotherhood' between the government of the GNA of Turkey and the government of the Ukrainian SSR. During meetings with the ministries of the government of the GNA, Frunze noticed that there was a possibility of developing not only political relations between Turkey and the Soviet republics but also relations in the fields of economy and culture (M. Frunze, 1929, p. 359).

After returning to Moscow, on 9 February 1922, Frunze sent to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) the proposals he had formulated for the development of relations between Turkey and the RSFSR. Some of his proposals related to the development of Soviet-Turkish cultural relations. In particular, he suggested instructing the People's Commissariat of Education of the RSFSR to positively consider the admission of Turkish students to Soviet educational institutions, to study the possibility of helping Turkey with textbooks and printing facilities and to recognise the establishment of regular connections between the educational departments of both countries (A. N. Heyfets, 1968, pp. 185-186). On the same day, the Political Bureau found it advisable to facilitate the admission of young Turkish people to educational institutions of Soviet Russia and Ukraine (A. N. Heyfets, 1968, p. 186). In a note dated 4 March 1922, the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR Georgiy Chicherin notified the ambassador of the government of the GNA of Turkey Ali Fuat Pasha [Cebesoy]: 'I have the honour to inform you that the Russian Government welcomes with the greatest joy the news of the first steps taken on the way to cultural rapprochement between the two friendly peoples and, as from now on, it provides

at the disposal of the government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey 100 places in Russian institutions of higher education and subsequently the number of places for Turkish students will be increased' (P. Moiseev, & Yu. Rosaliev, 1958, pp. 51-52).

Frunze stayed in Turkey from 24 November 1921 to 16 January 1922. This was the time when the government of the GNA of Turkey, under the leadership of Gazi Mustafa Kemal, continued to wage the National Struggle for the liberation and independence of Turkey. On the way to Ankara, Frunze made some notes in his travel diary. It contains valuable factual information about the Turkish cities and towns that he visited on his trip to Ankara as a member of the Extraordinary Embassy, and about meetings with Turkish people, leaders of the government of the GNA of Turkey, and representatives of the local governments of the GNA. In 1929, the travel diaries of Frunze were published in Moscow and Leningrad under the title *Trip to Angora*, as part of the first volume of Frunze's two-volume collected works (M. Frunze. (1929). pp. 272-351).

The leaders of the National Struggle, the government of the GNA of Turkey and Turkish cultural personalities in Ankara had the opportunity to get acquainted and learn about fine arts in Soviet Russia when the famous Russian artist Evgeniy Lansere (1875–1946) visited Ankara in June 1922. Lansere was born on 4 September (23 August, Old Style) 1875 in the city of Pavlovsk, near Saint Petersburg ((1936). *E. E. Lansere. XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, p. 3). He was born to a well-known Russian family of artists, architects, and art historians. Lansere was the son of the talented sculptor Evgeniy Aleksandrovich Lansere (A. Borovsky, 1975, p. 4), who held the title of Painter of the First Degree and was an Honorary Painter at the Saint Petersburg Imperial Academy of Arts ((1886). *E. A. Lansere. Niva*, 16, p. 486). Lansere's mother, Ekaterina Benua, was also involved with arts; she attended the Academy of Arts and came from the Benua-Cavos family, known in Russia for its artistic traditions ((1936). *E. E. Lansere. XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, pp. 3-4). Lansere's maternal great-grandfather was Albert Cavos, a renowned architect that constructed the world-famous Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow and the equally famous Mariinskiy Theatre in Saint Petersburg ((1936). *E. E. Lansere. XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, p. 4). The artist's grandfather was Nikolay Benua (1813-1897), a distinguished architect of the 1850s and architecture teacher, who, in addition to his main work as an architect, was also engaged in decorative art (M. V. Babenchikov, 1947, p. 7). Lansere's uncles were also painters and architects. For instance, Aleksander Benua was a famous painter, art critic and the founder of the society of artists known as 'World of Art'. Albert Benua was a wonderful watercolourist and Leontiy Benua was an academician of architecture and served as the rector of the Academy of Arts

((1936). *E. E. Lansere. XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, pp. 4-5). Thus, Lansere became familiar with art and artistic culture from a very young age.

Lansere received his secondary education in a gymnasium and studied at the painting school of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts in Saint Petersburg. He visited France, Finland, Italy, Siberia, Manchuria, the Far East, Japan, and the Caucasus. His creative interests were very broad: he was engaged in graphics, book illustration, monumental painting, theatrical scenery, historical painting, still-life painting, landscape painting and more. In 1912, following a proposal from the famous Russian painter Ilya Repin, he was appointed as academician of painting, and three years later, in 1915, Lansere was appointed as a full member of the Academy of Arts (K. Kravchenko, 1946, p. 14). Also in 1915, Lansere travelled with his family to the Caucasus to see the region, to observe different types of folk customs and, costumes and to study the local architecture and utensils. In 1920, the artist moved from Temir-Khan-Shura [Buynaksk] to Tiflis and got a job as a painter in the Ethnographic Museum of the city (A. Borovsky, 1975, p. 35). In 1920-1921, Lansere, on behalf of the Museum, made several archaeological and ethnographic sketches. In 1921, he made a trip to Adjara, in the surroundings of Batum, and participated in an expedition to David-Gereja (Georgia) organised by Professor Georgiy Chubinashvili to explore some cave monasteries with the remains of beautiful wall paintings and frescoes from the 13th and 14th centuries ((1936). *E. E. Lansere. XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, p. 12).

In early June 1922, Lansere travelled to Ankara from Batum by steamship through the Black Sea. He landed in the Turkish city of İnebolu, located on the Anatolian coast of the Black Sea, and from there, he travelled to Ankara by land, following an invitation from Semyön Aralov, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the RSFSR in Ankara (E. Lansere, 1925, p. 6). The purpose of his trip was to study the life and traditions of the people of Turkey ((1952). *Evgeniy Evgen'evich Lansere*. p. 18). In Turkey, he continued his research of the Orient. During his tour to Ankara, he visited various Turkish cities (Trabzon, Samsun, İnebolu, Kastamonu and Çankırı), kept a travel diary, and made drawings and sketches of scenes from life in the Turkish cities he visited.

On the morning of 6 June 1922, Lansere arrived in Samsun. In those years, ships arriving in Samsun used to anchor at some distance from the shore; passengers were then transported from steamers to the shore in large boats. Loading and unloading of cargo was also carried out by means of large boats similar to a wooden barge (M. V. Frunze, 1929, Vol. I, p. 285). Lansere, coming out to the deck of the steamship, noticed the heavy boats that transported cargo from the steamers to the shore, swaying on both sides of the steamer. Then he made a

sketch of this scene and a fairly detailed drawing of the boats, their rudder systems, and oars, as well as other technical aspects of the boats. Thanks to these sketches, today we can see the actual appearance of the boats, how they were driven and how cargo and passengers were transported ashore from vessels that arrived in Samsun.

From these sketches, we can see that the boats were quite large. At the same time, we notice that they had a very beautiful shape; their bow and stern curved sharply upward. Each boat was driven by four oars, each handled by a rower standing on the deck. Because of the large size of the boats and cargo, the rowers had to make great efforts. Each boat had a rudder at the stern. A man in a specially made place at the stern controlled the rudder and steered the boat. In these sketches, Lansere was able to capture and preserve for history this small and soon to disappear scene of life in Samsun during Turkey's National Struggle.

Lansere stayed in Ankara from June to September 1922. June, July and August 1922 were crucial months for the government of the GNA of Turkey, as the commander-in-chief of the Army of the government of the GNA, Gazi Mustafa Kemal, was working to prepare the army for a decisive and victorious offensive. Those months preceded a victorious offensive by the government of the GNA's army under the command of Gazi Mustafa Kemal against the Greek army. Lansere became a direct witness of those events. It was on one of those crucial days for the National Struggle, in July 1922, that Lansere and the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the RSFSR in Ankara Aralov visited Gazi Mustafa Kemal in his residence in Çankaya, six kilometres from Ankara (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 30). Lansere described his arrival at the Çankaya House: 'We were met by adjutants and led to the house along paths strewn with fresh sand. We were ushered into a large reception room with a bubbling fountain in the middle, and then the customary coffee cup was offered. Hanging on the walls of the room, there were painted and photographic portraits of Gazi Mustafa Kemal and, by the way, a large map-panorama of the Dardanelles since Gazi Mustafa Kemal was the hero of the defense of this Strait during the World War. Gazi Mustafa Kemal was dressed in a civilian frock coat. At the same time, he had military bearing' (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 30). After a reception under a large tent in the garden of the house, Lansere drew a portrait of Gazi Mustafa Kemal (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 30). Shortly after that, on 26 August 1922, the army of the government of the GNA under the command of Gazi Mustafa Kemal launched an offensive against the Greek army. The next day the Turkish recovered the city of Afyonkarahisar, and on 30 August the enemy was surrounded in the area of Aslıhanlar and defeated at the Battle of Dumlupınar. Lansere, who was in Ankara at the time, writes the following: '26 August: Quite unexpectedly for us, the laymen, an offensive began at the battlefield. 27 August: In Ankara, they are talking

about the first successes of the army of the government of the GNA under the command of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha. 28 August: Afyonkarahisar was taken. Already in the morning on the main street, [everybody was talking about this] in coffee shops ... I met some Turkish acquaintances, they are joyfully excited. In the evening, a demonstration was organised in Ankara. 1 September: Great achievements of the army of the government of the GNA under the command of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha. In the city, there is a parade, processions with banners' (E. E. Lansere, 1925, pp. 52-53).

In Ankara, Lansere also visited Tunalı Hilmi Bey, a Turkish politician and deputy of the GNA. Lansere noticed a real machine gun in Tunalı Hilmi Bey's room and asked him: 'Why such precautions?' Tunalı Hilmi Bey said that the Greeks came very close to Ankara the year before, and there was a critical situation (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 33). As a result of the Eskişehir War, which began on 21 July 1921, the Greek troops had occupied the Turkish cities of Eskişehir, Kütahya, and Afyonkarahisar. On 25 July, Turkish army units at the Western front withdrew beyond the Sakarya River. On one of those anxious nights, Tunalı Hilmi Bey wrote a poem glorifying the future victory and sent it to Gazi Mustafa Kemal (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 33). The next day, the troops of the government of the GNA won a decisive battle, and Gazi Mustafa Kemal, in response to Tunalı Hilmi Bey's poem, sent him this machine gun as a gift. It was one of the trophies of the victory of the Turkish army (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 33).

Lansere also visited the house of the Vice-Chairman of the GNA Adnan Bey [Adivar] and his wife, the writer Halide Edip [Adivar], who also actively participated in the National Struggle. Halide Edip was known for her determination, ideas, and publications. In her works, she raised the issues of women's rights in Turkish society and the education of children, and strove to secure an active role for Turkish women. Lansere made a portrait of Halide Edip following a request by Aralov.

On 16 September 1922, Lansere left Ankara. On the way back, he visited Kastamonu, İnebolu, and Trabzon. The artist, who was very interested in the peculiar features of the life of the East, wrote in his travel diary some notes about the camel caravans that arrived in Trabzon from Persia and made a draft sketch with some explanations. The camels in the caravan were richly and brightly decorated. On the bridles there were images of deer embroidered in turquoise and large numbers of copper bells (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 74). From his sketch, it is clear that the bridle itself was covered with beads. The camels had red, blue, and orange wool tassels attached to their heads. They had on their necks rows of red, orange, blue, and green wool tassels, each with a light-blue bead. The Persians driving the caravan had long hair and wore blue kaftans (E. E. Lansere, 1925, p. 74).

After returning from Turkey, Lansere presented to the public the works he made in Turkey, first in Moscow in 1922, at the exhibition of the 4th Congress of the Communist International ((1936). *E. E. Lansere XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, p. 24). Later in 1922, he organised a personal exhibition in Petrograd showing watercolours and drawings made during his trip to Turkey ((1936). *E. E. Lansere XL let khudozhestvennoy deyatel'nosti*, p. 24). In addition, in 1925 Lansere published a major book in Leningrad, *Leto v Angore* [Summer in Angora], in which he included excerpts from his travel diary and some of his Turkish sketches.

Thus, Lansere's trip to Turkey, his exhibitions of works about Turkey, and his book helped to acquaint the people of Soviet Russia with Turkey in the days when the country, under the leadership of Gazi Mustafa Kemal, was waging its National Struggle for independence. The National Struggle became one of the most important political events after World War I, not only in the Middle East but also in the world. This event attracted the attention of the whole world. In his published travel diary and sketches, Lansere acquainted Soviet Russia with the participants in the Turkish National Struggle, with episodes from daily life in some Turkish cities, with the colourful streets of Ankara, with preserved antiquities, with the work of wool weavers rolling felt on the floor, artisans making saddles for caravans, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, and jewellers. His book and sketches also reflect Turkish national male and female costumes and Turkish houses, with their external architectural features and interior decoration.

In 1925-1929, the Republic of Turkey and the USSR continued their mutual friendly and cooperative relations. At the same time, the governments of both countries continued to search for tools that could strengthen their friendly relations and maintain mutual trust. On 30 June 1925, Zekâi Bey, the new Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the USSR, arrived in Odessa from Istanbul on his way to Moscow. In the port of Odessa, Zekâi Bey was met by official representatives of both the Executive Committee of the Odessa Region and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, and also by the Consul of the Republic of Turkey in Odessa. In an interview with the newspaper *Izvestiya*, Zekâi Bey described Soviet-Turkish relations and Turkey's with the following words: 'Relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey are the most friendly, sincerely friendly. All my efforts will be directed to the further strengthening of these relations both in the political and economic spheres. All the efforts of the Turkish government are currently directed towards the economic recovery of our country, which suffered greatly during the war. Over the past three years, we began the construction of a new railway connecting the cities of Ankara, Sivas, and Samsun. We have increased mining extraction, organised new stock exchanges; the issuance of agricultural credits has increased; we have created new ports. Special attention is paid to the development of agriculture and

the consolidation of small farms, which are those that prevail in Turkey. Thanks to this, Turkey is avoiding the need to import wheat, and this year will even be able to export wheat and, in return, will increase the import of agricultural machinery' (Pribytie v Odessu novogo Turetskogo posla. (1925, July 1). *Izvestiya*, 147).

Zekâi Bey arrived in Moscow on 2 July 1925 (Priezd Turetskogo posla. (1925, July 3). *Izvestiya*, 149). In an interview with the press, he expressed the following: 'The general prospects of mutual relations between Turkey and the USSR are the best. My work here will be aimed at further rapprochement and strengthening the sincere ties of friendship that have already been established between Turkey and the USSR' (Beseda s novym Turetskim poslom v SSSR. (1925, July 4). *Izvestiya*, 150). Such relations allowed the two countries to expand and diversify their mutual cultural contacts.

The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries [Vsesoyuznoe Obshchestvo Kul'turnykh Svyazey s Zagranitsey] made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of cultural ties between the Republic of Turkey and the USSR throughout the 1920s and 1930s. This Society was founded in Moscow in 1925 by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the All-Russian Scientific Association for Oriental Studies, the Academy of Arts, the People's Commissariat of Education and Health and the Central Institute of Bibliography (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 13). Olga Kameneva, the sister of the well-known politician Lev Trotskiy, was appointed Chairman of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. In accordance with Article 1 of the Charter of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the Society aimed to promote the establishment and development of scientific and cultural relations between institutions and public organisations, as well as between scientists and cultural representatives of the USSR and foreign countries (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 13-14).

The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries assigned great importance to so-called rapprochement evenings, which were held by the Society on the occasion of the arrival of representatives of state organisations and economic and cultural institutions of the Republic of Turkey in Moscow (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 15). The Society jointly with the All-Russian Association for Oriental Studies organised the first rapprochement evening with the Republic of Turkey in the beginning of February 1926, on the occasion of the arrival in Moscow of the first Turkish commercial and industrial delegation, headed by the Director of the Commercial Institute of Ankara Ahmet Münir Reşit Bey and the representative of Turkish women Hafife Hanım (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 15). In her welcome address at the rapprochement evening, the Society Chairman Kameneva

said: 'Our All-Union Society embraces every opportunity to establish cultural ties between the peoples of the USSR and the peoples of other countries. Turkey continues to implement democratic legislation along a revolutionary path, so perhaps the Turkish people will be able to understand our revolutionary achievements, our new legislation, our way of life, and all our achievements in the field of cultural and social life better than any other people. A relationship has been established with the Turkish Embassy in matters of cultural relations. The monumental task of studying people... and establishing close cultural ties is a shared work and is so essential that it is a must to... do it together. Our society does not miss the opportunity to promote the rapprochement of peoples and live communication... Today's report by Ahmet Münir Reşit Bey will be useful for us as well: we will be able to learn from an important figure of the Republic of Turkey about his homeland' (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 15-16).

At this evening of rapprochement between the Republic of Turkey and the USSR, the head of the Turkish commercial and industrial delegation Ahmet Münir Reşit Bey presented a long report on 'The social situation in modern Turkey' (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16). Ahmet Münir Reşit Bey introduced the guests to the historical causes of the National Struggle and revolutionary gains, described the economic situation of Turkey and stressed the importance of the reforms carried out by Gazi Mustafa Kemal (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16). In his report, Ahmet Münir Reşit Bey also remarked on Turkey's deep sympathy for Soviet Russia and expressed hope for strong economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 15-16). The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the USSR Zekâi Bey and the Chairman of the All-Russian Association for Oriental Studies and author of articles and books on Turkey Mikhail Pavlovich also spoke at the event. Zekâi Bey, in his welcome address, encouraged the strengthening of Soviet-Turkish cultural ties (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16). In the 1920s, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries continued to acquaint the peoples of the USSR with major events in the cultural life of the Republic of Turkey and its prominent representatives through its meetings and magazines ((1930). *V.O.K.S. Vsesoyuznoe obshchestvo kul'turnoy svyazi s zagranitsey. Fakty i tsify*, p. 3).

In 1925, the first steps were also taken in establishing friendly contacts in the field of aviation. The Turkish Aviation Society [*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*] was founded on 16 February 1925 to promote the establishment of the aviation industry (military, civil, and tourist aviation). In this regard, the Presidium of the Society of Friends of the Air Fleet of the USSR [Obshchestvo druzey vozdushnogo flota] sent a congratulatory telegram to the Turkish Aviation Society which read as follows: 'We were very pleased to learn about the establishment

of your Society in our friendly neighbour Turkey. Your Society aims, in the same manner as our Society, to promote the progress of the air fleet, to ensure the independence and national development of the Turkish people. On behalf of the two million members of our Society, we wish you the best luck in your future endeavours to strengthen the Turkish air fleet, to ensure the independence and development of the Turkish people' ((1981). *SSSR i Turtsiya*, p. 88).

The Society of Friends of the Air Fleet merged with the Society of Friends of Chemical Defence [Obshchestvo družey khimicheskoy oborony (Dobrokhim)] on 28 May 1925 and formed a new Society of Friends of Aviation and Chemical Industry [Obshchestvo družey aviatsionnoy i khimicheskoy promyshlennosti (Aviakhim)]. This organisation was instrumental in the preparation of the first flight between Moscow and Ankara in the history of the relations between Turkey and Russia. A Soviet aeroplane of the type *Pochtovyy R-1* with the name *Red Star* was chosen for the flight (Mikh. Kol'tsov, (1926, August 12). *Perelyöt. Pravda*, 183). The flight was primarily intended to demonstrate the close ties between Turkey and the USSR ((1964). *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IX, p. 732). The aeroplane had an M. S. engine onboard and was designed and constructed in the USSR at the Bolshevik factory (Perelyöt Moskva-Angora. (1926, March 5). *Izvestiya*, 53). At the initial stage, the aeroplane was flown by military pilot Pyötr Mezheraup, who was already known for his flight from Moscow to Afghanistan in 1924, and flight engineer M. Golovanov. Later, at the Kacha aerodrome, in Crimea near Sevastopol, the flight was joined by the correspondent of the newspaper *Pravda* and editor of the popular magazine *Ogonyök* Mikhail Kol'tsov.

In March 1926, major Soviet newspapers began to talk about the upcoming flight from Moscow to Ankara. On 5 March 1926, the newspaper *Izvestiya* reported that the final route of the upcoming flight had been determined: Moscow-Tula-Kursk-Belgorod-Kharkov-Ekaterinoslav-Zaporozhye-Melitopol-Sevastopol, and then over the Black Sea to Ankara (Perelyöt Moskva-Angora. (1926, March 5). *Izvetstiya*, 53). By this time, there was also an urgent need for flights between the USSR and Turkey. So, after arriving in Odessa on the way from Istanbul to Moscow on 29 June 1926, Mehmed Bey, the military attaché of the Turkish Embassy in Moscow, noted in an interview with the newspaper *Izvestiya* that the time was ripe for air communication between the USSR and Turkey (Vozdushnyy reys Turtsiya-SSSR. (1926, June 30). *Izvestiya*, 147). He added that, first of all, Turkey needed air communication with Moscow and Odessa since Turkish firms and entrepreneurs maintained close trade relations with these two cities (Vozdushnyy reys Turtsiya-SSSR. (1926, June 30). *Izvestiya*, 147).

In the days before the flight, the Soviet government informed the government of the Republic of Turkey about the flight and asked for permission for the Soviet aircraft to fly

through Turkish airspace on the Moscow-Ankara route. On 31 May 1926, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Turkey, in a meeting with the participation of the President of the Turkish Republic Gazi Mustafa Kemal, the Prime Minister İsmet Pasha [İnönü], and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tevfik Rüştü Bey [Aras], adopted the following decision in connection with the appeal of the Soviet government: 'Regarding the visit of a Soviet aeroplane to Turkey, we decide to allow the aircraft to use the air route Sinop-Boyabat-Çankırı-Ankara on the territory of Turkey' (İcra Vekilleri Heyeti Kararnâmesi [Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers], 31 May 1926, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi [Archive of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Turkey], 030. 18. 01 / 019. 35. 10).

Late at night on 19 July 1926, a ceremony on the occasion of the departure of the aeroplane to Ankara took place at the Lev Trotskiy aerodrome near Moscow. The ceremony was attended by Aralov, who was a member of the Board of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, the Deputy Chairman of the Society of Friends of Aviation and Chemical Industry Sergey Kamenev, the Deputy Head of the Air Force of the USSR Romual'd Muklevich, the Secretary of the Turkish Embassy in Moscow Behçet Bey, and other employees of the Turkish Embassy. In his welcoming speech, Muklevich pointed out that the progressive processes taking place in Turkey were not different from those in the USSR. In his speech, he also declared the following: 'The peoples of the Soviet Union pay special attention to the rapid development of Turkey on the path of culture and progress. Great Turkey, just like the Soviet Union, is building its country without receiving any help from anyone. Therefore, we are particularly happy to seek to establish close friendly relations with Turkey. The time is not far off before regular air traffic will be established between Moscow and Ankara. Long live the Turkish Aviation Society! Long live the Great Turkish People!' (Bol'shie sovetskie perelyöty. Moskva-Angora. (1926, July 20). *Izvestiya*, 164). After his speech, Muklevich handed Mezheraup an album with the inscription 'To the Turkish Aviation Society'. Accepting this album, Mezheraup said the following: 'I am very happy to fly to friendly Turkey. I will do my best to carry out the task entrusted to me. Long live the Turkish People!' (Bol'shie sovetskie perelyöty. Moskva-Angora. (1926, July 20). *Izvestiya*, 164). In his speech, Aralov asked Mezheraup, on behalf of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, to convey greetings to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and expressed the wish that the political and cultural union of the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union would be further strengthened (Bol'shie sovetskie perelyöty. Moskva-Angora. (1926, July 20). *Izvestiya*, 164). The Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Moscow, Behçet Bey, shaking hands with Mezheraup, said: 'I am happy to greet you on behalf of the Embassy of

the Republic of Turkey. We consider the appearance of an aircraft from our friend the Soviet Union in the Turkish sky as a friendly handshake. Let me wish you every success in your glorious flight'. After the ceremony concluded with applause, the aeroplane, under the control of pilot Mezheraup and flight engineer Golovanov, departed for Ankara at 2:02am (Bol'shie sovetskie perelyöty. Moskva-Angora. (1926, July 20). *Izvestiya*, 164). The correspondent of the newspaper *Pravda* and editor of the magazine *Ogonyök Kol'tsov*, describing this flight, called it a revolution. Regarding this event, he wrote the following in the newspaper *Pravda*: 'Is not this route of ours, this perfectly straight line from the capital of the revolutionary and independent Russia to the capital of the revolutionary and independent Turkey, a revolution?!' (Mikh. Kol'tsov, (1926, August 12). *Perelyöt. Pravda*, 183).

In the course of the trip, Mezheraup landed in Kharkov and Kacha. On 20 July 1926, at 03:55am, Mezheraup, together with flight engineer Golovanov and *Pravda* correspondent and editor of the magazine *Ogonyök Kol'tsov*, flew from Kacha to Ankara. Mezheraup flew over the Black Sea in one hundred and twenty minutes (Mikh. Kol'tsov, (1926, August 12). *Perelyöt. Pravda*. 183) and landed at the airfield in Ankara at 07:40am. Immediately after arriving in Ankara, the crew handed over the flowers that had been picked in Moscow just before the departure and asked that they be to the President of the Republic of Turkey Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Tsvety iz Moskvyy Kemalyu. (1926, July 24). *Izvestiya*, 168). After that, the flight participants delivered to Turkish officials a letter from the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Chicherin to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey Tevfik Rüştü Bey. Chicherin's letter read as follows: 'Mr. Minister, I am taking advantage of this favourable occasion, the first Moscow-Ankara flight, to greet in your person the Government and people of Turkey. The organisation of the flight between Moscow and Ankara is evidence of the close ties existing between our two peoples, who have based their policy on sincere and mutual friendship. It is a special pleasure for me to greet in your person the Head of the foreign policy of Turkey. The orientation of this policy found its fortunate expression in the Soviet-Turkish Treaty of 17 December last year, which I had the pleasure of signing together with you. I express my firm confidence that in the near future all economic issues between the USSR and Turkey will also be resolved and that every day our brotherly relations will develop and strengthen in the interests of our friendly peoples' ((1964). *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IX, p. 370).

In Ankara, the Soviet pilots were given a very friendly welcome. The flight participants were received by the President of the Republic of Turkey Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Perelyöt Moskva-Angora. *Beseda s lyötchikom tov. Mezheraupom*. (1926, August 8). *Izvestiya*, 180).

In a cordial conversation with Soviet pilots and guests, which lasted for one hour, Gazi Mustafa Kemal said that the Republic of Turkey would soon be able to carry out a return aerial visit to the USSR (Vozvrashchenie uchastnikov pereflyöta Moskva-Angora. (1926, August 5). *Izvestiya*, 178). Moreover, a banquet was given in Ankara by the Turkish Aviation Society in honour of the guests from Moscow (Rus teyyaresi dün şehrimize geldi. (1926, Temmuz 21). *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*). A separate banquet was held in honour of the Soviet press, which was represented in the flight by the correspondent of the newspaper *Pravda* and editor of the magazine *Ogonyök* Kol'tsov. In Ankara, the flight participants delivered complimentary addresses and presented the Turkish aviation leaders with badges issued by the Soviet Aviahim to commemorate the Moscow-Ankara flight ((1964). *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IX, p. 370). The Government of the Republic of Turkey awarded the flight participants a medal encrusted with diamonds bearing the national emblem of Turkey and an aeroplane.

In connection with this flight, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey Tefrik Rüştü Bey sent a reply letter to Chicherin. In the letter, dated 27 July 1926, we read in particular the following: 'I was very pleased with the message that you deigned to send me in connection with this happy occasion: the first flight between Moscow and Ankara, which was so brilliantly carried out. I fully share your opinion that the organisation of the flight between Moscow and Ankara is an eloquent evidence of the close ties between our peoples, who have based their policy on sincere and mutual friendship. For my part, it gives me special pleasure to greet in your person the outstanding leader of the foreign policy of the USSR, a policy which, as you so rightly pointed out, has found its most successful expression in the Soviet-Turkish Treaty of 17 December last year, which I had the pleasure of signing with you in Paris. I also express with firm confidence that, thanks to the understanding of mutual interests on both sides, the efforts aimed at laying a solid and fair foundation under the economic relations between Turkey and the USSR will be crowned with complete success in the near future and all economic issues will be resolved between our countries, and that the fraternal relations between our peoples will develop and grow stronger. I take advantage of this opportunity to greet in your person the Government and the peoples of the USSR' ((1964). *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, Vol. IX, p. 370).

It was also in the 1920s that the foundations were laid for bilateral scientific contacts. It is worth noting the expeditions of the Russian botanist and plant-grower Pyötr Zhukovskiy to Turkey in 1926-1927 as important steps for the development and strengthening of cooperation in the field of science between the USSR and the Republic of Turkey. The idea for these expeditions was conceived by the Soviet academician Nikolay Vavilov, and they were

organised by the All-Union Research Institute of Plant Industry, but they became possible thanks to the support and attention of the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of Agriculture of Turkey. The expeditions to Turkey were part of the program of expeditions organised by the All-Union Research Institute of Plant Industry to collect plant specimens with ancient origins in agricultural nations (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). One of the goals of these expeditions was to create in the USSR substantial collection of original genotypic and botanical-geographical samples of all cultivated plants, for their selective breeding and direct introduction into agriculture (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). At the same time, the expeditions were meant to study the agricultural features of Turkey and the varieties of plants in Turkish fields (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). The organisers of the expeditions also believed that the results would be useful for Turkey itself to lay the practical and theoretical basis for further growth of productivity in its crop production (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXIII).

The first expedition lasted from 20 September 1925 to the end of January 1926; the second lasted from July to November 1926 (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1927, p. 135), and the third was carried out in 1927 (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). Turkish professors Ali Riza Bey and Tevfik Dünder Bey and the Director of the Turkish Institute of Selective Breeding in Yeşilköy Dr. Mirza Hacizade Bey showed great interest in this work, and their essential guidance and recommendations were instrumental in the fulfilment of the tasks of the expeditions (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). During the first expedition, Zhukovskiy was accompanied by a Turkish translator from Istanbul, Ali Essad Bey; in the second expedition, the translator was Mehmed Naji Bey (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1927, p. 135), and in 1927 the Soviet scientist was accompanied by Professor Tevfik Dünder Bey (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXI). The expedition collected vast material on grains, industrial crops, fodder plants, and vegetables of Anatolia. The total number of samples collected exceeded ten thousand items (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. 136).

The results of this significant scientific contact between the two countries were presented in Professor Zhukovskiy's fundamental work *Zemledel'cheskaya Turtsiya (Aziatskaya chast' - Anatoliya)* [Agricultural Turkey (Asian part - Anatolia)], published in Moscow and Leningrad in 1933. This work of 908 pages included, in addition to the text, 312 drawings made from Zhukovskiy's photographs of plant specimens, 12 colour tables, maps, statistical tables, and a summary in French. As a result of his research, Zhukovskiy discovered that Anatolia is the cradle of many valuable cultivated varieties of plants grown in Europe (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXII). According to Zhukovskiy, the study of plants cultivated in Anatolia showed

that the Republic of Turkey had many thousands of independent varieties of crops, which meant great potential for breeding (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXIII). Noting the importance of the study for Turkey, Zhukovskiy said the following in the introductory part of his work: 'The book gives the results and exact numbers from analyses of Turkish varieties, so Turkish agronomists and industry will see what a high percentage of proteins, fats, and essential oils are contained in many varieties. We will be deeply satisfied if our work, revealing the varietal composition and varietal diversity found in Turkish fields, will benefit Turkish scientists, breeders, and agronomists' (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XXIII).

The introductory article to this work, entitled 'The Soviet Union and Turkey', was written by the Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Lev Karakhan. Speaking about the nature of the relations between the two countries, Karakhan noted the following: 'We here in the USSR have always followed with deep attention the triumphs of Turkey in various fields of economy, culture, and science. Real, properly understood mutual interests have brought relations between the USSR and Turkey to such a degree of development that neither country can be indifferent to the course of the internal life in the other. We, who pursue a steady policy of peace, are far from indifferent to Turkey's triumphs achieved in the construction of its economy and culture, since these achievements strengthen the independence of the Republic of Turkey and increase its resistance in the face of aggression. Equally, Turkey cannot be indifferent to the successes of the Soviet Union in the completion of the first and the implementation of the second five-year plan for the development of the USSR, since these successes reinforce the international significance of the USSR, increase its economic power, thereby expanding the framework of cooperation between the two countries' (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, pp. XV-XVI).

Speaking about the significant progress achieved in scientific relations between the USSR and Turkey in previous years, Karakhan noted an important feature inherent to these relations. Because of the complexity of the tasks involved in it, this area of Soviet-Turkish cooperation was the most challenging in terms of obtaining quick results and showing achievements (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XVI). Karakhan regarded Zhukovskiy's *Zemledel'cheskaya Turtsiya (Aziatskaya chast' - Anatoliya)* as the first major product of scientific contacts between the two countries (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XVI).

According to Karakhan, Zhukovskiy's work, which was the result of his scientific labour over many years and his scientific expeditions in and cooperation with Turkey, had three remarkable qualities. First, it had major scientific significance as a valuable contribution to world literature on plant science and as one of the few truly scientific studies on Turkey (P.

M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XVI). Secondly, the work was of great practical importance for selective breeding to improve the quality of crops produced in Turkey and raise the overall level of Turkish agriculture (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XVI). Third, Zhukovskiy's work had enormous importance for strengthening Soviet-Turkish scientific ties, given the fact that communication between Turkish and Soviet scientists raises Soviet-Turkish relations to a new level of reciprocal cooperation and mutual understanding (P. M. Zhukovskiy, 1933, p. XVII).

It is a well-known fact that Gazi Mustafa Kemal always paid great attention to education in Turkey. On 17 October 1922, just a few days after signing the Armistice of Mudanya, Gazi Mustafa Kemal, in a speech pronounced in the city hall of Bursa during a working trip to the city, said the following: 'After a struggle that lasted for three and a half years, we will continue our struggle in the field of science, education, and economy. We will be manufacturers, we will be craftsmen. Now, we will direct all our thoughts to this work' (Ertuğrul Zekai Ökte, 2000, Vol. I, p. 36). This and subsequent years were important for Turkey in terms of ongoing work in the field of education. Turkey was proclaimed a Republic, and work began on the preparation of its educational policy. With the adoption of the *Act on the Unification of Education* [Tevhidi Tedrisat Kanunu] on 3 March 1924, Gazi Mustafa Kemal laid the foundations of the education system in Turkey.

The experience of other countries was also studied in the process of this work. In connection with this and on behalf of Gazi Mustafa Kemal, a delegation from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Turkey headed by the ministry adviser Nafi Atuf Bey [Kansu] visited the USSR in 1926. The delegation also included the assistant adviser of the Ministry of Education Rıdvan Nafiz Bey [Edgür], who was fluent in Russian. The People's Commissar of Education of the USSR received the Turkish delegation in Moscow. At the meeting, the Turkish delegation was acquainted with the activities of secondary schools, vocational schools, higher education institutions, and the Academies of Sciences of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. In the People's Commissariat of Education, the Turkish delegation met with the heads of departments of the Commissariat and was acquainted with their functions and activities.

In the RSFSR, the Turkish delegation visited various schools in Moscow and Leningrad. The delegation was very interested in the experience of the USSR in combating illiteracy ((1981). *SSSR i Turtsiya*, p. 87). In this regard, the Turkish delegation visited some villages, where those who could not read and write were taught in so-called 'reading huts'. The Turkish delegation also visited factories and the schools that were opened for those factories' workers. During its trip, the Turkish delegation visited educational institutions in Moscow and

Leningrad. The delegation also visited the cities of Kiev and Odessa and got acquainted with the education system of the Ukrainian SSR. After the visit, the delegation prepared a report on the education system in the USSR.

In connection with the arrival in the USSR of a large group of educators from the Republic of Turkey, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries organised an evening of rapprochement with the Republic of Turkey on 5 July 1926 in the Chamber Theatre. The evening was attended by about 900 guests. In their welcome addresses, the Chairman of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries Kameneva, Turkey's chargé d'affaires in the USSR Bedi Bey, and member of the Board of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Aralov stressed the need to strengthen Soviet-Turkish cultural ties (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16). At the evening, the head of the Turkish delegation Nafi Atuf Bey reported on the education system of the Republic of Turkey (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16). Nafi Atuf Bey noted the following: 'The government of our young Republic has sent us here to study the activities of the new Russia, which on the ruins of the old regime has laid a completely new social order and created a new educational system' (N. A. Ayzenšteyn, 1973, p. 106). The People's Commissar of Education of the USSR Anatoliy Lunacharskiy presented his report *On the new culture* at the event (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, p. 16).

The participants in this event sent a telegram to the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the USSR in Turkey Yakov Surits, in which they expressed the desire to develop Soviet-Turkish cultural ties. The telegram read as follows: 'The participants of the evening of Soviet-Turkish rapprochement ask you to convey warm greetings to the Turkish people and express their hope that the cultural ties between our peoples will grow stronger every year' (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 16-17).

In 1926, Soviet readers had the opportunity to get acquainted with the memoirs of the President of the Republic of Turkey Gazi Mustafa Kemal. The first part of the memoirs had been published in the Turkish press in March-April 1926 under the title *Pages from the memoirs of the great Gazi* (Mustafa Kemal'. (1929) *Put' novoy Turtsii*. Vol. I, p. XI). It was concerned with the history of Turkey during the First World War and concluded with the Armistice (Mustafa Kemal'. (1929). *Put' novoy Turtsii*. Vol. I, p. XI). An abridged version of this part of Gazi Mustafa Kemal's memoirs was translated into Russian by Polina Ravich and published in the magazine *Krasnaya Nov'* in 1926 (Mustafa Kemal' Pasha. (1926). *Krasnaya Nov'*, 11, pp. 122-173). Later, in 1927, the excerpt was published as a separate booklet by *Ogonyök* Publishing House (Mustafa Kemal' Pasha, 1927).

A significant event in Soviet-Turkish cultural relations was the visit of the Chairman of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries Olga Kameneva to Istanbul and Ankara in the fall of 1927. The Union of Soviet Writers prepared a selection of materials especially for Kameneva trip to Turkey related to recent works of Soviet literature published on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, as well as information on the activities of Soviet literary and theatrical associations, and excerpts from theatrical legislation (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 17-18). It should be noted that during her three-week stay in Turkey, Kameneva successfully promoted mutual contacts in the fields of culture and science, as clearly evidenced by her story about the trip to Turkey after returning to Moscow, in which she wrote the following: 'I stayed in Turkey for three weeks. It is evident to everyone that this period is extremely short to get acquainted with the country, even in a very superficial manner. However, I was lucky if one takes into account that the time of my stay in Turkey was extremely rich in events of the political and cultural life of the country: Istanbul celebrated its liberation, and Ankara solemnly welcomed the return of Gazi Mustafa Kemal. The Second Medical Congress was held on the same days in Ankara, an event that was given great importance. Finally, also during my stay in Ankara the historically significant Congress of the People's Party of Turkey began, and was the main focus of the attention of the Turkish press throughout those days. These manifold events and the concentration of all the most prominent figures in Ankara gave me the opportunity to meet in this short time with a majority of the most prominent representatives of the Government as well as public and scientific figures and, additionally, to get acquainted with many aspects of Turkish life... I was received by Prime Minister İsmet Pasha, who was very interested in my proposal to dedicate the first Russian issue of the VOKS Bulletin to Turkey upon my return to the USSR. He promised to give orders for the selection of special information for this issue. I had a long conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tefik Rüşti Bey. He showed a profound interest in the organisational structure of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and asked me to send additional detailed information on this issue since he had the idea of creating a similar organisation in Turkey for cultural exchanges with other countries. In the Ministry of Public Education, I had an audience with the Minister of Education Necati Bey. It turned out at this meeting that the representatives of the Ministry of Education who visited the USSR are particularly interested in the organisation of activities at our faculties for workers. In Istanbul, I had a conversation with the rector of the University of Istanbul Professor Neşet Ömer Bey and the Director of the Institute of Turkology and Dean of the Faculty of Philology Professor Mehmet Fuad Köprülüzade Bey. Following an invitation by Mahmut Bey [Soydam], editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, I visited the editorial office of this newspaper. With complete certainty, I see now as indisputable

the prospects for cultural cooperation, the study of the Russian language in Turkey, the exchange of articles in scientific journals, the participation in expeditions, scientific congresses, the reciprocal trips of scientists and young people from the USSR and Turkey, the performances of our artists in Turkey' (A. K. Sverchevskaya, 1983, pp. 18-19). This document was discovered by Antonina Sverchevskaya in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution and she made it available for scientific use. It demonstrates the interest of both countries in further developing and expanding their cooperation within the various fields of culture.

In 1929, Soviet readers had another opportunity to get acquainted with the history of the National Struggle in Turkey, led by Gazi Mustafa Kemal. It is common knowledge that, in the first half of 1927, the President of the Republic of Turkey, Gazi Mustafa Kemal, began to prepare an extensive work that covered the National Struggle, the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey, and revolutionary reforms in Turkey. The work dealt with the period from 1919 to 1927 and was based on documentary sources, memories, and opinions of his fellow fighters in the National Struggle. Gazi Mustafa Kemal read his work at the Second Congress of the Republican People's Party, which opened in Ankara in the building of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey on 15 October 1927. Gazi Mustafa Kemal read his work for 36 hours and 31 minutes. The work went down in history as *Nutuk* [The Speech]. The transcript of Gazi Mustafa Kemal's speech at the Party Congress, including several documents submitted by Gazi Mustafa Kemal to the Congress participants, was translated into Russian and published in four volumes under the title *Put' Novoy Turtsii* in 1929-1934.

Since the first volume of Gazi Mustafa Kemal's memoirs begins with May 1919, the editors considered it appropriate to provide a historical overview of the policy of Western powers towards Turkey before and after the First World War and the initial background of the National Struggle in Turkey. This overview was prepared by Professor V. Gurko-Kryazhin (Mustafa Kemal', *Put' Novoy Turtsii*, 1929, p. XIV). The editors also added reference notes and comments to each volume.

In addition, in the 1920s, the prominent Soviet orientalist and academician Vasiliy Bartol'd visited Istanbul University, and in 1927 exhibitions of Soviet economy and cultural achievements were arranged in Istanbul and Ankara. In 1926, Moscow Conservatory professor and violinist Naum Blinder gave concerts in Istanbul and Ankara. Meanwhile, Turkish actor Muhsin Ertuğrul and popular theatre and film actress Münire Bint Eyüp visited Moscow in 1925 and 1926, respectively. In 1925, Istanbul University professor Mehmet Fuad Köprülüzade visited the Russian Academy of Sciences and participated in the celebration of the twohundredth anniversary of the Academy.

In the 1930s, the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union's practical steps to strengthen and develop further friendly and cooperative relations manifested themselves in active bilateral diplomatic contacts, mutual visits of statesmen and government delegations. Such contacts favoured the development of mutual relations not only in the spheres of politics, but also in the spheres of culture and science.

One of the most important examples of cooperation between the two countries in the field of culture and science in the 1930s was the arrival of a Turkish government delegation headed by Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey İsmet Pasha in the USSR in 1932. The delegation stayed in the USSR from 26 April to 8 May and visited the cities of Odessa, Kiev, Moscow, and Leningrad. The newspaper *Izvestiya* wrote that, 'the meetings of the statesmen of the Republic of Turkey and the USSR are aimed at strengthening and developing friendly relations between both countries and are regarded as stages in the struggle for peace' (Strana Sovetov goryachyö privetstvuet predstaviteley družhestvennoy Turetskoy Respubliki. (1932, April 28). *Izvestiya*, 118). Among the 35 members of the delegation, there were representatives of Turkish industry, agriculture, producers' cooperatives, and the departments of education and health. The members of the Turkish delegation visited construction sites and major factories; they got acquainted with the cultural achievements of the USSR and the training of professional personnel. They were present at the military parade on Red Square in Moscow on 1 May. The deputies of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the journalists got acquainted with methods of cultural work and the activities of museums, theatres, clubs, and others. A group of specialists on behalf of İsmet Pasha studied the work of a number of research institutes ((1981). *SSSR i Turtsiya*, p. 98). Turkish journalists and writers got acquainted with Soviet writers' workshops.

On 28 April 1932, various groups from the Turkish delegation visited several People's Commissariats (Ministries). As part of these visits, the Director General of the Department of the Ministry of Education İhsan Bey and the Director of Turkish Orphanages and Deputy of the GNA Fuat Bey visited the People's Commissar of Education of the USSR Andrey Bubnov (Prebyvanie Turetskikh gostey v Moskve. (1932, April 29). *Izvestiya*, 119). On the same day, a group of Turkish journalists and writers, which included the Chairman of the Commission of Foreign Relations of the GNA of Turkey and editor of the newspaper *Milliyet* Mahmut Bey [Soydan], GNA deputy and editor of the newspapers *Cumhuriyet* and *Yeni Gün* Yunus Nadi Bey [Abalıoğlu], GNA deputy and writer Yakup Kadri Bey [Karaosmanoğlu], GNA deputy and writer Ruşen Eşref Bey [Ünaydın], GNA deputy and editor of the newspaper *Vakit* Hakkı Tarık Bey [Us], GNA deputy, writer, and journalist Falih Rıfkı Bey [Atay], the

representative of the newspaper *Akşam* Vali Nureddin Bey, and the editor of the newspaper *Son Posta* Selim Ragip Bey visited the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union and met with its executive director Yakov Doletskiy and employees (Poseshchenie narkomatom i uchrezhdeniy. (1932, April 29). *Izvestiya*, 119). Then a group of Turkish journalists and writers visited the editorial office of the newspaper *Izvestiya*, which was the press organ of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, and met with its executive editor Ivan Gronskey, members of the editorial board, and employees of the international department. During the meeting, Turkish journalists and writers asked Gronskey several questions concerning the organisational structure of the newspaper and examined the premises of the newspaper's editorial office and printing shop (Poseshchenie narkomatom i uchrezhdeniy. (1932, April 29). *Izvestiya*, 119).

On 1 May, the executive director of the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union Yakov Doletskiy hosted a reception in honour of Turkish journalists and writers. In addition to Turkish journalists and writers, the reception was also attended by the adviser of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Moscow Cevat Bey, representatives of the Soviet press and literature, including Gronskey, Demyan Bednyy, Kol'tsov, Platon Kerzhentsev, Valerian Osinskiy, and representatives of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. Doletskiy, Yunus Nadi Bey, Demyan Bednyy, and Ruşen Eşref Bey delivered speeches during the reception. Doletskiy, addressing the Turkish delegation, said the following: 'Let me warmly welcome the most prominent representatives of the press and literature of friendly Kemalist Turkey on behalf of the entire press of the USSR. I welcome the dear guests with a deep conviction that meetings like this, between journalists and writers of both countries, are one of the effective means of studying each other and expanding the long-lasting Soviet-Turkish friendship' (Vstrecha turetskikh i sovetskikh zhurnalistov i literatorov. (1932, May 4). *Izvestiya*, 122). The well-known Turkish publicist Yunus Nadi Bey, expressing admiration for the friendly reception in the USSR on behalf of the Turkish journalists and sharing his thoughts on further cooperation, added the following: 'I warmly join Doletsky's wish to strengthen communication between the press of our countries and consider it necessary that such meetings between Soviet and Turkish journalists be repeated in the future as often as possible' (Vstrecha turetskikh i sovetskikh zhurnalistov i literatorov. (1932, May 4). *Izvestiya*, 122).

On 3 May 1932, the Chairman of the Journal Association Kol'tsov gave a reception in the Moscow House of Scientists in honour of the Turkish press. The reception was attended by Turkish guests headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey Tevfik Rüştü Bey and Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey Ragip Bey. From the Soviet side, the reception was attended by the writer Maksim Gor'kiy, the People's Commissar of

Foreign Affairs Maksim Litvinov, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Representative of the USSR in the Republic of Turkey Surits, the writer Kerzhentsev, the editor of the newspaper *Pravda* Maksimilian Savel'yev, Doletskiy, Karl Radek, the Director of the Moscow House of Scientists Mariya Andreeva, Aleksander Bakhutov, the writer Leonid Leonov, the writer and journalist Efim Zozulya, the poet Semyön Kirsanov, the composer Sergey Prokof'ev, the theatre Director Vsevolod Meyerhol'd, and Aleksander Tairov. At tea, Maksim Gor'kiy had a conversation with Tevfik Rüştü Bey and Turkish writers and critics about the development of Turkish, Soviet and world literature (Vstrecha M. Gor'kogo s Turetskimi pisatelyami i zhurnalistami. (1932, May 6). *Izvestiya*, 124).

Falih Rıfkı Bey, the author of the famous book *Yeni Rusya* [New Russia], introduced Ruşen Eşref Bey to Gor'kiy as one of the major Turkish writers, one who did much to familiarise Turkish readers with the works of Soviet writers and especially with Gor'kiy's works (Vstrecha M. Gor'kogo s Turetskimi pisatelyami i zhurnalistami. (1932, May 6). *Izvestiya*, 124). While speaking about Soviet literature and enumerating the works Gor'kiy that had been translated into Turkish, Ruşen Eşref Bey noted that Maksim Gor'kiy was one of the most popular Soviet writers in Turkey (Vstrecha M. Gor'kogo s Turetskimi pisatelyami i zhurnalistami. (1932, May 6). *Izvestiya*, 124). Turkish writers also mentioned Ruşen Eşref Bey as the author of an anthology of Turkish poetry from the 16th century to the 20th century (Beseda s M. Gor'kim ob obmene literaturnymi tsennostyami. (1932, May 9). *Izvestiya*, 127). Gor'kiy also learnt that the anthology had been translated into French and would be published in the near future, and that, moreover, a similar anthology of Turkish prose was being prepared. Turkish writers and journalists promised to send a copy of the anthology of Turkish poetry as soon as they returned to Turkey. Gor'kiy decided to publish the anthology of Turkish poetry in Russian and asked the Turkish guests to send along with the book the Turkish originals of the poems included in the anthology to better preserve the character of the verses in the translation (Beseda s M. Gor'kim ob obmene literaturnymi tsennostyami. (1932, May 9). *Izvestiya*, 127).

It should also be noted that, in connection with the arrival of the Turkish government delegation to the USSR, the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries dedicated a special issue of its French language magazine to the Turkish-Soviet rapprochement. The issue included the following articles: 'The Republic of Turkey and the USSR', 'Cultural ties of the USSR and Turkey', and 'Soviet science and Turkish agriculture' (Spetsial'nyy nomer zhurnala VOKS. (1932, May 6). *Izvestiya*, 124).

In 1933, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey, an exhibition of Turkish placards from the period of the National Struggle in Turkey

was opened in the Museum of the Oriental Cultures in Moscow. At the beginning of 1934, Turkish composers Ulvi Cemal, Ekrem Zeki and Cemal Reşit visited Moscow. On February 19, 1934, the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries arranged a concert of their compositions. As a whole, in the 1930s the relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union in the sphere of culture were very active and many-sided, and covered such branches of art as cinema, music, theatre, and fine arts.

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