

# Turkish Area Studies Review

Bulletin of the British Association for  
Turkish Area Studies



[www.batas.org.uk](http://www.batas.org.uk)



## **The 2017 John Martin Lecture**

Friday 24 November 2017 at 6.15 pm

**Associate Professor  
Selin Sayek Böke MA PhD**

Member of the Turkish Parliament

on

**Building Turkey's Progressive Future:  
Democratic Politics and Economic Reform**

in

The Khalili Lecture Theatre  
SOAS University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square,  
London WC1H 0XG

**Registration from 5.45 pm**

Free entry for BATAS members and all full-time students (on production of student ID)  
Entrance charge for others £5.00

To be sure of getting a seat, you may reserve a place by emailing  
**events@batas.org.uk**

## **Spring Symposium 2018**

10 March 2018

at SOAS (Paul Webley Wing, Senate House)  
Details will follow (see also [www.batas.org.uk](http://www.batas.org.uk) for more information)



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**Please note: Opinions expressed and stances taken are exclusively those of the contributors themselves.**

## Editorial

After nearly a century of Kemalism, Turkey moves in new directions at home and abroad. With his authority bolstered by the constitutional referendum of 16 April, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is changing Turkish society and economy and re-directing the country's foreign policy orientation. Friends of Turkey in Britain and elsewhere very much hope to have their confidence in Turkish democracy justified and to see freedom of speech and association in the country reaffirmed at the levels we have come to expect. While there is great sympathy for the loss of life and political convulsion following the *coup* attempt of 2016 we are concerned to see new restrictions on personal liberty. These are not characteristics of the Turkey we admire. To reflect both far-reaching developments since the attempted *coup* and the impact of Turkey's involvement with conflict in Syria and Iraq we include in this issue of *TAS Review* articles on political and economic trends. William Hale has an extended piece on Turkey's politics and we welcome Mina Toksöz who writes on economic trends. We also have two substantial book reviews in which Gerald MacLean and John Moreton discuss recent analyses of the 'new Turkey'.

On Cyprus we have a personal reflection on the continuing *impasse* in the island's search for a constitutional settlement from a Turkish Cypriot negotiator. Articles from BATAS' Symposium earlier this year reflect the wide range of interests within the Association, and on the literary front we welcome a contribution on the Turkish poet Orhan Veli Kanik. As usual we have a report on forthcoming events relating to Turkey and another on new publications, plus an update on a series of research seminars – all from members of our Editorial Board. We thank all our contributors and also our proof-readers.

We look forward to our annual John Martin Lecture on 24 November, at which Turkish parliamentarian Dr Selin Sayek Böke will present an analysis of the current situation in Turkey. The 2018 Spring Symposium will again take place in London, this time in March.

Again we alert readers of *TAS Review* to our need for contributions. We would be very pleased to hear from anyone with a suggestion for a possible article on any aspect of Turkey or its historical/cultural hinterland. In place of remuneration we can offer instant worldwide access, via the BATAS website, to a discerning and appreciative readership.

We are very sorry to report the death of Mrs Nesta Dodd, a loyal supporter of BATAS (and its predecessor TASG). Our deep sympathies go to Professor Clement Dodd, a founder and sometime Vice-President of our association, and to his family.

Brian Beeley  
Co-Editor

Sigrid-B Martin  
Co-Editor



## Turkey's Politics since April 2017

by  
William Hale  
Emeritus Professor, SOAS, London

### **The State of Emergency, and suppression of the opposition, has continued:**

On 17 July the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) used its large majority in parliament to vote through a three-month extension to the State of Emergency originally imposed after the botched coup attempt of 15-16 July 2016. Shortly before, President Tayyip Erdoğan had remarked that it might be lifted 'in the not too distant future', and on 14 September the Minister of the Economy, Nihat Zeybekci, urged that it should be removed 'as soon as possible'.<sup>1</sup> However, by early October there was no clear sign of when this would be done. In the meantime, mass detentions and dismissals of those accused of links with the Islamic Gülenist organisation which was behind the attempted coup continued. By the end of September, between 100,000 and 150,000 judges, teachers and police officers were variously reported to have been dismissed, with over 50,000 arrested, including academics, journalists and civil society activists. On 24 July 2017 journalists from the leading opposition newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, of whom ten had already been held on remand for almost nine months, were put on trial for 'aiding a terrorist organisation'. On 18 September the trials also began of 21 journalists from the closed newspaper *Zaman*, owned by a company close to the Gülenist network, for whom the public prosecutor demanded aggravated life sentences. At this point, according to the Turkish Journalists Association (TGC) there were 160 journalists and writers in gaol, making Turkey the world's number one gaoler of journalists.<sup>2</sup>

The official campaign was also continued against the opposition parties. On 14 June Enis Berberoğlu, a Deputy of the Republican People's Party (CHP) and former editor of the daily *Hürriyet*, was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment for 'revealing state secrets' by divulging pictures allegedly showing the Turkish secret service delivering weapons to rebel groups in Syria, something which was rigidly denied by the government. In response, the CHP organised what its leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu described as 'a long march for justice in Turkey', joined by an estimated two million people in a 280-mile trek from Ankara to İzmir, and thence to Istanbul. This ended with a massive rally in Istanbul on 9 July.<sup>3</sup> In fact, by early October, Berberoğlu was only one of eight opposition Deputies in gaol, all the others being from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democracy Party (HDP), including the party's co-chairman Selahattin Demirtaş, and a former co-chair, Figen Yüksekdağ.<sup>4</sup> All these developments, combined with the one-sided referendum of 16 April which gave a future President (assumed to be Erdoğan) widespread powers, were strengthening the conclusion that Turkey had ceased to be a fully working democracy (*Review 29*, pp.15-26).

### **President Erdoğan has been tackling alleged 'metal fatigue' in the AKP –**

<sup>1</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12 July, 27 September 2017

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 18 September 2017: Murat Yetkin, 'Trying to silence tweets, as well as journalists', ibid 21 September 2017: Selin Girit, 'Turkey's Cumhuriyet journalists in terrorism trial', BBC news website ([www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news)) 24 July 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, 'A Long March for Justice in Turkey', *New York Times*, 7 July 2017

<sup>4</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 3 September 2017.

Following his narrow win in the April referendum, Tayyip Erdoğan formally took over the leadership of the AKP from Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım on 22 May.<sup>5</sup> At the special party congress he was elected unopposed, but this did not leave him without critics within the AKP, including former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, who claimed on 6 June that ‘the AKP is rapidly weakening its own values’.<sup>6</sup> Turkish voters are not scheduled to go to the polls until 2019, when local elections are due to be held in March, with parliamentary and presidential elections in November. Much could change over the next two years. Nevertheless, the signs are that President Erdoğan may have worries about his and his party’s electoral chances, granted that the ‘yes’ votes were only in a small majority in the constitutional referendum, and failed to prevail in Istanbul and a number of other large cities. Accordingly, in August he began a campaign for ‘renewal’ within the AKP ranks, which he claimed was suffering from ‘metal fatigue’. He first reshuffled the cabinet (although this did not result in important changes) and then led a process for change in the AKP’s provincial organisations so as to remove allegedly ‘tired’ office-holders by promoting those loyal to himself. The most dramatic step in this process so far has been the apparently forced resignation of the AKP mayor of Istanbul, Kadir Topbaş, on 22 September. The proximate reason for the dismissal was the mayor’s veto of several lucrative but controversial construction contracts, which provoked the ire of AKP city councillors, but it was widely believed that he was actually being ‘punished’ for the party’s failure to win a majority for the ‘yes’ camp in the April referendum. In his place the AKP majority in the metropolitan municipal council elected Mevlüt Uysal, formerly the mayor of the borough of Başakşehir. Following the departure of Topbaş there was widespread speculation that the purge would extend to other prominent mayors, such as the AKP mayor of Ankara, Melih Gökçek, who has long been criticised for bizarre statements and eccentric decisions.<sup>7</sup>

- **and is faced with the prospective rivalry of a new centre-right party -**

Another problem for the President is the apparent collapse of the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (MHP), led by Devlet Bahçeli, the AKP’s ally in parliament, which unexpectedly supported the government in the April referendum. With around two-thirds of the MHP’s grass-roots supporters opposing this move, opinion polls suggest that the party’s electoral support has dropped to around four percent, from the 11.9 percent which it won in the last general elections of November 2015. On this showing, in a future election the party would fall well below the ten percent threshold it would need to qualify for any seats in parliament. The main beneficiaries have been a group of ex-MHP Deputies led by Meral Akşener, a former minister who challenged Bahçeli’s leadership of the MHP in 2016, but was defeated in an attempt to unseat him by a series of court decisions which she claims were influenced by the government. Having been expelled from the MHP, she carried on as an independent Deputy. By August she had been joined by four other senior ex-MHP rebels – Koray Aydın, Ümit Özdağ, Yusuf Halaçoğlu and Sinan Oğan, in preparation for the foundation of a new centre-right nationalist party. Halaçoğlu claimed this would be ‘nationalist, conservative and Atatürkist’, while Akşener stressed social and

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 22 May 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 6 June 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 15 August, 22 September, 3 October 2017: Murat Yetkin, ‘Metal fatigue or spring fatigue?’ *ibid*, 16 August: *Hürriyet*, 29 September 2017: Ayla Jean Yackley, ‘Does Istanbul mayor’s ouster spell AKP shakeup?’ Al-Monitor website ([www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals](http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals)) 28 September 2017.



economic objectives, including expanding the political role of women. On 6 October, she revealed more of the planned party's programme, which would advocate 'a return to the parliamentary system', changes to the political parties law so as to prevent the virtual dictatorship of the party leader over the party machine, a restriction of the state of emergency to a maximum of three times in one year, and a reduction of the electoral threshold to five percent (ironically, an idea which was also being suggested by the MHP). To achieve all of this, however, the opposition parties (assuming they all supported the amendments) would need to capture at least three fifths of the seats, or 360 seats in the next parliament, since several changes to the constitution would be required. Meanwhile, Meral Akşener was evidently proceeding carefully, setting up a comprehensive national organisation and support base before announcing the official establishment, rule book and title of her party, but was expected to do this on 25 October.<sup>8</sup>

- **which might possibly end the AKP's dominating position:**

The time gap between now and the next elections, and the unreliability of opinion polls in Turkey, makes it unsafe to predict electoral outcomes, but current polling suggests that Akşener's party could produce some major upsets for the AKP. In early August the Sonar polling organisation reported that, ignoring 'don't knows', support for Akşener's prospective party could stand at around 20 percent, with the AKP dropping to a maximum of 42 percent. On this basis, the AKP would lose its majority in parliament. Even more crucially, Sonar reported that if İlhan Kesici, a former mayor of Istanbul, were the CHP candidate competing against Erdoğan in the second round of the next presidential election he could be in the lead.<sup>9</sup> In mid-September the Objektif Araştırma polling organisation reported that, after redistributing the 15 percent of 'don't know' responses *pro rata*, the AKP would be reduced to 39.9 percent, and the CHP to 23.4 percent, with Meral Akşener's prospective party at 21 percent, and the HDP just clearing the ten percent threshold.<sup>10</sup>

- If these figures hold good in 2019, with the AKP losing its majority in parliament, but Tayyip Erdoğan retaining the presidency, then he could probably not be prevented from governing, but would be restricted by the inability to carry legislation through parliament. Winning the presidential elections would be hard for the opposition, given the sharp disagreements between them – for instance, the strongly anti-Kurdish ex-MHP members would be very unlikely to cooperate with the HDP, or vice versa, with the CHP sitting uneasily between them. Hence, they could find it hard to come up with an agreed candidate. On the other hand, Tayyip Erdoğan might also find it hard to win the minimum of 50 percent-plus-one he would need to stay in power, given the AKP's apparent loss of support. In that case, he could find himself the author of his own downfall, having created a constitution with an all-powerful presidency, which was then captured by his opponents.

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<sup>8</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21, 22 August, 16, 19, 28 September, 6 October 2017: Cengiz Çandar, 'This woman might be the wild card who stops Erdoğan', Al-Monitor website, 16 August 2017.

<sup>9</sup> "SONAR'dan Meral Akşener ve İlhan Kesici tahmini", *Indigo Dergisi* website (<https://indigodergisi.com>) 4 August 2017.

<sup>10</sup> 'Akşenerin partisinin dahil edildiği ilk seçim anketi açıklandı', *Sputnik News* website (<https://tr.sputniknews.com>) 13 September 2017.

**Turkey's differences with Germany have remained unsettled:** During the spring of 2017, a serious rift opened between the AKP government and Berlin, as Turkish ministers were prevented from addressing rallies in Germany and other countries which were intended to drum up support for a 'yes' vote in the referendum by Turkish citizens living in Europe (*Review 29*, pp.20-21). The row has been



exacerbated by the arrest in Turkey of around a dozen German citizens, including the German-Turkish journalist **Deniz Yücel**, the local correspondent of *Die Welt*, who has been held in prison for more than 200 days. In addition, Turkey has unsuccessfully demanded the extradition to Turkey of a number of alleged Gülenists and others held responsible for the failed coup of July 2016, who have taken refuge in Germany. President Erdoğan increased tensions further on 18 August, when he asked Turks resident in

Germany with German citizenship not to vote for any of the main German parties (CDU-CSU, SPD, and the Greens) in the upcoming federal elections, held on 24 September, on the grounds that they had all allegedly taken anti-Turkish (read anti-AKP) positions. In response, Chancellor Angela Merkel announced limitations on military sales and limits to investments of German companies in Turkey, besides opposition to the idea of eventual Turkish accession to the EU (see below) although she rejected proposals for a total ban on German arms sales to Turkey.<sup>11</sup> The only relief in the mounting confrontation came on 10 August when the Turkish authorities allowed a group of German MPs to visit German troops based at the Turkish air base in Konya – a visit which it had long opposed, and which had led to the withdrawal of German war-planes from the İncirlik base near Adana, where they had been participating in NATO-led operations in Syria and Iraq.<sup>12</sup>

President Erdoğan's explanation to his domestic audience was that Chancellor Merkel's anti-Turkish rhetoric was merely part of her election campaign, designed to prevent a loss of votes to Germany's far-right party, the AfD, implying that the row would die down after the election since 'Turkey does not have a problem with the people of Germany'. In attempts at reconciliation, after the German elections Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım sent a congratulatory message to Mrs Merkel after her party won a fourth consecutive term of office, while by 5 October Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu had had two telephone conversations with his German counterpart, Sigmar Gabriel, evidently intending to patch up the relationship. There was no clear sign, however, that Angela Merkel would take significant steps on this issue. As she had remarked on 29 August, she wanted to enjoy better relations with Turkey, but the relationship was currently in a 'very complicated phase'.<sup>13</sup> More broadly, her main immediate post-election preoccupation was to put together a new coalition in the fractured Bundestag, so the reconstruction of relations with Ankara – if this occurred – would apparently have to wait until later.

### **Relations with the EU are stalled, but not broken off -**

In April, the German government had resisted calls by Austria and other countries to formally break off the stalled accession talks with Turkey. In May, following talks in

<sup>11</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 2, 12, 16, 24 September 2017: Semih İdiz, 'Erdoğan takes Turkey-Germany feud to next level', Al-Monitor website, 22 August 2017.

<sup>12</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 8, 10 August 2010.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 1 August, 5 October 2017.



Brussels between President Erdoğan, European Council President Donald Tusk, and Jean-Claude Juncker, the Chairman of the European Commission, the two sides agreed on a 'twelve month calendar' which Erdoğan claimed would give 'a new and positive acceleration to the EU membership process'.<sup>14</sup> At this stage, the main Turkish aims were to initiate negotiations on Chapters 23 and 24 of the *acquis communautaire* relating to the rule of law and human rights, which are currently blocked by a Greek Cypriot veto, the implementation of a new visa regime which would give Turkish citizens easier access to the Schengen agreement countries, and to upgrade the Turkey-EU customs union agreement, which currently excludes services and agricultural products from tariff-free access to the EU market. In response, the EU delegation at the Brussels talks stressed the need for Turkey to apply accepted human rights standards. The President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani, also confirmed that any reintroduction of the death penalty, which Erdoğan had threatened to endorse if it were ratified by parliament, would lead to an immediate cessation of negotiations.<sup>15</sup> Not unreasonably, the Turkish side felt that Turkey had been given insufficient political credit for hosting upwards of three million refugees from Syria and Iraq when (with Germany's exception) most European countries had been reluctant to take in more than a handful. There were occasional hints that Turkey might default on the agreement with the EU of April 2016 under which Turkey prevents the refugees from crossing from Turkey into Greece and Bulgaria, in return for assistance for the refugees and advances on Turkey's other objectives (*Review 26, p.7; 27, p.19*). For the time being however, the government stopped short of making the threat an open one.<sup>16</sup>

Events during the summer rapidly dimmed the hopes of advance in the Turkey-EU relationship. In early July negotiations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots on the reunification of the island, held in Switzerland under UN auspices, collapsed, mainly due to the Turkish insistence on continuation of the 'tripartite guarantee' security system, under which Britain, Greece and Turkey retain the right of military intervention in the event of collapse of the bi-communal constitution. The Turkish side also insisted that Turkey retain a military contingent on the island.<sup>17</sup> Both these conditions were rejected by the Greek side, although President Makarios had reluctantly accepted them when the original Cypriot constitution was negotiated in 1959-60.

#### - with the EU divided on this issue

Worse was to come on 30 August and 3 September, in the heat of the German election campaign, when Angela Merkel was first reported to have told Jean-Claude Juncker that Germany would veto any update of the customs union agreement, and then reversed her previous stand by urging the cessation of accession negotiations with Turkey.<sup>18</sup> Whether this change of policy would have any effect was doubtful, since such a decision could only be taken by a qualified majority vote in the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 28 April, 27 May 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 16 May, 29 May 2017 (interview with retired Ambassador Ünal Çeviköz, and news reports). On the death sentence issue, see Kareem Shaheen, 'Erdogan to continue crackdown as Turkey marks failed coup', *The Guardian*, 16 July 2017

<sup>16</sup> Ayla Jean Yackley, 'Turkey warns of migrant surge in spat with EU', Al-Monitor website, 14 August 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Helena Smith, 'Cyprus reunification talks collapse amid angry scenes', *The Guardian*, 7 July 2017.

<sup>18</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 1, 4 September 2017.

European Council by all the EU member states. Immediately after Chancellor Merkel's surprise announcement, on 4 September, Federica Mogherini, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, emphasised that the talks with Turkey would continue, and that Turkey was still an important partner for the EU in its region. On 7 September the French President Emmanuel Macron repeated the same message, with greater force. Among other member states, Austria and the Netherlands were alone in supporting Merkel's proposal, with Greece taking a strong position in favour of the continuation of talks, granted the country's important bilateral relationship with Turkey. Nor did there seem to be any further support for ending the customs union, with the Turkish Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci repeating the call for an updating of the agreement.<sup>19</sup>

It thus appeared that a complete breakdown had been avoided, but whether this could be converted into positive progress in the accession negotiations or on other issues remained doubtful. More probably, and unless some moves were made to restore more normal democratic politics in Ankara, relations between the EU and Turkey seemed likely to remain in the doldrums for some time to come. On the Turkish side, Tayyip Erdoğan was apt to engage in empty rhetoric, mainly for domestic consumption, which exacerbated a tense situation. His suggestion that he would approve the reintroduction of the death penalty was probably an attempt to outflank the MHP, which was vociferous on this issue, but he evidently realised that this would abruptly end the accession process; he therefore failed to instruct the AKP parliamentary group to pass the requisite bill in parliament, as he easily could have done. In addressing the opening session of parliament on 1 October, he claimed that Turkey did not need EU membership, but, paradoxically, that it would not abandon its bid for accession.<sup>20</sup> Nor was the fault entirely on the Turkish side. As the respected Turkish journalist Semih İdiz pointed out on 5 September, Angela Merkel's threat to end the accession process 'rings hollow for Turkey', since her party has long opposed the idea of Turkish membership of the EU anyway: she was thus pretending to take away something which she had never offered in the first place.<sup>21</sup> If the EU was genuinely concerned to advance the cause of democracy in Turkey, then the refusal to open negotiations on Chapters 23 and 24 of the *acquis* made little sense since, if implemented, their provisions would have a highly positive effect on Turkey's human rights regime. In fact, the blockage was caused by a veto by the Republic of Cyprus, whose motives had nothing to do with the shortcomings of Turkey's domestic political system.

### **Turkey's relations with Russia and the United States have been full of paradoxes**

Since April, Turkey's relations with both Russia and the United States have continued to be outwardly cooperative on broad points, but also contested on important policy issues, with significant effects on its policies in the ongoing Syrian civil war. On 16 May, when Tayyip Erdoğan met Donald Trump for their first meeting in the White House, the two presidents pledged to 'fight terror together', with Trump stating that his country fully supported Turkey in its fight against both the jihadist Islamic State organisation (IS) and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). For his part, Erdoğan confirmed that 'Turkey will work with the US to fight all terrorist groups in

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 6, 7, 11, 28 September 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 1 October 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Semih İdiz, 'Why Merkel's EU threat rings hollow for Turkey', *ibid*, 5 September 2017.

the region', and that he 'hopes and prays' for a 'new foundation' for the Turkey-US relationship under Trump. Similarly, when the two presidents met again on the sidelines of a UN meeting in New York on 21 September, Trump went so far as to claim that the two countries were 'the closest we've ever been', while the Turkish president referred to 'my dear friend, Donald'.<sup>22</sup>



Not far below the surface, however, serious tensions were apparent. For Turkey, the May visit was something of a public relations disaster, as Tayyip Erdoğan's security guards attacked demonstrators outside the Turkish embassy in Washington with kicks and blows, in full view of the TV cameras, in what the Washington police chief called a 'brutal attack'.<sup>23</sup> Politically, two issues separated Ankara and Washington: first, continued US cooperation with the Syrian Kurdish organisation the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its military wing, the People's Protection Units (YPG), which control a long strip of Syrian territory along the border with Turkey, and are aligned with the PKK; second, the continued presence in Pennsylvania of the Turkish Islamic preacher Fethullah Gülen, whose organisation played an important role in the abortive coup of July 2016 (see *Review No.28*, pp.6-7).

On the first score, particular alarm was caused in Ankara in May, when it was announced that the Trump administration would continue the policy of full cooperation with the YPG, now grouped with some non-Kurdish units as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). Increased arms supplies would be arranged, including some heavy weapons and armoured vehicles, as well as support by US special forces. This would be America's main proxy force to be used in the fight against IS, given that a large-scale deployment of US troops in Syria would not be accepted by Congress or the public. The authorities in Washington sought to assuage Turkish anger by confirming that 'Turkey is an important and valued NATO ally', and assuring the Turkish government that arms supplied to the YPG would only be used against IS, and not Turkey, but this did not halt Turkish protests.<sup>24</sup> On the second score, Turkey continued to demand the extradition of Gülen, but there was no sign that the American courts would comply: even if they did, Gülen would have the right to appeal – ultimately, maybe, to the Supreme Court – so the case could drag on seemingly endlessly.

On 8 October a new clash erupted after two of the Turkish staff at the US Consulate in Istanbul were arrested for alleged membership of the Gülenist network. In a sharp reaction, the outgoing US ambassador announced the suspension of all visa services for Turkish citizens in Turkey. In response, Turkish consulates in the US stopped issuing visas for Turkey to US citizens. Officials of the two sides then started talks for settling the dispute: on 20 October it was announced that 'substantial progress' had been made, although the mutual bans had not yet been withdrawn.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 16 May, 22 September 2017.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 18 May 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 18 May, 11 August 2017: 'Syria war: US to arm Kurds in battle for Raqqa', BBC News website, 9 May 2017.

<sup>25</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 20 October 2017.

## Turkey has serious policy differences with Russia, but they cooperate in Syria

Since April, Turkey has continued its role in the 'Astana peace process', in cooperation with Russia and Iran, for the establishment of regional ceasefires between the Syrian regime forces and opposition militias other than IS, which was launched in January (*Review 29*, pp15-17). Following a meeting between Presidents Erdoğan and Putin in Sochi on 3 May, and a meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan on the following day, Russia, Turkey and Iran agreed to establish four 'de-escalation' zones in Syria, in Idlib province and the adjoining districts of Hama, Aleppo and Latakya provinces. This deal was rejected by some of the rebel groups, with further objections from Turkey. Hence, a further meeting in Astana in July ended without agreement, although the local ceasefires were apparently holding.<sup>26</sup> On 8 August, representatives of the three countries met again in Tehran. By this stage the ceasefire was holding in the last three zones, but that in Idlib was unsuccessful, as the province was largely controlled by the Islamist opposition forces of Hay'et Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), affiliated to al-Qaeda and previously known as the al-Nusra Front. In August, the Turkish government made unsuccessful attempts to persuade HTS to disband itself. Later, on 28 September, Putin and Erdoğan came together again in Ankara – their fifth direct meeting of the year – to discuss the implementation of the de-escalation plan, after which the Turkish President announced that 'Turkey and Russia have repeated their joint will for a political resolution of the Syrian problem'.<sup>27</sup> This commitment appeared to have borne fruit on 7 October, when Turkish-backed Syrian forces of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) began an operation in Idlib province against the HTS, officially with some participation of the Turkish army on the ground, and significant air support by Russia as well as supplies from Turkey:<sup>28</sup> (earlier, the FSA had been responsible for 'Operation Euphrates Shield' in which an important stretch of territory had been captured from IS in a triangle between Azaz, Jarablus and Al-Bab, near the frontier with Turkey, and thus denied to the YPG; (*Review 28*, pp.12-13 & *No 29* p.16)). Significantly, the US government did not object to the Idlib operation, as it has been highly critical of the HTS.

Meanwhile, Turkey's relations with Russia developed in other fields. Following the Sochi meeting of 3 May, economic relations between the two countries were normalised, with the removal of embargoes imposed by Russia after Turkish F-16 aircraft shot down a Russian SU-24 which Turkey claimed had entered Turkish air space in November 2015 (*Review 27*, p.17). This failed to liberalise trade in some agricultural products, such as tomatoes. Nevertheless, after their 28 September meeting Presidents Putin and Erdoğan expressed their satisfaction at the restoration of economic ties, in particular a 58 percent increase in Turkey's agricultural exports to Russia and an 11-fold increase in Russian tourist arrivals during the first eight months of the year.<sup>29</sup>

Another critical aspect of the Turkish-Russian rapprochement was Turkey's decision, at least in principle, to opt for the Russian S-400 missile defence system, in

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<sup>26</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 15 May, 1 June 2017: Catherine Putz, '5<sup>th</sup> Round of Astana Syria Peace Talks End without Agreement', *The Diplomat* website (<http://thediplomat.com>) 7 July 2017

<sup>27</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 8 August, 28 September 2017: Amberin Zaman, 'Ankara makes overtures to Idlib militants', *Al-Monitor*, 22 August 2017.

<sup>28</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 7, 9 October 2017: 'Syria war: Turkey-backed rebels attack jihadists in Idlib', BBC News website, same date.

<sup>29</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 28 September 2017.



preference to American and European alternatives. According to Russian sources, Turkey made an ‘advance payment’ for the supply of this system in late September. The decision prompted strong criticisms from the US, on the grounds that the S-400 was incompatible with NATO systems. In response, Tayyip Erdoğan pointed out that Greece has possessed S-300s, a predecessor to the S-400, for several years, without any objections from NATO, having originally acquired them from the Republic of Cyprus. Critics replied that Greece did indeed possess the S-300 system, but that the missiles have been rusting away in a warehouse in Crete for many years, since they cannot be used together with NATO assets.<sup>30</sup>

While these developments suggested a significant shift in Turkey’s international allegiances, away from the US and towards Russia, there were still important underlying problems in the Turkish-Russian relationship. In Syria, the US refused to identify the PYD/YPG as terrorists, in spite of intense Turkish objections, but so did the Russian government – in fact Putin did not even put the PKK in the ‘terrorist’ category.<sup>31</sup> Since the start of the Syrian conflict, Russia had strongly supported the Syrian Ba’thist regime under President Bashar al-Assad as its main ally in the Middle East, whereas Turkey had backed his opponents (or at least, some of them) and opposed his participation in any post-civil war government. Both Turkey and Russia abided by the principle that in any post-war settlement Syria’s territorial integrity should be preserved, but in practice it seemed likely that, although Assad might continue to be the official ruler of Syria, local power in many areas would actually be wielded by local militias. The significance of the Idlib operation – assuming it succeeded – was that in two areas (that is, Idlib, and the Azaz-Jarablus-al-Bab triangle) power would be in the hands of the FSA, and thus, indirectly of Turkey. Against this, the PYD/YPG might cut a post-war deal with Assad (although currently this seems unlikely, due to highly hostile attitudes on both sides).<sup>32</sup> Given that it could not take on a wider war in Syria, Turkey would need to work out a live-and-let-live arrangement with Assad – much as it had done before the whole Syrian equation had been upset by the ‘Arab spring’ revolt in 2011.

### **The Iraqi-Kurdish ‘independence’ referendum creates a new regional problem**

Since 2010 Turkey has cultivated a generally cooperative relationship with the Kurdistan Regional Government under Massoud Barzani, whose territory is constitutionally part of Iraq, but in fact enjoys a wide degree of autonomy, with its own armed forces in the shape of the Kurdish *peshmerga*. Both sides have benefitted from the arrangement, since Iraqi Kurdistan’s economy depends heavily on the export of oil via Turkey as well as imports, while Turkish firms benefit from an important export market and overland transport access to the rest of Iraq. Politically, also, it helps Turkey’s cause if can be shown to enjoy good relations with the only formally established Kurdish administration in the region.

This valuable link was put in serious jeopardy in August, when Barzani announced that his government would hold a referendum on 25 September, in which the inhabitants of the KRG region and some adjoining areas would be asked to vote for or against the idea of an independent Kurdistan. Predictably, this proposal was

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 28 September 2017: Murat Yetkin, ‘Will Turkish taxes go to Russian S-400s to rust in a warehouse?’ Ibid, 6 October 2017.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 15 May 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Fehim Tastekin, ‘Kurds plan ahead for shifting status in Syria’, Al-Monitor, 16 August 2017.

strongly opposed by the Iraqi government, as well as those of Turkey and Iran, all of which are firmly in favour of maintaining the territorial integrity of all regional states, especially in response to the Kurdish question. Nor did it enjoy any support from the United States or Russia – in fact, the only government to support the idea of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq was Israel (and, for what it was worth, the Catalan regional government in Spain).<sup>33</sup> For both Iraq and Turkey, an additional reason for opposing the referendum was that it would include the city of Kirkuk, adjoining one of Iraq's richest oilfields, which had been occupied by the *peshmerga* although it was not officially part of the KRG's territory, and had a mixed population.<sup>34</sup> In response to the planned referendum Iran's Chief of the General Staff, Mohammed Hossein Bagheri, paid a three-day visit to Turkey on 15 August – the first by any top Iranian commander since the Iranian revolution of 1979. Afterwards, Tayyip Erdoğan remarked that a joint military operation against PKK bases in northern Iraq "is always on the agenda", although the command of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards then denied that any operations were being planned.<sup>35</sup> Closer cooperation between Turkey and Iran could also be constrained by the fact that they backed opposite sides in the Syrian civil war, with Iran being one of Bashar al-Assad's strongest supporters, although the two governments appeared to put these differences aside when talking about the Iraqi Kurds. Although Barzani maintained that the KRG would remain no threat to Turkey,<sup>36</sup> the Turkish government remained strongly opposed to the referendum: having failed to persuade Barzani to drop the idea, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım agreed with his Iraqi counterpart Haider al-Abadi to work together to prevent it, but to no effect.<sup>37</sup> On 25 September the referendum duly went ahead, with the KRG's electoral commission reporting that 92 percent of the 3.3 million people who voted cast ballots for 'yes'.<sup>38</sup>

The problem for the Iraqi Kurds, as Patrick Cockburn aptly summarised it, was that the referendum showed both 'the strength of their demand for self-determination and the weakness of their ability to obtain it'. In international politics, he suggested, a 'minnow' like Iraqi Kurdistan depends 'for its freedom of action – even its survival ... on playing one foreign state against the other and keeping tolerable relations with all of them'.<sup>39</sup> This Barzani had patently failed to achieve. The Iraqi Kurds may have hoped for support from Washington, but with the imminent defeat of IS in Iraq, President Trump had no further need for an alliance with the *peshmerga*. An alliance between the Kurds and Israel without US backing would be virtually meaningless for logistical reasons, and would guarantee the political hostility of the rest of the Middle East.

Once the referendum had been held, Turkey, along with Iraq and Iran, had to consider how far to go in reacting to it. Given that military action was almost certainly off the agenda -unless the Iraqi Kurds started one themselves, which seemed most

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<sup>33</sup> Amberin Zaman, 'Turkey squawks as KRG referendum nears', *Al-Monitor*, 16 August 2017

<sup>34</sup> Beverley Milton-Edwards and Alexander Brammer, 'Mosul eyes Kurdish referendum', Brookings Institution website ([www.brookings.edu/blog](http://www.brookings.edu/blog)) 20 September 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Amberin Zaman, 'Iran army chief's Turkey tour ends in promises of military cooperation', *Al-Monitor*, 17 August 2017; *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21 August, 18 September 2017: report from AFP, *Al-Monitor*, 22 August 2017.

<sup>36</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 25 September 2017.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 16, 21 September 2017.

<sup>38</sup> 'Iraqi Kurds decisively back independence in referendum', BBC news website 27 September 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Patrick Cockburn, 'The Kurdish referendum has shown a yearning for independence, but also the lack of strength to carry it out', *The Independent*, 29 September 2017.



unlikely – economic sanctions seemed the most useful option, but even here there were serious constraints.<sup>40</sup> On 25 September Tayyip Erdoğan threatened to cut off the flow of oil from Iraqi Kurdistan to Turkey, but he seemed unlikely to do so since - apparently under Russian pressure. Over the previous year Russia was reported to have invested \$4 billion in Iraqi Kurdistan's oil and natural gas industries, with the state corporation Rosneft planning to ship large quantities of oil from the KRG region to European markets via Turkey. Putin was thought to have warned Erdoğan over this, so the oil embargo option seemed to have dropped off the agenda – for the time being at any rate.<sup>41</sup>

An overall trade embargo, with the closure of the Habur border crossing point between Turkey and the KRG region, seemed even more problematic. Admittedly, for the Iraqi Kurds this was a vital outlet to the rest of the world, but it was also hugely important to Turkish exporters and transporters, with Turkish trucks making an estimated 700,000 runs across the border annually. In 2013, before the IS occupied Mosul, Turkey's total exports to Iraq totalled about \$12 billion: even in 2016 they came to \$7.6 billion, or 5.4 percent of total exports, with about 45 percent of the goods passing through Habur destined for the KRG region. Apart from the trade with Iraqi Kurdistan, passage through Habur was vital for Turkey's exports to the rest of Iraq, since the only practical alternative was the long sea route via the Suez Canal. As another solution, it was suggested by the Iraqi government that if the Habur gate were closed, another could be opened at Ovaköy, 15 kilometres to the west of Habur, so as to allow direct access from Turkey to Mosul, and thus to the rest of Iraq, without passing through KRG territory. It was admitted that this would require road improvements on the Iraqi side, but the most serious obstacle was the simple fact that the whole of the border with Turkey was occupied on the Iraqi side by the Kurdish forces.<sup>42</sup> Opening the new route would thus require a military operation by the Iraqi army, and thus, potentially yet another war between the Kurds and Baghdad which all would be anxious to avoid. Hence, except for the termination of international flights to Erbil, it was, as the Turkish Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci admitted on 27 September, 'business as usual' in trade with Iraq.<sup>43</sup>



How long this situation could be sustained depended on whether Barzani actually took the next step of a unilateral declaration of independence, and thus required some examination of his original motives for calling the referendum. On this score, it was suggested that his aims were almost entirely derived from the KRG's internal politics, and that for Barzani, holding the referendum was an end in itself. As Maria Fantappie explained, the aim of the KRG's leadership was 'not so much to move quickly towards a declaration of independence but to shore up their own political fortunes in Iraqi Kurdistan'. By extending the referendum to the 'disputed territories'

<sup>40</sup> Murat Yetkin, 'Possible costs of Barzani's mistake to Erdoğan', *Hürriyet Daily News*, 27 September 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Jasper Mortimer, 'Russia tempers Erdogan's threats against Iraqi Kurdistan', *Al-Monitor*, 29 September 2017.

<sup>42</sup> 'Habur Sınır Kapısı'na alternatif sınır kapısı Ovaköy', *Habertürk* website ([www.haberturk.com](http://www.haberturk.com)) 27 September 2017; Fehim Tastekin, 'Turkey lays out plans for Iraq's Kurds after independence vote', *Al-Monitor*, 5 October 2017

<sup>43</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News*, 27 September 2017.

like Kirkuk they would also aim to strengthen their case for annexing these areas.<sup>44</sup> According to this analysis, the 'old guard' in the Kurdish leadership had 'clung to power for too long'. By holding the referendum, Barzani and his colleagues would 'put their opponents.... in a bind: support the referendum and, by default, the leadership that proposed it, or oppose it, and expose themselves to accusations of betraying Kurdish nationalism'.<sup>45</sup> On these grounds, once the referendum was over, and faced with the virtual certainty of no international recognition, Barzani could quietly drop independence as an immediate aim, restoring the delicate balance of power with his neighbours.



## Turkish Economy: dodging political shocks

by

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2017 began like the others for the Turkish economy: with hopes of a return to growth and stability. Indeed, that was the case in the first half of 2017. But as we head into the last quarter, a series of spats with major trading partners, and the possibility of less benign global conditions, dampens the outlook for 2018.

### Strong recovery in growth in 2017

The first half GDP growth (over the same period in 2016) was a higher than expected 5.1%, lifting full year forecasts to around 5%. It was led by private consumption driven by a credit boom and VAT cuts on consumer goods. Automotive exports to the EU boosted export growth. In contrast, investment, which has struggled to grow since 2012, made a smaller contribution with investment in construction rising but contracting in machinery and equipment. Sector data showed services as the main motor of growth boosted by the recovery in tourism that is likely to continue into the third quarter with tourist arrivals up over 40% on a year earlier.

Foreign payments were supported by a weaker US dollar (used in imports pricing) vs the Euro (where exports are destined); low oil prices and international interest rates; and the Eurozone recovery. Current account data to August show an increasing reliance on portfolio inflows and a significant drawdown of foreign currency reserves. Signs of an uptick in oil prices and international interest rates suggest that going forward, managing the 4-5% of GDP current account deficit and debt repayments remain a source of risk for the economy.

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<sup>44</sup> Maria Fantappie, 'How to Mitigate the Risks of Iraqi Kurdistan's Referendum', International Crisis Group website ([www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org)) 20 September 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Maria Fantappie and Cale Salih, 'The Politics of the Kurdish Independence Referendum', *Foreign Affairs* website ([www.foreignaffairs.com/articles](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles)) 19 September 2017.

## **The economic policy team mostly left intact in the cabinet reshuffle**

The government economics team credited with steering the economy through the shock of the 2016 failed coup was mostly kept intact in the July cabinet reshuffle. Mr Şimşek's sponsorship of the Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF) that helped motor the economic recovery helped retain his Deputy Prime Minister role and earned him the position of the policy coordinator responsible for the Treasury and the Central Bank. He also takes over Mr Nurettin Canikli's responsibilities in the banking sector in charge of the Capital Markets Board and the banking regulator (BDDK). This is expected to ease the problems of policy coordination that had existed between Mr Canikli, a former Ministry of Finance bureaucrat, and Mehmet Şimşek, a former investment banker.

Those parts of the real economy that are in state hands are the responsibility of Prime Minister Yıldırım. These include TOKI (the Mass Housing Administration) as well as the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) that contains the state share of entities such as the two state banks, THY, BOTAS, TurkTelekom, et.al. Mr Yıldırım also oversees the politically critical TMSF (Deposit Insurance Fund) that is acting as a mini-Treuhand<sup>46</sup> where the 900 or so firms taken over after the July 2016 failed coup are awaiting privatisation.

State enterprises are set to play a greater role in the economy. They were hugely profitable in 2016 (led by BOTAS, the state pipeline conglomerate) making positive contributions to finance the budget deficit. Now gathered under the SWF, the aim is to create a pool of infrastructure finance for the mega-projects in health, energy, and transport. These measures have raised concerns around transparency in procurement and inevitable risks of increased corruption and inefficiencies associated with a bigger state role in the economy.

## **Missed targets on inflation and unemployment**

Coordination of monetary and fiscal policy remains difficult with the economic team having to deal with not only political instability but also fend-off political interference and manage the impact of volatile international capital flows. Economic policy has struggled to contain persistent inflation and unemployment in these conditions. Nor is there likely to be any rapid improvement. Unemployment was 10.2% (excluding agriculture, it is 12.2%) in June with a slight improvement in the participation ratio to 53.4% on the back of new employment incentives including subsidies for newly hired workers for one year and for four years for young and female workers. An added complication affecting conditions in the job market is the official or unofficial employment of Syrian refugees.

With open capital markets and floating currency, the Central Bank (CBT) has repeatedly missed its inflation target while having to contend with political pressures against interest rate hikes that are the conventional monetary policy response to rising inflation. The latest CPI inflation in September was 11.2% -- one of the highest among major emerging markets. Inflation has been difficult to contain since the Lira began its sharp depreciation in 2013 triggered by the US Federal reserve 'tapering' policy that brought sudden capital outflows from emerging markets. The political shocks in Turkey since 2015 continued to weaken the currency that combined with the looser fiscal stance to feed inflationary pressures. Although the CBT has

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<sup>46</sup> The German entity which took over and privatised East German assets upon unification.

tightened monetary policy, confidence in the currency remains fragile with the share of TL deposits down at around 56% at mid-2017 vs 67.4% at end-2012.

In addition to fiscal stimulus, credit has been the second motor of growth. Credit growth recovered sharply this year from its slump in mid-2016 -- supported by the CGF and KOSGEB credits – the latter mostly to small & medium enterprises (SMEs) that are the AKP's main electoral base. There is further room for credit growth to continue. At just under 100%, total private debt to GDP is below the 160% EU threshold and the non-performing loan ratio remains steady at around 3.2%. But other indicators suggest the scope for credit and consumer led growth is narrowing. According to the IMF, some solvency indicators of corporate debt (relative to equity) and household debt (relative to net financial assets) are higher than they should be.<sup>47</sup>

### **Medium Term Plan (MTP) aiming to boost fiscal revenues**

Fiscal policy is one of Turkey's economic strengths but now faces new challenges. Public debt relative to GDP is a low 28% (vs average of 71% for the EU) that has provided the policy space for the fiscal stimulus to offset shocks to the economy. This stance has continued into 2017 with the debt-roll-over ratio expected at 125% -- highest since the global financial crisis in 2009. But repeated rounds of fiscal stimulus raise the risk of weakening fiscal accounts and clashes with the aim of reducing inflation (and interest rates). There has also been a rapid rise in state guarantees related to large infrastructure projects and PPPs (Public Private Partnerships). While guarantees from the Treasury are recorded, some provided by other public agencies are not always disclosed.

Aware of these risks, and to accommodate the expected rise in defence spending due to heightened regional risks, the new MTP currently being discussed in the Meclis proposes new tax hikes that will withdraw some of the fiscal stimulus of the past few years. Although ongoing parliamentary debates suggest the proposed tax increases -- including on the automotive and banking sector, rental income, and corporation tax – will be pared down, Ministers Şimşek and Ağbal have argued that higher taxes are needed to ensure Turkey's prudent fiscal stance is maintained while growth of around 5.5% is sustained.

Unsurprisingly, the private sector responded negatively to the prospect of higher taxes with TUSIAD arguing it will further undermine private investment. Although the Turkish economy has come through its rough patch, the fraught conditions of Emergency Rule have increased uncertainty for investors according to business who have demanded an end to Emergency Rule. If private investment remains weak, growth at the projected levels is unlikely to be met once the fiscal stimulus is withdrawn. Even if somehow credit growth is sustained, it is not clear if credit will be directed to investment. There are reports that not enough of CGF backed credits in 2017 were used to fund investment and exports. Investment trends also show that during 2009-2015, the share of machinery and equipment investments in total credits has fallen from 26% to around 15%.<sup>48</sup>

### **Disputes with major trading partners increase risks**

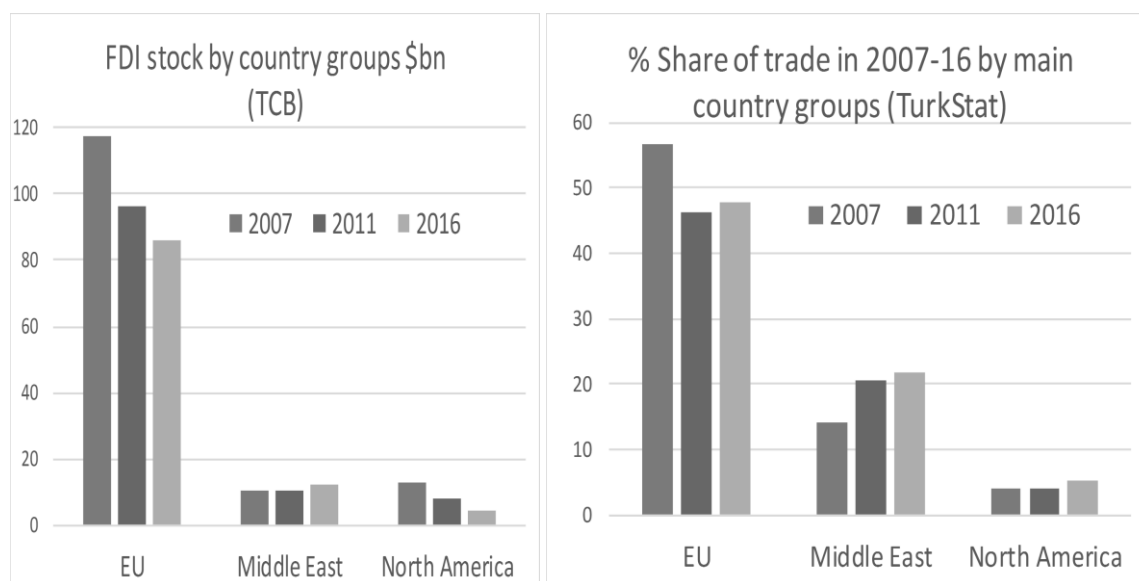
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<sup>47</sup> IMF, Turkey 2017 Article IV consultation, February 2017.

<sup>48</sup> Ismet Ozkul, "Bu makas, ekonomide yeni bir fay hattı demek", *Dunya*, 15 September 2017.

In addition to domestic and regional political shocks, the Turkish economy has had to cope with conflicts in relations with important regional trade partners. While Russian sanctions have been mostly lifted since the 2015 crisis, in 2017 it is political frictions with Germany and the GCC -- over the Saudi and UAE sanctions on Qatar -- that threaten to spill into the economy. Meanwhile the Kurdish referendum in northern Iraq in September and the visa crisis with the US in October drove down the Turkish Lira and the Istanbul stock market. The latter had been a star performer among Emerging Markets until then.

Relations with Germany have reached a new low as politicians in both countries ramped up the political rhetoric -- predictably in the lead up to the September German general election. Germany is Turkey's biggest export market accounting for around 10% of total. Meanwhile there is a risk that Turkey's backing of Qatar in the dispute with Saudi Arabia and UAE could affect relations with the latter two countries which take 6% of total exports. To this must be added foreign currency earnings from services exports such as tourism and construction. In 2016, 40% (\$5.3bn) of total new projects undertaken by Turkish contractors were in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economies according to the Turkish Contractors Association. Germany and the GCC countries are among the top investors in Turkey. While GCC investment has slowed since the oil price decline; German firms remain active investors in manufacturing and include the giants of Bosch, Mercedes, MAN, and Siemens. The dispute with Germany has also had negative repercussions for Turkey's relations with the EU which, despite Turkey's attempts to diversify, still accounts for almost half of Turkey's goods exports and in terms of FDI stock, EU investment dwarfs all other investors (see charts).



## Outlook

Global conditions have been supportive for the Turkish economy in the past few years helping to cope with domestic and regional political shocks. Even if global liquidity is tightened somewhat, as long as a major global financial crisis is avoided -- the past few years have shown that the Turkish economy is able to chug along supported by its underlying strengths. These include diversified structure, relatively well-regulated banking sector, big domestic market, and low public debt. In addition, given its large external payments gap and dependence on high levels of capital



inflows, prospects for the Turkish economy are stronger if international investors remain constructive towards Turkey. Hence, it would help if the diplomatic sparring with major trade partners could blow over. Indeed, amid the dispute over Qatar, Turkish airports operator TAV won a 30-year lease to build and operate new terminals in several Saudi cities. Similarly, a 1000MW wind farm project (Yeka) was awarded to Germany's Siemens in a consortium with Turkerler and Kalyon.

But there are two problems here. One is that there is a risk that diplomatic tiffs may not be easy to patch up. In the Middle East, the Kuwait crisis drags on with no sign of a compromise. In Germany, export credit agency, Hermes, has cut its lines from Eur2.1bn to Eur1.5bn; there are anecdotal reports that smaller German firms are becoming reluctant to source supplies from Turkey. Deteriorating relations with Germany have further soured Turkey-EU prospects with Turkey's membership now being debated by the EU. Even the renegotiation of the Customs Union (to expand its remit to agriculture and services) -- a priority for Turkey -- looks more difficult. Under domestic electoral pressure, German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated there would be no forward movement on the customs Union if relations failed to improve.<sup>49</sup> With the first election under Turkey's new Presidential system due in the next two years, Brussels busy managing Brexit, and given the EU's capacity to procrastinate on its promises to Turkey, relations with the EU are unlikely to improve anytime soon. Hence it is not a good time to pick a fight also with the US. Given Turkey's own political pressures and its volatile region against the backdrop of growing protectionist trends and weakening credit conditions in the global economy, there is a risk that these diplomatic disputes overlap and result in major economic disruptions.

And that leads to the second issue. Even if credit injections, fiscal stimulus, and state led investments can overcome political and diplomatic shocks to growth in the short-term, there is a long-term price. As seen today, the negative effect of these short-term boosts to growth include high inflation, unemployment, and weak investment which need political and policy stability to overcome.



## **Update on Cyprus 2017**

**by Ergün Olgun**

Former Turkish Cypriot Negotiator

### **Reflecting on the Crans Montana Cyprus Conference**

<sup>49</sup> "Merkel: Won't Move Forward With Customs Union Amid Turkey Tension", Bloomberg, 8 August, 2017.



“Geography compels the two politically equal peoples of Cyprus to be good neighbours and find mutual accommodation to their problems. All efforts to do this through a federal partnership having failed, we must now direct our efforts to finding new and realistic ways to promote mutual respect and peaceful co-existence as good neighbours. This is both our vision and responsibility to future generations.”

Following the collapse of the Crans Montana Conference on 7 July 2017, Mr Tahsin Ertuğruloğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, made this statement, reflecting the bitterness and frustration felt on the Turkish Cypriot side at what they saw as the failure of the Greek Cypriots – after half a century of failure-marked negotiations – to divorce themselves from the obsession that Cyprus is Greek. This approach to the Cyprus dilemma leaves them unable to contemplate the UN-endorsed, bi-zonal federal partnership model based on the equality of its two politically equal, constitutive peoples.

Crans Montana also marked the ultimate disappointment for Turkish Cypriot President Mustafa Akıncı who, in contrast to his Greek Cypriot counterpart Nikos Anastasiades, consistently sought a fair and sustainable solution based on mutual respect, bi-communality and a new partnership – all fully consistent with the UN parameters established over decades of negotiation. Throughout the process, the Turkish Cypriot side acted on the internationally accepted premise that Cyprus is the common home of Turkish and Greek Cypriots whose relationship is not one of majority and minority but of two equal peoples. This is in stark contrast with the Greek Cypriot side’s long-held claim that Cyprus is a Hellenic land in which the Turkish Cypriots, at best, are entitled to minority status. Turkish Cypriot negotiators were, furthermore, dismayed that it was they – and Turkey -who were blamed for the failure at Crans Montana. Even worse, it can be argued, the Greek Cypriot side prolonged the negotiation process to serve their own political agenda, as when they speeded up their unilateral offshore hydrocarbon exploration activities at critical phases of the settlement deliberations, openly violating co-ownership rights to these resources and the principle of political equality.



**Looking Back:** Since the seizure of the seat of government by the Greek Cypriot Community in December 1963, the 1960 Republic of Cyprus has not been able to fulfil the bi-communal power-sharing objective for which it was established. This is the root cause of the Cyprus Problem.



The Turkish Cypriot community has since been deprived of its constitutional rights and has endured economic, social and travel restrictions, while the Greek Cypriot community is allowed to represent Cyprus on its own – although, under the 1960 Constitution, neither community may claim jurisdiction over the

other. In practice since 1963 the two communities have been living and governing themselves separately on the territory they each control.

Following the 1963 take-over, the full union of Cyprus with Greece was averted by the Turkish intervention of 20 July 1974 under the 1960 Treaties of Guarantee. Both communities have their own separate, and most often opposing, narratives in interpreting events of the past, although the Turkish Cypriot narrative regarding the origins of the Cyprus conflict leading up to the events of 1974 is supported by objective field reports of the UN Peace-keeping Forces (UNFICYP).

The UN's twofold mandate for Cyprus is (a) to prevent a recurrence of fighting and to contribute to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal conditions (implying that the current condition is not normal) by working with the Greek Cypriot-dominated Government; and (b) to find a negotiated solution to the Cyprus issue within the Mission of Good Offices of the UN Secretary General. While the first mandate is bent on 'maintaining the *status quo*' in the field, the latter finds the current reality unacceptable and unsustainable, aiming to change it through a negotiated settlement. There is thus an in-built contradiction in these two mandates/objectives - the former obstructs the realization of the latter by helping maintain the *status quo*.

Many UN comprehensive settlement initiatives and plans have failed in Cyprus, but the most dramatic was in April 2004 when 75.8% of Greek Cypriot voters rejected the so-called Annan Plan while 64.9% of Turkish Cypriot voters accepted it. In his report of 28 May 2004 to the Security Council following the vote, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said "The rejection of such a plan by the Greek Cypriot electorate is a major setback. What was rejected was the solution itself rather than a mere blueprint" (para. 83). "If the Greek Cypriots are ready to share power and prosperity with the Turkish Cypriots in a federal structure based on political equality, this needs to be demonstrated, not just by words, but by action" (para 86).

In the same report the UN Secretary General also said '...this (Turkish Cypriot) vote has undone whatever rationale might have existed for pressuring and isolating them (para 90)...I would hope they give a strong lead to all States to cooperate both bilaterally and in international bodies to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development, deeming such a move as consistent with Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984).'(para 93).

**Looking Ahead:** There is, of course, no benefit in continuing to engage in the blame game. The time has come to reflect on the lessons of past negotiations, as well as the realities on the ground, and think ahead and outside the box.

The negotiation process has shown beyond doubt that the respective positions and visions of the two sides on the resolution of the Cyprus issue are diametrically opposed. This brings into question the feasibility of the federal partnership objective set out decades ago. The time has come for the two sides, together with the UN and other involved parties, to adapt to establish political, physical and socio-psychological realities for a new and sustainable future of co-existence, cooperation and respect on the island.



The Turkish Cypriot people have faced an unjust isolation, imposed on them by the Greek Cypriot side. If a new start is to be made for *rapprochement* and reconciliation based on a new agenda, it must begin with the removal of unwarranted restrictions which only embitter the relationship between the two peoples and further deepen the lack of trust and confidence.

## FROM THE 2017 BATAS SYMPOSIUM



### **The Malta Tribunal:**

### **New light on the 'Malta Tribunal of 1919-1921'<sup>50</sup>**

**by Uluç Gürkan**

Former Deputy Speaker of  
the Turkish Grand National Assembly  
& Vice Chairman of the PACE & OSCE

'Armenian genocide' lobbies have created a widespread impression that there is an international consensus characterizing the 1915 events as genocide. This is not the case, as has been shown by the European Court of Human Rights in its *Perinçek-Switzerland* decisions of December 2013 and October 2015. The Court noted that only some twenty state parliaments out of more than 190 in the world have officially acknowledged, politically rather than legally, the fact of such a genocide.

The United Kingdom is one of the majority of countries stating that the events of 1915-1916 cannot be described as 'genocide'. This British position was made clear by Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale, spokesperson for the London Ministry of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in a speech on April 14, 1999, in which she observed that there is "no evidence to show that the Ottoman administration took a specific decision to eliminate the Armenians." Despite this statement, the genocide lobbies have maintained their pressure on the UK Government. They requested allegations of genocide to be addressed during a Holocaust commemoration ceremony in London on January 27, 2001, whereupon Beverley Hughes, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, stated that "A while ago, the British government reviewed evidence put forth on the Armenian allegations and examined documents on the events of 1915-1916. The decision is that these events do not correspond to what is defined as genocide by the UN. This is the attitude of the British government, and this will never change."

In a response to a question Baroness Scotland, for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, told the House of Lords on February 7, 2001: "The Government, in line with

<sup>50</sup> Abridged from the speaker's lecture text. References not included.

previous British Governments, have judged the evidence relating to events in eastern Anatolia in 1915-1916 not to be sufficiently unequivocal to persuade us that these events should be categorized as genocide as defined by the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide”.

**Ottoman Courts-Martial:** During and after World War I, the British used every opportunity to bring to trial Turks they accused of killing Armenians. After the war, such efforts were pursued at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and ultimately figured in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres. For its part the post-conflict Ottoman government, under strong British pressure, set up courts-martial to prosecute ‘crimes against Armenians’. Following an accelerated judicial process sentences were carried out immediately. The court-martial in Istanbul, for example, passed death sentences *in absentia* on five leading Ottoman war-time government members accused of ‘Armenian massacres’ and even of the entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I.

At this point, I want to make it clear that there were two different types of Ottoman courts-martial. First the 1915-1916 courts-martial set up by the war time Ottoman government to try members of irregular bands together with some government officials accused of the criminal treatment of Armenians during the 1915 relocation. Secondly came the 1919-1920 courts-martial which operated when Istanbul was controlled by Allied powers and had the primary function of trying Ottoman officials accused in the 1915-1916 courts-martial.

‘Genocide lobbies’ regard the verdicts of the Ottoman courts-martial as safe, although the judges involved were helpless against strong governmental and external pressure and many of them resigned during the trials. Furthermore, trial procedures were not appropriate. There were false witnesses and exaggerated testimony. To accelerate the ‘legal’ procedures, the hiring of lawyers was not permitted and the accused had no right of appeal. For example, a district governor, Kemal Bey, was sentenced to death despite the lack of clear evidence of his role in any massacre. Indeed Mustafa Pasha, the presiding judge in the case, declared that “a court-martial operating under occupation acts in line with emotions instead of conscience. This is an order coming from above”. Kemal Bey’s execution caused significant public outcry against the Ottoman government and the British and became a turning point. Admiral Calthorpe, British High Commissioner in Istanbul, reported to London that the Ottoman trials were “proving to be a farce and injurious to (British) prestige and to that of the Turkish government”. Admiral John de Robeck, who replaced Calthorpe, informed London of the futility of continuing the trials with the remark “Its findings cannot be held of any account at all”.

Meanwhile, a new government gave the right of appeal to those convicted in the 1919-1920 courts-martial. Those who were lightly sentenced had to make their appeal personally while for those sentenced to death or life imprisonment the appeal process was automatic. The Ottoman Military Court of Appeal investigated the light sentence decisions and discovered significant inconsistencies and improprieties, reversing almost all the judgments. For heavy sentences no Ottoman Court of Appeal was established. Overall the British authorities considered the Ottoman trials a travesty of justice and moved proceedings to their own territory, Malta.

**Malta Tribunal:** A total of 144 Ottoman officials and military officers, the majority of whom had been sentenced to death or life imprisonment by Ottoman courts-martial, were sent to Malta as prisoners of war. The aim was to try to sentence these Turks just as the Ottoman courts-martial did, but within the scope of an appeal process, on the grounds that they had ‘perpetrated mass killings against not only Armenians, but all local Christian people’. The prosecution, which was conducted for more than two years by Britain’s highest legal prosecution authority, H.M. Attorney General for England and



Wales, was based on Articles 230 and 231 of the Treaty of Sèvres involving ‘Armenian massacre’ allegations. Along with Ottoman archives transported to London after the 1918 invasion, documents in America were also examined and proof of ‘massacre’ of Armenians was sought in Egypt, Iraq, and Caucasia.

Despite all efforts by the British government to place on trial and sentence the Turks detained in Malta, no evidence that a British court of law could consider sufficient proof against them was found. Consequently, charges were dismissed with a judgement of *nulle prosequi*. Officers for the UK Attorney General reported to the Foreign Ministry in London that the Turks detained in Malta ‘are charged with political offences and their detention or release therefore involves a question of high policy and is not dependent on the legal proceedings...’ In the absence of evidence to convict, the British Foreign Ministry, under Lord Curzon, asked the Attorney General to ‘initiate political charges’ against forty-two Turks in Malta and prosecute them ‘with reasonable prospects if judicial ones cannot be initiated’. But even this failed and the Attorney General, on July 29, 1921, informed the British government that the prosecution had to be closed because, with the evidence in hand, none of the Turks in Malta could be prosecuted on the grounds of the massacre of Armenians. The judgement declared that ‘the charges made against the Turks named in the Foreign Office list are of quasi-political character’ and ‘no statements have been taken from witnesses who can depose to the truth of the charges made against the prisoners’.

Since the Turks on trial in Malta no longer faced charges, they could not be detained and became available for exchange against British prisoners in Anatolia. Indeed the UK High Commissioner in Istanbul wrote to London that ‘Since no adequate evidence was found to convince a British Court of Law, all Turks should be included in the exchange of captives to avoid losing more reputation’.

The Malta Tribunal is seen by those who reject the word ‘genocide’ to support the contention that there was no explicit Ottoman policy to exterminate Armenians and to undermine the resolutions passed by some twenty national state parliaments. I argue that, to overcome prejudice and face historical fact, the Malta Tribunal should be our legitimate key. Documents in the UK National Archives and elsewhere are crucial in clarifying the official British government view.

**UN Genocide Convention:** The 1948 Convention (Articles 2 and 3) defines genocide as acts committed ‘with the intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group’. The key element here is intent. On this basis it is clear that allegations of a ‘systematic campaign of destruction’ of Armenians and other Christian minorities in the Ottoman State are legally and historically spurious. Support for this argument comes from the League of Nations, the Secretary General of which, British politician and diplomat Sir Eric Drummond, stated on March 1, 1920 that “in Turkey, minorities were often oppressed and massacres carried out by irregular bands who were entirely outside the control of the Central Turkish Government”. Indeed hundreds of officials and other subjects of that government were tried and sentenced during the relocation of 1915 on charges involving allegations of having committed – on their own initiative – crimes against Armenians. It is also clear that the 1915 decision for relocation was a reaction to Armenian armed rebellion, with anti-Ottoman irregulars and gangs behind military lines, during the Russian occupation of eastern Anatolia.

**Academic Views:** Professor of Military History Edward Erickson’s *Ottomans and Armenians* provides evidence that the motive of the Ottoman military command in recommending the relocation of Armenians in 1915 was indeed the threat to the war effort from Armenian insurgent groups mobilized with the support of Russia. ‘It was self-defence for the Turks’ writes Professor Erickson, who adds “The Ottoman Government

had every right to protect the lives of their Muslim subjects who constituted the majority of the population in the areas selected for declaration of the autonomous state of Armenia”.

Princeton University Ottoman historian Professor Bernard Lewis pointed out that what happened was a ‘war-time tragedy’ and added that ‘to say that the massacre of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was the same as what happened to Jews in Nazi Germany is a downright falsehood’. ‘What happened to the Armenians’, Professor Lewis goes on, ‘was the result of a massive Armenian armed rebellion against the Turks, which began even before war broke out, and continued on a larger scale... To make this a parallel with the holocaust in Germany, you would have to assume the Jews of Germany had been engaged in an armed rebellion against the German state, collaborating with the allies against Germany. This seems to me a rather absurd parallel’.

**Armenian Republic (1918-1919):** Hovannes Katchaznouni, Prime Minister of the short-lived state, supports Lewis and Erickson in his report to the 1923 Armenian Revolutionary Federation Congress refuting claims of the Armenian genocide lobbies. Katchaznouni admits that Armenians rebelled against the Ottoman state and were at war with the Turks during World War I – ‘The winter of 1914 and the spring of 1915 were the periods of greatest enthusiasm and hope for all the Armenians in the Caucasus... We had no doubt the war would end with the complete victory of the Allies; Turkey would be defeated and dismembered, and its Armenian population would at last be liberated’. Other Armenian activists admitted that there was armed rebellion. One was Gatrekin Pastermadjian, whose book *Why Armenia should be Free* stated that ‘The Armenian reservists, about 160,000 in number, gladly responded to the call for the simple reason that they were to fight the arch-enemy of their historic race! Beside regular soldiers, nearly 20,000 volunteers expressed their readiness to take up arms against the Turk’.

Many American archive documents also mention the armed Armenian rebellion. One such, by Niles & Sutherland, reports that ‘the material evidence on the ground itself has convinced us of the general truth of the facts, first, that Armenians massacred Mussulmans on a large scale with many refinements of cruelty, and second, that Armenians are responsible for most of the destruction done to towns and villages. The Russians and Armenians occupied the country for a considerable time together in 1915...’ Meanwhile Congress Report 266 – American Mission to Armenia – concludes ‘We know, however, so much to be a fact that the Armenians in the new State are carrying on operations in view of exterminating the Mussulman element in obedience to orders from the Armenian corps commander’.

League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Nobel Prize Laureate Fridthjof Nansen addressed the General Assembly on September 21, 1921, to the effect that “When Armenians were driven out of Asia Minor ... the Allied Western Powers had said to the Armenians: If you fight with us against the Turks, and if the war ends successfully for us, we promise to give you a national home, liberty and independence...” But when peace was concluded, the promise given to the Armenians was forgotten by the Allies who had made use of Armenian manpower to reinforce the front when the Russian line collapsed during World War I. They encouraged and then let down the Armenians.

**Conclusion:** Even though the 1915 relocation was a war-time tragedy and ‘a military self-defence precaution’ to head off an uprising against the Ottoman state, it was certainly a devastating period for Ottoman Armenians. It created many victims. But the result of what happened was not only grief for Armenian. It was the grief of all Anatolian people, Christian and Muslim together. So that pain should be shared and mourned together. Those who demand that the tragedy of what happened to Armenians during World War 1 be designated ‘genocide’ at every turn call on us, the Turks, to ‘face our

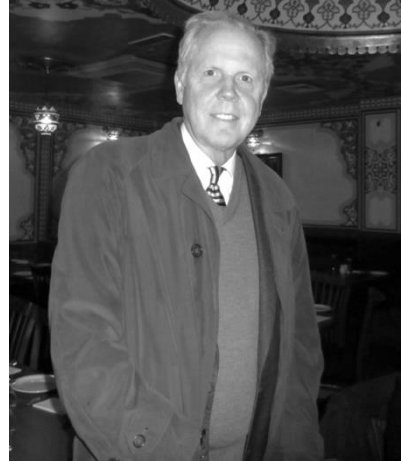


history'. I argue that, as Thomas Cooper, an Anglo-American economist, college president and political philosopher, said two hundred years ago, "Fraud and falsehood only dread examination. Truth invites it".

## Anatolian Seljuk Caravanserais<sup>51</sup>

by Scott Redford

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However much it is associated with Islamic civilisations, the caravanserai as an architectural form has a long history that predates the advent of Islam. During various periods of Islamic history and in various regions of the Islamic world, the building of caravanserais took place. However, it is in two periods, the medieval (11th-14th centuries) and early modern (16th-17th centuries) that caravanserais found the most favour.<sup>52</sup> This essay will examine the phenomenon of the caravanserai not in the Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid realms of the 16th and 17th centuries, but rather in the medieval period, specifically under the rule of the Anatolian Seljuks.

Caravanserais can be viewed as a subset of a group called the 'architecture of travel'. This functional grouping puts caravanserais together with roads, bridges, waterworks, watchtowers, and other constructions promoting ease of travel and communication. And, quite obviously, caravanserais were built in order to facilitate travel and encourage trade. They were built at regular intervals along both major routes and minor routes linking cities and routes of the Islamic world and beyond, and served as secure rest places for travellers and their animals; people often journeyed together in caravans for reasons of safety, whether they were merchants or not.

<sup>51</sup> This essay draws on Scott Redford, "Caravanserais and Commerce," P. Magdalino and N. Necipoğlu, eds., *Trade in Byzantium. Papers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Foundation, 2016, pp. 297-311 and *idem*, "Caravanserais, Roads, and Routes in Seljuk Anatolia," L. Vandeput, D. Baird, K. Gökay, J. Haldon, M. Massa, and S. Mitchell, eds., *Pathways of Communication: Routes and Roads in Anatolia from Prehistory to the Seljuk Period* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (forthcoming). My work draws on that of many scholars, most prominently Kurt Erdmann and Ayşıl Tükel Yavuz. The website [www.turkishhan.org](http://www.turkishhan.org) provides easy access to views of many Seljuk caravanserais in Turkey, and some bibliography, but should be used with caution.

<sup>52</sup> The best introduction to the caravanserai in the Islamic world remains Chapter 6 'The Caravansarai' [sic] of Robert Hillenbrand's *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function, and Meaning* New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, pp. 331-376.

However, the very name 'caravanserai' is composite, with its second half, 'serai', the Persian word for palace. And indeed it was in this period that grand 'palaces of commerce', and not just utilitarian buildings serving the needs of travellers and their pack animals, sprang up in Seljuk realms. First the Great Seljuks and their neighbours in Central Asia built caravanserais in areas that are now in northeastern Iran, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. (These are not as well known, due both to their remoteness and the fact that many of them were built of perishable mudbrick.)<sup>53</sup> The palatial aspect of caravanserais links them to the ruling elite that largely sponsored their building: indeed many caravanserais preserved social distinction in their layout, with areas or suites of rooms seemingly made for elite travellers. The travel of the ruling elite was often undertaken in conjunction with activities such as hunting and warfare that took sultans and their retinues into the countryside.

In addition to catering to the needs of the state elite for activities like warfare and hunting, caravanserais accrued benefit and prestige to the sultan and other elite state actors who built caravanserais (and whose building inscriptions would have been visible above and around the entrances to these buildings) because they were providing for the safety and welfare of their subjects. The building of caravanserais was considered *khayrat* or good works for Muslim rulers. Be that as it may, inscriptions on, and endowments of, Anatolian Seljuk and Mamluk caravanserais mention that they are made for *all* travellers, Muslim and non-Muslim. As such they were ecumenical spaces, even though, of course, the only places of worship they contained were mosques. The predominant religious reason for travel in Islamic lands was the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca, but it was not until Ottoman times that one state ruled territories that united Anatolia with the Islamic holy places. However, in Seljuk times, we see that caravanserais were also built at shrine spots within Seljuk realms such as Seyit Gazi close to Eskişehir and Eshab-i Khef near Elbistan.

The cousins of the Great Seljuks, who ruled in the 10th and 11th centuries in Iran, Iraq and parts of western Central Asia, were the Anatolian Seljuks, who set up a sultanate in the central part of today's Turkey, ruling there in the late 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. The 'golden age' of caravanserai building in Seljuk Anatolia coincides with the period of greatest prosperity and stability in the sultanate in the late 12th and the first half of the 13th centuries.

Interestingly, the incredible spurt of caravanserai construction that took place in Anatolian Seljuk lands in the first half of the 13th century was preceded by many decades by another kind of 'architecture of travel' constructed by the ruling elite of another Turco-Islamic state which ruled in a part of the world currently within the boundaries of the Republic of Turkey: the Artuqids.

As understood today from scanty surviving textual evidence, the building of caravanserais in Seljuk Anatolia was primarily an investment on the part of the ruling elite to promote trade within its territories. It was, as stated above, also viewed as

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<sup>53</sup> For the latest research on medieval caravanserais in Turkmenistan, see the work of Paul Wordsworth, for instance his 'Sustaining Travel: The Economy of Medieval Stopping Places across the Karakum Desert, Turkmenistan', S. McPhillips and P. Wordsworth, eds., *Landscapes of the Islamic World: Archaeological, Historical and Ethnographic Approaches*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016, pp. 219-236.

good works, helping the lives of fellow Muslims and the population of the state at large. The benefit to the state occurred in the collection of higher taxes at points of entry. Even so, tax treaties with the Venetians point to concessions even at ports of entry in order to spur trade.

The Artuqids, occupying territories traversed by the mighty streams of the Tigris River and its affluents, chose to build another sort of 'architecture of travel', namely bridges. Some of these bridges survive, although the grandest of them, the bridge at Hasan Keyf, lies in ruins and is soon to be inundated by the waters of a hydroelectric dam. Sources from the 13th and early 14th centuries give us hints that these bridges were 'toll bridges', with taxes collected from merchants and caravans using them. However, the absence of caravanserais from an Artuqid 'architecture of travel' is nonetheless striking: there were obviously different approaches to encouraging trade and travel at different times, and in different parts of the Islamic world.

As seen, caravanserais were largely built by members of the state elite, within which – as was the case with other forms of architecture – there was a hierarchy. At the top was the sultan, whose caravanserais were larger, more prominent, and possessed features like kiosk mosques, residential suites, built-in bathhouses, and others, that other caravanserais did not have. These sultanic caravanserais usually were found on prominent roads and at intersections. They are the best known of Seljuk caravanserais: especially the Sultan Hans near Aksaray and on the road between Kayseri and Sivas, both built during the reign of Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad (r. 1219-1237). These buildings are the true 'serais' or palaces of commerce of the medieval Islamic world: their portals rich in decoration, and their lodgings capacious.

Other prominent, but less opulent, caravanserais on major roads were built by members of the royal family, including royal wives and state emirs. And lowest on the hierarchy were smaller caravanserais built on lesser routes, especially through the mountains: these were built by lesser emirs.

The first and major axis of Seljuk caravanserai building seems to have been between the capital Konya and the major eastern cities of Aksaray and Kayseri. Early building activity linked Konya to the Mediterranean coast at Antalya, and later Alanya, and also westward from Konya into lands controlled at the time by the Laskarid Byzantine Empire of Nicaea. From Kayseri, caravanserais followed routes northward to Sivas and to the Black Sea ports of Samsun and Sinop.

In addition to the vast majority of Anatolian Seljuk caravanserais built by major state actors, we have evidence for participation in this grand venture by subjects of the sultan who built caravanserais for profit. West of Konya, a Tabrizi merchant built a caravanserai and, in the town of Hekimhan in northern Malatya province in southeastern Turkey, we still have a caravanserai built by a local Syriac deacon and doctor. There must have been other caravanserais built by those who were not members of the Seljuk ruling class and who had a more direct profit motive in mind.

The fact that Anatolian Seljuk caravanserais were built of stone, and not of brick and mudbrick like the earlier caravanserais of their Seljuk cousins ruling in Iran and Central Asia, is only one reason we know and value these caravanserais above all others. The best of them were true palaces of commerce: in fact larger than those surviving Seljuk palaces we know. Why did the Anatolian Seljuks invest so much in what was, in other areas and at other times, a largely functional building type? There

are no ready answers to this. The Anatolian Seljuks were very wealthy at this time, but didn't build mosques or palaces as large and lavish as some of these caravanserais, so wealth alone cannot be the answer. One possible answer is the use of the caravanserais to project the power of the state into the countryside and to impress the rural population of Anatolia (which must have still been largely Christian at this point) and to bind it to the state through the endowment of local lands for the upkeep of these palaces of commerce.

**Illustrations:** I have selected photographs taken before recent restorations that have altered drastically the historic character of these and other caravanserais. I am grateful to Benni Claasz Cockson for permission to reproduce his photographs.



The Portal of the Karatay Han. This caravanserai was built by Anatolian Seljuk Sultans Alaeddin Keykubad (r. 1219-1237) and Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev II (r. 1237-1246). Photograph taken in 2009 by Benni Claasz Cockson.



The courtyard of the Ağzıkara Han showing its kiosk mosque. This caravanserai was built by Anatolian Seljuk Sultans Alaeddin Keykubad (r. 1219-1237) and Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev II (r. 1237-1246). Photograph taken in 2003 by Benni Claasz Cockson.

## Reciting Hikmat in Uyghur Villages: the circulation of texts and performance

by Rachel Harris  
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In a small village in southern Xinjiang in 2012, a *hetme* ritual is being conducted by a group of pious village women led by a qushnach: a village ritual specialist who deals





with funerals and sickness. The bulk of this ritual is devoted to the repeated recitation of short Arabic prayers. The *hikmat* is recited at the end of the ritual, and serves to provide the participants with emotional and spiritual resolution.

Recitation led by Jennetkhan Qushnach; recorded by Rachel Harris. Translated by Rachel Harris and Aziz Isa:

Aghzingning nimi qashqay, Amin  
Kozum nuri ochkey, Amin  
Tupraq ichige kushkey, Amin  
Weyran qilur bu olum, Amin

It will dry the saliva in your mouth  
Extinguish the light in your eyes  
You will enter into the dust  
Be fearful of death

**Qul Khoj' Ahmed** sen oyghan, Amin  
Yoqtur bu sozler yalghan, Amin  
Tupraq ichide qalghan, Amin  
Weyran qilur bu olum, Amin

Awake, Khoja Ahmed, Slave of God  
These words are no lies  
You will be left in the dust  
Be fearful of death

Saraylirini buzurup, Amin  
Bostanlirini kuchurup, Amin  
Hemimizge beraber, Amin  
Kelgen olum emesmu, Amin

Palaces will be destroyed  
Orchards moved away  
It is the same for us all  
Death will come, will it not?

Xotunlirini tul qilghan, Amin  
Gulzarliqni xar qilghan, Amin  
Yitimlarni qaxshatqan, Amin  
Kelgen olum emesmu, Amin ...

Wives will be widows  
Gardens will be abandoned  
Orphans will weep  
Death will come, will it not?

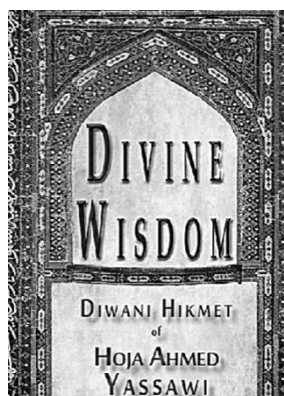
The reference in this sung text to *Qul Khoj'Ahmed* is to the celebrated 12th-century Central Asian saint, Khoja Ahmad Yasawi, popularly known as a Sufi shaykh, founder of the Yasawi order, and a mystic poet, author of the *Diwan-i Hikmat*. Yasawi's shrine lies in the town now known as Turkestan in southern Kazakhstan; an important religious centre and pilgrimage site since the 14th century when this huge mausoleum was built on the orders of Timur. The Yasawi as an organised Sufi order has not survived to the present day, but it has had far-reaching influence in the realm of popular religious practice across Central Asia, including contemporary Xinjiang. Its influence includes styles of *zikr*, aspects of shrine veneration, forms of social organisation, and the tradition of reciting Turkic language *hikmat*.



The *Diwan-i Hikmat* are manuscript collections of Turkic-language Sufi mystic poetry, which have circulated in multiple forms from Turkey to Xinjiang. The oldest manuscript dates back to the 17th century. Different versions may vary quite considerably, in terms of content, number of poems, and in wording and style. Larger collections contain over 100 *hikmat*. They are identified with Yasawi through the



inclusion of his name within the poem, in the manner of Central Asian poetry, appearing in different forms, primarily *Kul Khoj' Ahmad* (Ahmad, servant of God).



They recount in formulaic fashion the life of Yasawi, listing his spiritual achievements year by year until the age of 63 (the age of the Prophet at death) after which he retires to a hermit existence in a cave. According to legend he lived on to the age of 125. In popular belief, and in much of the scholarship up to the late 20th century, it was uncritically assumed that the Diwan was actually written by Yasawi. But there are many anachronisms in terms of content (such as references to Yasawi's tomb) and poetic language and style (such as the extensive inclusion of Persian vocabulary within the Turkic) and the late date of surviving manuscripts, which all suggest that the Diwan-i Hikmat is a compilation of poetry post-dating Yasawi, and probably composed by multiple authors over a substantial period of time.

The *hikmat* tradition has been maintained in written manuscripts and in oral performance in Xinjiang to the present day. The performance of *hikmat* is widespread in ritual contexts in Xinjiang, and across Central Asia, and the texts can also be found in musical traditions, including the Uyghur Twelve Muqam. Manuscript versions of the Diwan also circulate; it was one of the most common written works in the region in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Unofficially published collections of *hikmat* still circulate underground in Uyghur bazaars, and many people, men and women, who participate in ritual gatherings, keep their own notebooks of *hikmat*. Jennetkhan Qushnach recounts:

"I learned *hikmat* from my mother. I know about 15 to 20 different *hikmat*. Where do they come from? Long, long ago there lived a man who wrote a book called Hikmet Sherip [?]. It was handed down from one person to another, and so it came down to us. My mother had her own notebook (*haterisi*) that she wrote *hikmat* in. I used it when I learned, and I made a copy for myself. ... With this book we recite in a way that other people can't".

Print versions of the Diwan-i Hikmat circulate still more widely. Turkish scholars have shown great interest in this tradition since the early 20th century, and several versions of the Diwan-i Hikmat have been published in Turkey, part of the nationalist project to establish the cultural heritage of the 'Turkic peoples'. Uyghur scholars have also shown interest in Yasawi's *hikmat*; the first modern published version appeared in the 1980s in the pioneering journal *Bulaq*. But it is remarkable that all the published versions available in modern Uyghur translation are based, not on the living tradition of *hikmat* as it is practised among the Uyghurs, but on 19th century collections published in Turkey.

Recent studies have assumed that the written tradition of *hikmat* is quite separate from the local traditions of oral performance. Nathan Light (2008) argues that *hikmat* in the Uyghur ritual context is a locally maintained, discrete tradition, taught directly by teacher to pupil in linear chains of transmission, with written texts serving primarily as personal aide-memoires. It is true that the majority of recited *hikmat* that I have heard appear to have no direct relationship with print versions of the Diwan, although they do share many structural and stylistic aspects. But some performances suggest that something else may be going on, such as this recording

of *hikmat* sung over *zitr*, recited by Ayshemkhan Peytul Khelpet, and filmed by Rahile Dawut in Qarakhoja, near Turpan, in 2009:

*Eya dostlar hesbim halim bayan eyley  
Ol sewebtin heqtin qorqup ghargha kirdim  
Jin dertlikte bu sozlerni bayan eyley, hu-Allah  
Ol sewebtin heqtin qorqup ghargha kirdim  
Ne sewebtin heqtin qorqup ghargha kirdim*

The text of this *hikmat* is a very close match with poems in the printed tradition, in particular the 1984 edition of Bulaq. The final line: 'For this reason I hid myself from others and entered the cave' (*Ol sewebtin heqtin qorqup ghargha kirdim*), is an important recurring motif in the *hikmat*, pointing to a key trope in the story of Yasawi's life: his retreat from the world at the age of 63.

What are the particular forms of circulation and transmission that have created this close relationship between printed texts and performed tradition? Rather than separate oral and written traditions, recordings like this suggest the existence of more diverse, complex forms of circulation, criss-crossing the oral and textual spheres, and crossing international borders. *Hikmat* performers are referring to published versions as well as the handwritten notebook *hikmat* they directly inherit, and they are adapting the published texts to the musical framework that they have learned orally. The similarities between different strands of the *hikmat* tradition in terms of lyric structure mean that the published versions are easily subsumed into the oral tradition, and easily fitted to the established musical framework of the performance.



Across the border from Xinjiang, in Penjim village near Zharkant, in eastern Kazakhstan, another *hetme* group of pious women is led by Adilem Haji. Adilem travels regularly across the border to her hometown of Ghulja in Xinjiang, where she attends *zitr* meetings, and writes down *hikmat* texts to teach to her own group in Kazakhstan. She recites from a hand-copied version of a *hikmat* which is a close match to a 2012 modern Uyghur edition of the Diwan-i Hikmat.

The possibility of this kind of movement from published texts back into locally maintained traditions of ritual performance suggests that we need to revise some of our assessments of the process of canonization in Uyghur literary and musical traditions. It suggests that this work of canonization, far from being a final, authoritative sealing of tradition, is in fact merely one more link in the chain of oral transmission. We should think instead about 'feedback loops', in which traditions of manuscript copying and oral performance intersect and feed into each other in circuits of transmission. The advent of print versions fits seamlessly into these circuits, not in any way disrupting the cycles of movement between text and performance, but instead enabling faster moving and more far flung loops of feedback, as Turkish scholars in Ankara rework manuscripts sourced in Turkestan; Uyghur scholars in Urumchi translate these texts from the 18th century Turki into modern Uyghur; and ritual specialists in Qarakhoja or Ghulja adapt these translations into a form that fits the musical structure of their performance tradition. Thus texts that are meant by nationalist scholars to 'fix and preserve' can in fact be

revivified in the hands of performers who retain the framework of the performance tradition, revised and enriched, and set into motion a new cycle of transmission.

Audio and video clips accompanying this article can be found at: [www.soundislamchina.org](http://www.soundislamchina.org)



## Noteworthy Events

by Ayşe Furlonger

### EXHIBITIONS

#### Fahrelnissa Zeid

**Date and time:** 20 October 2017 – 25 March 2018

**Venue:** Deutsche Bank KunstHalle, Unter den Linden 13 / 15 10117 Berlin

**More information:** **E-mail:** [db.kunsthalle@db.com](mailto:db.kunsthalle@db.com), ☎ +49 30 / 20 20 93 0

**Website:** [www.deutsche-bank-kunsthalle.de/kunsthalle/de/](http://www.deutsche-bank-kunsthalle.de/kunsthalle/de/)

The retrospective 'Fahrelnissa Zeid' introduces one of Turkey's most important pioneering modernists to an international audience. The artist was born in 1901 on an island off Istanbul into an upper-class, intellectual family and died in 1991 in Amman, Jordan. She travelled extensively, exhibited internationally and influenced a younger generation of artists in Europe and the Middle East. In Istanbul she became a member of the d Group, an avant-garde artists' association which, encouraged by the policies of Atatürk, sought to develop an independent Turkish brand of Modernism. This exhibition will be the first major retrospective dedicated to her work, focusing on how Zeid's practice both related to and diverged from international art movements. Her large-scale abstract works from the late 1940s-1960s form the heart of the exhibition. After completion, the exhibition will be shown at Nicolas Ibrahim Surssock Museum in Beirut from 27 April – 1 October 2018.

#### Turkish Tulips

**Date and time:** 29 July 2017 – 5 November, 2017 / 10:00 – 17:00

**Venue:** The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, Co Durham DL12 8NP, UK

**More information:** Entry £14 (concessions £12, students £6), ☎ +44 (0) 1833 690606

Email: [info@thebowesmuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@thebowesmuseum.org.uk)

This exhibition delves into the complex and paradoxical history behind this iconic flower. Follow the trail of tulips for an enlightening insight into our relationship with Europe and the Middle East brought to you through the eyes of over thirty contemporary artists including Damien Hirst, Cornelia Parker, Gavin Turk and Sir Peter Blake. This is also a story about migration and about how much is owed to the East – a land steeped in culture, mathematics, science and philosophy – but now war-torn and from whence refugees flee. It is a romantic story set in 17th-century Europe, a fable about social inequality and extravagance. As well it is an allegory of aesthetics and science – about beauty and obsession.

The Bowes Museum is located in the historic town of Barnard Castle in Teesdale. The magnificent building houses internationally significant collections of fine and decorative arts.

## Arts of The East

### Highlights of Islamic Art from the Bruschetti Collection

**Date and time:** 23 September 2017 – 21 January 2018

**Venue:** Aga Khan Museum, 77 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1K1

**More information:** Email: [information@agakhanmuseum.org](mailto:information@agakhanmuseum.org), ☎ +1 416.646.4677  
Website: [www.agakhanmuseum.org/bruschetti-collection](http://www.agakhanmuseum.org/bruschetti-collection)



From lavish textiles and intricately patterned carpets to colourful paintings, polychrome Iznik wares, and precious inlaid metalwork, the world premiere of Arts of the East: Highlights of Islamic Art from the Bruschetti Collection introduces Canadian and international audiences to a choice selection from one of the world's most important private collections of Islamic art. Handpicked by Dr. Alessandro Bruschetti in conversation with Aga Khan Museum Curator Filiz Çakır Phillip, the objects showcased in the exhibition, numbering more than 40 and dating from the 13th to 17th centuries, demonstrate remarkable vibrancy, variety, and technical perfection and represent the essence of this rarely exhibited collection.

## LECTURES, TALKS AND SEMINARS

### Istanbul: The World's Desire

**Date and time:** Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 18:00

**Venue:** Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy Street London W1T 5BT

**More information:** Website: [www.therai.org.uk](http://www.therai.org.uk)

**Speaker:** Dr Bettany Hughes

Joint seminar with the Anglo-Turkish Society

Award-winning historian, broadcaster and author Bettany Hughes presents an epic new biography of Istanbul, the city with three names – Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul – the gateway between the East and the West, and between the North and the South, which served as the capital of the Late Roman, Byzantine, Latin and Ottoman Empires. Investigating what it takes to make a city, Bettany explores this city, 'the world's desire' that is racing up the modern political agenda. Based on research over a decade and new archaeological evidence, this captivating portrait of Istanbul is visceral, immediate and scholarly narrative history at its finest. Using the latest techniques and finds – including Neolithic footprints preserved in the deep mud of the Bosphorus – Bettany walks the streets of the city and brings back to life the story of its inhabitants across 8000 years.

This event is free, but tickets should be booked at <https://bettany-hughes-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

## Byzantine Routes and Frontiers in Eastern Pontus

**Date and time:** 7 December 2017 / 18:30-19:30

**Venue:** British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

**More information:** Tickets £10 (Free for members), ☎+44 (0)207 969 5204

**Website:** [www.biaa.ac.uk/event/lecture-byzantine-routes-and-frontiers-in-eastern-pontus](http://www.biaa.ac.uk/event/lecture-byzantine-routes-and-frontiers-in-eastern-pontus)



**Speaker:** Professor Jim Crow

London BIAA Lecture

Byzantine Trebizond (Trabzon) has a rich collection of written sources up to 1461. This lecture will combine new archaeological evidence from the miracle tales of St Eugenios, with fieldwork carried out at east Trabzon at the monastery at Buzluca. Professor Crow will show how to reconstruct routes across the Pontic mountains and identify Byzantine border lands around Bayburt and beyond.

Jim Crow is Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh. His research has ranged from Hadrian's Wall to Greece and Turkey from Roman to later medieval times. Recent projects have focused on the water supply of Constantinople and on the coastal regions of the Black Sea and the Aegean.

## A Conceptual History of Turkish Republicanism

**Date and time:** 29 November 2017 / 15:00-17:00

**Venue:** Russell Square: College Buildings Room: 4426

**More information:** Email: [mr18@soas.ac.uk](mailto:mr18@soas.ac.uk). ☎+44(0) 20 7898 4573  
(University of Cambridge)

**Speaker:** Dr Banu Turnaoğlu (University of Cambridge)

**Organiser:** Dr Manjeet Ramgotra (SOAS)



Dr Turnaoğlu is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow and a Research Associate of St John's College, Cambridge. She received her PhD from the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge on the development of Turkish republicanism and was awarded the Political Studies Association's 2015 Sir Ernest Barker Prize for Best Dissertation in Political Theory for her doctoral thesis. She earned a BA in International Relations and History from Koç University, Turkey and an MSc in Political Theory from the University of Oxford. Banu specialises in Ottoman political thought, focusing on concepts of republicanism, constitutionalism, secularism, positivism, and anti-imperialism. She has particular interests in the exchange of ideas between Western and non-Western political spheres, examining both in a comparative perspective. Her first book, *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism*, examines the development of republican conceptions of the state within the intellectual and political context of the Ottoman Empire.

Her current research and second book project, *The Eastern Question: The Western Question Seen from the East*, studies the conceptualisations of the Eastern



Question, a defining source of international crisis and armed conflict in the Ottoman Empire, Russia, England and France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and looks at how Ottoman intellectuals and statesmen responded to Western imperialism in their writings. It argues that the sources of today's socio-political crises in the Middle East, the Black Sea region, and Eastern Europe can be better understood by grasping the Question's emergence and evolution.

### **The (Im)Possibility of Living Together: Ethnographic Explorations on Inter-Communitarian Relationships between Kurds and Syrians in Southeastern Turkey**

**Date and time:** 1 December 2017, 12:00 -14:00

**Venue:** MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square Room: MBI Al Jaber Seminar Room

**More information:** Email: [gd5@soas.ac.uk](mailto:gd5@soas.ac.uk) / [gm29@soas.ac.uk](mailto:gm29@soas.ac.uk)

**Speaker:** Dr Zerrin Özlem Biner

SOAS Modern Turkish Studies Programme (London Middle East Institute)

Zerrin Ozlem Biner is a social anthropologist with research interests in conflict and post-conflict settings in the Middle East. She holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge (2007), and an MA from Goldsmiths College, University of London (2000).

### **From Istanbul to Addis Ababa: South-South Relations at the Height of Inter-Imperial Competition**

**Date and time:** 6 December 2017 / 15:15-17:-00

**Venue:** Russell Square: College Buildings Room: 4429,

Centre for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies (CCLPS)

**Speaker:** Mostafa Minawi (Cornell)

On an early spring day in 1904, an aide-de-camp to Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) by the name of Sadik al-Mouayad Azmzade left on an official journey from the Ottoman capital to the newly established imperial capital of the Ethiopian Empire, Addis Ababa. It took him close to two months to reach Emperor Menelik II's (r. 1889-1913) palace on a hill overlooking the new city. Azmzade penned a travelogue while on this journey from Istanbul to Marseille, Port Said, and Djibouti by ship; from Djibouti to Dire Dawa by train; and through the mountains to Addis Ababa by caravan. The journey offered a variety of experiences allowing Azmzade to reflect on all that he encountered and on his life as an Ottoman subject who, like others from his generation, felt the constant judgmental gaze of Europe. As a man who had a front seat to inter-imperial competition, his observations identified an existential threat to the Empire. This threat infiltrated the thoughts and lives of this generation of proud Ottomans who increasingly identified with a Victorian conceptualization of 'modernity', while simultaneously being regarded as 'backward' members of the 'Sick man of Europe'. The speaker will aim to understand the South-South relationship between Istanbul and Addis Ababa at the height of the colonial competition for the Somali coast and will discuss the significance of Azmzade's travelogue.

Mostafa Minawi is a historian of the Ottoman Empire, an assistant professor and the director of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies initiative at Cornell University.

### **The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Modern Middle East**

**Date and time:** Friday 19 January 2018, 19:30

**Venue:** Lecture Theatre, Reading School, Earleigh Road, READING RG1 5LW, Historical Association Reading Branch

**More information:** All are welcome without prior reservation. But anyone wishing to join the speaker and committee for supper from 6.00pm (cost £12.50 Inc. wine), should email a reservation a few days in advance to [sexton44@gmail.com](mailto:sexton44@gmail.com).

Speaker: Dr James Baldwin (Royal Holloway College, University of London)

James E. Baldwin is Lecturer in Empires of the Early Modern Muslim World, in the Department of History.

### **Non-Istanbulites of Istanbul: 'Right to the City' Novels in Turkish Literature from the 1960s to the Present**

**Date and time:** 9 January 2018

**Venue:** Netherlands Institute in Turkey, Beyoğlu, İstanbul

**More information:** [www.nit-istanbul.org/event/-non-istanbulites-of-istanbul-the-right-to-the-city-novels-in-turkish-literature-from-the-1960s-to-the-present](http://www.nit-istanbul.org/event/-non-istanbulites-of-istanbul-the-right-to-the-city-novels-in-turkish-literature-from-the-1960s-to-the-present)

Speaker/Presenter: N Buket Cengiz

N. Buket Cengiz received her BA in Russian Language and Literature from Istanbul University.

### **Politics and Sociability in a Transcultural Context: The Diplomatic Milieu in Istanbul during the long Eighteenth Century**

**Date:** 17 November 2017

**Venue:** Deutsches Historisches Institut, 8 rue du Parc-Royal, 75003 Paris

**More information:** Contact: Pascal Firges: [pfirges@dhi-paris.fr](mailto:pfirges@dhi-paris.fr), *Website:* [www.hsozkult.de](http://www.hsozkult.de)

Speakers/Presenters: David Do Paço (Sciences Po), Pascal Firges (DHI Paris)

Recently, the new diplomatic history has put a particular emphasis on studying the early modern European *société des princes*, taking into account hitherto marginalized diplomatic agents and localities such as Moscow or Istanbul. Two sorts of scholarship have contributed to this renewal. First, historians of early modern Europe have paid particular attention to the increasing inclusion of the Sublime Porte in the European system of diplomatic representation. Second, putting an emphasis on 'intermediaries', 'brokers', and 'proxies' like merchants, dragomans, and captives, Mediterranean historians highlight the multiple connections framing diplomatic networks in the Eastern Mediterranean and the rich economic, social, political, and cultural resources that diplomatic agents could mobilise in support of their mission.

Focusing on Istanbul and its surroundings in the 18th century, this workshop will examine the social life of diplomats in a transcultural metropolitan and cosmopolitan context. Did the European diplomatic corps really live isolated from their host society? How much did they depend on the linguistic and social skills of their dragomans? Did their influence reach beyond the limits of the suburb of Pera?

## Ottoman Crossings: Osmanische Schnittstellen

**Date and time:** Wednesdays at 6.30pm from 8 November to 13 December 2017

**Venue:** University of Vienna, Spitalgasse 2, Hof 4 1090 Vienna, Austria

**More information:** Contact: David Selim Sayers, Email: david.s.sayers@turkologie.uni-giessen.de, ☎+49 641 99 31072

Prof. Dr David Selim Sayers is convening a series of six lectures at the University of Vienna from November to December 2017.

Programme:

### 08.11.2017

Gender Norms and Print Technologies in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul, David Selim Sayers (Vienna) in German

### 15.11.2017

Karamanlidika Studies and the Turkish-speaking Orthodox Populations of the Ottoman Empire, Evangelia Balta (Athens) in English

### 22.11.2017

Men at Arms, Reporters, and Novelists: the First World War in Turkish Literature, Timour Muhidine (Paris) in English

### 29. 11. 2017

Alevism in one Book? On the Utilization of Buyruk Manuscripts, Janina Karolewski (Hamburg) in German

### 06.12.2017

Love at the Ottoman Court: Poems, Poets, and Parties Mehmet Kalpaklı (Ankara) in English

## MUSIC

### The Mysticism of Anatolian & Alevi Folk Music

**Date and time:** Friday 12 January 2018, 19:30 – 21:00

**Venue:** Brunei Gallery Room: Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS Department of Music, School of Art

**More information:** musicevents@soas.ac.uk, Recommended donation: £3.

Speakers/Presenters: Huseyin Kaplan & Dursun Can Cakin

The bağlama or saz (a plucked folk lute) is considered to be an emblem of Anatolian culture. The name comes from the Turkish 'bağlamak', 'to tie', referring to the frets tied to the neck of the instrument. Alevism is a belief system found mainly in Anatolia, parts of the Balkans and Central Asia. Alevi religious services, known as cem, include spiritual exercises incorporating elements of deviş and semah (ritual dance) accompanied by sung mystical poetry and the bağlama. In this concert, Huseyin Kaplan and Dursun Can Cakin (both senior students of the Turkish bağlama master, Erol Parlak) will be

joined by an ensemble performing traditional music from Anatolian and Alevi devîş folk music.

The venue capacity is limited but the prior on-line payment of the suggested donation will guarantee a seat for the concert. Remaining seats on the night will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

## **Brickwork Lizards – Turko/Arabian/Balkan**

**Date and time:** Saturday, 9 December 2017, 19:30 – 21:30

**Venue:** Saint Giles Church, Oxford, 10 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HA

**More information:** [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brickwork-lizards-turkoarabianbalkan-tickets](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brickwork-lizards-turkoarabianbalkan-tickets)  
£ 5 - £ 15

Speaker/Presenter: Jean Darke

This band's exotic and intoxicating Arabian/Turkish/Balkan/gypsy music had, at their last 2016 appearance in St. Giles, people dancing in the aisles - vicar Andrew said that was ok – jigging himself from time to time!! Extraordinary Arabian ouds and other unusual instruments and 'Eastern' vocals in evidence! A festive finale to what promises to be yet another successful, happy, relaxing and friendly Jazz at St Giles 2017 Autumn Series Five.

Supporting St Giles Project 900 and 'War Child' and 'Save the Children' charities. Journeys across Eastern Europe & Beyond

## **She’Koyokh**

**Date and time:** Fri 15 December 2017, 19:30 – 21:00

**Venue:** Brunei Gallery at SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, London, WC1H 0XG

**More information:** [musicevents@soas.ac.uk](mailto:musicevents@soas.ac.uk), [www.soas.ac.uk/music/events/concerts](http://www.soas.ac.uk/music/events/concerts),  
Recommended donation: £3

She’Koyokh have been hailed as “one of the finest and most entertaining British-based exponents of global music” (*The Guardian*). Having started out busking in London's Columbia Road flower market, the group has developed into one of the city's major exponents of Balkan and klezmer styles from Russia, Ukraine, Greece, Turkey and, of course, the Balkans. Touring their fourth album ‘First Dance on Second Avenue’, the group go on a formidably gymnastic journey across Eastern Europe and beyond. Starting out in 1950s New York, they finish up in a Turkish sauna, via Romanian mountains and Serbian villages.

The venue capacity is limited but the prior online payment of the suggested donation will guarantee a seat for the concert. Remaining seats on the night will be allocated on a first come first served basis.



## ORHAN VELİ KANIK

1914-1950



### **Garip Poet in Search of the New<sup>54</sup>**

In Rumelihisarı on the European shore of the Bosphorus there is an old cemetery, Aşıyan, where some prominent literary personalities are buried. The poet Orhan Veli is buried there – and a larger than life-size statue of him stands there on a levee.



Statue of Orhan Veli (with Mina Reddy)  
Photo by Christopher Tegmo

The statue depicts him sitting on a stone bench holding a book in his right hand. This area of the Bosphorus is a place for promenades and is full of cafés and restaurants. Orhan Veli's statue in that spot creates a litany of comments by passers-by about the aesthetics of the sculpture that would have made him smile, even the unflattering ones.

Orhan Veli Kanık, better known as Orhan Veli, was one of the most innovative poets who grew up in the modern Republic of Turkey. His father, Mehmet Veli, was a clarinetist and later the conductor of the Presidential Philharmonic Orchestra. In his short life

Orhan Veli wrote many poems and essays about poetry. With his poet friends Melih Cevdet Anday and Oktay Rifat he challenged the poetry establishment and introduced the idea of the 'New' in literature. In 1941 Veli started the *Garip* movement. *Garip* means 'strange'; it is also a word used for the 'forlorn' folk poets that Orhan Veli identified with. The era of the Republic had brought about a radical change in the use of language that influenced the literature. Now it was the language of the common people.

Nazım Hikmet, the great poet twelve years Orhan Veli's senior, was the first in the modern era to initiate a new style and content in Turkish poetry. His daring leftist ideology and his use of rich vocabulary inspired by the language of the ordinary people opened an entirely new phase in Turkish poetry. Veli too was deeply involved in the undiscovered and neglected depths of Turkish life and language. He called himself 'anti-poetic'. In pursuit of simple, pure poetry, he was also emphasizing the role of the subconscious in our lives. A few years he spent at the prestigious

<sup>54</sup> For this biographical note I have profited much from Asım Bezirci's book *Orhan Veli ve Seçme Şiirler* (Orhan Veli and Selected Poems), Metin Dizimevi, İstanbul, 1977. Also Orhan Veli's *Denize Doğru, Düz Yazıları* (prose writings), Varlık Yayınları, Ekin Basımevi, 1969.



Galatasaray Lisesi, where he learned French, gave him the opportunity to read Ronsard, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud and other French poets. He translated some of La Fontaine's *Fables* into Turkish in rhymed couplets. By widening the scope of Turkish poetry he introduced the street language and depicted ordinary types like Süleyman Efendi, whose greatest suffering was caused by the corn on his toe. He used an innocent childish sense of irony and referred to folk wisdom in his poems, breaking all the taboos about the 'high ideals' of poetry. *Garip* poets also abolished the idea of *école*, because they considered it against dialectical thinking. There was no dichotomy between common language and poetry. Initially Orhan Veli's radical approach was not well received, but the simplicity of his poems and the frank declaration of genuine feelings were eventually accepted and excerpts from his writings were even quoted.

#### FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOSTALGIC FOR THE SEA

Ships pass in my dreams,  
Decorated ships over the roofs.  
And me, ah! poor me  
I've been missing the sea for ages,  
I look and look and cry.

I remember my first look at the world  
Through the opening of a clam shell,  
Seeing the greenness of the water, the blueness of the sky  
And the most iridescent wrasse.  
My blood still runs salty  
From the place where the oyster shell had cut.  
It was such a crazy trip  
In the open sea among the white foams!  
The foams look like lips  
Their adultery with humans  
Is not wicked.

Ships pass in my dreams,  
Decorated ships over the roofs.  
And, me ah! poor me  
I've been missing the sea for ages,  
I look and look and cry.

(Orhan Veli, *Bütün Şiirleri*, Varlık Yayınları, 1973, page 180)

#### LISTENING TO ISTANBUL

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
At first there is a light wind;  
The leaves on the trees  
Are gently swaying.  
And far, far away  
The endless jingling of the water-sellers' bells,  
I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
 High above the birds are flying,  
 Flocks after flocks shrieking loudly.  
 In fish traps the nets are drawn;  
 A woman's foot touches the water.  
 I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
 Delightfully cool Covered Bazaar,  
 Busy, lively Mahmut Pasha,  
 Courtyards teeming with pigeons,  
 Sounds of hammering coming from the docks.  
 Smell of sweat in the lovely spring breeze.  
 I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
 Drunk with its old-time memories,  
 A seaside mansion with gloomy boathouses,  
 Amid the humming of waning south winds,  
 I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
 A sexy girl is passing by on the sidewalk –  
 Curses songs ditties taunt...  
 Something in her hand falls to the ground,  
 It must be a rose.  
 I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.  
 Round the edges of your skirt a twittering bird;  
 I know if your brow is hot or cold,  
 I know if your lips are moist or dry.  
 I can sense that from the beatings of your heart.  
 A pale moon is rising behind the umbrella pines;  
 I am listening to Istanbul, with my eyes closed.

Orhan Veli, *Bütün Şiirleri*. Varlık Yayınları, 1973, pp. 198-200

#### THE MERMAID

Had she just come out of the sea?  
 Her hair, her lips  
 Smelled like the sea till the morning;  
 Her heaving bosom was like the sea.

I knew she was poor  
 But you can't talk about poverty forever -  
 She sang songs of love  
 Gently to my ears.

Who knows what she had seen and learned

In a life spent fighting the sea.  
 Mending, casting and drawing the nets,  
 Fixing the fishing line, getting the bait, cleaning the boats...  
 To remind me of the bony fish  
 Her hands touched mine.

I saw it that night in her eyes  
 That dawn is so lovely in the open seas!  
 Her tresses taught me all about the waves,  
 I kept tossing and turning in my dreams.

Orhan Veli, *Bütün Şiirleri*, Varlık Yayınları, 1973, p.224

Orhan Veli was also interested in the theatre. He translated Moliere's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* into Turkish. He even acted in some of the plays he translated.

What mattered most for Orhan Veli was the fact that he was the poet of the new Turkey which was going through a radical language revolution – one which included new ways of seeing the country and the world. His poems and his essays were published in literary magazines such as *Ülkü* and *Varlık*, as well as in some newspapers. Unfortunately he died young, but his poetry is as alive as ever and will be read for a long time to come.

His profound yearning for freedom and equality will be the torch carried by future generations.

Nilüfer Mizanoğlu Reddy



## Gülray Durdal Michaels

Poet and Translator

### UZUN HAÍKU

Gönül gözünü açtıramadım, hep sustu  
 yağmur sonu şükranla şakiyan  
 kuşa selam vermesini bilmezdi  
 telefon da sessiz  
 bense zor ve eşsiz şiirle başbaşa  
 mutfak penceresindeyim –  
 arka bahçede düğün çiçekleri...

### LONG HAIKU

I couldn't open his heart's eye, he kept quiet  
 he didn't know how to salute the bird  
 gratefully warbling after the rain  
 the telephone is equally silent  
 while head to head with poetry hard and  
 unequalled  
 I am at the kitchen window  
 buttercups in the back yard...

## Conferences & Organisations

Brian Beeley



# BRISMES

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

### BRISMES 2017

The 2017 conference of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies ([www.brismes.ac.uk](http://www.brismes.ac.uk)) took place at the University of Edinburgh from 5-7 July. More than 400 academics, diplomats, booksellers, and people with some personal connection with the region made this the Society's largest ever annual gathering. Of those in attendance Turks numbered some 25, many of them now based at institutions in the United Kingdom. Half of the dozen-plus presentations on Turkey involved Ottoman topics, reflecting the resurgence in interest in the country's imperial past. Unsurprisingly, full sessions on the AKP and on refugees in Turkey also attracted a lot of interest. BATAS was represented by Mina Toksöz, who organised a stimulating session on the economic development of 'Mediterranean Rim' countries – with Turkey as a motor of growth. Networking – both social and academic – was, as usual, a feature of the conference, not least at the Publishers' Reception (to which all were summoned by a kilted piper) and the splendid conference dinner at the Café Andaluz.

The most obvious contrasts between BRISMES 2017 and the first gathering in Lancaster University back in 1974 are the hugely increased numbers of those attending **and** their national origins. Early BRISMES meetings attracted mostly UK-born scholars. Now these are in the minority, making the growing multi-national mix one of the strong features of such events. To a large extent the UK presence at conferences is provided by nationals of other countries now based in the country. This applies to Turkish studies as much as to other aspects of interest in the Middle East and North Africa. Britons are also less in evidence at meetings of the World Congress of Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES), which brings together BRISMES and other similar national bodies.





## **From Enemies to Allies: Turkey and Britain 1914-1952:**

**The British Empire and the Turkish Republic in the  
1920s and 1930s**

by Jill Sindall

### **Second in the Series of Panel Discussions held under the auspices of the British Institute at Ankara at Churchill College, Cambridge, 31 March – 1 April 2017**

Following the Entente's occupation of Constantinople in 1918 after the Armistice of Mudros, Britain's policy with regard to the nascent Turkish nationalists and the failing Ottomans was indecisive and dithering. The need for sufficient troops to enforce the armistice was countered by the British public's demand for demobilisation; consequently the 900,000 despatched were insufficient. Moreover, the army itself was near mutiny. Government ministries in the coalition were unable to agree on British interests, and whether or not to punish or help the nationalists, who were a threat to the sultan, but not necessarily to Britain. Secret agreements made during WW1 gave rise to conflicting policies, the only sure one being that the Bosphorus should be kept out of Russian hands and that Turkey should be disarmed. Furthermore, the Cabinet was split over the Greek occupation of Anatolia.

The most immediate problem facing the Entente was the future of Constantinople: should it be an international zone, or a separate state, and should the sultan go into exile or stay. Dr Hakan Özoğlu (University of Central Florida) said that a document dated as early as 11 January 1920 in the British archives reveals discussions held pre-Treaty of Sèvres defining the borders and method of governance of a "State of Constantinople": a sovereign state would better protect the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. However, a map dated 1918 with similar details had been prepared by an American diplomat stationed in the city, begging the question of which came first. Both plans were similar to those presented in the Treaty of Sèvres, proving, according to Dr Özoğlu, that the US had a bigger agency in the future of Constantinople than previously thought.

The difficulty of administering the occupied territory was highlighted by Dr Daniel-Joseph MacArthur-Seal's (BIIA, Ankara) fascinating account of the legal complexities facing the Entente. The Entente declared that the Capitulations, whose abolition in 1914 had been greeted joyously by the sultan's subjects as a release from "the greatest persecution in history", still existed. But the British Foreign Office legal advisors declared that the Ottoman government's compliance was essential, and the Porte finally agreed to a temporary reinstatement of separate consular courts. A juridical confusion ensued with a two-tier legal system: capitulation courts and



martial laws. However, until 1920 the occupation of Constantinople by the Entente was "unofficial", so the British War Office was forced to judge that the right to impose martial law did not depend on its proclamation! In this legal quagmire, the occupying rulers had difficulty in finding the basis on which to raise taxes to run the city. The unanswered question was how to give citizens rights when a country disintegrates after war.

Dr Kadir Dede (Hacettepe University) described the effect day-to-day encounters with the occupying forces had on elite Constantinople residents, who felt more betrayed by France since they had been raised to read French literature and to take inspiration from the Enlightenment. Although they had had little experience of the British, the public in general were disgusted by their arrogance, their drunkenness, their attempts to consort with Turkish women and, above all, their support of the Greeks.

The Armistice of Mudanya (11 October 1922) marked the death-knell of Lloyd George's attempts to support the Greek invasion of Thrace and Western Anatolia. The Dominions, the British army, Admiral Gough-Calthorpe (British Military Advisor), the British public, and even France, Britain's ally in the Entente, opposed military action against Kemalist forces who were pushing to drive the Greeks out of their territory. France warned Britain that if it took action this would lead to its isolation in the Middle East. Dr Richard Toye (University of Exeter) described this moment as the end of "co-imperialism" in the region. It was also the death-knell of Lloyd George's political career, the coalition and the end of Liberalism, with a move to "realpolitik" under the new Conservative Prime Minister, Andrew Bonar-Law, who had expressed the "revolutionary" ideas that British withdrawal would not be a sign of weakness, but a "humanitarian act", and that "we cannot act alone as the world's policeman". Moreover, there was a shift in British perceptions of and attitudes to Turkey, manifested by an end to anti-Turk rhetoric. Dr Giorgos Giannakopoulos (Queen Mary University) maintained that the historian/journalist Arnold Toynbee pioneered the sea-change in the narrative of oppression of Christians by Turks. He introduced the new Turkey as a potentially advanced modern state, writing that the enterprising spirit of Ankara "radiated" across the country and that Turks would become more "individualistic" under the "magnetic quality" of Mustafa Kemal.

Dr Alaaddin Paksoy's (Anadolu University) reading of Turkish (Constantinople) press coverage of the proposed terms of the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) was that it provided only summary accounts, with no deep analysis of the issues and couched in language based on the acceptance of apparently inevitable realities, its tone being "silent, demotivated". Dr Paksoy believes that the impact and value of the reportage should not be underestimated, even though three important points were overlooked: the political agenda of the Western powers; the Turkish majority in occupied regions; and the nationalist movement in Anatolia.

After the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, British-Turkish bilateral relations were not close, mainly due to the unresolved questions of sovereignty of Mosul and demilitarization of the Straits. In 1932, the two countries failed to sign a non-aggression pact and Britain opposed Turkey's membership of the League of Nations. The Great Depression had a huge economic and political impact on the new republic, largely due to its lack of credit and American agricultural protectionism. Furthermore, Italy failed to deliver on its promise of an interest-free loan to Turkey for

the purchase of naval equipment. Then, having opposed Turkey's membership of the League of Nations, Mussolini continued to claim that the Mediterranean was "Mare Nostrum" (a claim supported by Germany) and, in 1934, declared Italy's interests lay in Asia and Africa before going on to invade Abyssinia in 1935. The Turks, concerned at the potential threat from Italy, turned to the British to supply arms for self-protection. However, the British, unlike the Germans, were not interested in trading without a convertible currency. Professor Dilek Barlas (keynote speaker, Koç University) said that Turkey would have preferred to deal with the US rather than the UK, as it wanted to be aligned with the strongest naval power in the face of Mussolini's mounting bellicosity; the US was not a former colonial power nor had it declared war on the Ottomans in 1914; and because Turkey still distrusted Britain after the non-delivery of two warships ordered in 1911. On the other hand, Turkey feared that the US supported Italy.

Following Mussolini's invasion of North Africa, Turkish cooperation with Britain in its



attempt to restrain Italian support for Franco in the Spanish Civil War was probably one factor which led the British government to review its policy and to view Turkey as a potential bulwark against Italian expansionism. Much credit must go to the incumbent British Ambassador, Sir Percy Lorraine, for this change in the Anglo-Turkish relationship described in one of the most interesting papers, which was delivered by Dr Seçkin Barış Gülmez (Koç University). He described how Sir Percy built a close relationship with the Turkish government and with Kemal himself. He launched a charm offensive, wining, dining and arranging private meetings with senior members of the Turkish government. He sent two important letters to the British government complaining of the lack of support to Turkey against the German *Drang nach Osten*, maintaining that Turkey could prove a major obstacle to German ambitions. Sir Percy had an ally in London: his cousin, Sir Lancelot Oliphant, was a member of the Cabinet, and voiced what he and Sir Percy identified as Britain's and Turkey's joint interest, persuading the government to work with the Turks to achieve this. Still concerned about potential Russian ambitions to have access to the Mediterranean, and alarmed at Hitler's renunciation of the provisions of the Versailles Treaty, the British eventually declared they would not oppose remilitarization of the Straits under Turkish control on the condition that Turkey would agree to naval armaments limitation. The mediator of this agreement (the Montreux Convention), British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, was heralded as a "hero" in the Turkish press. Subsequently, the British offered cooperation on improving Turkish ports and a new air college in Istanbul was built with British help in 1937. In 1938 the Treasury permitted export guarantees to be extended to Turkey. Sir Percy's visits to local factories with Prime Minister İnönü were widely reported and praised in the press. He was the main architect of the GBP 3M contract for the Karabük Iron and Steel Plant, even though Krapp had offered a better deal to Turkey. He masterminded Edward VIII's unplanned visit to Istanbul: the king was already holidaying on a yacht in the Mediterranean and agreed that the opportunity should be seized. Sir Percy's coup was instrumental in shifting Turkish perceptions of Britain, and led to a special relationship between Mustafa Kemal and the king. Full recognition of the Republic meant that henceforth, in line with diplomatic practice, the king sent an official letter of congratulations on the birthday of the Republic. *The Times* followed this trend by referring to "Istanbul" rather than "Constantinople".

The period covered by this conference marks important watersheds in British and Turkish history. The Çanakkale crisis leading to the Armistice of Mudanya precipitated the end of France and Britain as important players in the Middle Eastern theatre, leaving their roles as co-imperialists to be filled ultimately by the US and the USSR. Britain's role vis-à-vis its Dominions was also irreversibly changed. In general, Britain's role in world affairs was diminished. By contrast, by the time of the Montreux Convention, the story for the Turks was one of success in strengthening its status as a respected sovereign state, recovering its control over the Straits and, above all, causing the demise of the hated Treaty of Sèvres, which (according to Dr Paksoy), still rankles in the Turkish psyche, giving rise to the "Sèvres syndrome" – a reason to distrust the West.

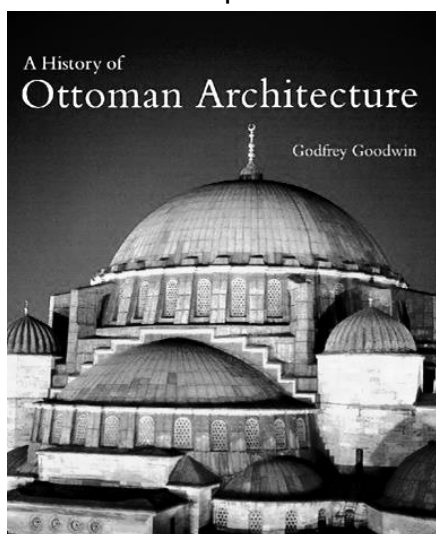


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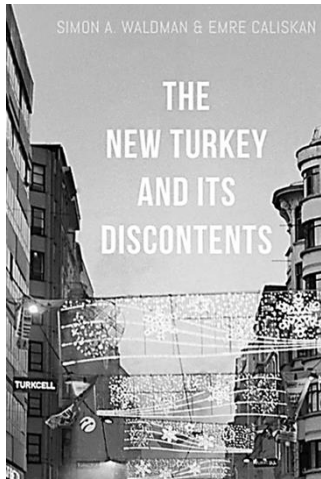
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## Book Reviews & Publications



### The New Turkey and its Discontents

by

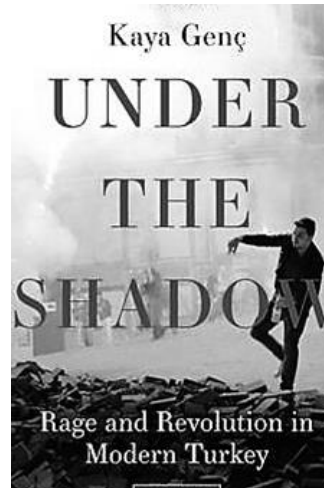
Simon Waldman  
and

Emre Caliskan

London: Hurst, 2016,

pp. i-xvii + 342:

ISBN (paperback) 978  
1849045667



### Under the Shadow:

Rage and  
Revolution in  
Modern  
Turkey

by

Kaya Genç

London: Tauris, 2016,  
pp. i-x + 230:

ISBN (paperback) 978  
1784534578.

Both books under review examine events in Turkey between the Gezi Park protests of summer 2013 and the aftermaths of the attempted coup of July 2016, but from different directions and with differing ambitions and achievements. Simon Waldman and Emre Caliskan's *The New Turkey and its Discontents* is a thorough-going history of twenty-first century Turkey that shows how the decline of the military alongside the increasingly powerful rule of the AK Party has generated unprecedented forms of social and political anxiety, disaffection and unrest.<sup>55</sup> Kaya Genç's *Under the Shadow: Rage and Revolution in Modern Turkey* also uncovers recent discontents, but limits the range and focus to that of young people in Turkey and what the Gezi Park protests meant to them at the time and have come to mean since. A young novelist and writer, Genç has composed a work of creative non-fiction, drawing together personal testimonies and historical commentary to chart how the three years from the Gezi protests to the attempted coup have shaped the lives and attitudes of young people. *The New Turkey and its Discontents*, on the other hand, is a scholarly book written by academics with a longer historical reach, but it remains

<sup>55</sup> Since this book does not employ Turkish diacritical marks, I have not supplied them when quoting from it.



free from specialist jargon, having been lucidly written for what some publishers call 'general readers.' Fully documented with a timeline and biographical notes on key players, it will inform anyone interested in wanting to understand what has been happening in Turkey this century. Because of its greater historical range, it seems best to begin with *The New Turkey and its Discontents*.

**Waldmann and Caliskan:** In September 2003, when Mehmet Ali Birand first used the phrase 'new Turkey perception', he was reporting how European Union ministers were responding with cautious optimism to the first year of rule by the AKP government.<sup>56</sup> The 'new Turkey' was a hopeful perception, and a European one at that, of a nation that seemed to be successfully undertaking liberalizing social and democratic reforms, paradoxically, through a government formed by conservative politicians with roots in Islamic parties. The sense that the 'new Turkey' was primarily a European perception rather than a Turkish fact was confirmed in 2005 by Chris Morris's book, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, which recorded the rapid energy with which 'a torrent of sweeping democratic, legal and economic reforms have been rushed through the political system' in pursuit of EU membership. Aware of social and political problems that remained unaddressed, Morris was nevertheless confident that 'the process of reform' that seeking EU membership had inspired was proving 'an end in itself,' and ended his book hopefully with a vision of the 'new Turkey' as a land 'reclaimed for the people.'<sup>57</sup> Since then, the notion of the 'new Turkey' has changed, no longer a European view associated with social and democratic reforms aimed at EU admission, but instead firmly linked to the increasingly populist and majoritarian rule of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who began claiming the term for himself in the summer of 2014 during the run-up to the presidential elections.<sup>58</sup>

In *The New Turkey and its Discontents*, Simon Waldman and Emre Caliskan lucidly and persuasively explain how, within little more than a decade, the 'new Turkey' morphed from a moment of energetic and optimistic democratic reform into a divided and fearful state ruled by a populist executive president. For them, understanding the 'new Turkey' involves historical factors beyond European perception and the early reforms introduced by the AKP in their first years of government. Most important of these, they argue, was the declining role of the military as protectors of secularism in Turkey, which in turn exposed the fragile balance of powers within the state to the predatory opportunism of a majority government with a leader whose personal ambition seems unlimited.

In their first three chapters, which amount to almost exactly half the book's length, Waldman and Caliskan set out their version of the 'new Turkey' and its emergence, while the remaining four chapters make good on their title by demonstrating how 'discontents' have resulted. The opening chapter examines how, ironically, EU reforms to civil-military relations which the Turkish military high command itself had

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<sup>56</sup> Mehmet Ali Birand, 'The new Turkey Perception of Turkey,' *Hurriyet Daily News*, 10 September 2003. This piece appears to have been removed from the online archives of *HDN* since February 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Chris Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe* (London: Granta, 2005), pp. 2, 245

<sup>58</sup>. See Mustafa Akyol, 'What exactly is the 'New Turkey?', *Al-Monitor*, 26 August 2014



promoted proved instrumental in reducing their power, even as internal disputes created damaging divisions among the General Staff. Enough active and retired high-ranking officers were implicated during the Ergenekon and Balyoz 'deep state' conspiracy trials of 2012-13 to cause the military further problems. Although the Constitutional Court eventually ruled those trials illegitimate, these cases, the authors argue, 'essentially smashed for good the already dwindling power of the military in Turkish politics' (pp.37/8). While the July 2016 attempted coup exposed the continued presence of 'Gülenist insiders within the armed forces,' Waldman and Caliskan conclude that subsequent 'purges within the armed forces' have rendered the Turkish military no more than 'a professional instrument of the ruling political cadres' (p.48).

Those 'ruling political cadres' provide the subject of Chapter Two, which argues that 'the spectacular rise of the AKP coincided with the military's decline' (p.50). On coming to power, the AKP successfully managed a programme of 'conservative democracy' in alliance with '*Hizmet*,' the influential Gülen movement, drawing support from a rising and conservative middle class whose interests the party served. However, the elections and Republican protests of 2007 demonstrated how, alongside increased popular support, the party had also provoked considerable and hostile opposition even as it formed its second government. Nevertheless, the party and its charismatic leader Erdoğan continued to triumph, reaching their 'height of popularity' in 2011 (p.73). But, the authors show, during Erdoğan's rise, the party had lost the energy for pursuing democratic reforms, had become increasingly authoritarian and autocratic, and had started conducting purges within the party of many reform-minded founding members including Bülent Arınç and Abdullah Gül. Erdoğan's subsequent victory at being voted president in 2014, and the election results that gave the AKP its fourth majority government in 2015, alert the authors to the increasing importance of the large numbers of Turks who, never having voted for Erdoğan or the AKP, 'have grown tired and frustrated' (p.81). Before turning directly to the rise of growing national disunity and popular insurgency, the authors complete their historical account of the 'new Turkey' by outlining how the declining political agency of the military and growing power of the AKP have produced political opportunities for Erdoğan to assume personal authority within the party and hence control of the government.

Shakespeare evidently knew enough Plutarch to grasp the problems peculiar to democratically elected political leaders who enjoy the support of a popular majority, but the English dramatist was also a royalist who remained resolutely scornful of the fickle electorate. More democratically inclined, Waldman and Caliskan open their third chapter, 'Erdoğan's Way', by evoking, instead of Shakespeare, Alexis de Tocqueville and his warning of 'the tyranny of the masses' (p.83). Thus they set about accounting for Erdoğan's growing popularity and success at gaining personal control over the party, despite numerous scandals, alongside the inevitable alienation of everyone who disagrees with him, which is intensified by his consistent and energetic efforts to silence and demonize all opposition. With care and precision, the authors describe how, despite growing evidence of his authoritarianism since victory in 2007, and more recent accusations of corruption in 2013, Erdoğan remained increasingly popular, enabling him to use his apparent democratic mandate to set about grasping control over the executive, legislative and, most importantly, judiciary, in the pursuit of personal power. By labelling all his critics at home to be 'enemies of the state,' Erdoğan has managed to justify – to his

supporters at least – government control over the media and internet access. Subsequently purging alleged supporters of Gülen from all branches of government service has not only perpetuated a state of crisis, distracting attention from accusations of corruption, but also provided opportunities for replacing the deposed with AKP loyalists. Unlike Shakespeare, the authors speculate only briefly on psychological questions, noting that a scholarly ‘personality’ analysis shows Erdoğan to believe strongly that he can control events, has ‘a general dislike of others,’ and ‘scored low on understanding conceptual complexity’(p.93). One can but wonder how angry he must have felt at the results of the April 2017 referendum, when he lost control of Istanbul for the first time in his political career, and failed to achieve a higher (and unassailable) percentage of the vote.

In the second half of the book, Waldman and Caliskan devote chapters to four major problems that have accompanied the rise of Erdoğan’s personal power and provoked discontent: government control of the media, urban development, the Kurdish peace process, and Middle East foreign policy more generally. Readers of this *Review* will doubtless be generally familiar already with Erdoğan’s attitude to the press and social media, with the imprisonment and sacking of journalists following government take-overs of media outlets, with the destruction of populated urban areas for constructing mosques and shopping mall complexes for rich foreign tourists, with the destruction of green spaces for airports, with the collapse of Kurdish peace talks and escalating violence in south-eastern Turkey, and with Turkish foreign policy since the termination of Ahmet Davutoğlu’s policy of no-problems-with-neighbours and Erdoğan’s intransigence over Syria. In the lucid and thorough accounts of these matters here, Waldman and Caliskan fill in details while continuing their general analysis of the many and accelerating defects and weaknesses in Turkish democracy and state institutions. Ever attentive to the rise of civil society in Turkey and the numerous protest movements that have, as yet, failed to unite and shake Erdoğan’s ascendancy, the authors invaluablely document how Turkey has become a nation divided against itself in unprecedented ways. And it is that very unprecedented nature of things that makes it almost impossible for the authors to suggest practical solutions.

As Waldman and Caliskan announce in their Introduction, Turkish society can no longer be regarded in ‘cultural’ terms of secular-urban ‘White’ and conservative-rural/provincial ‘Black’ Turks (pp.12/3). Wisely, they refrain from theorizing a new system of social analysis, but they do offer their own vision of a ‘new’ Turkey which does, indeed, omit any sense of national culture(s) in favour of European political categories. ‘We would like,’ they write, ‘to see a Turkey whose political parties are not divided by such cultural identities, but rather are representative of left, right and centre, with a good dose of liberalism to boot – healthy, normalized politics for the new Turkey’ (p.13). Later, in concluding the book, the authors call more specifically for Turkey’s need ‘to fix its political climate,’ to increase ‘tolerance and consensus politics,’ achieve greater accountability and transparency in government, especially the business interests of elected officials, and a ‘clear separation of powers’ (p.230). They also call for the ‘new’ Turkey to achieve reconciliation with the Kurds, and to sort out its foreign policy as far as circumstances make this possible. They see little reason for optimism regarding any of these improvements to the ‘political climate’ taking place any time soon, and sensibly refrain from imagining easy ways out of what they have shown to be intractable problems. Turkish society may no longer be

'Black' and 'White,' but is it 'left, right and centre, with a good dose of liberalism to boot'?

*The New Turkey and its Discontents* successfully offers illuminating analytical narratives for all readers interested in seeking to understand what has been going on in Turkey this century. Sources for facts and details are scrupulously noted in footnotes that will be an invaluable resource for students and future historians. In academic terms, we might say, this is history written with an eye on the social sciences. Not defined in cultural terms, the Turks appear instead as statistics – percentages of the labour market or voters at election time, journalists in jail, numbers of protestors – with the exception of key political figures. In the second book under review here, *Under The Shadow: Rage and Revolution in Modern Turkey*, Kaya Genç supplies the cultural perspective.

**Genç:** Not an academic but a novelist and writer, Kaya Genç also sets out to understand and describe how Turkey has recently become so divided. He reckons that the key split today – one with a long history in Turkey – is generational, between young people and the state of things brought into being by previous generations. For Genç, Turkey is 'a country in whose history words and writers have played such a central role' (p.13), and he boldly opens his Preface with a muted literary allusion that illustrates his point by challenging Orhan Pamuk's often cited notion that Istanbul is a melancholy city characterised by *hüzün*. Not so, the new generation of writers replies: 'Istanbul was once ruled by *keyif*, an old word which means both pleasure and a state of carelessness and joy'. This is as much flattering imitation of the Nobel laureate as it is oedipal dethronement or anything worse, but the point – as the emphatic past tense 'was once ruled' makes clear – is to lament the loss of this state of pleasure which, for Genç's purposes, started with the violence of protests in 2013 and has increased ever since, making the city 'a target of international terror' today (p.1). What do these years look like to the young people living through them? Instead of creating a variety of fictional but representative characters travelling on buses or living in the same apartment block and then putting them into a novel that delves into the recent past to illustrate life in modern Turkey, Genç sets about asking people, and, by careful editing and his own commentary, lets their stories unfold.

Genç's sources are interviews he conducted with fourteen young Turks about their personal memories of and responses to the Gezi Park protests of May 2013. But this is not social science. Playing host to a variety of voices, Genç weaves a compelling composite narrative telling how events at Gezi and the years since have shaped the lives and views of Turkish young people born during the 1980s. Comprising 16.6% of Turks in 2013, according to Genç, they make Turkey's population 'the youngest in Europe,' and they all grew up 'in a country where cultures of entrepreneurship and dissent are equally rich,' and where 'seemingly never-ending' struggles 'in the public sphere ... energize the country every morning' (p.18). From among this energized generation, Genç presents the stories of two business leaders and twelve others who are all 'either unemployed graduate students or wage earners or entry level politicians' (p.190).

Genç makes no scholarly or scientific claim to anything like representing all possible opinions, but it is worth noting that his 'interviewees' have all been remarkably

successful at being not merely energized by, but also notably active in, that public sphere of endless daily struggles within which they have all left their personal mark. While several of them manage visible public careers through social and other media, all of them, I suspect, can be found beyond social networks, with public profiles available online via Google for their remarkable achievements. More to the point, what this means is that Genç's subjects are highly articulate in their witnessing of how the Gezi protests and aftermaths shaped their lives and views. While their stories reveal disagreements about what the problems are and what can be done about them, they do all agree on the need for change and for peace with the Kurds.

What makes *Under the Shadow* compelling reading is not just that Genç is evidently a smart observer who writes well and has assembled a veritable kaleidoscope of backgrounds and competing views. In recasting these different voices and the stories they tell, he recreates the experiences and ambitions of growing up in the 1980s and 1990s, schooled to be Atatürk's 'children of Turkey's future', in the wake of the 1980 military coup and Özal's (eventually devastating) kick-start to the economy. An Introduction and Epilogue frame four chapters devoted, in turn, to the stories of activists, artists, writers, and those he calls 'entrepreneurs.' Along the way, Genç's interviewees recall key moments in their sense of what was going on around them – such as Hrant Dink's assassination, the headscarf ban in schools and universities, the so-called postmodern coup that ousted Erdogan, the Republican demonstrations of 2007, the return to war with the Kurds – and these provide Genç with moments to reflect on turbulent moments in Turkish history since the 1980s, and even earlier, that continue to resonate in today's political atmosphere.

In pursuit of his claim that the Gezi protests proved how 'Young people are furious in Turkey', Genç offers historical precedents to illuminate today's youthful discontent. Recalling Şerif Mardin's classic study *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* of 1962, Genç speculates that 'if Young Ottomans are the ideological forefathers of Turkey's conservative reformers, the much better-known Young Turks, founders of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), are behind some of the politics of today's secular-progressive movement' (p.68). Such historical analogies are only ever as good as their claims prove descriptively useful, because the differences between then and now often prove more revealing than similarities. Nonetheless, Genç – evidently though not emphatically a secular-progressive – discovers 'a clear model for modern-day protestors' in 'the collaboration of nationalists, secularists, Armenians, Greeks and different segments of Ottoman society,' that a century ago joined together 'under the Young Turk banner' (p.69).

Since he has already shown that the Gezi Park protests were, at best, only a temporary if not unwitting 'collaboration' that within a few days had fragmented into mutually antagonistic factions, Genç wants to endorse and celebrate inclusivity rather than the Young Turks' programme as such. More emphatically, he wants to understand the Gezi riots and their aftermath as a clash between conflicting interests that continues to re-enact 'the clash between [the] irreconcilable visions' of the Young Ottomans and Young Turks in terms of conservative reform and secular progress. Those 'irreconcilable visions', he argues, continue to fuel 'unrest among Turkey's furious youth' a century later (p. 70), though as the multiple, conflicting and sometimes contradictory views revealed by his interviews illustrate, the unrest



produced takes shape and specificity in different times and under different circumstances that entail different attitudes from those of the past.

It would be impossible in a review to summarize all the fascinating profiles that Genç has collected and carefully shaped through his own historical reflections and personal memories into a persuasive and illuminating account of how young people in Turkey felt about the Gezi protests. Over half were active supporters, in some form, while the others were uncertain, alarmed, or hostile. Excitement, anxiety, fear, paranoia, anger and confusion commonly feature in these stories. Taken together, they overwhelmingly document such a multiplicity of ambitions and attitudes that, a common sense of discontent aside, the complexities resist conventional political categories such as left, right and centre. Even the four who support the AKP illustrate the differing opinions and attitudes of those who, otherwise, ally with the same political party.

Beybin Somuk, a 'liberal' Kurd currently active in the pro-AKP organisation 'Young Civilians,' was out of the country when the Gezi protests began, but instantly intimidated when she saw television coverage of what looked like a nationalist revolution. Somuk remained contemptuous of the 'middle-class hipsters' with diverse agendas and indifference to the problems facing Kurds (p.38). Mehmet Alğan, a left activist in college, was uncertain of what to think about the events taking place at Gezi Park until attending the airport rally for Prime Minister Erdoğan on his return to Turkey after the protests had become violent. Inspired by the atmosphere and Erdoğan's speech, Alğan is now the AKP minister for Iskenderun and a ballot-box democrat who opposes public protest.

Like Beybin Somuk, Betül Kayahan was out of Turkey during the Gezi protests, and what she saw on television in the USA was clearly, to her, a systematic campaign of 'disinformation spread by protestors ... fake Photoshopped images of burnt youths, bullets purportedly used by cops...' (p.167). A young English teacher with ambitions to be a journalist, Kayahan was in San Francisco at the time. Her confident analysis of the news broadcasts followed a recent chance meeting with Prime Minister Erdoğan on the Google Campus two weeks before the protests began. Like Mehmet Alğan, she was impressed: "He had an incredible aura ... as if one could not go near him because of that incredible halo around him" (p.158). Such notoriety followed Kayahan's attack on the Gezi protestors and her loyal defence of the government on social media that she has since been taken on as a feature writer by the staunchly pro-Erdoğan English newspaper *Daily Sabah*.

The least hostile attitude among AKP allies comes from Yavuz Fettahoğlu, head of 'Young MUSIAD', the youth branch of an organization representing 'conservative, pious, *Anatolian tiger* entrepreneurs based largely in Turkey's Asian cities,' established in competition with TUSIAD, representing 'the Istanbul bourgeoisie with strong ties to global capitalism' (p.201). When the protests began, Fettahoğlu felt 'full respect for those who went there during the first three days', and was horrified by police brutality towards them. Yet as violence increased, he perceived 'a well-executed plan, managed partly from outside Turkey' (p.211). At once MUSIAD took a public position, defending the right to protest but condemning all forms of violence. Members of Young MUSIAD visited the park and talked with protestors, reporting back on their complaints. They conducted a subsequent survey that, to Fettahoğlu's incredulity, showed 14% could not identify the 'biggest problem in their life' (p.212).



For him, 'politicization should be an intellectual process' and not entail violence generated from hate for 'the other side'; violent behaviour, he believes, 'is only hatred in ignorance' (p.213).

While all these young people find reasons to support Erdoğan and the AKP, despite significant differences among those reasons, Genç's other interviewees show little inclination to trust, identify with, or feel allegiance to political parties at all. The exception, perhaps, is Sarphan Uzunoğlu, former speech writer for Sırrı Süreyya Önder, the parliamentary deputy for the pro-Kurdish *Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi* (Peace and Democracy Party) who halted the bulldozers from entering Gezi Park on the morning of 28 May. Yet significantly, even Uzunoğlu now finds himself politically divided between his principles as an active socialist and his support for Kurdish rights. Though angry and politically aware, none of Genç's four artists show any inclination to think or work in support of political parties. Unlike previous generations, Genç concludes, young artists today are 'more reluctant to take sides,' and have 'become observers of events which they are expected to interpret to an international audience' (pp.128/9). While the stories of these non-aligned young people create difficulties if we try to imagine them easily lining up behind traditional left, right and centre parties, their very diversity clearly demands 'a good dose of liberalism to boot'. Making this tell in electoral terms remains another matter.

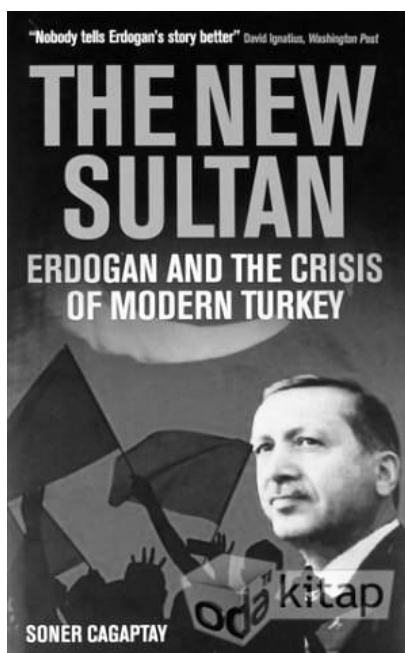
What does reveal itself, however, is burgeoning awareness of the continuing power of sometimes unrecognized racist feeling that, since the dawn of the Republic, has shaped what being happy to be a Turk can mean. From a wealthy, left-wing Jewish family, curator Lara Fresko had a privileged private education that included sophisticated approaches to neo-marxist historiography as well as a good dose of racist bullying at school. Born in 1986, Fresko contemptuously dismissed the Republican demonstrations of 2007 for being no more than a protest against 'a transfer of capital from one group of business people to another' (p.96). At school in the 1990s, Fresko recalls being bullied by nationalist students who taunted her by asking whether she would support Turkey or Israel if they went to war (p.97). Active at Gezi, she perceived 'the cumulative outburst of many little movements' and how 'the underlying neoliberal policies have connected these movements' (p.103). For Fresko, the Republican elite, now in conflict with the incursions of pious capital, had originally enriched itself at the expense of the Jews and Armenians by confiscating their property (p.97). Later in the book, Genç reminds readers of how the *Varlık Vergisi* (Wealth Tax), unconstitutionally levied between 1942 and 1944, further systematized this economic racist oppression, bankrupting Armenian, Levantine, Greek and Jewish citizens and throwing defaulters into labour camps where many died (p.188). With such historical baggage, how could being happy to be a Turk avoid ethnicist complicity?

Aware of this dilemma, none of Genç's young people seek to align themselves with, or own, the racism of the Republican past, and none seek continued violent conflict between the state and the Kurds. There remain unresolved problems of feeling and sensibility, but these young people appear to be more shocked by, than complicit with, the unthinking and violent racism of recent years. Born in 1992 in Diyarbakir, Beybin Somuk instinctively reacted against the nationalist flags she saw being waved at Gezi Park. Serra Tansel, a London-based designer born in Istanbul in 1989, felt strongly uncomfortable on arriving at Hyde Park to see protestors divided under Turkish and Kurdish flags. Tansel organized a meeting at London's Arcola

Theatre where young protestors, both nationalist and Kurdish, discussed their similar feelings and agreed no longer to carry flags (p.121). Friends from Urfa made Sarphan Uzunoğlu sympathetic to the Kurdish cause while at university in Izmir, where he launched a pro-Kurdish website with Armenian and Kurdish friends (p.52). In 1993 while still at high school, Sibel Oral was shocked when a 'religion professor' fantasized in class about using nail clippers to dismember the 'atheist writer' Aziz Nesin, who had recently survived an assassination attempt by an Islamist mob in Sivas that killed 35 other writers. Still furious, Oral went public a few weeks later when the same teacher lectured the class on the importance of wearing burqas (p.174). Oral subsequently pursued a successful career in journalism until March 2014, when she was sacked for being rude to Erdoğan on social media. Enraged once more, this time by media cover-ups of state violence, such as the 2011 airstrikes on the Turkey-Iraq border that killed 34 Kurdish smugglers seemingly mistaken for PKK militants, Oral visited the villagers near Cizre and wrote a book about their sufferings at the receiving end of the state's violence and injustice (pp.180/1).

Among the conclusions of *The New Turkey and its Discontents*, Waldman and Caliskan argue that a major problem facing politicians is that 'Turkish society needs to be ready to accept some Kurdish demands' (p.196). Until what it means to be 'a Turk,' happy or discontented, is redefined and accepted as a question of citizenship and not identity, and the atavistic power with which 'race' continues to shape Turkish society is somehow disabled, democracy of the kind Waldman and Caliskan want cannot advance. For the foreseeable future, Erdoğan and his government have little reason to pursue any form of peace that would damage their electoral support. In 2015, Erdoğan campaigned under the slogan '*Daha Güçlü*' ('Stronger'), continuing his own oedipal struggle against Atatürk by replacing a racially divisive vision of a people united by happiness – *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene* ('Happy to call oneself a Turk') – with a vision of a people united in fear by the will to power. The views of Genç's interviewees strongly suggest that the necessary changes in attitudes towards racial difference have already taken root among Turkey's articulate young people. So while that is genuine cause for optimism, there is no easy way of seeing how, in Turkey's current political climate, their common desire for peaceful resolution will come to influence political practice any time soon.

Gerald MacLean



## The New Sultan

### Erdoğan and the Crisis Of Modern Turkey

by Soner Çağaptay

I B Tauris, London & New York, 2017, xiv+240 pp  
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In mid-August 2016, just a month after a certain failed coup attempt, a traveller in an antique land could not help but notice (and observe discreetly) an interesting sight on the main street in Bayburt, between Trabzon and Erzurum, in north-eastern Turkey. Draped over a building was a huge banner with two male portraits side by side. Beneath the increasingly familiar face on the left was the legend in Turkish *BAYBURT BELIEVES IN YOU*, while the even-more-familiar and generally ubiquitous face on the right had nothing beneath it at all. A full year later, the same traveller noticed that even in the north-western part of the same country – the historic heartland of the man on the right – the new official narrative of the era following that coup attempt was now the dominant and established message. Posters and mosaic murals illustrated dramatically how democracy had been saved a year ago, and the name of at least one major bus station was dignified by the new significant date in Turkey's history – **15 July**.

The man on the left in Bayburt was, of course, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Coming to prominence first as the election-winning and economy-transforming prime minister and leader of Turkey's new Justice and Development Party (AKP) in the first decade of this century, President Erdoğan has in recent years not been long out of the news, and has now consolidated his personal executive power following the sidelining of some erstwhile colleagues, last year's coup attempt and the April 2017 referendum on changing the role of the presidency. His rise from the 'wrong side of the tracks' in a working-class part of Istanbul to becoming Turkey's 'strongman', a controversial and divisive figure both at home and abroad, is the subject of a recent and important study by the Turkish historian and scholar Dr Soner Çağaptay, who directs the Turkish Research Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Published by the ever-prolific I.B. Tauris, and apparently written during the winter of 2016/17, the book adopts a style and format suggesting it is addressed to the interested or concerned lay reader as well as to specialists in Turkish history and politics. There are two useful maps at the front, a well-chosen set of black-and-white photographs in the centre, a single figure on p.121 demonstrating the erosion of liberal democracy under Erdoğan and the AKP over the past decade, notes to the twelve chapters and a bibliography covering books and an impressive range of other

sources. The chapters offer a very readable narrative in the form of an account of Erdoğan's rise to elected power and progress into autocracy by explaining lucidly the background and context and breaking up the text with clearly-marked section headings, in a style that is often more journalistic, with touches of humour, than heavily academic (e.g. *Up with the United States* followed by *Down with the United States* in Chapter 11 on foreign policy twists and turns). Believing that Turkey has now been brought to a point of political crisis by Erdoğan's actions, the author states that his aim, in order to shed light on this crisis, will be to 'explore Erdoğan's dramatic rise against the backdrop of the ascendancy of political Islam' and to 'provide "report cards", evaluating Erdoğan's record on democracy and foreign policy with periodic snapshots' (pp.12-13).

We are first given a masterly overview of the subject matter and of the author's thesis in an introductory chapter entitled 'Meet Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'. Although happy that the 2016 coup plot was thwarted, the author nonetheless believes that 'Turkey is in trouble, very deep trouble'. This is for several reasons that are to be analyzed and explained in context in the succeeding chapters. One is of course that Erdoğan has created a polarized society, by demonizing and bearing down harshly on those electoral constituencies that are unlikely to vote for him, and also concentrating more and more power in his own hands since 2014. Another is that, despite the undeniable economic achievements of the AKP's first decade or so in power (which the author sees as 'Erdoğan's bright side'), Turkey's economy has experienced something of a downturn more recently, and this may well be 'Erdoğan's Achilles' heel' in the future. However, a more alarming reason for Turkey's present crisis, in the author's view, is that the rifts in this society are being ruthlessly exploited by terror groups such as the PKK and ISIS. Moreover, Erdoğan's foreign-policy aim of making Turkey a key Middle East actor has failed, leaving him with few real friends in the region, and now international actors such as the Assad regime in Damascus and its backers in Moscow and Tehran 'are eager to see Erdoğan fall and Turkey descend into chaos' (p.2). For the author, Erdoğan is an 'anti-Atatürk Atatürk' who has espoused some of the methods (for example, use of state institutions and top-down social engineering) rather than the values of his distinguished predecessor to change Turkey in his own image. Yet, while the country remains genuinely democratic, he cannot complete his own revolution, and this is what has encouraged his 'dark, illiberal side' which has increasingly sought to create a political playing field that is far from even. He could still take a more positive and unifying position in both domestic and foreign affairs – what Çağaptay calls a 'good sultan' trajectory – that might result in him eventually being crowned Turkey's 'Erdoğan the Great'. However, the course he has followed since July 2016 gives no ground for such optimism. As for the divided opposition of secular and liberal Turks, the long-term future could yet belong to them, the author suggests, if they can 'find a captivating, Western-leaning man or woman to unite them and lead the country' (p.12).

The first two chapters give an account of Erdoğan's childhood and youth spent in both the İstanbul district of Kasımpaşa and the conservative Black Sea province of Rize. They also usefully set the scene, politically and ideologically, for the path he would later follow. As an 11-year-old, he was registered by his devout father as a boarder in an Imam Hatip school, not only to allow him to receive a formal religious upbringing but also in an attempt (in vain as it turned out) to keep him away from the local attractions of his main youthful passion, football. Our attention is drawn here to

how, in the context of a staunchly secular society, the educational system served for the young Erdoğan as 'a dramatic reminder of religion's estrangement from mainstream life' (p.20). But for him and others from conservative, devout family backgrounds, the İmam Hatip schools served as centres of social and cultural activity and, in this milieu, Erdoğan had the chance to develop skills in poetry and Qur'an recitation, and consequently in oratory. This prepared him well for later conservative and Islamist political involvement in the late 1960s and 1970s.

An interesting passage in Chapter 2 (pp. 29-30) describes how in the late 1950s the Democrat Party led by Adnan Menderes 'drifted into majoritarianism' after winning three straight elections during that decade. In an attempt to get rid of the Kemalist old guard, the DP arbitrarily dismissed a number of long-serving civil servants, judges and academic staff. Faced with opposition to this, the party then resorted to restrictions on press freedom and political demonstrations. The outcome was the first military coup of 1960, followed by the execution of Menderes and others. According to the Erdoğan narrative, observes the author, the subsequent military coups in Turkey (either actual or delivered 'by memorandum') represented attempts by a privileged élite to abuse the rights of the ordinary Turkish citizen. In July 2016 it was the Gülenists who 'became the abusive actors in this narrative' (p.32).

Chapters 3-5 describe the rise of political Islam in Turkey and, against that background, Erdoğan's own entry into politics during the turbulent 1970s and his eventual ascent to national prominence as Mayor of İstanbul. Erdoğan's main hero at that time was the Islamist politician Necmettin Erbakan, whose National Salvation Party (MSP) provided a suitable entry point into Turkish politics from 1973. Indeed, as early as 1976 Erdoğan became president of the MSP youth branch in Beyoğlu, where he would subsequently run for mayor in 1989 as a rising young star of the Welfare Party (RP) and Islamist movement generally. As a campaigner and activist he showed many strengths, presenting himself as a man of the ordinary people on his own home turf and taking the seemingly revolutionary step for a social conservative of putting women in charge of canvassing the electorate (p.64). As the author explains, because the Constitutional Court was in the habit of closing down Islamist parties only to see them reformed under different names, it would take to the end of the century for Erdoğan's AKP to emerge and hold its ground as the successor to the MSP, the Welfare Party (RP) and the Virtue Party (FP). By that time, it was Erdoğan's sterling performance as Mayor of İstanbul that had marked him out amongst many Turks as the man to watch and follow. As Çağaptay puts it at this crucial point in the story, 'Erdoğan demonstrated that the Islamists could not only govern but also do it well' (p.75).

Chapter 6 explains how it was a 'perfect storm' of political and economic circumstances in Turkey at the turn of the century that brought the AKP to power in 2002. Even though the cleverly-named party ('Ak' in Turkish meaning white/pure) gained only just over a third of the votes, it managed to gain two-thirds of the parliamentary seats, picking these up from formerly dominant parties that fell below Turkey's electoral threshold. Chapters 7-9 then provide a full and balanced account of the AKP years, and of Erdoğan's three terms as prime minister. First there are the initial 'good years' of economic stabilization and growth (plus EU accession talks) in 2002-7; then the 'illiberal turn' of 2007-11, when Erdoğan with the aid of the Gülen movement and others took on the secularist state and began his assault on democratic institutions and existing checks and balances, and finally, the period 2011-14, when both the Gülen movement and leftist-liberals suffered a crackdown,



and at the end of which Erdoğan moved up from prime minister to president (and into his new \$615-million palace in Ankara) which 'also signalled the blending of ruling party and state' (p.141).

This narrative is followed by two very useful and interesting chapters covering first the Kurdish issue (with reasoned suggestions for conflict resolution) and then the AKP's record (and 'report card') on foreign policy, which has, overall, 'left the country with few allies' (p.177). The book's final chapter reviews the main trends and events (including the 2016 failed coup attempt) which have led to the present crisis situation in Turkey, as the author sees it, and presents Erdoğan's 'final report card' in numerous areas before suggesting ways in which he could change course and reduce the risks of future economic as well as other threats – which could even include civil war. The choice, says Dr Çağaptay, must lie with Erdoğan himself. He could be remembered in future either as 'Erdoğan the Great' or – if things go dangerously wrong for Turkey – as the 'failed Sultan' who caused the breakdown of the Republic.

I found this book a fascinating and well-balanced account of an (initially at least) astute and patient, gradualist politician's rise from humble origins to more or less supreme power in Turkey. The tone is positive, giving plenty of credit where it is due, making sensible reviews and recommendations along the way, and providing a coherent and systematic explanation of the often very turbulent context for Erdoğan's emergence as a successful Islamist politician. Having myself lived for a time in Turkey in the early 1970s when Erbakan was often in the news, I was particularly interested to read in Chapter 3 about the early influence he and his 'National Outlook' movement exerted over the young Erdoğan before the latter eventually realised that Erbakan and his like were doomed to political failure. I would also recommend the book for the memorable insights and observations it frequently makes: for example, that '...Turks used to live like Syrians, but now they live like Spaniards' (p.5), and that according to a 2013 study by New York University, whereas only 35 percent of tweets about Egypt's Tahrir Square protests in 2011 actually originated from Egypt, '90 percent of tweets during the 2013 Gezi Park protests came from Turkey, and 80 percent were in Turkish' (p.132).

One thing that surprised me about the actual presentation of the book was that the publishers and printers have not used the Turkish alphabet (for names of people and places) in the main text, while it is in fact used in the Notes and Bibliography. Even though the book may be aimed at a general rather than a specialist audience, this strikes me as a lack of professionalism. However, the author can certainly be congratulated and thanked for this fascinating and very timely contribution to contemporary Turkish studies, which should be welcomed by a wide readership.

John Moreton  
University of Leeds

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Compiled by Arın Bayraktaroğlu

## RESEARCH AND POLICY ON TURKEY

Print ISSN:2376-0818; Online ISSN 2376-0826

The first issue of this peer-reviewed journal, elegantly published by Taylor & Francis Group, appeared in March 2016. It is produced by Research Turkey, Centre for Policy and Research on Turkey (see *Review 29*, Spring 2017, pp.54-55) and is to offer two issues each year. The editor-in-chief is Ümit Sönmez, who is sharing the work with guest editors, assisted by no fewer than 46 members of editorial and advisory boards, including a substantial representation of non-Turkish scholars. The journal aims to reflect significant work across the range of social sciences and encourages multidisciplinary contributions.



This title is a welcome addition to research on contemporary Turkey. The first issue offered seven articles in a volume of about 100 pages, with coverage of economic and political/social topics in equal measure. Later issues are maintaining the concern with a wide range of subjects, including contributions from non-Turkish scholars.

For information about *Research and Policy on Turkey* see [www.tandfonline.com/rrpt](http://www.tandfonline.com/rrpt)

Brian Beeley

## Reminiscence

### ANTALYA TO ATHENS – AND BACK...

by Brian Beeley

One morning in 1961 there came a knock on the door of the room I had rented in a village on the coastal plain to the west of Antalya. It was Hasan, my landlord and friend, with news that Giriakos had arrived for his annual visit from Athens, armed with a restricted-stay tourist-visa. I had already heard from villagers in the coffee-house that they greatly valued the work done for them each summer by the visitor, a skilled carpenter, who would stay in the very house in which he had been born. Young Giriakos had been removed from the village, along with his family and the other Greek Orthodox *Rum* living there in the early 1920s, as part of the exchange of population between Greece and the new Turkish Republic.



Giriakos greeted Hasan and me warmly when we knocked on his door. As his wife, who had been sitting quietly in a corner, provided us with glasses of tea, Giriakos was as interested to know what I was doing in 'his' village as I was to learn about his life as an immigrant from Turkey in Greece. It occurred to me that the scene was as if I had visited the home of any of my local village neighbours, until Hasan took his leave to attend *namaz* prayers at the nearby *mescit*. Thereupon Giriakos produced a bottle of VAT69 whisky, which he proceeded to share with me and with his wife, who

removed her head-scarf and joined in the talk for the occasion. Not long later we heard the crunch of Hasan's shoes on the gravel outside the house. The whisky disappeared instantly and Giriakos' wife retreated, head-scarf back in place, to her corner. During the visit I learned that our host's family had been part of the substantial *Rum* community from the Antalya area who were removed to the Nea Lonia district of Athens nearly four decades previously. The *Rum* who had lived in Antalya villages had had homes and life-styles much like those of their Sunni Muslim neighbours, except that, in general, their levels of formal schooling were higher and their number included specialist craftsmen – e.g. carpenters such as Giriakos might have become – and enterprises. The local mill (*değirmen*), for example, which had been run by a Greek-Orthodox family, was derelict when I encountered its remains in 1961 – though these were destined to be transformed into a Turkish country restaurant some decades later.

Some months after my meeting with Giriakos I returned to Durham University via Athens, intent on visiting him at his home. The district was easy enough to find but the precise address was not. However, I noticed a coffee-house which could have been in Turkey. The noise made by the men playing *tavla* (backgammon) and cards abated as I entered, enough for me to ask the *kahveci* in my basic Turkish whether anyone could help me to find the home of Giriakos. "Evet!" confirmed several voices and I was told to stay put while someone went off to alert my *Rum* acquaintance. Quite soon the roar of a motor-cycle outside the coffee-house was followed by the appearance of Giriakos and the exchange of customary Turkish greetings of welcome. Soon I found myself sitting pillion on his motor-cycle as we drove off towards his nearby home, where I met not only his wife but other relations – including his aged aunt, whose knowledge of Greek appeared to be as limited as was mine of Turkish. She addressed me warmly as *evladım*...

Soon several of Giriakos' relatives and neighbours were sitting with me in the street near his home as I did my best to answer their questions about Antalya and the lowland villages of the Boğa Çayı to the west of it, which they thought of as their 'old home'. Word of my arrival appeared to attract more onlookers until we constituted a gathering large enough to concern the local constabulary. Perhaps the policemen thought that the Turkish they were hearing was something worth investigating. They appeared to be reassured to find nothing more alarming than a British post-graduate student at the centre of the attention.



The occasion was for me as demanding as it was fascinating. Despite my linguistic limitations I could see something of the change in the lives of once-Turkish villagers now transplanted into

an urban setting in a different cultural context. Older folk were still 'Anatolian', whereas younger people, born in Greece, thought of Antalya and its villages as remote and more than a little mysterious. My conversation was not helped by the fact that the Turkish of those born and bred in Athens appeared to be not only less fluent but also to involve the use of Greek equivalents for some Turkish words. For example 'Arnavutluk' was, I recall, recognised as Albania only by the old-timers.



As I took my leave from my new-found friends in the early evening I thought about the unhelpfulness of simplistic stereotypes of 'Turks' and 'Greeks'. In the early 1960s relations between Turkey and Greece varied from cool to bad as the two neighbours worried about their 'national' interests. But at least to Giriakos and his community in Nea Ionia at that time there was an awareness that people did not necessarily fit neatly into national categories. Their parents and grandparents in Antalya and its villages had been exiled because they differed – in religion – from the new norm of Turkishness. Giriakos now represented Antalya's mixed past, but perhaps his readiness to drink tea with Hasan suggests that separation need not be permanent – or even inevitable.



## A Week in Kuşadası 2016

by Chris Ponsford



At home in UK a dental implant was going to cost me over £1,500. Good friends who spent a lot of time in Kirazlı had both had successful implants in nearby Kuşadası for only about €750 each. As we were planning to be in the area in the spring, staying in Şirince, I arranged to visit their dentist and had the base screw fitted then. Next I had to wait three months for the gum to settle down before returning for the new tooth to be screwed on.



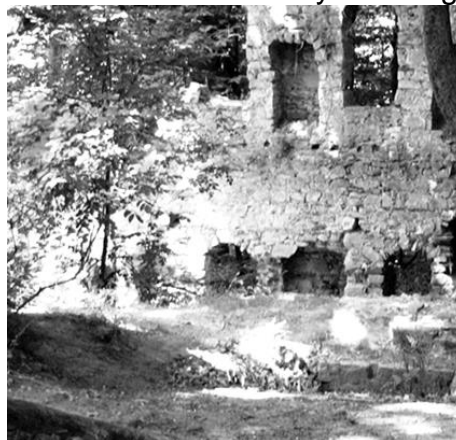
We were due back at the other side of the Aegean to rejoin our yacht in Kilada in September, but rather than wait and take the ferry across to Turkey, I decided to pay for extra flights and get the treatment finished in July. This meant I was there, a woman alone, in a budget hotel in the heat of the summer, adding to the expense. However, it proved to be a very interesting experience.

The hotel was up a hill about a ten-minute walk from the dentist. It was self-catering, cheap and cheerful, but with a swimming pool, restaurant, TV, A/C and WiFi. The



whole package, including flights and transfers, cost £300. The staff were very welcoming and the manager said I was his Queen, so I called him the King!

Fitting around daily visits to the dentist, my routine was to have an early-morning swim when the pool was still empty, breakfast on my sunny balcony and a walk into town. The route took me past roadside stalls selling cherries and walnuts, then down a long street with little family shops where I bought bread, yoghurt, honey, cheese etc and one which I visited when my mobile wasn't working. I then went through the Bazaar to the immaculate dental surgery, situated over a shop conveniently opposite 'Carpe Diem' Café. On my way back I caught the *dolmuş* up to the hotel, read and watched BBC World. The first time I missed my stop and the driver turned back for me.



Then one evening I got lost walking a different route and ended up by what looked like ancient city walls. Luckily I found a taxi nearby as I didn't like to be out after dark.

At first I also kept getting lost in the Bazaar, but kind stallholders always insisted on escorting me on my way. One of these worked in a shoe shop. He told me he was a teacher of English from an ancient town in eastern Turkey. He came to earn extra money, 10% commission, during the school holidays. He was keen to practise speaking English with a native and so whenever I passed the shop we had a chat over a glass of *çay*. Overseen by the spider-like owner, I had to melt away if a customer came into his web. The teacher was assisted by a young lad who climbed up a ladder to bring down the shoes and was hence known as Tarzan. One day I arrived when they were drinking some lurid orange juice. They quickly poured some out of their glasses into another for me, but they got me some *çay* when I declined. The teacher was expected to be present in the shop twelve hours a day without a break, and only once got permission to join me for an ice cream, although the spider kept phoning to get him back before he had finished eating. They had the timetable for the cruise ships, their busiest time.

Another shop I liked was the jeweller's, where I could watch him making beautiful beads and pendants, fusing silver and glass with a blowtorch. Then one day on my way down the hill people were passing me clutching melons. In the distance there was a commotion. A man high above the others was using a loudspeaker and people were gathering round him. I called in at the phone shop and nervously asked the proprietor "Is it about politics or melons?" "Melons" he said. "Selling for just one lira each."

The dental waiting room was also very jolly, with everyone chatting and the dentist came out and shook hands with us all. I was very happy with his treatment. Only one day was it rather painful and I rested afterwards. I stayed in my room anyway when it was very hot, and had simple meals, but then I found the chef made my favourite dish of Imam Bayıldı, so I had a couple of delicious evening meals in the restaurant.



The hotel guests included Russians, Turks, Irish and other Brits, mainly noisy families who bagged the deckchairs with their towels, but one Scotsman liked to go on tours to classical sites and was very surprised to hear that I had previously visited many of them by car with my husband. “He was prepared to risk driving in Turkey?”

Towards the end of the week I woke up to the news that a lorry had been driven into the crowds in Nice, where my grandchildren were staying, but I soon got a message that they were safe. The next day the teacher told me it was his birthday, so I got him a card, but he was embarrassed to admit that he was born in a village and his birth was registered by his father several years later on the wrong date.

On my last morning news came of the attempted coup. Luckily my flight was not cancelled, but both the shoe shop owner and the hotel manager, who owned a dress shop, faced bankruptcy. There were hardly any tourists after that. The teacher couldn't get any work to pay for an operation needed by his wife.



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- to generate support for Turkish studies in the UK
- to maintain the publication of *TAS Review*

When applying for membership of BATAS, you can choose a membership type that includes receiving a hard copy of *TAS Review* (published twice a year) or one that does not. In either case membership will give you free or reduced-rate entry to BATAS events and entitle you to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting, to stand for election to Council and to receive emailed information about forthcoming Turkey-related events (arranged by a variety of organisations) that may be of interest to you. The annual subscription rates for the different types of membership are shown in the last section of the application form below.

Please enter below your personal details, the type of membership you are applying for and (unless you are applying for the free student membership option) your chosen method of payment.

Then either scan the form and email it to [ayfurlonger@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ayfurlonger@yahoo.co.uk) or post it to Ayşe Furlonger, BATAS Membership Secretary, 36B Ozier Court, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 4BH.

Your email address will be used only for communications about BATAS matters and (unless you opt out of receiving them) notices of other Turkey-related events. If you are not applying to receive a hard copy of *TAS Review*, your postal address will be used only in the event of a failure to reach you by email. Any information that you are willing to supply about yourself in the 'Date of birth', 'Occupation' and 'Knowledge/Areas of interest' boxes will help Council to build up a profile of BATAS members and to plan its activities accordingly.

\*Surname:

\*First name(s):

Title:

\*Postal address:

\*Email address:

Date of birth:

Occupation:

Particular knowledge of Turkey, its history or culture, or your area(s) of interest:

*Type of membership required:	Annual subscription	Please tick one
Full-time student membership with hard copy of <i>TAS Review</i>	£12	
Ordinary membership with hard copy of <i>TAS Review</i>	£22	
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Standing order set up by me through internet banking (Sort code 54-21-23; Account no. 87314622)	
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Cheque made out to BATAS (please inform me of address to send it to)	

\* Required items





**We need a new Events Coordinator!!!!**

**Please volunteer and help**

The Events Coordinator has to organise (with the help of others on the BATAS team) just two major events: The Spring Symposium and the annual John Martin Lecture in the autumn. Tasks include booking venues, liaising with speakers, and organising registration.

Don't hesitate to contact [celia.kerslake@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:celia.kerslake@orinst.ox.ac.uk) if you are interested or would like more information.

**Request for contributions**

TAS *Review* welcomes articles, features, reviews, announcements and news from private individuals as well as those representing universities and other relevant institutions. Submissions may range from 250 to 2500 words and should be written in A4 format or, preferably, sent electronically to the Co-Editors at [bw.beeley@gmail.com](mailto:bw.beeley@gmail.com) and/or [sigimartin3@gmail.com](mailto:sigimartin3@gmail.com). Submissions for the Spring issue would be particularly welcomed by 28 February 2018.

# BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR TURKISH AREA STUDIES

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Events Coordinator: position to be filled

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## Turkish Area Studies *Review*

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