

# Turkish Area Studies Review

Bulletin of the British Association for  
Turkish Area Studies



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



# Annual Symposium 2019

and

## Annual General Meeting

(@ 4.40 pm)

**Emmanuel College, Cambridge,**

St Andrew's St, Cambridge CB2 3AP

**Saturday 11 May 2019**

**10.00 am to 4.40 pm**

Programme & abstracts enclosed (pp 74-76; no advance booking needed!)

For more information see: [www.batas.org.uk](http://www.batas.org.uk)



**The 2019  
John Martin Lecture**

**Watch this space! And our website!**

## CONTENTS

A Bayraktaroğlu & S-B Martin 2 Editorial

### 2018 John Martin Lecture

Richard Moore 3 UK-Turkey relations in the Erdoğan era

### Politics, Society & Economics

David Barchard 5 Turkey's domestic politics background  
 Mina Toksöz 11 The Turkish Economy  
 Vassilis Fouskas & Bülent Gökay 15 The Turkey-US standoff  
 Clement Dodd 20 Update on Cyprus 2018/19  
 Daria Isachenko 23 Effects of the Cyprus hydrocarbon issue

### History & Culture

Michael Provence 26 *The Last Ottoman Generation*  
 Elizabeth Orrin 29 An interview with Yeşim Güzelpınar  
 Semra Eren-Nijhar 33 Poem: *Road to Gurbet*  
 Kerem Bayraktaroğlu 33 Noteworthy events  
 Michael Ellison 36 Transcultural adventures in *makam* ornamentation  
 Mina Toksöz 41 Mersin Citrus Fruit Festival  
 Erhun Kula 43 Poem: *Teenage Spring in Gallipoli*

### Conferences & Organisations

John Moreton 44 The Levantine Heritage Foundation 3rd  
 International Conference 2018  
 Gül Berna Özcan 48 Turkologentag 2018

### Reminiscence

Mehmet Ali Dikerdem 49 1968 (Part 2)  
 Maggie Moore 54 An Ambassador's memories of Turkey

### Books

Gerald MacLean 56 Ines Aščerić et al.: *Travellers in Ottoman Lands*  
 Colin Imber 60 Philip Mansel: *Aleppo*  
 Jill Sindall 62 Janet Starkey: *The Scottish Enlightenment Abroad*  
 Arın Bayraktaroğlu 65 Recent & forthcoming publications

### In Memoriam

Ateş Orga 67 Ara Güler  
 Celia Kerlake 71 Şerif Mardin

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

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## Editorial

On the eve of the local elections scheduled for 31 March 2019 Turkey has been going through a difficult period with acute economic problems and rising unemployment, both causing wide-spread discontent in the country, according to recent election polls. There is also instability in foreign affairs, where relations with Russia and the US keep on changing in response to developments in Syria.

Our coverage addresses some of these issues. David Barchard provides an insight into the background and significance of the impending local elections and Mina Toksöz sheds light on the economic situation. While Professors Vassilis Fouskas and Bülent Gökay report on the recent instances of Turkey-US standoff, Daria Isachenko evaluates the likely effects on Cyprus of the hydro-carbon discoveries. We are also happy to include in this issue a report on other developments in the TRNC with a reminder of the historical context, by our long-term contributor Professor Clement Dodd.

For the annual John Martin Lecture we were provided with unique insights into the work of an Ambassador in Ankara, whose diplomatic skills have to be on an exceptional level. Richard Moore was/is also in full command of the language, which enabled him and his wife to have access to Turkish speakers.

On the history side we are privileged to have a contribution by Michael Provence about the last phases of Ottoman rule in the Middle East, a report by Jill Sindall on a book about the Russell brothers of Scotland in eighteenth century Aleppo, and Colin Imber's review of Philip Mansel's *Aleppo*. We are also fortunate to have Professor Gerald Maclean's substantial review of *Travellers in Ottoman Lands: The Botanical Legacy*.

Conference reports are provided by Gül Berna Özcan and John Moreton, while reminiscences include the second part of Mehmet Ali Dikerdem's '1968' and memories of Turkey by Ms Maggie Moore – wife of the British Ambassador in Ankara 2014-2017, who in her own right was a co-founder of the Turkish Guide Dogs Association.

We also have an article on *maqam* ornamentation in Turkish classical music, an interview about the 'Taste of Anatolia' Film Festival, and obituaries on a world famous photographer, Ara Güler, and a renowned sociologist and political scientist, Şerif Mardin.

Finally, we wish to announce that in May this year Arın Bayraktaroğlu is handing her Co-Editorship duties over to Dr Çiğdem Balım, who is amply equipped to take this publication forward with her experience, knowledge and enthusiasm.

Arın Bayraktaroğlu  
Co-Editor

Sigrid-B Martin  
Co-Editor

**The 2018 John Martin Lecture**  
**SOAS, University of London,**  
**Wolfson Lecture Theatre,**  
**Senate House**  
**30 November 2018**

## UK-Turkey Relations in the Erdoğan Era

### Richard Moore

British Ambassador to Turkey  
from January 2014 to December 2017



Richard Moore, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Turkey (2014-2017), and current Political Director at the FCO, recounted his experience of 'UK-Turkey Relations in the Erdoğan Era'. He spoke colourfully about his attempts to overcome deeply entrenched mistrust and anti-British sentiment amongst some sections of Turkish opinion. These range from taking on the twitter trolls and their conspiracies to his efforts to build more trusting relationships based on respect and a genuine commitment to reciprocal engagement.

**“As I was preparing to go out to Turkey in late 2013, I bemoaned this anti-British sentiment, and our low trust rating, to a Turkish friend and eminent newspaperman. I asked his advice on how to change it. He told me good-humouredly not to bother trying. The distrust was too entrenched. It was a windmill at which I should not tilt. A mountain I should not climb. A hellish snowball already melting. You get the picture.**

**But diplomats are eternal optimists (they have to be!) and I was born stubborn. So I determined to give it a go.”**

He tackled this in a number of ways. The first was the dictum he encouraged senior officials and ministers to adhere to, namely, the three Rs (respect, respect, respect) and the 5 in 2 diet plan – they should commit to visiting at least 5 times in 2 years in order to build load-bearing relationships.

**“I’m afraid that cool detachment simply doesn’t cut it – especially with warm, passionate, proud Turks. If an ambassador aspires to succeed they have to show some sympathy for the country in which they serve.”**

During his time as Ambassador, Richard felt it his mission to win over the public as well, selecting Twitter as his tool of choice. As with officials, authenticity was key; whether taking on the trolls (to viral effect) or, more seriously, putting the record straight when on occasion mistruths were spread about the UK.

**“I used Twitter as a conversation, not a broadcast. I engaged with people. I disrupted the stereotype of a British diplomat. People enjoyed the repartee, the *hazır cevap*. I used humour.**

**I came to realise that there was, literally, a silent majority out there who did not feel able to join the debate. I could tell I had struck a chord when the RTs and Likes climbed rapidly.**

**In so doing I became something of a minor celebrity. I was even asked for selfies in the street – as close as I will ever get to feeling like Prince Harry. And my social media forays often got picked up in the mainstream media – in newspapers and on TV.”**

This large following, often gained from fun interventions around mad conspiracy theories or his love of Beşiktaş football club, allowed Richard to deliver serious messages to a wide audience who might not otherwise have heard the UK perspective on the issues of the moment.

His conclusion was as follows:

The UK-Turkey relationship is a long and complex one. It means a great deal economically and politically to each. History suggests that the British and the Turks have been allies more often than enemies.

We need to get Turks and Brits to focus now on the modern versions of our countries, not a version suspended in early 20th century aspic. Both countries are hugely different places in the early 21st century. We need to recognise that and work with its grain. The two bookends of Europe have much to gain from each other.



Richard Moore, William Hale (Acting President of BATAS), Celia Kerslake (Chair of BATAS)

## Politics, Society & Economics

### Turkey's Domestic Politics Background

Why Turkey's local elections are as fierce as the general elections



David Barchard  
Writer on Turkish history and society

#### Local elections-- the main event in a subdued scene

The last six months in Turkey have been, at least outwardly, an uneventful period with few if any major political upsets, very little political violence and hardly any deaths from terrorism. Though not widely appreciated, on that front a calm currently prevails in Turkey that has been relatively unknown in the country since the 1960s though a wide swathe of opinion, especially in the large cities, remains firmly opposed to the ruling AKP (Justice and Development Party) – and the AKP is equally uncompromising in its response.

This placidity of daily life in Turkey reflects the transition from a parliamentary political system to one in which the presidency rules. Adversarial politics, though still definitely present and sharp in tone, have been marginalised though tensions between the AKP and its opponents are if anything fiercer than ever.

But many aspects of life and discussion in a parliamentary system have gone. The cabinet has disappeared with its legal and administrative powers absorbed into the presidency, while ministers now resemble civil servants more than politicians. The Grand National Assembly, which had been the central arena for the country ever



since 1908, even under periods without free elections, attracts much less attention than formerly. The pro-government press spends much time denouncing the main opposition party, the CHP (Republican Peoples Party) but the focus is no longer on its parliamentary activities but on its alleged links with the pro-Kurdish political fringes.

### **THE LOCAL ELECTIONS**

Turkey's local elections on 31 March are the first since 2014 but they come hot on the heels of presidential and general elections in June last year, to be followed by four and half years with no elections. (By-elections have been almost unknown in Turkey since 1979).<sup>1</sup>

The results will probably be known around the time that this bulletin appears. So all judgements here can only be provisional.

#### **A matter of survival?**

Local elections are not normally political events lasting half a year. These are being treated differently. Supporters of the AKP-MHP alliance, including Devlet Bahçeli of the MHP (Nationalist Action Party), can even be heard suggesting that they are a 'beka sorunu' [question of survival].<sup>2</sup> All sides see them as a crucial test of the popularity of President Erdoğan and the AKP at a time of very adverse economic conditions when growth has almost paused.

#### **A land ruled by mayors**

There is a second reason behind their importance. Highly centralised though Turkey is, local government does have a very direct impact on the life and welfare of ordinary citizens everywhere. A little general scene setting about the way local government works in Turkey helps in understanding the significance of the 31 March local elections.

Local elections in Turkey involve casting votes for mayors, provincial councils, municipal councils and district/parish headmen, But they focus heavily on the personalities of mayors who effectively take decisions and steer development in a community. Though one mostly writ small, local government was a strongly presidential system long before central government in Turkey became so, though it seems to have functioned like this for as long as anyone can remember. Individual provincial and municipal councillors attract little attention beyond appearing on the community webpage. Councillors, unlike national MPs, seem to be little called upon as intermediaries interceding for citizens with a problem. This is probably because council meetings, at least in smaller communities, do not seem to be open to the public. Though some minutes are published by larger municipalities<sup>3</sup>, I have found these to be unavailable in smaller places. So everything rests with the mayor. The AKP is heavily dominant but by no means unchallenged.

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<sup>1</sup> A by-election was held in March 2003 to enable Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to enter parliament, and before that in 1986.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/ya-beka-ya-bela-3451108>

<sup>3</sup> Examples can be seen at

[https://www.antalya.bel.tr/Content/UserFiles/Files/Birimler\\_IsSurecleri/Meclis\\_Kararlari\\_Tutanaklari\\_Sureci\\_Is\\_Akis\\_Semasi.pdf](https://www.antalya.bel.tr/Content/UserFiles/Files/Birimler_IsSurecleri/Meclis_Kararlari_Tutanaklari_Sureci_Is_Akis_Semasi.pdf) for Antalya, and at <https://emlakkulisi.com/guncel/uskudar-belediye-meclisi-kararlari/1294406> The latter site covers land development decisions rather than minutes as such. A similar site for Ankara metropolitan municipality at <https://www.ankara.bel.tr/meclis-kararlari> seems to basically record land development decisions.



There were 1397 municipalities of all sizes in Turkey last year. Of the ones at sub-province level, 609 were won by the AKP in 2014, with the CHP taking 174, and the MHP (then an opponent of the AKP, now its ally) taking 113.<sup>4</sup> The top 30 are 'metropolitan' municipalities. Turkey has thirteen cities of more than one million inhabitants and about eight of more than two million. Mayors of these communities are powerful figures, controlling large budgets and overseeing very large projects. Moreover, they are gaining importance. Metropolitan municipalities have been expanded in recent years to absorb adjacent small towns and villages.

Mayors work from imposing offices that are sometimes disproportionate for their small communities, with considerable local powers to initiate local projects and development, and relying less on relatively low local taxes than on subsidies from central government and borrowing. Just how much they do so is hard to ascertain in the absence of easily available accounts. Auditing is done by the Ministry of Finance and opposition-controlled municipalities complain that this weighs more heavily on them than in government-controlled communities. In the latter, a town's voters may only discover that their community is millions of lira in debt in the aftermath of an election victory by a rival party. These discoveries do not seem to be widely publicized or discussed.<sup>5</sup>

Central government can and does interfere with mayors of whom it disapproves. The Minister of the Interior, Süleyman Soylu, said in March that 95 municipalities – almost all held by the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) – are currently administered by appointed trustees. The claim is that government trustees give the local population better management than HDP mayors (in many cases now jailed) have done. This suggestion is angrily rejected by the HDP leadership. In addition to that, several of Turkey's main mayors, including those of Istanbul and Ankara, all AKP members, resigned their office in the autumn of 2017 at the request of President Erdoğan.<sup>6</sup> Anecdotally mayors in small communities sometimes give 'Ankara' as the reason why something is or isn't done.

### **Challenging situation for the AKP**

So much then for the general background of the system being contested. The 2019 local elections are being held against an obviously very difficult background for the AKP with economic growth at a standstill and interest rates of around 24% since last summer. If ever there was an opportunity for the opposition this should be it, and opinion polls suggest that the AKP's vote is currently well below heyday levels, perhaps even below 40%.<sup>7</sup>

Because of this threat the AKP is continuing with the electoral alliance with which it fought the general elections. This Cumhuriyet İttifakı (People's Alliance) includes, alongside the AKP, the MHP (Nationalist Action Party) and the BBP (Grand Turkey

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<sup>4</sup> T-24, Which Party Won Where? <https://t24.com.tr/haber/81-il-ve-923-ilcede-secimi-hangi-parti-kazandi,254929>

<sup>5</sup> Some information can be gleaned from the Ministry of Finance's Annual Report on Public Sector Debt. The 2018 report can be found at <https://www.hmb.gov.tr/kurumsal-raporlar> Adjustments of the structuring of municipal debt are covered in amendments contained in the periodic miscellaneous legislation laws (Torba Yasaları).

<sup>6</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-turkey-politics/turkeys-erdogan-says-three-more-mayors-to-quit-including-ankara-chief-idUKKBN1CO12Q>

<sup>7</sup> There is a useful round up of polls in the first week of March on Euronews Turkish service at <https://tr.euronews.com/2019/02/12/akp-ankara-yi-kaybedebilir-31-mart-yerel-secimleri-oncesi-son-anketler-ne-diyor#>.

Party.) The MHP is much larger and the partner which matters, having polled 11% (5.5 million votes) in the general elections last June.

Final nominations are still a nearly week away at the time of writing, but the pattern seems to have emerged showing how candidates will be shared between the two. Currently the AKP plans to field candidates in 27 of Turkey's largest cities, leaving three to the MHP, while it is putting up 17 provincial candidates leaving four to the MHP and 477 sub-provincial candidates, giving 91 to the MHP – but these figures leave a large number of districts as yet unaccounted for.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Opposition: poised to take Ankara?**

The opposition also consists of a formal alliance – the 'Nation Alliance' – between the CHP and the Good Party, backed also by the small Islamist Felicity Party. The CHP got 11 million votes last June compared to the 21 million cast for the AKP, so its chances overall might look poor, especially in the conservative heartlands of the Anatolian interior, but the signs are that it is doing well in a number of cities, particularly Ankara where it is running a popular candidate and the opinion polls suggest he has a ten percent lead.<sup>9</sup> Antalya (held by the CHP until 2014) and even Istanbul look like conceivable wins for it. But victory has a way of slipping out of the grasp of opposition parties in Turkey. The AKP has held Ankara and Istanbul – and countless other cities – continuously since 1994. The Nation Alliance's candidate, Mansur Yavaş, actually originally a conservative nationalist from the MHP co-opted into the CHP by the latter's leadership, which seems to have a penchant for not reaching out beyond its own ranks also stood in 2014. In 2014 he lost despite an apparent initial victory when the count turned against him during the night,<sup>10</sup> a problem over which the CHP made very little fuss.

The betting must surely be that on the past form of Turkish elections, the AKP is going to win yet again. Last summer the opposition seemed to attract huge levels of support and there was speculation about an AKP defeat. In the event it won handsomely.

## **PARTIES AND CANDIDATES**

### **How candidates are chosen**

Mention that the CHP is fielding a non-CHP candidate in the elections for the second time running raises the question of how candidates are chosen. Selection processes for all elections in Turkey are one of the features of the Turkish political system which diverges most strikingly from what are seen as best practices in Western Europe. As elections approach, hopeful individuals allow their names to be thrown into the ring. Local party selection processes are obscure and seemingly vestigial. The only contest in which individuals rather than parties decide who is running are the elections for muhtars or local headmen which have to be non-partisan.

### **Very few women candidates**

A strong streak of patriarchy can be detected in local government in Turkey, even more so than in national elections. Of the total 769 mayoral candidates

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<sup>8</sup><https://www.memurlar.net/haber/815297/secime-477-ilcede-ak-parti-91-ilcede-mhp-nin-adayilacagirilacak.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://tr.euronews.com/2019/03/10/31-mart-yerel-secimleri-piar-a-go-re-ankara-ve-diger-illerde-son-durum>

<sup>10</sup> Roy Gutman "Turkish election irregularities favor Erdogan's candidate", McClatchy News 9 April 2014 <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/04/09/223936/turkish-election-irregularities.html#storylink=cpy>

declared so far from all 13 parties only 76 are women candidates. The majority of these come from fringe parties with no chance of winning, such as the miniscule TKP (Turkish Communist Party) which has 19 women candidates. The number of women candidates put up by the parties in parliament is AK Parti one, CHP three, MHP two, HDP six, and the Good Party just two.<sup>11</sup>

### **Leaders not grassroots pick candidates**

Each party's national leadership holds all the cards and makes the choice. Its selections quite often fly in the teeth of locals. In İzmir for example, the only very large city held by the CHP, the party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu ignored calls from his party's notables to have a say in the selection and imposed Tunç Soyer, mayor of nearby Seferihisar over their vocal protests and calls for local involvement in the choice of candidate.

In Istanbul the CHP leadership passed over Muharrem İnce, the popular candidate in last summer's presidential elections but a factional rival, and instead selected Ekrem İmamoğlu, mayor of Beylikdüzü but then a little known figure in the city though his campaign has won him admirers. Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, the CHP no longer seems to be trying to project itself as a mass party.

### **Cabinet ministers for the AKP**

The AKP's candidates are chosen personally by President Erdoğan. Those for the big cities are almost invariably former cabinet ministers. In İzmir, the AKP candidate is Nihat Zeybekçi, four times economy minister. An AKP victory in Izmir looks unlikely as it has never won that city. In order to win over opponents, Zeybekçi is following a softer line than other voices in his party.

In Ankara the AKP is fielding Mehmet Özhaseki, former mayor of Kayseri and Minister of the Environment from 2015, a slightly surprising choice for a vibrant capital. During the seventeen years he was mayor of Kayseri, Özhaseki made it into an economically successful but social and culturally rather austere city, a place where the rich can buy a living Canadian lobster for dinner or shop at Marks & Spencer, but if you want a glass of wine, you will find that even tourists have to go dry.<sup>12</sup> So if he wins, Ankara could be in for a drastic change of character. But he is well behind in the polls.



The AKP candidate in Istanbul is Binali Yıldırım, the former prime minister and loyal Erdoğan lieutenant who on 18 February relinquished the prestigious office of President of the Grand National Assembly to run, possibly a little reluctantly, at the bidding of President Erdoğan. The mayor of Istanbul leads 15 million people and in 2018 had a budget of TL42.6 billion (\$11.2 billion on 1 January 2018)<sup>13</sup>, so an Istanbul incumbent who can stress successful infrastructure and health services achievements is in a commanding position.

## **THE CAMPAIGN**

### **Treasury foots the bill - generously**

The campaign's cost to the main parties, as always, is defrayed from Treasury subsidies: funds granted to the main parties specifically for the local elections at the

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.haberturk.com/31-mart-yerel-secimlerinde-81-il-icin-70-kadin-yarisacak-2396890>

<sup>12</sup> Turizm Gazetesi, Kayseri Hilton closes its pub at <https://www.turizmgazetesi.com/news.aspx?id=70539>

<sup>13</sup> Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality <https://www.ibb.istanbul/News/Detail/34344ality> Report, <https://www.ibb.istanbul/News/Detail/34344>

end of June last summer totalled TL 670 million or £95 million,<sup>14</sup> though with other subsidies for the year their total state income is about TL100 million higher). The campaign money,<sup>15</sup> decided last June immediately after the general elections, is divided between the AKP ( TL291 million (£41 million), and the main opposition CHP, which gets TL178.5 million or £25 million). Though it is campaigning with its main leaders in prison and under threat of government sanctions against it, even the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples Democratic Party) receives TL79.2 million or £11.2 million.)

Party spending is audited by the Constitutional Court although detailed accounts, unlike the situation in Western European democracies, appear not to be easily available, as an EU report noted a year ago.<sup>16</sup> For comparison, in the UK the British Conservative Party spent £18.5 million pounds in the June 2017 general elections and total spending by all the parties was under £40 million.<sup>17</sup>

Generous state subsidies mean that parties do not have to engage in local fund raising social activities of the sort which are common in party political life in Western Europe. In compliance with the 1983 Political Parties law, there have to be party offices in every small municipality, but these are often vacant and unused beyond the sign in the street. This state of affairs seems to be especially typical of the CHP in conservative communities in central Anatolia where local party organization exists in name but has largely withered in practice to just a sign in a window, but it is not confined to that party. The heyday of grassroots participation in Turkish democracy was in the sixties and the early seventies when party leaders had considerable difficulty fending off challenges from below. This is probably a big part of the reason why Bülent Ecevit at the peak of his popularity was a formidable contender for government and the present leadership of the CHP isn't.

## **A POLARISING CAMPAIGN**

### **Erdoğan speaking twice a day**

The AKP campaign plan was professionally designed last autumn at a three day meeting of the party organization, held at its Kızılcahamam party centre where training sessions are held.<sup>18</sup> Since January President Erdoğan has been making an average of two speeches a day to flag-waving crowds, immaculately choreographed across the country, delivered to loyal audiences evidently screened for security. Each speech is carefully crafted for a particular community, presumably having been written by his team of writers in the presidential palace and, though each tends to be heavily laden with figures, delivered flawlessly with no signs of tiredness.

### **There are two main messages.**

The AKP since 2002 has delivered on infrastructure and health services to each community and more development is planned. The opposition is disreputable,

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gozlemgazetesi.com/HaberDetay/25/1107726/turkiyede-secim-maliyeti-ne-kadar-yerel-secimlerde-partilere-ne-kadar-para-verilecek.html> Note that these figures predate the currency slide in August and so originally greater expenditure was envisaged by them.

<sup>15</sup> <https://t24.com.tr/haber/yerel-secimler-icin-5-partiye-670-milyon-lira-verilecek-en-fazla-akp-en-az-iyi-parti-alacak,662227>

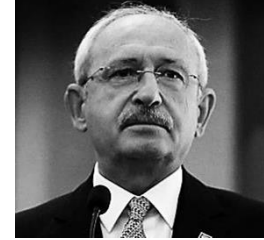
<sup>16</sup> EU Commission, Key findings of the 2018 Report on Turkey - europa.eu europa.eu/rapid/press-release\_MEMO-18-3407\_en.pdf, April 20 18.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/political-parties-campaigning-and-donations/political-party-spending-at-elections/details-of-party-spending-at-previous-elections>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/akp-to-draw-up-strategy-for-2019-local-elections-at-three-day-camp-137550>

perhaps even criminal<sup>19</sup> and the fact that the HDP, unable to stand in many places, is pitching its support behind the CHP/Good Party coalition exposes the links between the CHP and the PKK, the Kurdish terrorist organization. Both are enemies of religion and of the Muslim call to prayer.<sup>20</sup> There are also claims of National Alliance links with FETÖ, the Gülen movement.

The opposition is also campaigning energetically. Kılıçdaroğlu is a charismatic orator too, which is perhaps why he has kept his job despite seven consecutive election defeats, but he lacks the formidable rhetorical punch of his adversary and of course, outside a few CHP-controlled centres, he does not have a record of achievement to present to the crowds. Presentation of the CHP meetings is notably less polished than those of the AKP.



Despite this the opposition coalition has made some headway in the large cities and this could provoke fiercer tactics from the incumbents. Mansur Yavaş, in the lead in Ankara, finds himself facing shadowy criminal charges from a very doubtful accuser actually under prison sentence for fraud – so doubtful that even some reputable pro-AKP writers are unhappy<sup>21</sup>. As 31 March approaches, tension looks certain to grow further.



## The Turkish Economy

### Navigating out of the 2018 currency-shock

by **Mina Toksöz**  
University of Manchester Business School

The Autumn 2018 issue of this *Review* traced how regional crises, domestic electoral pressures, and economic policy conflicts delayed the Turkish government policy adjustment to the tightening global monetary conditions. The delay weakened policy credibility, exposed the Turkish economy to deteriorating investor sentiment, and brought sharp Lira depreciation in May and August.<sup>22</sup> The belated, reactive monetary policy measures in both instances had to be more intense than would have been required had the government acted pre-emptively. Inevitably, the Turkish economy is now left struggling with high inflation and a sharp deceleration in growth with recession by the end of 2018<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/erdogan-accuses-chps-ankara-mayoral-candidate-yavas-of-involvement-in-shady-business-141901>

<sup>20</sup> <https://halkweb.com.tr/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-ezan-dusmanligi-yapanlarin-arkasinda-chp-ile-hdp-var/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/03/turkey-local-elections-mayor-ankara-yavas.html>  
The influential pro government journalist Abdulkadir Selvi expresses his reservations  
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/abdulkadir-selvi/mansur-yavas-hakkindaki-iddianame-secimi-nasil-etkileyecek-41147134>

<sup>22</sup> The turning point was the July 2018 Monetary Policy Council meeting that failed to respond to the acceleration in inflation.

<sup>23</sup> Defined as two quarters of consecutive contractions in real GDP.



However, the underlying structural resilience of the Turkish economy, and – in contrast with the pre-crisis complacency – the active government policy response, have so far prevented the currency shock from turning into a banking or foreign payments crisis. Following the 625 basis-point interest rate hike by the Central Bank of Turkey (CBT) in September, capital flows began to trickle back. Crucially, the current account reverted from a wide deficit to a surplus in August/November as exports broke historical records and imports collapsed – the latter also reflecting the drop in domestic demand. The ongoing recovery in tourism and the fall in international oil prices since October helped ease the foreign payments pressures with the current account deficit (CAD) falling to \$27.6bn for 2018 as a whole, down around 40% from 2017 and the lowest since 2009.



### **Inflation will depend on restoring CBT credibility**

Inflation peaked in September 2018 at 25.2% year-on-year for the consumer price index (CPI) and 45% for the producer price index (PPI). The latter suggests almost a one-to-one pass-through into producer-prices of the rise in costs due to the Lira depreciation. This problem is examined by the IMF in its October WEO showing how weak central bank credibility amplifies the inflationary impact of currency depreciation (the 'exchange rate pass-through').<sup>24</sup> This suggests that a sustainable decline in inflation-expectations will depend on the CBT convincing the public that it is serious about reducing inflation.

By end-December, PPI had slowed to 33.6% on the back of the Lira strengthening from its oversold positions in August, one-off measures from the government including fuel and electricity tariff reductions and a campaign to encourage voluntary price discounts by producers. This and various consumer tax cuts in turn eased CPI to 20.3%. But, in January consumer prices were still rising at 20.35%, suggesting inflation may remain sticky in the first half of 2019. The main culprit in January was the rise in food prices which rapidly triggered new administrative measures to control pricing in wholesale markets and more soul-searching about the problems in Turkish agriculture.

### **Growth struggling to recover in 2019**

The latest available GDP growth data for the third quarter of 2018 already showed a contraction of 1.1% over the previous quarter and a lowly 1.6% growth from a year ago. The contraction is likely to have continued into the fourth quarter of 2018: industrial production (contracting since September) was down 9.8% in the year to December, retail sales were down 9.2% and the manufacturers' purchasing managers' index (PMI) was down to 44.2, declining for the ninth consecutive month.

Wide-ranging fiscal measures to boost demand were introduced from September onwards ranging from reductions in traffic fines to raising the tax exemption ceiling for women working from home. Also included were cuts in consumer taxes on durable goods and automotive purchases, assistance to low income families on utility bills, cuts in social security payments by employers, and a 26% hike in the minimum wage. These fiscal measures (as well as the amnesty for real-estate planning

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<sup>24</sup> IMF, *World Economic Outlook*, October 2018.



breaches) were recently extended until the end of March, predictably expiring only after the local elections.

However, expectations for a recovery in the first half of 2019 remain low. The Aegean Region Chamber of Industry (EBSO) survey showed 65% expecting a weak domestic market and planning to focus on exports instead.<sup>25</sup> Confidence indicators were still falling in early 2019 with households facing rising unemployment and cuts in real incomes and corporates struggling with the squeeze on profitability. A recovery of sorts is expected in the second half of 2019 mostly led by exports and assuming the slowdown in the major economies and global trade wars are contained.

### **Banking sector carrying currency wounds**

In addition to the fiscal stimulus, a number of macro-prudential measures were put in place to ease the credit crunch that ensued after the currency crash. Credit growth declined sharply in the second half of 2018 with exchange-rate-adjusted total loans up a mere 2.3% at end-2018 from double-digits in 2017. In January 2019 it was a negative 0.6%. Meanwhile, there are increasing problem loans: non-performing loans as a share of total rose to 3.9% at end-2018, up from 3% in 2017. Gross non-performing loans rose 51% over the year to TL96.6bn.<sup>26</sup>

Given the importance of credit as a driver of growth in recent years, BRSA, the banking regulator, rapidly eased debt restructuring rules to help business cope with the increased burden of foreign currency debt following the Lira depreciation. Other measures aim to cushion the impact of the currency collapse on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These include the commissioning of Halk Bank to roll out TL22bn of credit to SMEs. Thirteen private sector banks have been authorised to lend to SMEs and offer micro credits of TL20bn from the unused or already paid back portions of loans from the Credit Guarantee Fund introduced in 2016 following the failed coup. In addition, the biggest public sector bank, Ziraat, is restructuring credit card debt, agricultural loans, and the debt of the four biggest football clubs in the Turkish Football Federation.

The government has repeatedly said it will stand behind the banks. In September 2018, state banks received a TL11bn (\$1.8bn) capital injection from the Unemployment Fund. Meanwhile, private sector banks are under pressure to ease lending rates (which have started to come down) and increase the supply of credit. At the same time, to cope with the rising number of impaired loans on their books, the bigger private sector banks, including Akbank and Yapı Kredi have been busy capital raising to shore-up their financial positions.

### **Economic policy risks remain high**

It will take time for the Turkish economy to recover from the 2018 currency shock. This is unlikely to be a V-shaped recovery as seen in the 2008-09 global crisis. A return to the credit-and-construction led growth formula looks difficult with little sign of a recovery in the housing sector. Although public sector debt remains low and household debt is moderate compared to other big emerging market economies, the global environment is harsher; the Turkish corporates and banks are more indebted; and government policy credibility is weaker.

<sup>25</sup> 'Egeli sanayici ilk altı aydan umudunu kesti', *Dünya*, 30 January, 2019.

<sup>26</sup> İş Bank, *Turkish Economy Monthly*, February 2019.

In recent months, contributing to a semblance of ‘normalisation’ of the economy and a recovery in the Lira were the monthly current account surpluses, the fall in oil prices, and an easing of tensions with the US. In addition, in early 2019, foreign currency inflows from Turkish Treasury bond issues and corporate and bank syndicated loans supported the Lira as did the more positive sentiment towards Emerging Markets following the US Federal Reserve signalling a more dovish stance in 2019.

But none of these may last. Tensions with the US over strategy in Syria and Iran (or maybe even Venezuela) could lead to another sharp clash. Oil prices are creeping up, the current account balance already reverted to a deficit in December 2018, and there is a heavy foreign debt repayment schedule in the next few months. In this volatile context, the most important economic task for the government is to restore policy credibility. This will be difficult given the government’s proclivity to follow a policy mix of weak currency, easy monetary policy, and increased recourse to short-term fixes with administrative measures, while blaming ‘outside forces’ for causing crises. It is not clear that the lessons of 2018 have been internalised and the mistakes made in the timing and mix of policies recognised. The conflicting dual rhetoric of the past few years continues. While some emphasise the primacy of the fight against inflation, others continue to demand cuts in interest rates sooner, rather than later. Meanwhile, recent legislation has confirmed the President’s sole authority at a time of crisis. The habit of pre-election fiscal incentives is also still in evidence in the lead up to the 31 March local elections. These worries seem to be behind the repeated flare-up of public debate regarding an IMF programme in 2019.

However, some things may be changing. In a discussion with Turkish economists, the Treasury and Finance Minister Albayrak promised orthodox fiscal and monetary policies suggesting they were now more likely as there are no elections scheduled after March until 2023.<sup>27</sup> Elections becoming more infrequent may not be desirable in the context of the increasingly circumscribed Turkish democracy. But it may be possible because the concentration of power in the presidency may reduce AKP’s need to renew frequently its popular mandate.

Another possible change in government outlook is a recognition that the previous decade’s high growth rates may not be attainable in the next few years.<sup>28</sup> ‘Rebalancing’ the economy from its dependence on foreign capital inflows is a frequently discussed objective. The Medium-Term Programme (MTP) announced on 20 September 2018 projected GDP growth to slow from an estimated 3.8% in 2018 to 2.3% in 2019<sup>29</sup>, recovering only to 3.5% in 2020. If held to, this would imply that the period of high CAD may be over: the MTP is projecting it to fall to 2.7% of GDP by 2020 compared with 5.6% in 2017. It seems the Turkish government is at a crossroads and will be tested in 2019 if it can pursue policies that can deliver stable economic growth for Turkey that also strengthen its resilience against global shocks.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> ‘Bütçeyi bozmadan reel sektöre destek gelecek’, *Dünya*, 31 December 2018.

<sup>28</sup> More on this discussion by Turkish economists, see ‘Ekonomik Kriz: bu kez farklı (mı?)’, *İktisat ve Toplum*, December 2018, No 98.

<sup>29</sup> This is higher than the IMF’s GDP growth forecast of 0.4% for 2019.

<sup>30</sup> On economic policy dilemmas for Emerging Markets, see *The Economist Guide to Country Risk* by M Toksöz. Profile Books, 2014.

# The US-Turkey standoff and the global crisis of hegemony



by **Vassilis Fouskas**<sup>31</sup> & **Bülent Gökay**<sup>32</sup>

Turkey was thrust into a full-blown currency crisis in August 2018 when Donald Trump hoisted tariffs on Turkey's steel and aluminium exports to the USA, the country's most serious crisis since AKP came to power 17 years ago. The Lira initially lost more than 40 percent of its value. Turkey responded by doubling tariffs on many American imports. The pretext for Trump's punishing attack on Turkey was the detention of the evangelical American missionary Andrew Brunson who was arrested in October 2016 on charges of espionage and accused of involvement in the attempted coup of July the same year. After a Turkish court freed Brunson in October 2018, both countries dropped some of the sanctions. This was not the first time the two countries found themselves in serious conflict: in recent years, the US-Turkish relationship has been repeatedly strained by quarrels, from US support for Syrian Kurdish militia to Ankara's plans to buy a missile-defence system from Russia. In January 2019, Trump threatened Turkey again with "devastating sanctions" if the Turkish army attacked Kurds in northern Syria<sup>33</sup>.

At first sight, the 2018-19 US-Turkey standoff appears to be a uniquely Turkish problem triggered by a very public confrontation between Donald Trump and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and worsened by the often-misguided economic approach of both leaders. This is not entirely true. The underlying motives for the drive to bring the Turkish economy to its knees lie in the bid by the US to displace and off-load its own crisis onto the back of a number of medium-sized emerging economies by means of trade restrictions, economic sanctions, direct confrontation, and using the dollar's reserve currency status. In other words, the real source of the crisis is not rooted in the personality or psychology of Trump or Erdoğan, and this is not just Turkey's problem. It is a global problem carrying substantial risks of contagion in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe. Around August-September 2018, the Turkish crisis looked the most vivid but, as we shall see



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<sup>31</sup>Vassilis K. Fouskas is Professor of International Politics & Economics at the Royal Docks School of Business & Law, University of East London

<sup>32</sup>Bülent Gökay is Professor of International Relations at Keele University. Professors Fouskas and Gökay are marking over 20 years of collaborative research with the publication of *The Disintegration of Euro-Atlanticism and New Authoritarianism: Global Power Shift*, their third joint monograph, completing a trilogy on the structural decline of the USA as global superpower, by Palgrave Macmillan in January 2019.

<sup>33</sup> <https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/trump-threatens-apos-devastate-turkey-121200655.html?guccounter=1> (accessed in February 2019)

below, one cannot look at this crisis in isolation, and there is much more going on between the USA and the rest of the world.

### **The global financial crisis and shifts in the global power system**

Soon after the 2008 crisis hit the major economies, governments and central banks took off the books of the banks toxic assets, which were then transferred onto the states' budgets rendering legal responsibility to the taxpayer to pay the debts of the banks. The bailout operation and other similar measures have cost more than 25 percent of global GDP, the landmark operation being the Greek case. Ten years after, it is becoming increasingly clear that a new period of intensified crisis is gripping the global economy. "World economy at risk of another financial crash", warned the IMF in October 2018.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, geopolitical and geo-economic tensions have risen among the major powers and significantly increased global risks, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2019 -- US sanctions against Iran, Russia, Turkey and Venezuela; and US trade wars with China, the EU, Canada and Mexico<sup>35</sup>. This economic warfare, reminiscent of the inter-war period<sup>36</sup>, is also indirectly affecting a long list of other countries which have close economic links with these targeted countries. For instance, Chinese producers buy iron ore for steel from Australia, Brazil, India, Iran, South Africa, and Ukraine, and bauxite for aluminium from Australia, Brazil, and the poor West African nation of Guinea. It seems that global trade, and the role of the US dollar within it, are used as a weapon by the American President who sees trade sanctions and tariffs, such as the onslaught he launched against Turkey, as an integral component of his drive to secure the USA's geopolitical and economic interests at the expense of others. Trump's "America First" policy is just this and configures its strategy as a response to the structural crisis of globalisation/ financialisation.

The USA's 'aggressive unilateralism', which first emerged in the 1980s under Ronald Reagan, is now pushed to its limits. Trump is not some bizarre abnormality, but rather represents a coherent policy, the genuine face of the vital interests of a declining superpower that is prepared to initiate a major crisis and huge devastation worldwide in order to stop its eventual decline. Trump's coming to power itself is but an epiphenomenon of the deeply embedded structural and historical changes and trends taking place in the system. All such shifts are the results of an increasingly more volatile and chaotic international situation, which is the direct consequence of a process that Giovanni Arrighi, drawing from Gramsci, called "hegemonic transition"<sup>37</sup>. The core logic of this shift can be analysed properly within the context of major global structural changes and re-distribution of power, which have been affecting the world system for the last 30 years or so.

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<sup>34</sup> *Guardian*, 3 October 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/oct/03/world-economy-at-risk-of-another-financial-crash-says-imf> (accessed in February 2019).

<sup>35</sup> World Economic Forum Global Risk Report 2019, <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-risks-report-2019> (accessed in February 2019).

<sup>36</sup> The Hawley-Smoot Tariff of June 1930, that raised already high import duties on more than 20,000 goods to their highest level in 100 years in American history, was considered by some historians as a contributing factor to the start and severity of the Great Depression and fed political extremism helping to push Adolf Hitler into power in Germany.

<sup>37</sup> <https://newleftreview.org/II/56/giovanni-arrighi-the-winding-paths-of-capital> (accessed in August 2018).



Even though the US still represents the largest and strongest economic and military power in the world, it is nevertheless struggling with severe weaknesses resulting from low economic growth and the protracted decline of its industry. Falling profitability and weakening competitiveness led to the erosion of the production-led mode of accumulation in the United States. When productive power (and capacity) started to decline, financial speculation began to play a major role in order to compensate for the loss of profit rates in production and trade. One of the most striking features of the US economy has been the rise of the rentier and the money capitalist, which was reinforced with the massive upsurge of the US bond and junk bond markets.

### **From Quantitative Easing (QE) to Quantitative Tightening (QT)**

Even if the US economy is in decline in terms of its productive capacity and share of global trade, one aspect still dominates the global economy: the dominant role of the US dollar in international trade and finance. This is the privilege to profit from the usage of the dollar by the rest of the world as the international reserve currency. All states have to acquire funds of the internationally acceptable money in order to be able to pay for goods and services in global trade. This constraint does not exist for the USA because the international currency since 1944 is the US dollar. As a result, the US Federal Reserve (Fed) can dictate the level of international rates through moving the US domestic interest rates, thus determining the costs of credit internationally.

When international credit is cheap economic operators with access to cheap international credit borrow money and invest in projects which seem viable, given the level of low interest rates. However, when the USA decides to make credit expensive (sometimes very expensive) in order to gain competitive advantage or for political reasons, suddenly, such 'normal' and 'sound' investments may become serious loss-makers because of this sudden contraction of cheap credit. Because only the American state can issue the international reserve currency, the US dollar, Wall Street can swing the international economy between oversupplying credit at one time and contracting it at another without even providing a reasonable period of notice.

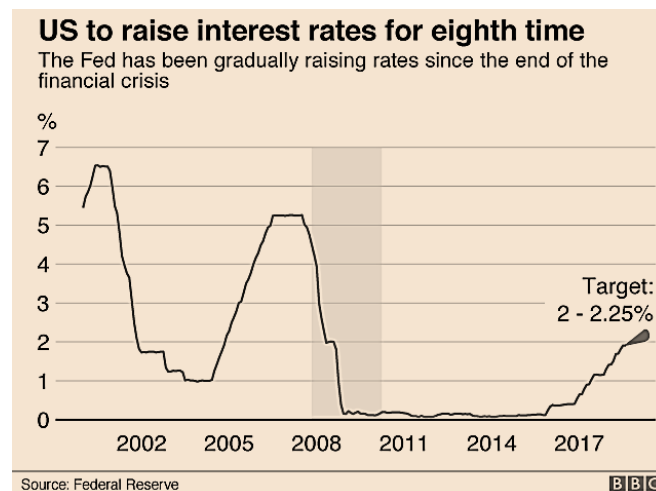
Since the 2007-08 global financial crisis the reliance of financial markets on policy decisions taken by the Fed has expanded to unprecedented levels. Immediately after the global crisis hit the USA in 2007, the Fed began what was called Quantitative Easing, in effect buying up bonds to revive the flow of credit to a shrinking economy. The Fed bought a staggering sum of bonds from the struggling banks, which increased up to 4.5 trillion dollars from only some \$850 to \$900 billion in 2010<sup>38</sup>. Since then, four global central banks: the US Federal Reserve, European Central Bank (ECB), Bank of Japan and Bank of England have been engaged in QE programs. The result of this QE was that the central banks flooded markets with an unprecedented flow of funds through auctions and lending facilities, creating approximately four billion dollars of new money a day, and thus financial markets



<sup>38</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurengensler/2017/09/20/federal-reserve-september-meeting-unwind-balance-sheet/#44ad904e48bb> and <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/04/business/economy/04fomc.html>

were saved<sup>39</sup>. This operation plunged the interest rates to zero in an effort to prevent an economic collapse. These sums of money were in turn invested in any part of the world offering high returns, as USA bonds paid near zero interest. The hope was that lenders would pass that liquidity along as credit to companies and households, thus stimulating anaemic economies. Private investors, who were looking for new and more profitable avenues to park their investments (low interest new money they borrowed from the Fed) started pumping large amounts of this into emerging markets, such as Turkey, Brazil, Argentina, Indonesia, India and China, where the economies were booming and the US bonds could potentially bring back high returns. Thus, the corporations as well as private individuals in emerging markets had a large amount of cash at their disposal. Even the Russian market received some liquidity dollars until the US sanctions in early 2018<sup>40</sup>. As a result, during the last ten years, the supply of cheap dollars to the global system has risen to unprecedented levels, exacerbated by the US, British, German and Japanese QE programmes.<sup>41</sup>

Because of near-zero interest rates, combined with a weak dollar, this level of debt was not difficult to fund for consistently growing emerging economies. However, if the interest rates begin going up quickly, as is currently the case, then many debtors will not be able to pay their debts and the world will again be facing a 2008-style catastrophe. Currently, emerging market economies' massive dollar debt is the key vulnerability even for still expanding emerging economies. Turkish companies now owe an estimated \$229 billion in foreign-denominated debt, which is more than one-third of the country's GDP<sup>42</sup>.



(26 September 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-45657009>)

The US Federal Reserve ended its programme of QE in late 2017, and started to reverse it, i.e. selling off the financial assets it had purchased, and hence effectively taking dollars out of the financial system. Since then the Fed has been retreating

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/investor/2013/01/30/how-the-fed-is-helping-to-rig-the-stock-market/#71853de4da7f> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2016/09/23/russias-central-bank-criticizes-the-easy-money-policies-of-its-peers.html> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>41</sup> <http://uk.businessinsider.com/global-debt-his-record-233-trillion-debt-to-gdp-falling-2018-1> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.intellinews.com/turkey-raises-stakes-in-economic-war-with-tariff-hikes-on-us-goods-146939/> (accessed in August 2018).



from markets by reducing the amount it reinvests after the bonds in its portfolio reach maturity. Global finance has now *de facto* entered in the new era of Quantitative Tightening (QT)<sup>43</sup>. The Federal Reserve has raised its policy rates five times, from 0.25 to 1.5 percent. The Bank of England has raised its policy rate too, back to 0.5 percent. As a result the dollar's value has begun to rise. This rise, accompanied by two successive interest-rate rises by the US Fed, has made debt payments for countries, corporations and individuals far more difficult. This direct US financial policy is deliberately precipitating a major new economic crisis across the emerging world, especially in Iran, Turkey, Russia, South Africa, Argentina and India. The stronger dollar means that emerging markets in particular are facing uncertainties: for companies, and individuals, in countries that have issued dollar-denominated bonds, their interest payment burdens just get a lot heavier, and investors worry about the ability of emerging market debtors to pay off their dollar-denominated debt.<sup>44</sup> According to estimates, by the end of 2018, there is approximately one trillion dollars less global QE than in 2017, and the peak for total emerging market dollar debt falling due comes this year, with more than 1.2 trillion dollars maturing, meaning there will be an equivalent of 1.2 trillion fewer dollars in the world. This is simply to choke off the dollar supply.<sup>45</sup> So far, the currencies of Venezuela, Argentina, and Turkey have been hit seriously. The Indian rupee, South African rand and Brazilian real too have come under serious pressure. China has a great advantage compared with other emerging market currencies. As it has never been fully open to unrestricted financial flows, there is no question of any serious capital flight. Also China has a current account surplus on the balance of payments, so there is no danger of financial deficit. The turbulence, however, goes beyond the emerging powers: the currency traders in Australia, New Zealand and Canada are watching the US dollar rise with increased nervousness, according to the Wall Street Journal.<sup>46</sup>

The motivations for this trade and currency war are also political: the USA punishes Turkey, Iran and Russia for having a divergent geo-political agenda in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia that clashes strategically with that of the USA. Whereas it is clear that the economic warfare between the USA and Turkey has wider structural causes, it remains to be seen whether this can push Turkey further away from the Western security structures. "Turkey is heading back to Eurasia, and Russia and China will be the beneficiaries at the expense of America and Europe", speculates writes David Gardner in the *FT*.<sup>47</sup>

The Trump regime is also initiating trade wars and sanctions against Russia, Iran, China and Venezuela. It seems Turkey suddenly has a lot in common with Iran, Russia, and China. The US seems to be aiming at a domestic economic advantage

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/bbcdffa6-5865-11e8-806a-808d194ffb75> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>44</sup> <https://seekingalpha.com/article/4087450-dangerous-emerging-markets-dollar-debt> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>45</sup> William Engdahl, "Washington's Silent Weapon for Not-so-quiet Wars", *New Eastern Outlook*, 20 August 2018, <https://journal-neo.org/2018/08/20/washington-s-silent-weapon-for-not-so-quiet-wars/> and Dan Glazebrook, "Trump just triggered a new financial crisis. Here's why", *RT*, 17 August 2018, <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/436206-turkey-crisis-trump-financial/> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-dollars-rise-puts-canada-australia-new-zealand-in-spotlight-1535284801> (accessed in August 2018).

<sup>47</sup> *Financial Times*, 8 August 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/79e73f90-9a5e-11e8-ab77-f854c65a4465> (accessed in February 2019).

by pushing the global South into bankruptcy. All this is affecting not only emerging economies, but the whole world economy. “Trump’s continuous assault on multilateralism and his administration’s erratic policies... seriously deepened uncertainty in the global economy”, writes Yuwa Hedrick-Wong in November 2018 in *Forbes*<sup>48</sup>.

This is yet another clear manifestation of the fact that the world is currently going through a dangerous *interregnum*, poised between inward-looking old hegemonic powers, and reluctant new emergent ones. The US is a declining superpower, with a crumbling infrastructure and a shrinking share of the global economy. China is an ascending superpower, with a growing share of world trade and increasing self-confidence, but not ready yet to lead the world. The post-WWII arrangements that centred power on the Euro-Atlantic hub and Japan under the primacy of the USA is fast losing ground amid economic nationalism, trade wars and sanctions. A new international system is in the making with the arrival of new actors demanding a redistribution of power. This is in effect what causes the breakdown of the global order and forces the ruling elites in many countries to unconstrained economic/political nationalism and authoritarianism. We do not know with certainty yet what the ultimate impact of the current standoff between Trump’s America and a number of emerging powers, from Turkey to Argentina, India and Russia, will be. However, it is almost certain that our world is, once again, entering an historical moment where uncertain global circumstances and the authoritarian populist agenda of unpredictable political leaders have coincided to initiate a major shift in the way the world economy and finance are organised.

An earlier version of this piece was published in September 2018 at <https://www.Opacity.net/en/us-turkey-stand-in-context-us-and-weaponisation-of-global-financ/>



## Update on Cyprus 2018/19

**With a reminder of the historical context**

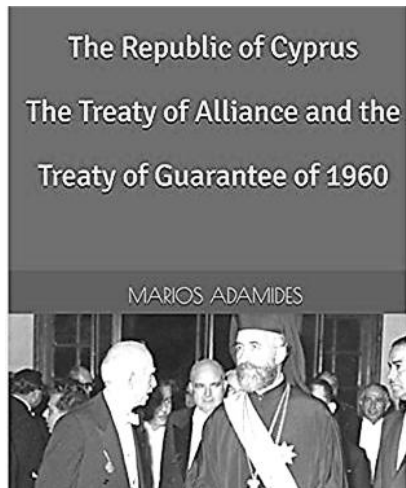
**by Clement Dodd**

The month of November 2018 was an interesting and important month in the development of the Cyprus problem. Readers of the last update will recall the controversial visit of President Erdoğan to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in that month. This was important; but more so was the decision taken by Turkey to support the Turkish Cypriot government’s historic right to a fair share of the wealth of the Greek Cypriot Republic of Cyprus. In particular, they demanded a share of the wealth likely to be generated by the Greek Cypriot search for carbon deposits in its internationally recognised economic enterprise zone in the eastern Mediterranean. This is an internationally approved Greek Cypriot zone, but the Turkish Cypriots claim that they are also entitled to that and other Greek Cypriot sources of wealth

<sup>48</sup> *Forbes*, 4 November 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/yuwahedrickwong/2018/11/04/how-donald-trump-is-shaping-the-next-global-economic-recession/#5bac957357e1> (accessed in February 2019).

under the terms of the 1960 Cyprus settlement. Under the Treaty of Guarantee, which was part of that settlement, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom have to recognise and guarantee 'the state of affairs established by the basic articles of the constitution', a constitution that the new Republic of Cyprus also undertook to respect. It provided for a Greek Cypriot President, and for a Turkish Cypriot Vice President with important powers, including veto powers in certain areas. The Turkish Cypriots have not forgotten their legal right to share in the government of Cyprus.

The President was the Greek Cypriot leader, Archbishop Makarios, who had signed up to the 1960 treaties only under pressure from Greece. He did not at heart believe that the Turkish Cypriots were entitled to more than minority treatment. He also did not believe that he should have to share authority with a Turkish Cypriot Vice President. He was so determined on keeping power to himself that in 1963 he drew up a new constitution to replace that agreed in the Treaty of Guarantee, which formed part of the 1960 settlement and which recognised the basic and unamendable articles of the constitution. Moreover, the Treaty of Guarantee also acknowledged that the three Guarantor powers, the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey, were entitled, jointly or separately, to maintain the state of affairs established



by the Treaty. The new constitution proposed by Makarios to the Turkish members of the Parliament was rejected by them, for whom the only legal constitution was that upheld in, and by, the Treaty of Guarantee and in the Treaty of Establishment. Nevertheless, Makarios was determined to rule without Turkish Cypriot participation and in practice, came to be dealt with as President of Cyprus by the United Nations. Many Turkish Cypriots refused to recognise the now Greek Makarios government. As a result, they were ruthlessly attacked in 1963 and 1964 by Greek Cypriot military forces. British troops tried, but without very great effect, to stem the violence. Especially being British and of the former colonial power, they were not easily accepted by the Greek Cypriots. In order to provide what they thought would be a more effective force, the UN Security Council therefore decided, in 1964, to introduce a UN force to contain Greek Cypriot violence. For this, the United Nations required the authority of the Greek Cypriot government and, to provide it, the UN Security Council then decided to ask Archbishop Makarios (who was calling himself President) for this authority. This was clearly illegal. The Turkish Cypriot leader, President Rauf Denktaş, was in tears: he knew it was a great victory for the Greek Cypriots, from which they would take every advantage. The only legal Cypriot government had to be that in the Treaty of Establishment and the Treaty of Guarantee. The United Kingdom and the United States were very careful and wary in dealing with Makarios because the Greek Cypriots were supporting and helping maintain the British sovereign base areas in southern Cyprus.



Turkey could, and perhaps should, have intervened at this stage as one of the guarantors of the 1960 constitution, but military intervention in civilian politics in Turkey in 1960 and the overthrow of the Democratic Party government created considerable political confusion. In 1961, the military passed and carried out death sentences on the former Turkish Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes and two other

ministers, one of whom was Fatin Rüştü Zorlu. He was important because it was he who, as Foreign Minister, had persuaded Greece to join with Turkey to provide the 1960 solution to the Cyprus problem, a solution that the United Kingdom also accepted in preference to its own plan.

Deeply aware of their historic right to be part of the Government of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriots had no hesitation in demanding a fair share in the internationally recognised Greek-Cypriot economic enterprise zone in the Eastern Mediterranean. Nor had Turkey any doubts about giving its full support to the Turkish Cypriots by providing research vessels and naval ships for protection as necessary. The Turkish Cypriots believe they have a right to the actual and potential riches of Cyprus. For them, the Greek-Cypriot state was clearly illegal – despite its worldwide recognition. In 1964 President Makarios had no right to speak for the Turkish Cypriots.

Turkey is prepared to support the Turkish Cypriots in claiming their fair share of the carbon deposits in the Eastern Mediterranean, and has done so by providing research ships to prospect and drill for carbon deposits in the Greek Cypriot internationally recognised economic enterprise zone. There have been some relatively minor incidents involving Greek and Turkish vessels, either prospecting or drilling for carbons, but this violence has been limited by the presence of Turkish naval units.

In the UN negotiations between the two sides in Switzerland in 2017, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, remarkably claimed that Turkey's right of intervention on behalf of the Turkish Cypriots could "no longer be sustainable" on the basis of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee! (The Greek Cypriots had previously and successfully made efforts among various European nations to get them to accept that Turkish intervention under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee was nowadays no longer acceptable).

### **A Loose Federation**

Also in November 2018, there was a major new development when President Anastasiades surprisingly proposed a decentralised or 'loose federation' as the way forward in negotiations between the two sides. What did this mean? Many Greek Cypriots did not like the sound of it. Some Turkish Cypriots thought it was a puzzling approach, but what did it mean?

A largely approving and valuable account of its meaning and importance is given (particularly in relation to the TRNC) by the British scholar and long-time student of Cypriot affairs, Dr James Ker-Lindsay.<sup>49</sup> Essentially he says, A 'loose federation' limits areas where agreement is necessary, and provides space for disabling political disputes to be reduced. Reference by President Anastasiades to introducing the principle of 'subsidiarity' into any settlement allows decisions to be taken at the most appropriate level – including the local – thus devolving power, for instance, to Greek Cypriot committees within the TRNC. They would then be left to be largely self-governing on a day-to-day basis – a development that could well encourage other displaced Greek Cypriots to return to their former villages in Northern Cyprus. Moreover the introduction of the now popular doctrine of subsidiarity into any

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<sup>49</sup> To be found at [www.academia.edu/17346369/The\\_Case\\_for\\_a\\_Loose\\_Federation\\_in\\_Resolving\\_Cyprus\\_](http://www.academia.edu/17346369/The_Case_for_a_Loose_Federation_in_Resolving_Cyprus_)



settlement would encourage decision making at local levels including, in this case, Greek Cypriot communities in Northern Cyprus. Going further, Ker-Lindsay believes that there would be a significant reduction in the number of Turkish troops in the TRNC, with a view to their eventual departure altogether. He also envisages the repatriation of many, if not all, settlers though now they are gradually becoming more and more Turkish Cypriot as they generally settle down economically and domestically in Northern Cyprus.

The Turkish Cypriot Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Kudret Özersay, puzzled like many others, saw the loose federation as “less authority with the central government and more authority with the states”. He said it was impossible for the Turkish Cypriots to accept such an approach. There must be “a common vision for Northern Cyprus. This must be the first issue to be resolved before any future international negotiations”.<sup>50</sup> Many Greek Cypriots are also anything but impressed by the ‘loose federation’ advocated by President Anastasiades.



## Effects of the Cyprus hydrocarbon issue

by **Daria Isachenko**

Otto-von-Guericke University  
Magdeburg, Germany

During several decades of deadlocked negotiations, the Cyprus problem has witnessed a number of catalysing moments. In the late 1990s, a catalytic effect was expected from the prospect of membership in the European Union (EU) for a reunited island. Yet in May 2004, following the referendum on the Annan Plan, the Greek-Cypriot-controlled Republic of Cyprus joined the EU, whereas the application of the *aquis communautaire* in the Turkish Cypriot part was suspended.<sup>51</sup> Discovery of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean almost a decade ago appeared to provide another momentum for fostering cooperation between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. As the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently emphasized, “the natural resources found in and around Cyprus should benefit both communities and should provide a strong incentive to find a durable solution to the Cyprus problem”.<sup>52</sup> However, instead of catalysing the peace talks, the hydrocarbon issue has in fact sidelined the negotiation process over the Cyprus conflict.

<sup>50</sup> More UN negotiations seem not now to be very far away – probably they will be held towards the end of this summer.

<sup>51</sup> For a detailed analysis of assumptions guiding expectations of EU membership see Erol Kaymak, ‘Why the EU Catalyst Proved Insufficient to Solve the Cyprus Problem: The Politicization of European Values’, *Cyprus Policy Center*, the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, San Diego, 22 March, 2006.

<sup>52</sup> Cited in Jean Christou, ‘Guterres reaffirms UNFICYP’s importance but disappointed over lack of confidence building’, *Cyprus Mail*, 12 January, 2019.



Despite much hope placed in the potential for cooperation over hydrocarbon discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, subsequent developments have demonstrated the dominance of unilateral actions. Having concluded maritime border agreements with Egypt (2003), Lebanon (2007) and Israel (2010), the Republic of Cyprus delineated an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and invited foreign energy companies to proceed with exploration and drilling. As a reaction to drilling activities undertaken on 19 September 2011 by the US Company Noble Energy licensed by the Greek Cypriot side, Northern Cyprus concluded a Continental Shelf Delimitation Agreement with Turkey on 21 September 2011 and a licensing agreement with the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) on 22 September 2011. Importantly, the hydrocarbon exploration activity has aggravated the situation, because the delineation zones of the Republic of Cyprus are disputed by Turkey.

In addition to the questions of exploration, one of the core contentious points has been whether and how the hydrocarbon issue can be linked to the negotiation process. For the Greek Cypriot side, any discussion of sharing of acquired benefits could be possible only after the settlement of the Cyprus problem. As was underlined in 2012 by the then Greek Cypriot leader Demetris Christofias, “I repeat at the same time that in a reunified Cyprus the natural resources, including hydrocarbon, will be common wealth for all Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike”.<sup>53</sup> Prior to reunification, the Republic of Cyprus has been not only keen on keeping the hydrocarbon issue out of the negotiation process but also wary of any UN engagement in this issue. For the Turkish Cypriot side, the key priority remains a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem itself. By implication, the Turkish Cypriot authorities insisted on suspension of unilateral activities of hydrocarbon exploration until a solution is found. Alternatively, the Turkish Cypriot side also proposed in September 2011 the establishment of a special ad hoc committee, a bi-communal body formed by Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, that would discuss the question of revenues. What the options suggested by the Turkish Cypriot leadership demonstrate is that for Northern Cyprus what is at stake ‘is not sharing of wealth but sharing of sovereignty’.<sup>54</sup>

With regard to the hydrocarbon issue, from the Turkish Cypriot perspective the role of the international community has been central in influencing the Greek Cypriot position. As explained by the Turkish Cypriot Minister of Foreign Affairs Kudret Özersay, “While one side is able to benefit from this wealth, the other side, an equal partner over that wealth, is told by the international community that it can only benefit from this wealth as and when a settlement is reached. Naturally such a stance discourages the Greek Cypriots from cooperating on this issue”.<sup>55</sup> Tellingly, it was through the UN Secretary-General that the Turkish Cypriot authorities made a proposal to form an *ad hoc* committee dealing with revenues before a settlement is reached with the Greek Cypriot side. However, due to the lack



<sup>53</sup> Cited in Ayla Gürel, Fiona Mullen and Harry Tzimitras, ‘The Cyprus Hydrocarbons Issue: Context, Positions and Future Scenarios’, *PRIO Report 1*, Nicosia: PRIO Cyprus Centre, 2013, p. 44.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46

<sup>55</sup> ‘FM Özersay speaks at Atlantic Council’, <http://www.brtk.net>, 10 January, 2019



of agreement between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities the UN Secretary-General has refrained from engaging in the hydrocarbon issue. As the then Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Cyprus, Alexander Downer, commented on the Turkish Cypriot proposal, "If the two sides came together and asked us to play some sort of mediating role the Secretary-General would have a look at that and we'd discuss it and look at what we could do. But the two sides would have to come to us; we're not trying to impose ourselves on them".<sup>56</sup>

Thus far, discovery of natural gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean has proved to be of limited value in terms of enabling cooperation in a divided island. Instead, we can observe two effects that have hindered any prospects of resuming peace talks since the failure of the latest negotiation round of the Crans Montana conference in July 2017.

First, the hydrocarbon issue has undoubtedly increased international attention towards Cyprus. However, rather than serving as a catalyst, the hydrocarbon issue has added more conflict potential, not least due to competitive claims by Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus over maritime jurisdiction. A significant number of companies have been licensed by the Greek Cypriot side for exploration and drilling activities, such as Noble Energy and Exxon Mobil (US), ENI (Italy), Total (France), and Kogas (Korea), as well as Qatar Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell. These activities have not passed unnoticed by Turkey. In February 2018, Turkish military ships issued a warning to ENI's drill vessel Saipel 12000 impeding its movement in one of the blocks of the Exclusive Economic Zone claimed by the Republic of Cyprus. Further warning to foreign energy companies was voiced by Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in November 2018: "As we made the terrorists in Syria pay, we will not leave the scene to the bandits of the sea".<sup>57</sup> Whereas Turkish and Turkish Cypriot authorities still refer to the Turkish Cypriot offer to set up a joint ad hoc committee as valid for starting cooperation, drilling activities by Turkey are also under way. As reiterated by Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, "Let those who come to the region from far away, and their companies, see that nothing can be done in that region without us. Nothing at all can be done in the Mediterranean without Turkey, we will not allow that".<sup>58</sup>



Second, despite increasing internationalisation of the Cyprus problem due to the hydrocarbon issue, the interest in natural resources and the growing international attention has not translated into understanding of the concerns of the parties involved. On the contrary, the hydrocarbon question has effectively overshadowed the Cyprus problem itself. For the Greek Cypriot side, the question of gas reserves has become the highest priority, as it would provide much needed financial resources. For Turkish Cypriots, the core concern is the formalisation of status which would put an end to the international isolation that has resulted from non-recognition.

<sup>56</sup> Cited in Gürel et al, 'The Cyprus Hydrocarbons Issue: Context, Positions and Future Scenarios', p.55.

<sup>57</sup> Cited in The Guardian, 'Turkey warns oil companies against drilling near Cyprus', 4 November, 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Cited in Reuters, 'Turkey set to begin oil and gas drilling off Cyprus', 21 February, 2019.

However, the resumption of the negotiation process after the stalemate of Crans Montana is likely to remain highly elusive.

During the recent meeting at the house of the UN Special Representative on 26 February 2019, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders discussed a number of confidence-building measures. Yet the meeting did not appear to be promising with regard to the negotiation process itself. As the Greek Cypriot press commented, “These are all meaningless gestures that serve as a distraction from the reality that the peace process is dead and neither side is prepared to admit this, preferring instead to engage in confidence-building theatre while pretending they are making big efforts to agree the terms of reference that will lead to a resumption of talks”.<sup>59</sup> In the meantime, on 28 February 2019, ExxonMobil made public the results of its exploration activities, namely a natural gas find of 5-8 trillion cubic feet in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus, which is estimated to be the largest discovery of natural gas reserves worldwide in the last three years. What we can observe from developments over hydrocarbons is that if the priorities of the parties significantly diverge and key concerns remain unaddressed, catalysing forces are unlikely to work in solving the Cyprus problem.

## History & Culture

### The Last Ottoman Generation And the Making of the Modern Middle East

by Michael Provence  
Research Fellow in Residence,  
Institut d'Études Avancées de Nantes

Cambridge University Press, 2017, 336pp, ISBN  
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ISBN 978-0-521-74751-6 (paper)



At the end of the nineteenth century a 10-year-old boy began a long walk away from home. He kissed his mother, perhaps for the last time, cried a little, and left, carrying some belongings, carefully packed for the journey, accompanied by his father, an uncle, or older brother. They soon passed beyond beloved and familiar sights, through unfamiliar villages, or neighborhoods, through the passage of hours, or even days. Finally they reached the grand doorway of a large stone building, with an inscription neither could possibly read, bearing the signature of the Ottoman sultan, and reading ‘Imperial Military Middle School’. The boy kissed his father, perhaps

<sup>59</sup> Cyprus Mail, ‘Our View: Leaders’ meeting shows nothing of substance in Cyprus talks’, 27 February, 2019.

cried a bit more, but furtively, and passed through the doorway into the seemingly durable embrace of the modernizing state.

Expanding state education shaped the Ottoman Middle East as it shaped much of contemporary Europe. In Istanbul and provincial capitals like Damascus, Beirut, Adana, Salonica, among many, state planners built middle schools and preparatory schools to train new functionaries of the modernizing state. School buildings were among the largest municipal buildings and erecting them was a government priority from the 1870s onward.

For students exposed to the new order, anxiety gave way to excitement and pride when the new boys received their splendid woolen uniforms, complete with brass buttons bearing the imperial coat of arms, and a crimson fez. In the nineteenth century in Europe and the Mediterranean basin, most people were peasants and most died not far from their birthplace. It would not have taken the child long to realize that his life was about to change in a way different from the lives of his parents or grandparents. Education and association with the state would indeed open new vistas on a world beyond the village or neighborhood. School would be jarring, eased by new friends, and a dormitory full of boys just as alone and disoriented.



Teachers spoke unfamiliar languages and used new words, and there would surely be a huge and frightening quantity of things to learn. Military or civil middle school would, however, be the first real step in becoming part of a late Ottoman élite, and children would meet peers with whom they would share experiences and outlook over the coming decades. Everything they learned and did conditioned them to believe they were the foremost guardians of the Ottoman state, its sultan, and its Muslim people. They came to form a self-conscious élite and expected to assume leading roles in the army and politics. Similarly conditioned men played singular roles in all the countries that marched to war in 1914. In the former Ottoman lands, they continued their central role after the defeat in 1918.

Between the late nineties and about 2011, I walked around Damascus, Beirut, Istanbul, Adana, Ankara, Aleppo, Tripoli, and other places, tracking down and photographing Ottoman schools. There were a lot of them and I toured them when I could. Most of them are still state schools. A few, like the Damascus *rüşdiyye askeriye* have been demolished, and there is now a modern neo-Mamluk government mosque, and after more than thirty years, a still unfinished office tower in Marja Square. The Damascus military secondary school was in the Tankiz Mosque, which burned in the early 1960s and is now an Islamic girls' school under the Syrian ministry of *awqaf*. The Tribal School in Istanbul, a bit ironically I think, is a very expensive residential condominium with Bosphorus views. Do the people who live there know it used to be a gilded prison for boys from the wild hinterland? I doubt it.



Middle Eastern historians have usually focused on national histories and the rise of post-Ottoman nationalisms. Modernity, ethnic nationalism, and the Middle East post-colonial nation-state are understood to be intertwined; a perspective that also lay behind the League of Nations mandates and the post-World War I settlements.

In *The Last Ottoman Generation and the making of the Modern Middle East*, I tried to imagine the feeling of the post-war Middle East between 1918 and 1939 for people who lived through it. Many who were products of the Ottoman state education system argued that the divisions and governing arrangements of the post-Ottoman, colonial period were inferior, less free, and less representative than what had come before. Many protested that Ottoman rule had been better, more just, and more modern, than what we take to be the modern nation-state system of the Middle East. I wanted to understand the sudden demise of the evolving centuries-long Ottoman order and how people tried to survive this personal and political cataclysm.

The nineteenth-century European state had evolved in the century after the French revolution to become a state that educated, taxed, counted, conscripted, trained, and claimed to act in the name of, and derive its legitimacy from, the collective will and spirit of its population. The state sought to harness the loyalty of its majorities, while attempting more fitfully to insure the compliance of its religious minorities.

After the Great War the Ottoman State was partitioned and partly colonized. The Great Powers and various regional client states planned and discussed the partition of the Ottoman Empire long before the Balkan and Ottoman crises of 1911–13, and World War I. The partition plans, maneuvers, and negotiations were inevitably accompanied by a range of racial, religious, cultural, and civilizational oppositions. Put another way, a host of essential positive attributes claimed to characterize the British and French nations were arrayed against negative attributes claimed to characterize Ottoman Muslims. These assumptions and preconceptions were not always openly expressed but they underlay all aspects of the post-World War settlement, and in fact made possible the kind of breathtaking hubris the settlement displayed. Notably, as Ottoman intellectuals pointed out at the time, such partitions and colonial arrangements were not contemplated or replicated in the conquered territories of the Hapsburg or German empires in central Europe. Muslims and so-called Oriental Christians, including Greeks and Armenians, were considered to be unworthy of full self-rule.

The colonial legacy in the Middle East was a common experience, whether in Palestine, Iraq, Syria, or Turkey, without which the history of the region is incomprehensible. Further the durable tendency to view the history of the region through the lens of national histories of Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, etc. obscures commonalities that were clear to all until at least the 1940s.

Evolving legal and racial structures and theories legitimized colonial rule over formerly independent peoples. Efforts to colonize the Ottoman realms required a rhetorical removal of the Ottoman state from the story of Europe, and the tacit placement of Ottoman Muslims into racially deficient non-European categories that demanded colonial tutelage. The resulting inconsistencies at the core of the colonial and League of Nations mandate system had consequences for the post-Ottoman region and its people that are still unfolding one hundred years later.

The idea of the book as a transnational history of anti-colonial insurgency and political struggle evolved since my days as a graduate student living in Damascus in the 1990s. Walking the streets of the city every day, I realized that the physical Ottoman structure of the city was mostly intact and more a part of everyday life than much of what had come after 1918. I slowly became aware of roads, schools, railways, shops, and cafes, electrical plants, drinking water, and river diversion projects, and government and residential buildings of every description, most built in

the second half of the 19th century.

In the book I follow the adventures and struggles of the last Ottoman Arab generation through the interwar decades. Their example shows that for those who lived through them, the borders, states, and national histories that characterize the usual framework for understanding the region made little sense. The book attempts to re-imagine a post-Ottoman Middle East of great cities, and rural and pastoral hinterlands, interconnected through modern infrastructure, and institutions, undivided by borders, ruling arrangements, or the constructed barriers of human consciousness.

A century later, the poisonous fruit of the Middle East colonial settlement is still in the headlines. One hundred years after the end of the Great War, one of the states created in its wake, Syria, is in an advanced state of civil war and social and political disintegration. The conflict is widely claimed to be the gravest humanitarian and refugee crisis since World War II. The roots of the conflict in Syria today, like many other regional conflicts, reach directly into the polluted soil sown by the post-War settlement, and I hope that readers may discern the shadows of these roots, and know that the suffering of today did not come from nowhere, but from the conviction, still nurtured widely, that some people were more deserving of life and liberty than others simply by the accident of their birth, and that the people who have suffered most from this conviction, now and in the past, did nothing to deserve their awful inheritance.

**The Author**



Yeşim Güzelpınar, Organizer of the 'Taste of Anatolia' Film Festival,

Interviewed by Elizabeth Orrin

EO: *What is the genesis of 'Taste of Anatolia'? What inspired you to develop the idea?*

YG: Balık Arts, which I founded in 1999 originally to work with Turkish speaking children and young people through the arts, has evolved over the years to include all ethnicities in its work. In addition to organising filmmaking workshops and transnational youth exchange projects with several partner organisations in the UK, Turkey, Cyprus, Europe and beyond, we have been organising screenings of films made by young people as well as professional film makers, particularly from Turkey. We realised that there was no film festival in Cambridge dedicated to films from



Turkey, and existing film festivals and cinemas screened few Turkish films, if any. As the charity is based in Cambridge we felt that it was our duty to promote the cinema of Turkey in our 'hood'. I am on the programming team of Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) in Bangladesh, and as I witnessed how much they managed to organise with so little over the years, I promised myself that my organisation would also start its own festival in Cambridge as soon as possible. This finally materialised in September 2018.

EO: *Did you have any experience in organising film festivals prior to 'Taste of Anatolia'?*

YG: The 14th edition of the London Turkish Film Festival was organised under the auspices of Balık Arts after a long pause in the history of the festival, as a result of a request from the festival director. I worked as the festival manager and thanks to contributions from the Balık Arts team, the festival secured



funding from the Ministry of Culture in Turkey for the first time, which helped spread the festival to various venues over London, with gala screenings at prestigious venues such as the BFI and BAFTA and with stars like Türkan Şoray and Hülya Koçyiğit in attendance. We parted company with the festival during the 16th edition. In 2014 we organised the first international film festival in Northern Cyprus, in three cities and the UN Buffer Zone, with sponsorship from Creditwest Bank of Altınbaş Holding. We have also been involved in various festivals as partners or contributors. These include Dhaka International Film Festival, for which I have been curating films mainly from Turkey since 2016 and performed jury duties; Watersprite International Student Film Festival, where we have served in the jury for the last two years; and more recently Sochi International Film Festival in Russia where I was invited as a co-chair of the Shorts and Documentary Section, as well as being the programmer for one film from Turkey.

We are ready to organise new festivals with partners from all around the world, as there is always so much to learn from one another.

EO: *Why is this festival called 'Taste of Anatolia'?*

YG: Turkey is a big country with a wealth of cultures, traditions and art. We felt that the word Anatolia captured this concept, unifying the many communities that live together, while at the same time respecting their diversity. We also thought it would entice potential viewers wanting to get a bite and glimpse into Turkish culture.

EO: *You are the director of the festival but would you also let the reader know who else has taken part in the development of this idea from start to finish?*

YG: Bernadette Schramm, the producer of Watersprite International Student Film Festival held within Cambridge University was an advisor to the festival. Hakan Eğri was responsible for finances and various logistic issues, the help behind the scenes if you will. Of course, I am also grateful to you for joining our team as a festival producer after your graduation from Cambridge University.

In addition to our small team, we had many volunteers from Turkey and the UK, as we ran an EU funded transnational youth exchange project in parallel to the festival. Maybe it would not be correct to state that everyone had been involved from beginning to end, but all made valuable contributions.

EO: *How did you manage to find sponsors for the event?*

YG We hardly had any financial sponsors. The festival was mainly funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the EU, as part of the Reel Skills youth exchange project. We also received a small amount of funding from Film Hub South East, and a few in-kind contributions such as festival t-shirts, bags and presents for the reception guests (Erol Albayrak, Tees Limited, Aster Textiles and İmren Han Hotel). We grafted hard and relied on previous donations made by our patrons who help support our work year-round. We are always in need of support, so please do get in contact if you wish to help as a volunteer or donate to the charity.

EO: *Will there be another `Taste of Anatolia` festival in 2019 or thereafter?*

YG: Yes, the plans are already underway. The Opening Reception will take place on 27 September 2019, followed by two screening days on 28 and 29 September. We can't reveal too much at this stage, but we are already very excited!

EO: *How different is this festival from other Turkish film festivals, for instance, from the London Turkish Film Festival?*

YG: Apart from the London Turkish Film Festival, we are the only one in the UK. Moreover, I believe the last edition of LTFF was online only, not in locations with audiences and professionals in attendance. It's probably safe to say then that in 2018 we were the only 'live' film festival in the UK dedicated to films from Turkey.

EO *Is it a `travelling` activity to be staged in various places or is it always going to be in Cambridge?*

YG: We would love to take the festival to other cities in the UK, and even beyond. We are currently having discussions for screenings in Norwich, and potentially Oxford. We would be happy to explore further partnerships, as we are always eager to expand our network.

EO: *Has it created any interest in the Turkish and/or English media?*

YG: Yes, especially in the Turkish media in the UK! Avrupa newspaper and T-Vine magazine have been our media sponsors and allocated good amounts of coverage to the festival. We have also been covered in



Turkish national and online media. The young people present during the project moreover helped show the long lasting impact the project had on their lives via social media.

EO: *How do the `Erasmus` students fit into this festival?*

YG: We ran 'Reel Skills', an Erasmus+ funded youth exchange project, in 2018. Although we received Erasmus+ funding, the young people were not 'students' like those who take part in university exchanges. This was a separate programme entirely dedicated to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The first part of the project was implemented in Bodrum, Turkey, focusing on film making skills, intercultural dialogue and young people making short films around the themes of migrants and refugees. The second part took place in parallel to 'Taste of Anatolia', and included workshops on how to run community film screenings and festivals. During the festival, we also screened the shorts made by the young people during the first part. As a result, they experienced what professionals do at film festivals

when their films are analysed: they answered questions from the audience, including some celebrities from Turkey, who joined the festival as well as taking part in making a professional short film. One group were particularly praised, and we look forward to tracking their journey in the future.

EO: *Who attended the launch of the festival in 2018? Will these people be involved in future festivals?*

YG: Many academics, professionals and young film makers from Turkey and the UK (producers, directors, crew members) were present: Julie Smith (Baroness Smith of Newnham), Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge, local politicians and film lovers. In terms of notable actors Nur Sürer, Kadir Doğulu and Sıtare Akbaş were in attendance. Baroness Smith is the Festival Patron and we hope that her involvement will continue along with others.

EO: *How many people attended the 2018 'Taste of Anatolia' Film Festival? What was the ratio of Turkish attendees as compared to non-Turkish attendees?*

YG: About 250 people attended the 'Taste of Anatolia' Film Festival. Although most people present had some knowledge of Turkish cinema or films, others discovered a completely new world. These are the kinds of bonds we seek to foster, and we really hope that next year will introduce even more people to an industry which keeps on growing. Something important we learned was that the beginning of September was not the ideal time for a film festival, as not all university students had come back yet and local families could still be on their summer holiday. These are the main reasons we have decided to push back the next edition, moving it to the end of September 2019.

EO: *What steps were taken to make the festival films accessible to a non-Turkish audience? Sub-titles? Voice-over?*

YG: All films had English subtitles. We do not really believe in voice-overs, as actors' performances can be dramatically changed and the feel of the atmosphere altered. Different festivals have different policies, but we believe that in a multi-cultural world, it is important to hear what other cultures sound like in one of their local languages.

EO: *How do you intend to make this festival grow? In what ways?*

YG: We will open up the festival to more submissions via multiple channels. We are also hoping to have a wider publicity and promotion strategy so that more people are aware of the festival; of course, this all depends on funding and resources, but we are confident we can learn from last year's proceedings. We will apply to the Ministry of Culture in Turkey and other institutions for funding. However, funding will not impede the organisation of the festival; the size of it will depend on what we are able to raise. Small or big, the cinema of Turkey will be represented in Cambridge, no matter what.

EO: *Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing about the second 'Taste of Anatolia' festival next year. Until next time!*



## ROAD TO GURBET\*

In my search for colours of gurbet  
I found;  
Red in struggle  
Yellow in labour  
Black in grief  
Blue in hope

In my search for voice of gurbet  
I heard;  
Nostalgia in its folksongs  
Elegiac in its saz  
Poetry in its lips  
Love in its ballad

Set off to feel the pain of gurbet  
I found;  
Memory in its longing  
Wound in its heart  
Love in its soul  
Sorrow in its bosom

Fading away on the road to gurbet  
I saw;  
Colours turning into years  
Years turning into grief  
Grief turning into love  
And longing cradled with love  
Embroidered all these emotions  
To the essence of life  
To the seed of life  
To the light of life  
Days, weeks and month  
Labour's scent of the land  
Pain of love  
So delicately embraced  
Just like the beauty of eternal poetry  
On the leaves of history tree

\*a place far from home

**Semra Eren-Nijhar**  
Author, academic  
and filmmaker



☆☆☆☆

## Noteworthy Events

by Kerem Bayraktaroğlu & al.

### LECTURES/Talks

#### 'Göbekli Tepe'

Anglo-Turkish Society Lecture

**Speaker:** Lee Clare

**Date and time:** Thursday 18 April 2019, 6 pm

**Venue:** Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy Street, Fitzrovia, London





**'Headscarf-wearing fashion professionals:  
New roles and old challenges'**

**Speaker:** Magdalena Crăciun (Ph.D UCL)

A BIAA Lecture:

**Date and time:** Thursday 2 May 2019, 7 pm

**Venue:** Wolfson Foundation Conference Room, British Institute at Ankara, Turkey

**'10 Minutes, 38 Seconds in this Strange World'**

The Royal Academy Festival of Ideas

**Speaker:** Elif Shafak

**Date and time:** Sunday 5 May 2019, 2.30-3.30

**Venue:** The Royal Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly, Mayfair, London W1J 0BD

**More Information:** Elif Shafak was born in Turkey and now lives in London. She is one of today's most influential writers who straddles East and West. Her work has been translated into fifty languages. She discusses gender, politics and identity and her forthcoming novel '10 Minutes, 38 Seconds in this Strange World'. This event will be followed by a Q&A and by a book signing in the Burlington Gardens entrance hall, outside Pace Gallery.

Elif Shafak

10 Minutes 38  
Seconds in This  
Strange World

PENGUIN  
VIKING

FINAL COVER TO BE REVEALED

## CONFERENCES

### Investing in Turkey Forum

**Date:** Thursday 25 April 2019

**Venue:** The Waldorf Hilton, Aldwych, London

**More Information:** The conference will provide a networking platform for business professionals to explore the key investment opportunities in Turkey, including PPP infrastructure projects transport (airports, roads, bridges, railways); education (schools and universities); healthcare (hospitals, health campuses, laboratories) as well as prospects in energy, renewable energy, private equity and the real estate sector.

### UK Turkish Overseas Investment Forum

**Date:** Friday 26 April 2019

**Venue:** The Waldorf Hilton, Aldwych, London

### British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES)

**Dates:** Monday 24 June – Wednesday 26 June 2019

**Venue:** University of Leeds

**More Information:** The BRISMES Conference is the largest annual academic meeting of Middle East experts in the UK. We are delighted to welcome two outstanding keynote speakers: **Professor Mona Harb** (AUB) and **Professor Salman Sayyid** (University of Leeds). The event will also include over eighty panel sessions, a welcome drinks reception featuring The Nyawa Quartet musicians, a publishers' exhibition, and lunch for delegates on Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th June.



### Second International NEHT Workshop 2019

Environmental Histories of the Ottoman  
Empire and Turkey

**Dates:** Saturday 7 September – Monday 9 September 2019





**Venue:** Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

### International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Robotics

**Dates:** Tuesday 20 August – Sunday 25 August 2019

**Venue:** Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

**More Information:** [www: http://specom.nw.ru/icr2019](http://specom.nw.ru/icr2019)

The 4th International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Robotics attracts researchers in the area of human-robot interaction, social robotics and collaborative robotics.

### Towards Higher Education (THE) Conference

**Dates:** Friday 27 September – Saturday 28 September 2019

**Venue:** Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

### International Energy Congress & Expo - EIF Turkey 2019

**Dates:** Wednesday 6 November – Friday 8 November 2019

**Venue:** Congresium Ankara, Turkey

**More Information:** International Energy Congress & Expo. EIF TURKEY EXPO showcases Renewable Energy Systems and Technologies, Solar & Wind Power Systems, Oil & Gas, Wind Turbine Towers, Electricity Generation Systems



## CONCERTS

### 1001 Nights Tangos of Istanbul

**Soloist (Tenor):** Ekrem Demir

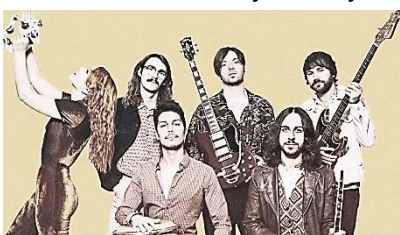
**Date:** Saturday 6 April 2019, 7 pm

**Venue:** St James Church, Prebend Street, London N1 8PF

**More Information:** In Istanbul, every love turns into a song. Every song carries scars of Istanbul and hides its story inside. You discover them intimately as you savour their melodies. In this unique concert, they are performing Istanbul Tangos. They were originally composed by various composers from Istanbul in Turkish and specially arranged by group member Ethem Demir for our group.

### Altın Gün Concert

**Date:** Wednesday 8 May 2019



**Venue:** The Jazz Café, 5 Parkway, London NW1 7PG (0207 485 6834), [thejazzcafelondon.com/](http://thejazzcafelondon.com/)

**More Information:** Altın Gün is an Amsterdam band that plays Turkish psychedelic folk rock. Their debut album *On* was released in 2018 by Bongo Joe Records. The band mainly plays covers of Turkish bands from the sixties and seventies. The name means Golden Day

### Berkсан and Hande Ünsal London Concert

**Date:** Sunday 30 June 2019, 6 pm

**Venue:** Dingwalls, Middle Yard, London NW1 8AB

**More Information:** Legendary Turkish Pop singer Berkсан and the amazing Hande Ünsal coming to London for 1 night only! Prices from: £30.00

## FESTIVALS

### 3rd Turkish Cypriot Cultural Festival

**Date:** Sunday 23 June 2019, 11 am – 8 pm

**Venue:** Donkey Lane, Enfield EN1 1YP



**More Information:** Live music, folk dancers, food, arts and crafts etc. Following on from the success of last two years' festival, CTCA UK will once again host the Turkish Cypriot Cultural Festival to celebrate and share the Turkish Cypriot culture.

### West London Turkish Festival

**Date:** Sunday 07 July 2019, 10 am – 8 pm

**Venue:** Springwest Academy (outdoors), Browells Lane, Feltham TW13 7EF

**More Information:** West London Turkish Festival, an annual charity event, brings every year a few thousand people with diverse backgrounds together from all over London and the UK. Taste delicious foods and enjoy the various entertainment and fun activities on offer for all people; organized for the 4th consecutive year. Food, stage performances, football tournament, stands etc.

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### Özlem's Turkish Table

Charity Turkish Cooking Evening

**Date:** Thursday 3 April 2019, 7.15 pm

**Venue:** Neptune, 10 Church Street, Weybridge KT13 8DX



#### 'Taste of Anatolia' Film Festival

**Date:** Friday 27 September – Sunday 29 September 2019

**Venue:** St John's College Old Divinity School, Cambridge

**More Information:** Organised by Balik Arts, an arts charity working with disadvantaged children and young people, as well as assisting new/emerging artists. Filmmaking, film screenings and festivals have been at the core of our charity. Website: <http://www.balikarts.org.uk>, Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/balikarts>

♩♩♩♩♩

Çârgâh makam



### Transcultural adventures in *makam* ornamentation

Michael Ellison

Reader in Composition  
University of Bristol

There is an innovative approach to music gaining momentum throughout the world in the early 21st century, to which Turkey, with such a profound, still living musical heritage in both *makam* (melodic system) and Anatolian so-called 'folk' (*halk*) arenas, is set to be a major contributor. This phenomenon – itself not without precedents, but which has intensified over especially the last 15 years – is perhaps best described by a term increasingly used both in scholarship and practice: *transcultural*. There is no single, recognizable 'style' of music being created using transcultural approaches; rather it represents a working method creating a plethora of possibilities

caused by the multiplicity of intersections of diverse musico-cultural traditions in the world today – whether in Brazil, Berlin, Uzbekistan, Palestine, Istanbul, or anywhere else. Various definitions exist for the term ‘transcultural’, which stands alongside other possible descriptors foregrounding the presence of diverse cultural elements, such as ‘intercultural,’ ‘intracultural,’ ‘multicultural,’ ‘transtraditional’ and so on. My own, stubbornly asserted definition of *transcultural*, dating back to 2013 in the wake of the *Say I am You-Mevlâna* (Söyle Ben Senim-Istanbul Music Festival and Rotterdam Operadagen in 2012) (Ellison, 2013) is simply: music that draws from the resources of more than one established music tradition in its conception and performance. The most obvious determining factors for early 21st century transcultural practices, distinguishing these from earlier practices – are that instruments from diverse traditions perform transculturally conceived works (or projects) together. For me, this makes a new kind of contemporary music informed equally by multiple traditions possible.

Others may, and do, define the term differently. To some, *transcultural* has a universalist connotation (Knowles, 2010), associated with theatre figures such as Peter Brook, whose works such as *Mahabharatha* have been widely successful, but have provoked ethical controversy – usually from critics associated with previously colonised cultures given a ‘voice’ in his productions (Bharucha, 1993). Others assert that there can be nothing ‘above culture’ and reject the use of this term altogether. Another key idea behind my definition is to be able to emphasise both veneration of the vast amount of knowledge and culture inherent in existing, living traditions, and the freedom to create something not bound by any of these in creating new work (Ellison, 2014). That is the vision that informs the *Beyond East and West* European Research Council (ERC) grant (2015-present) for which I am Principal Investigator, which has already produced one opera for the Istanbul Music Festival, *Deniz Küstü* (Ellison, 2016), with a second, *Bin Boğalar Efsanesi* due in 2020.<sup>60</sup>

It is clear, however, that preparing musicians for such projects in a thorough, balanced, way that actually enhances understanding of music from the ‘other’ tradition amongst practitioners, allows musical and cultural significance to go much further. Intensive work on *makam* itself by Western-trained musicians, and on detailed contemporary notation by *makam* players, may be defined more properly as *intercultural* activity (Knowles, 2010) following Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins (2000, p 7) who define it as ‘the meeting in the moment of performance of two or more cultural traditions,’ and whose ‘inter’ prefix implies much give and take and adjustment in the process of creation. For me, to prepare for transcultural flights (whatever the composer’s vision may be, and where musicians should really be playing one music, not two) with any integrity requires much ‘on the ground’ work, through preparatory workshop phases, grounded as they are in direct learning and exchange. This begins essentially with the hard work of learning the ways of the ‘other’ through extensive rehearsal and practice: something our Istanbul-based Hezarfen Ensemble<sup>61</sup> (of which I am co-director along with violist Ulrich Mertin) has had the luxury of pursuing over 5



<sup>60</sup> It should also be noted that my definition concerns transculturally produced *music*, not transcultural *studies*, for which some scholars are also currently loosely employing the term for comparative work no different from the comparative musicology of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>61</sup> Hezarfen Ensemble website: <https://www.hezarfenensemble.com/>

years, thanks to ERC support. To establish a consistency and necessary *répétition* in this work makes a world of difference.

In the most basic sense, 21st century transcultural music combines not only the ideas of, but the sounds and instruments of distinctly different musical traditions. Our vision for Hezarfen Ensemble is that once we can play anything from the most avant-garde contemporary music to *makam* music, we will achieve an extraordinary palette from which to create something with true relevance for our time, i.e. transcultural music.<sup>62</sup> We include voice in this process as well: *Say I am You* included a part for ‘High Azeri tenor’ for the role of Shams-i Tabriz; *Deniz Küstü* was entirely sung by Western-trained opera singers, with ney, kemençe and kanun featured in the instrumental ensemble. *Bin Boğalar Efsanesi* – scheduled for premiere at Istanbul Music Festival/Arter in 2021 – employs two traditional singers and ‘competing narration’ for the other two vocal parts: a link to the oral histories of the *Yörük* Türkmen, the subject of Kemal’s novel, who consistently stress their presumed lineage going back to Khorasan.

In the remaining space, I would like to take one musical element to provide an example of a negotiated intercultural discourse: one of those most difficult for Western-trained musicians (who, in our group of course, are mainly Turkish) to get a handle on in *makam* music without extensive listening and training: ornamentation.

This topic has been an adventure from the start. In my own composed music, for the most part, I have left it to the kemençe player or ney player to play whatever dynamics and ornamentation they see fit. If a grace note really is essential for the melody, I’ll write one, but – and this may sound strange – I have found that simply giving a melodic outline or even notes in a box produces often more satisfactory sonic results, less dependent on notation than on *makam* musicians’ long-cultivated instincts for interpretation. This means less prescriptive notation. Towards the beginning of our forthcoming book *Makam Instruments and Voices in Contemporary Music*, currently under review by a major publisher for release in 2020/21, in the ornamentation chapter, I write:

Ornamentation [*süsleme, çarpma*] is a profound subject in makam music. From players’ perspectives, this can be seen as adding notes to the already existing notation, but also it encompasses differences in bowing changes and techniques, dynamics, timbre, and rhythmic feel. Since players generally interpret *makam* music using a full repertoire of ‘spontaneous’ nuance and ornamentation applied to the composed, basic melodic shape, one normally can expect even the simplest line to be interpreted in such ways, and not played merely ‘as written’. *Makam* players bring this cultural heritage, or ‘equipment’ with them from their extensive training, applying such nuances of expression and interpretation almost unconsciously...With new music that has any ‘melodic’ character, the level of notational detail needed in a new score from a composer, when compared to that needed for a Western player to achieve a similar, satisfactory musical result, may be much lower. Indeed, even when a

<sup>62</sup> Not only Hezarfen Ensemble is pursuing inter- or transcultural directions in music today. Atlas Ensemble (Netherlands), Omnibus Ensemble (Uzbekistan) and Sandeep Bhagwati’s two ensembles, Extrakte (Berlin) and Ecstasie of Influence (Montreal) are pursuing similar aims with varying methodologies, along with many other examples. Composers in Turkey who have most pursued the integration of makam instruments include one of the main collaborators on our ERC project, Onur Türkmen, as well as Evrim Demirel, Uğraş Durmuş, Münir Nurettin Beken, Hasan Uçarsu, Kamran İnce, and Turgay Erdener.



composer does write out detailed ornaments a player may change those or add additional nuance. (2020, forthcoming).

Conversely, with Western musicians, who usually have many more elements decided by the composer, and who generally have far less experience ‘interpreting’ melodic shapes in this way according to a performance school, often a composer needs to write out every detail possible for the selfsame melodic line for it to even sound ‘musical’. If we are talking about nuances endemic to *makam*, this is usually not practically possible in normal rehearsal time, and it is close to impossible to convey more than a general sense of the sound actually desired.

I described the dimension of ornamentation as a key musical difference needing attention (along with tuning and timbre) in the ‘Mystery of Turkish Sound’ section of our 2014 ERC project outline (with one reviewer chastising my description of the sound as ‘Romantic!’), promising to work on demystifying and unpacking the subject for Western-trained musicians. At the start of our work on this ‘problem’ in 2015, for the first year, our Hezarfen musicians would do their best to imitate what *makam*



players played, in true *Meşk* tradition. There was, however, a certain opaqueness about the process for those so new to playing this music. As an example, our 4-string kemençe player, Nermin

Kaygusuz, declared more than once how she preferred to ornament as little and tastefully as possible – whereupon the musical phrase that followed this declaration would include far more subtle ornamentation and *portamenti* within even a single fragment of melody than Hezarfen players could get a grasp on. Kaygusuz was so automatic in her inclusion of nuances, even when claiming to omit them, that there was far more to her playing than the written notes of a *Saz Semaisi* or *Peşrev*. Enter young *makam* violinist Murat Gürel, who teaches at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, formerly Gazi University. I had asked him to lead one pilot session during our workshops on ornamentation, since Murat had written his dissertation (Gürel, 2016) on that very subject of ornamentation in *makam*.

Before his first session, Murat sent detailed transcriptions of Kâni Karaca’s interpretation of Itri’s *Buselik Beste*, along with a recording of Karaca’s performance for Hezarfen members to listen to. Grace notes, glissandi, ‘unspoken’ grace notes, molto vibrato, etc. all were added to the original notation, which he included for reference above in its unadulterated form (see figure 1). That looked promising for Western players [though far too detailed for *makam* players!] but I wondered, ‘yes, but what will it actually *sound like* when they just play what’s written?’ Indeed, at first the results sounded nothing like *makam* ornamentation – certainly not like Kâni Karaca. But then the genius of Gürel’s teaching revealed itself, when he taught the transcription not by playing and reading only, but by a combination of singing first to, then with the players in solfège, then singing on the syllable ‘o’, then playing on his violin, all in rapid succession. Each motive in the piece was numbered, making rehearsal intensive and efficient, even when going around the room to hear each player individually. An intercultural gap was being filled by in essence combining *makam* and Western approaches: intensive aural learning mixed with a detailed notational aid. After a few more sessions, Hezarfen members were able to play some of these passages convincingly. Even over three days the depth of learning was remarkable, if notation-dependent. Now, *Meşk* purists (though this teacher-to-student oral transmission method hardly exists anymore in its original sense) would say ‘the only way to learn is by ear’ and this remains true, actually. But for musicians



who *do* read detailed notation at very high levels, Gürel's transcriptions were the equivalent of boarding an express train towards a destination, rather than walking. Notation, after all, although it can never describe music exactly (in Mozart, either!), makes more conscious what one is aiming for and – as I see it – that one is aiming for *something* which must be included. The exact sound of that something can be learned by ear with repetition and effective explanation. Seeing the Itri transcribed made our musicians' appreciation of the depth of nuance included in *makam* music reach a new level, which was coupled with the joy of actually making conscious, tangible progress.



**Itri's Buselik Makam Composition**  
(Transposition to "E" note)  
(13 Phrases) Buhurizade Mustafa Itri (1630,1640?-1711,1712?)  
Arranged by Dr.Murat GUREL

Figure 1: İtri Beste in Buselik, first 3 bars<sup>63</sup>

Of course this didn't mean everyone was now an expert in *makam* – far from it! In this instance all had basically memorised a way of playing Itri's piece according to Karaca's ornamentation, and only that, which would never be the situation for a lifelong *makam* player. Still, it equipped each musician, after several transcriptions like this, to be able to go back to 'traditional' *makam* notation with no ornamentation written, to hear better what was being done by experienced players, and to begin to create their own. Violinists, cellists and clarinetists in the project are increasingly able to share a stage with someone like Nermin Kaygusuz with some air of convincingness even in traditional Ottoman music. While to some it may seem even perverse to ask Western trained players to approach *makam* at this level of detail, our aspiration with Hezarfen Ensemble is for it to become an ensemble unique in the world. The acquisition of real tools for realising *makam* makes it far more prepared to welcome a variety of transcultural creations, combining these skills with the 'contemporary music' side best cultivated by playing Ligeti, Grisey, Yayalar, Çetiz

<sup>63</sup> For audio and video examples of Gürel's and Kaygusuz's workshops see *Beyond East and West* Website: <http://www.beyondeastandwest.org/>

and others. An added bonus is that all the detailed intonation of *makam* music also makes playing 'microtonal' contemporary music by anyone easier to grasp. As Ozan Tunca, an experienced cellist, remarked succinctly after several sessions with both Gürel and Kaygusuz 'you know, this is really improving my ear.'

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Scenes 3&4: <https://vimeo.com/user56012711/sea-crossed-scenes-3-4>

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## MERSIN CITRUS FRUIT FESTIVAL



A report by Mina Toksöz, International Economist

In 2018, while the Turkish Lira saw sharp ups-and-downs, and the -- not that far away -- Syrian crisis smouldered on, the 6th Citrus Fruit Festival was held in the south-east

Mediterranean port city of Mersin on 17-18 November. I only heard about this from my uncle, who lives there, and thought it would be good to report it, as such regional events are rarely covered outside Turkey. It is also a good opportunity to admire the resilient philosophical perspective of local people who have seen many eastern Mediterranean civilisations rise and fall since ancient times!

The festival was attended by around 200,000 people according to its website (<http://www.mersinnarenciyefestivali.com/tr/festival/11/festival-programi>), attracting not only Mersin residents but visitors from nearby towns and villages as well as trade representatives from citrus-importing countries. Crowds lined the streets to watch the carnival parade on the first day with clowns, circus acts, musical groups and folk dances with performers from 30 countries. Other highlights were a sail-boat regatta in the bay, a chess competition, and food stands presenting a myriad of citrus-based culinary delights. A Mobile-Art Exhibition and concerts by the Turkish Navy Military Band, Mersin State Opera and Ballet, and Mersin Capella Choir added further cultural dimensions.

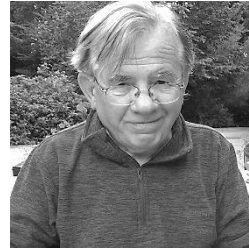


The festival was sponsored by the Mersin governorate and the Mersin Board of Trade with contributions from the Mersin Municipality and other nearby local authorities and community groups. Mersin area is home to 500,000 lemon, orange and grapefruit trees, making it one of Turkey's most important citrus producing – and, with the Mersin port, exporting provinces. One quarter of citrus grown in the country and 35% of citrus exports come from Mersin. Citrus production provides tens of thousands of families with livelihood and is reported to contribute TL1billion to the regional economy.

Mersin is fortunate to have the historical, cultural and artistic infrastructure to support such an event. The city already hosts international music and theatre festivals. In fact, more could have been done to showcase its cultural assets. In addition to the Mersin State Opera and Ballet, there is the Classical Turkish Music Choir and AKOB Baroque Music Ensemble, as well as an active theatre scene supported by the İel Art Association. Trips could be arranged to visit the nearby archaeological sites associated with ancient Cilicia that remains off the beaten tourist track. There is also historic Tarsus, the birthplace of St Paul and where Anthony and Cleopatra had their first fateful tryst.

The success of this year's festival has prompted talk to broaden it into a week-long Mersin City Cultural Festival, or maybe an International Citrus and Culture Festival. (On this see: <http://www.cukurovagazetesi.com/mersin-narenciye-festivali-nasil-uluslararasi-kultur-sanat-festivali-olur-65426.html>). The plan is to build it up in preparation for the holding of the 14<sup>th</sup> International Citrus Congress to be held in Mersin in 2020. Good luck to the *Mersinliler!*





## TEENAGE SPRING IN GALLIPOLI

by Erhun Kula (non-resident)  
Professor of Environmental Economics,  
Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul;  
Writer of poetry, living in Belfast

Spring flowers in riot  
in Rumelia's Chunk Bhair  
showing how sublime life can be  
even under shellfire.

Murat of Travnik  
son of Murat  
Murat Muratovic  
in his seventeen  
holding the line  
in a trench of Lone Pine.

This is Gallipoli  
in the year of nineteen fifteen  
lines full of soldiers  
riotous flowers in between.

Youngsters daydream  
on both sides of the divide  
the earth is their shield  
like their mothers  
her scent so sweet  
firing their desire  
to go soon  
away from here.

Dreams tumble  
like a wounded horseman  
from his horseback  
when Mehmet the Pomak  
carries the news  
it is time to attack  
while the sun is out  
catching the eyes  
of the Anzac.

Murat's best mate  
Artin  
hugs him tight  
begging forgiveness  
from the bottom of his heart  
for errors on his part  
if any.

Ladders stand erect  
bayonets fixed  
all ready to take  
the final step.

Ottoman officer Abbas  
the eagle of Kafkas  
in his spotless uniform  
topped with shining stars  
blows the whistle  
to take his boys  
heavens above.

Fears submerge  
nothing matters any more  
fighters surge  
in a deafening roar;

Allah, Allah, Allah, Allah,  
Allah, Allah, Allah,  
Allah, Allah,  
Allah,  
All,  
A.

Suddenly  
the breeze eased  
wild flowers stopped swinging  
the Lone Pine in tears  
begging them not to hop  
over the top.

Murat sensed  
he had a few minutes life left  
in his slight frame  
he knew  
he'll never see his mother  
and more than that  
he won't ever taste  
the excitement of kissing  
his Leyla  
for the first time.

Trench came alive  
no time to waste  
soldiers in their haste  
hugging their friends  
saying goodbye  
a few jokes in the air  
to ease the awesome fear.

Murat was the last to fall  
in Lone Pine's shadow  
as he was parting  
caught the eyes of the Anzac  
who pumped five into him  
a teenager born in Connemara  
Michael O'Hara  
his eyes just as blue  
but watery  
for the last two bullets  
were unnecessary.

Pearl drops in Irish eyes  
Murat's last consolation  
knowing for sure  
at least he cared.

Hundred and four springs past  
since Lone Pine cried  
hills in their Sunday best  
waiting to welcome  
visitors from far  
for Michael and Murat  
who were left behind.

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## Conferences & Organisations



### The Levantines: Identities and Heritage

The Levantine Heritage Foundation's 3rd  
International Conference, Athens, 2-3 November 2018

As I compose this report Greece's Parliament has recently voted narrowly to ratify agreement to a change of name to one of the country's northern neighbours. But the newly agreed name 'Republic of Northern Macedonia' may not finally put to bed a dispute that has lasted nearly three decades, given that many Greeks are fiercely opposed to their neighbour's use of the name 'Macedonia'. It's all a question, we are



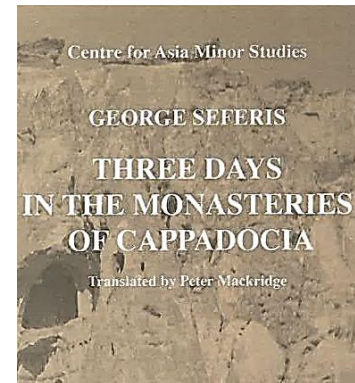
told, of national identity, heritage and ownership. Questions of identity, national or otherwise, are of course the flavour of our times, for better or worse, so perhaps it was more than appropriate that the Levantine Heritage Foundation's 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference in Athens last autumn should have focused on the identity and heritage of the 'Levantines'. Who were these people, and how can they be defined? Where were they all from? What was their place and function in a multicultural Ottoman world, and what legacy have they left to the post-Ottoman world of Greece and the eastern Mediterranean? Amongst all the other major centres of Levantine life and business, LHF Chairman Quentin Compton-Bishop points out in his Welcome Note to the conference booklet, "Athens was and still is a hub for trade with the Levant. The heritage of Greek Levantine communities and networks still resonates today."



This conference followed two previous successful LHF international conferences held in Istanbul (2014) and London (2016), focusing on Commerce and Diplomacy and Shipping and Trade, respectively. It was held over a Friday and Saturday and consisted of some thirty presentations of one sort or another, including two Keynote Speeches and Roundtables beginning and ending each day. The venue was the Cotsen Hall, attached to the historic Gennadius Library and serving as the cultural centre of the American School of Classical Studies in the leafy and attractive Kolonaki district of Athens. Speakers and other participants like myself came from Greece, Turkey, Italy, France, Germany, Malta, Romania, the USA and the UK.

On the Thursday before and the Sunday after the conference itself a special programme of group visits was arranged for those able to participate. The idea was to complement the overall theme and input of the conference with visits to certain highly relevant museums and research and heritage associations in Athens. I had to miss the Sunday visit to the National Historical Museum on Stadiou Street, but fortunately arrived in time to take part in the Thursday visits. Our first stop in the early afternoon was the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (CAMS), located on historic Kydathineon Street in central Athens, where we were welcomed both by the LHF officers and trustees Quentin Compton-Bishop and Craig Encer and by two of the local Greek conference organisers Ioanna Koukouni and Dimitris Kamouzis. Dimitris, a researcher at the Centre, then gave us a fascinating overview of its history and work, and answered various questions. Originally conceived by Melpo and Octave Merlier after the 1922 disaster and the exchange of populations, at a time when some Greeks became aware of the need to preserve the memory and cultural heritage of the refugee population from the different parts of Asia Minor, the Centre had grown steadily from its initial focus on musicology and the creation of musical folklore archives. In the inter-war years the scope of research and collection activity had been extended to include ethnological and historical information derived from the oral accounts and testimonies of refugees resettled in Attica and beyond. Educated 'informants' had been encouraged to write down their experiences and memories in manuscript, and some (if I understood correctly) had done so using a form of Turkish written in the Greek alphabet called 'Karamanli'. The Centre is now primarily for scholarly research, with a large collection of books, newspapers, music recordings and maps, and there has apparently been a lot of interest in visiting the Centre from Turkish researchers.

We left CAMS suitably stimulated and with a gift in the form of one of the Centre's own publications, Peter Mackridge's 2010 translation of George Seferis's *Three Days in the Monasteries of Cappadocia*. Then, after a break for lunch outdoors in a nearby restaurant, a bus was waiting to transport us into the southern suburbs of 'New Smyrna' to visit the *Estia Neas Smyrnis*, a club or association occupying an impressive building and serving since 1930 as a cultural centre focusing on the collection, salvage and study of the whole intellectual, historical, folkloric and linguistic diversity of the Greek communities of Asia Minor, Thrace and Pontus. The *Estia* has the vision of attracting young people and bequeathing to them the splendid heritage of the Greek culture of Asia Minor.



We were first welcomed by a lady who gave us a mini-lecture on the broad historical background to the setting up of the *Estia*, including – perhaps inevitably – some emotive details or observations relating to the events of 1922-23. Later, before a reception, we enjoyed a quick tour of some of the association's exhibits. Two items I recall particularly: one was the 1905 Smyrna Fire Insurance Map displayed in a corridor (and used as the cover image for the conference booklet); the other was a rug bearing the image of Kemal Atatürk over which a table had sensitively been placed in order to prevent people walking over it, accidentally or deliberately.

When the conference proper opened the following morning we first heard a Keynote Speech by the Director of CAMS, Prof Paschalis Kitromilides. His broad subject was *The Challenges of Pluralism* and he noted how the history of the Levant was replete with awful examples of the conflicts and confrontations between nationalism on the one hand and cosmopolitanism and diversity on the other. He also pointed out that Cyprus was generally overlooked in the conference coverage and described how in the Cypriot context the presence there of Maronites, Armenians and Latins represented an instance of pluralism.

Other talks on Day One came under three headings, or sessions: *Dignitaries in the Levantine World*, *Networks, Families and Institutions*, and *The Role of Religion and Interreligious Connections*. Space allows for mention here only of a few examples of the wealth of interesting information offered. An early highlight for me was the story of how Levantines were used and valued increasingly by the British Consular Service in the late Ottoman Empire, not only for their linguistic abilities, their cultural knowledge and the trust they enjoyed with local populations but also for their particular usefulness in helping with the search for antiquities for European museums. Other papers told us about the role of the German Teutonia Club in Istanbul, which in the years leading up to WW1 developed into a major cultural hub at its premises in Galata, and about the peculiarly British type of 'cultural penetration' through sports activities pursued by the English Commercial School 'Barkshire', first in late Ottoman Smyrna and then in Greece after 1922. Another very interesting presentation by a Turkish researcher was on the activities of the Smyrna-based Levantine Baltazzi family who invested in the rural hinterland of Smyrna in the late Ottoman period, radically changing its social and ecological output through the *çiftlik* system and opening it up to global capitalism. Then the final session of Day One focused on matters of religion, with both Greek and Turkish scholars offering

fascinating glimpses into Catholic relations with the Ottoman authorities, Muslim-Christian economic cooperation in Smyrna, the phenomenon of Protestant Greek communities in Asia Minor and the competition and conflict between the Greek Orthodox Church and American Protestant missionary activities in the region.

Day Two began with Alexander Kitroeff's Keynote Speech on the 'parallel lives' led in Egypt by Levantines and Greeks, the latter increasingly claiming indigenous status as Egyptian nationalism rose after WW1. Then two Greek scholars presented their book on *The Smyrna Quay – Tracing a Symbol of Progress and Splendour*: a study both historical and topographical of the waterfront of what is now Izmir from 1869 through 1922 to the present day. Later Ioanna Koukouni, a native of Chios, spoke about the Genoese Levantine society that was established on that island before the Ottoman conquest, observing that the Levantines in general were "forerunners and first bearers of values such as intercultural dialogue, diversity and tolerance". Then, in the session on *Cosmopolitan Cities in Transition*, we heard about 19th-century Athens, Smyrna during WW1, and from Philip Mansel on *Salonica, Jerusalem of the Balkans*: a key Levantine city that was Ottoman, Jewish and Greek, the birthplace of Mustafa Kemal and the 'holy city' of the Young Turk revolution. Two final talks I found interesting were about the role of Malta in having to accommodate Greek-speaking refugees (employees of British Levantine businesses) from Smyrna in 1922, and on the very uncertain status of Turkey's Levantine community following the creation of the nationalist Turkish Republic.

Following an often quite emotional and nostalgic 'Levantine Unions socializing event' at the end of the afternoon the conference was summed up by LHF Trustee Dr Axel Çorlu. He saw the field of LHF-type research as a 'maturing' one and observed that there could be no static definition of what 'Levantine' means: history was a continuum of which we are all a part, and 'being a Levantine is a way of life'. Spreading the idea of 'Levantinism', he believed, was the best way to hold back the 'dark tide rising in the world' – that is, a lack of tolerance and will to co-exist – before it engulfs us.

The venue for the next LHF International Conference has yet to be arranged. In the meantime, for information about the Foundation and its occasional meetings and activities in London, visit [www.levantineheritage.com](http://www.levantineheritage.com)

**John Moreton**  
University of Leeds



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15:41, Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2018

# Turkologentag

The Third European Convention on  
Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies  
19-21 September 2018

University of Bamberg, Germany

In cooperation with  
Gesellschaft für Turkologie,  
Osmanistik und Turkeiforschung e. V.  
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# GTOT

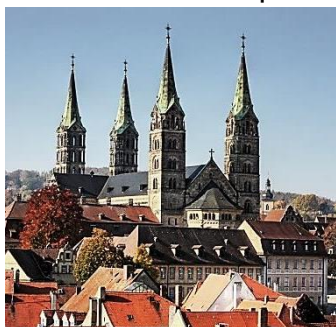
**Turkologentag 2018**  
19.-21.09.2018

**Third European Convention  
on Turkic,  
Ottoman  
and Turkish Studies**

OBERFRANKEN  
STIFTUNG

Conference Venue:  
University of Bamberg  
Feldkirchenstr. 21  
96052 Bamberg  
Germany

Turkologentag – the Third European Convention on Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies – took place in the charming university campus of Bamberg (Germany) between 19 and 21 September 2018. A guided tour of Bamberg Cathedral and its beautiful setting with some sunshine made the event socially interactive and aesthetically pleasing. The excellent organisation was headed by Christoph Herzog, Ellinor Morack, Elizabeth Diethelm, and Stevan Lüke. An exciting range of papers from diverse disciplines and countries demonstrated growing interest in Ottoman and



Turkic studies in Europe and beyond with refined scholarship. The presentations took place in the preferred language of scholars, either in German, Turkish or English. Some of the highlights included the theme of death in Turkish literature and Muslim conversions of Christians in the early Republican and the late Ottoman period. There were papers on historical linguistics in the Ottoman Empire and Central Asia, and Turkish politics and gender in the recent authoritarian era.

The panel on Premodern Literature provided a fascinating range of papers and illuminating scholarship. Chen Hao (Shanghai University) presented his comparative research on Chinese sources and old Turkic inscriptions of the 8th century showing how competing narratives justified the objectives of different power polities. Zeynep Elbasan-Bozdoğan (Indiana University, Bloomington) elaborated on survival strategies of women writers in the male-dominated literary circles of the late Ottoman



period with a detailed analysis of two female figures, Zeynep Hatun and Mihri Hatun. Another fascinating paper by Azra Abadžić Navaey (University of Zagreb) discussed the 16<sup>th</sup> century Turkish folk poetry collection of Miho Martelini of Ragusa. Ferenc Peter Csirkes (Sabancı University) presented how Turkic literature in Safavid Shiraz evolved with an illustration of Nashatî's Turkic translation of the Safwat al-safa.

My colleague Lisa Ahsen Sezer (Leicester University) and I presented our study on the geography of politically connected firms and business mobilisation in Gaziantep and showed how a dynamic state of multiple identifications and business networks has been converging towards a hierarchical structure under growing repression. We did this at the panel on *New Studies on Anatolian Cities: Changes in Economy, Production and Religion since the 1980s*, organised by Lale Yalçın-Heckmann (Max Planck Institute) and Cengiz Kurtuluş (Ankara University). In his talk Cengiz Kurtuluş provided a compact critique of the once popular analyses on Islamic Calvinists. His arguments centred on the lack of appreciation of plurality and modernisation trends among religious revivalist entrepreneurs in Anatolia. In her talk, resting on doctoral research on the role of religious orders and their recruitment strategies, Ceren Deniz (Max Planck) provided a compelling anthropological analysis of daily practices and their fluidity in Çorum. The session ended with a cautionary analysis by Selçuk Uygur (Brunel University) as he highlighted the negative business and social consequences of thinning freedoms and opportunistic distortions of spirituality.

**Gül Berna Özcan**  
School of Management,  
Royal Holloway University of London



## Reminiscence

# 1968

## The year of living vicariously<sup>64</sup>

by Mehmet Ali Dikerdem  
Associate Professor  
Department of Law  
Middlesex University London



### Part 2

<sup>64</sup> This is the second part of a condensed version of a longer piece which was published in the October issue of the Journal of *Global Faultlines*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2018. The first part of the article appeared in *Turkish Area Studies Review* No. 32, October 2018.



## Manchester University, Autumn 1968 – subversive poetics

For as long as I can remember, Freshers' Week at the university where I now work has been a tame affair, with the majority of the stalls devoted to different sports societies and activities such as paint-balling and the like. The only mildly political outfits present have been a handful of Third World charities and Greenpeace. The cavernous main hall of the Students' Union of The Victoria University of Manchester (to give it its full name) welcoming us in October 1968 could not have been more different. Almost every shade of political opinion was represented, alongside twenty or so national societies and the usual sports, academic, and religious groups. The Trots were out in full force with their alphabet soup of acronyms (IS, IMG, SLL, WF and others) and hectoring male paper sellers. I made a beeline to the biggest and most crowded of the stalls, that of the Socialist Society ('Soc Soc'), because there were an equal number of males and females there and it looked more fun.

The first Soc Soc meeting I attended must have had over 100 people, including a number of Turkish students. I had been asked to give a briefing on the situation in Turkey, and afterwards was greeted enthusiastically by Üstün, a Turkish Workers' Party (TWP) sympathiser. We attended the Turkish Society (TS) meeting, where he got up and argued forcefully that we should disband and join Soc Soc alongside our Palestinian, Latin American and African comrades! Such was the prevalent internationalist pulse and engagement of that year...

All my fellow Turks were postgraduates on government scholarships, studying engineering and textiles-related subjects. I was the only one taking a 'soft' subject such as Politics and Modern History, and the sole Turkish undergraduate in the university. There were no Turkish women students. TS was led by the good-humoured and Ecevit-supporting Sedat, who knew how to handle the Student Attaché in London and stage Turkish folk dancing performances and socials. He also attended the 'Marxist study group' that we had set up. There were also the 'reactionaries' (*takunyallılar*, literally 'clog-wearers'), with their long beards, who could be seen reading Mehmet Şevket Eygi's *Bugün* newspaper that whipped up Islamic fervour against the godless communists opposing the US Sixth Fleet. We studiously ignored each other in the Student Union reading room: us in one corner with our *Cumhuriyet* (then as now the leading left paper) held aloft; them in the opposite corner with their papers. (How Turkey's Eton, the francophone *Lycée de Galatasaray/Galatasaray Lisesi*, regarded for a century as the 'window opening to the West', could have produced both Eygi and the country's elite diplomatic corps, including my father, is a mystery!)



Towards the end of term Sedat organised a Turkish evening of 'cultural events' in one of the university's amphitheatres, open to the public and including national dishes prepared (par for the course for those times) by the wives of the married students. There was the usual folk dancing, some amateur and scratchy saz playing and off-key *türkü*s (folk songs). It was surprisingly well attended, with over 100 people. I volunteered to read some poetry, choosing Nazım Hikmet's *A Call* of 1947, with its palpable love of Turkey's land and people.

Gallop from farthest Asia  
and jutting out into the Mediterranean like a mare's head –  
this country is ours.

Wrists in blood, teeth clenched, feet bare  
on this soil that's like a silk carpet –  
this hell, this paradise is ours.

Shut the gates of servitude, keep them shut,  
stop the enslavement of one human being to another –  
this call is ours.

To live, free and single like a tree  
but in brotherhood like a forest –  
this longing is ours.

A few months later I received official notification from the Embassy that “due to activities incompatible with [my] student status”, the Ministry of National Education no longer recognised me as a student, despite the fact that I was fully registered as such at a British university. This meant that I was immediately liable for two years of National Service duty as an ordinary private. This administrative device was frequently used against left-wingers, since university graduates were entitled to a relatively easier and shorter round of duty as NCOs. Much later it transpired that a businessman of Pakistani heritage attending the TS social evening had written a letter of complaint to the Embassy denouncing me for reading a “subversive poem by a communist”. My father did of course use his influence to re-register me as a student with the Ministry of National Education, thus saving me from experiencing the harsh regime of an army which, having hanged a prime minister and his foreign and finance ministers in 1961, would do the same a decade later to three student leaders in their 20s, including Deniz Gezmiş, who had not spilt blood.

### **Christmas in New York – in the belly of ‘Babylon’**

Having marched through London countless times and denounced ‘US imperialism’, it was ironic that I saw out 1968 in New York, or ‘Babylon’ as Black Power rhetoric had dubbed the USA. My year ended in considerable style in Park Avenue, New York, in the swanky residence of the Turkish Permanent Delegate to the UN, my mother’s second husband. There was a fake Renoir in the main reception room and ‘Lenny’ Bernstein lived upstairs, holding fundraisers for the Black Panthers.

My British-educated stepfather had a passing likeness to David Niven, with a similar cut-glass accent and Anglo-Saxon affability. Having spent the early period of his meteoric career in London and Washington, he was ‘an avowed Atlanticist and a Cold Warrior’. To avoid possible unpleasantness, he was canny enough to relate to me through the tacit codes of English public school boys belonging to the same House, with him, of course, as the Head Boy. But I found out through my mother that he regarded the world-wide student revolt as a ‘Soviet strategy for world domination’ and that it should be dealt with sternly, *pour décourager les autres*. (Later, in the early 1970s, he would suggest putting up Western cowboy style ‘Wanted’ posters with big rewards for Turkish student leaders on the run.)

A pervasive background of violence and references to the ‘armed struggle’ permeated the rhetoric of the meetings of the Students for Democratic Society, which I attended at Columbia University. This was very different in tone and content from what I had experienced in Britain. There had been many urban uprisings across

America, notably the demonstrations violently quelled in Detroit in 1967 and in Chicago following Martin Luther King's assassination, where the National Guard used live rounds.

Black students saw the black ghettos such as Harlem and Watts as 'internal colonies', pockets of the 'Third World' exploited and politically dominated by the 'First World white power structure', arguing, like the late Che Guevara, for the creation of "one, two, three or more Vietnams". They held separate caucuses and operated in a world of concepts and images borrowed from anti-colonial liberation struggles in Africa, Vietnam and Cuba. The writings of francophone psychiatrist and political thinker Franz Fanon, who had died aged 36 in 1961, provided crucial links for theorising the personal and the political by proposing that anti-colonial violence would liberate the black psyche which racism and cultural brainwashing had destroyed. It appeared as if America was inching towards an overt race war.

I was able to attend some of these meetings because I shamelessly allowed my name to be Arabised to invoke the great boxer Muhammad Ali. This was the first and last time in my life that I played the 'Islamic' card by default, so that I could participate in meetings closed to 'whites'.

### **After such knowledge, what forgiveness?**

As in an 18th-century picaresque narrative, we have come to the part where the story of the adolescent graced with good *karma* at birth tapers into the reflections of the elderly adult – in my case, one rapidly approaching three score years and ten: the end of the line according to the poet Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, culminating in a series of *kıssadan hisse* (moral conclusions) or here, political reflections on 1968 and beyond...

Even the mildest forms of socialist organisation and independent trade unionism in Turkey were pushed underground from the 1920s until spaces were opened up by the liberal 1961 Constitution (re-closed in 1971). The Turkish left entering the fray in 1968, comprised mainly of the best and brightest students from the country's elite universities, was designing the airplane while flying it, and condensing into a few years what it took the European socialist movement a century to traverse.

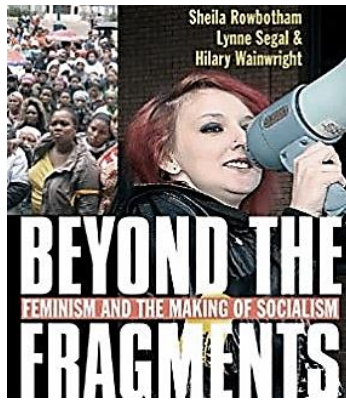
In Britain, where I have ended up spending all my adult and working life, '1968' has become a sign of *habitus* of academics *d'un certain age*, who are, in the scathing words of Sir Keith Joseph (Mrs. Thatcher's leading ideological commissar), purveyors of 'paperback Marxism in polytechnics'!

I have visited America many times since 1968, more frequently in the new millennium than previously. Last month I accompanied my partner (a feminist art historian) to the Boston Institute of Contemporary Arts' exhibition *Black Radical Women 1965-85 – We Wanted A Revolution*. There I saw Black Panther posters, photographs, diaries, films of interviews with activists, sculptures with clenched Black Power fists and so on being displayed in the perfect trappings of a top world-class gallery. It was as if 'Babylon' had not tried to grind these people down and marginalise their angry images of resistance for decades. In the age of #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo how can young black women curators represent history? I remembered that sixteen Black Panthers are still in US jails, some kept in solitary confinement for nearly fifty years...and here I was in a tame ritual of re-presenting 'revolutionary' images which,

at the time of their production, had provoked the security forces to frame, incarcerate and physically eliminate the black people who directly challenged endemic racism. Has '68' become a museum item? Are we of that generation reduced to cultural exhibits of a flawed and failed rage which turned sour? I recall playful lines of an early Nazım Hikmet poem (*Jokond ile Si-Ya-U*, 1929) touching upon Gioconda's boredom at being constantly admired in the Louvre:

I drew this lesson:  
To visit  
a museum is fine;  
to be a museum piece is terrible

The most lasting legacy of '68' has been the education given to a slow learner – me – by the women's liberation movement. It was almost like a rite of passage for the men of my baby-boomer generation. You either evolved, like those charts illustrating Darwinism that traced monkeys turning into humans, or remained with your knuckles dragging on the floor however much you mouthed political slogans. For many men, left politics stopped outside their front door.



My personal can-opener was *Beyond the fragments: feminism and the making of socialism*, a pamphlet by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, virtually self-published when MrsThatcher had just come to power. It reflects on their experiences as political activists since 1968, critiquing the male-dominated, sectarian and top-down elitism of the radical left organisations they encountered along the way. The back of the first edition proclaims in bold lettering and in earnest self-confidence: An Important Book. The three authors did indeed write many more important books in the following decades, including key feminist classics.

In the mid-1980s I became Lynne's colleague at Middlesex Polytechnic (the first higher education institution to set up a Woman's Studies programme), and later her North London neighbour. Mainly through sheer osmosis of her *Feminist Review* circles, of breathing the same social and intellectual air, I began to grasp that 'patriarchy' was not simply an add-on to 'class' but a constitutive element structuring all human relations. Like racism, it also could be consciously and unconsciously reproduced in everyday individual acts and in collective social practices.

This was a 'total politics', which rescued the self from the puppeteering of abstractions like 'state' and 'class' and saw the links between selfhood, affect, and oppression. Liberation and emancipation were not aspirations waiting for that Golden Age 'after the revolution' which, in the Soviets and Mao's China, had substantially failed to arrive. 'Skill' and 'talent' wouldn't be used to divide people into hierarchies of power but re-harnessed to express different forms of individuality which needed nourishing.

Most of these insights from that time were vindicated by the ethos and practices of anti-globalisation movements of the 1990s, and more recently, in mobilisations around Gezi, Occupy Wall Street and #BlackLivesMatter.



In closing, I leave you with one of the celebrated jibes of 1968 which has always stayed with me: *“Never trust anyone over the age of 30”*.

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An Ambassador's memories of Turkey

## Sister and brother cities, a twenty-two-years gap...

A reminiscent report by  
a traveller in Turkey  
and co-founder of the country's  
Guide Dogs Association

Maggie Moore

Maggie Moore, her husband Richard  
and guide dog *Star* or *Yıldız hanım*,



Flying into Istanbul on the evening of the 10th of January 2014 I was filled with happy excitement at the prospect of spending another four years in a country that I love and which already held many happy memories for me. The fact that on that same evening exactly 22 years earlier I had been in that same city in labour with our daughter Olivia (born in the early hours of the 11th of January) made it seem all the more auspicious. Good things came out of our time in Turkey then and I was sure that it would be the same again this time.

After a brief stopover in Istanbul we boarded the onward flight to Ankara. It is here that I must make a confession that often shocks and even appals my Turkish friends. I know, of course I know, that Istanbul is one of the greatest cities in the world. It is dripping with beauty, culture and incredible architecture. Seen from the Bosphorus, it has probably the most beautiful skyline of any city in the world. But I can't help feeling that Istanbul is like the sophisticated, elegant older sister, all dressed up for a night out and with the cares of youth firmly behind her. Ankara is like the grubby but lovable younger brother, crouching with muddy knees to wonder at an insect on a leaf. Ankara may lack the refinement of Istanbul, but it has real heart and its people are some of the warmest and kindest I have ever met.

My hopes for our four-year stay in Turkey were not disappointed. Twenty years on, without the encumbrance of a young family, we were able to do an enormous amount of travelling. We visited Edirne and climbed the minaret designed by Sinan, with the two intertwining staircases that never touch – surely an unsung wonder of the world. We visited the hospital where hundreds of years before it was happening anywhere else in Europe, music was used as therapy to soothe the troubled minds of the mentally ill. As with all our travels in Turkey, this trip is associated with the tastes encountered. How is it possible to talk about Turkey without talking about food? I think that in the





weekend we spent there we probably ate our own body weight in the thin slivers of crisply fried liver for which the town is famous.

Turks are immensely generous and often show this generosity with food. It is not for nothing that Turkish *misafirperverlik* is legendary. On a weekend stay with friends in Kayseri we were once treated to four four-course meals in a single day. Resistance was futile. All our protestations that we might burst if we ate another mouthful fell on deaf ears. We were met with cries of “Allah’ın aşkına yiyin“. The taste of the wonderful bread cooked in the wood oven in the garden will stay with me forever, as, sadly, probably so will at least one of the several inches I gained around my waist during the four year stay. Health warning! Turkey is very bad for your figure.

In addition to these weekend getaways we did a number of long road trips. One summer we travelled along the Black Sea Coast and up to the *yaylas* taking in such incredible sites as the Sümela monastery.



Probably our most memorable trip was a ten day trip to the east taking in Nemrut Dağ, Lake Van, Ani, Doğubeyazıt and Erzurum. I love this way of travelling. As the car chews up the miles and the time passes you get a real sense of the scale of the country in a way that you never do if you simply fly from place to place. Of course it is wonderful when the scenery changes and you go from one dramatic backdrop to another, but for me there is equal wonder in driving for hours and hours and seeing



almost no change at all in the scenery. Maybe it is my imagination, but I always feel when driving through Central Turkey that, although the landscape is flat, you have a real sense of being high up. Because these journeys are long they offer a good opportunity to listen to an audiobook. When we did our eastern Turkey road trip we listened to Zülfü Livaneli’s ‘Mutluluk’. In my memory breath-taking scenery is inextricably linked to passages of prose from that wonderful book.

One of my most treasured memories of our time in Turkey was our annual attendance at the commemoration services held in April in Gallipoli. It is always sobering to be reminded of so much suffering and sacrifice by so many, but the message I always take from it is one of great hope. To see former enemies standing side-by-side in mutual respect and friendship to remember their dead shows that no matter how terrible a situation may be, reconciliation is possible.

We seemed to move from one extraordinary experience to another. On a visit to Fethiye we were taken by a friend to meet a remarkable woman who, tiring of her busy life in Istanbul, had decided to move to the mountains, to buy a herd of goats and to make cheese. And her cheese was as remarkable as her story. I recommend it to you.

If ever we were in danger of becoming complacent and forgetting how lucky we were to be living in such a marvellous place, we had only to wait for our next set of visitors and to share their delight in all the sights, sounds, tastes and smells that Turkey has

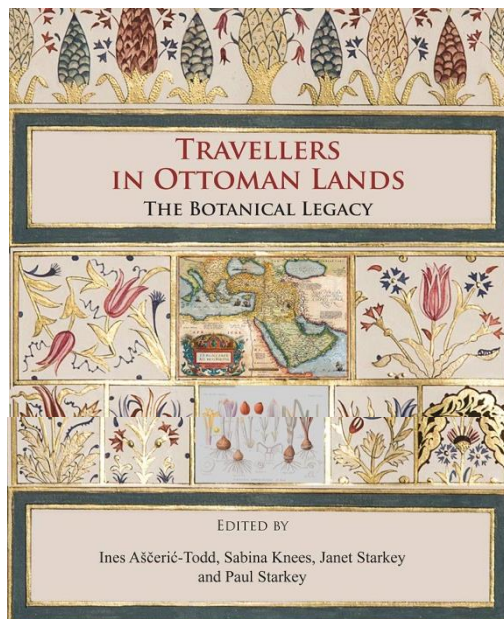
to offer. By the end of our time in Ankara I felt I could get a job as a tour guide for the Kale.

But I can't talk about my time in Turkey without mentioning guide dogs. When I first arrived in Ankara people were unsurprisingly perplexed that I wanted to take my dog with me everywhere I went. Why should I need to take my dog to the hairdresser, to dinner in a restaurant, to a reception in a hotel or to the theatre? Fortunately for me, the media were very interested in this too and because they took such a keen interest word quickly spread that mine was not an ordinary dog. She was highly trained in helping me to get around safely in spite of my very poor eyesight.

Thanks to the media attention I soon met a wonderful Turkish lawyer named Nurdeniz Tuncer. We became firm friends and together started a Turkish Guide Dogs Association. To date the Association has trained six dogs who are all working to support Turkish blind people. I am very proud of the work that the Association has done and hope that it will continue to grow and strengthen. Also, selfishly, it gives me the perfect excuse to go back to Turkey often.



Books



## Travellers in Ottoman Lands The Botanical Legacy

by Ines Aščerić-Todd, Sabina Knees,  
Janet Starkey and Paul Starkey (eds)

Oxford: ASTENE/Archaeopress, 2018.  
pp.xxi+379; illustrated, paperback.  
ISBN 978 1 78491 915 3. £48.00

*Travellers in Ottoman Lands: The Botanical Legacy*, the most recent collection of papers gathered from the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Travel to Egypt and the Near East (ASTENE), is the first to be concerned directly and explicitly with the Ottoman world and will be of considerable interest to many readers of the *TAS Review*. It commemorates the two-day conference held in Edinburgh in collaboration with the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), the Turkish Consulate General, Edinburgh, and *Cornucopia* magazine in May 2017.

Sumptuously illustrated with numerous full-colour plates, the volume offers a number of chapters organized into four groups that knit together the two themes indicated by the title: papers on Ottoman gardens, on travelling botanists, on the flora of the Ottoman world, and on some of the different forms of artistic representation inspired by Anatolian flowers. The volume contains an enormous amount of detailed and factual information, and the editors and publishers must be commended for bringing it so rapidly into print.

Invariably with such collections of papers by 'experts and enthusiasts' (Starkey, Introduction, p. xiii), individual chapters often reflect the author's interests and enthusiasms rather more strongly than the organizing principles of the conference, but this is not necessarily a bad thing. Who knew, for instance, that the contemporary fashion for hiking in undeveloped areas is among the primary threats to a number of very rare bulbous plants in Israel (Ori Fragman-Sapir, p 197)? Or that the practices of modern homeopathy barely differ from those described in *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides of Anazarbus (modern Ağaçlı, in Adana province) back in the first century of the common era (Alison Denham, *passim*)? Opened in 2006, the Bakewell Ottoman Garden in St. Louis, Missouri, also falls well outside the chronological and, in this case, geographical range of the Ottoman world. However, having been designed throughout according to known architectural features of Ottoman imperial gardens and planted with 'specimens derived from Ottoman botanical manuscripts' (Radha Dalal, p 75), the Bakewell garden fully exemplifies how the Ottoman 'botanical legacy' continues to be a feature of our own times. Perhaps less germane but nevertheless of interest are Jennifer Scarce's learned essay on early-modern textile production and the sumptuary codes governing Ottoman court costume which notices that tulips and other flower motifs occasionally appeared on printed caftans, and Gérard J Maizou and Kathrin Müller's fascinating study of how flowers feature in modern lace embroidery, gathering an array of disparate hidden meanings along the way.

European interest in Asiatic flora and horticulture can be traced to the eleventh-century CE and descriptions of planted gardens recorded by pilgrims and crusaders that inspired medieval court poetry, while specifically Ottoman gardening practices after the conquest of Byzantine Constantinople in 1453 owe much to Persia and to Central Asian models from Bukhara and Samarkand.<sup>65</sup> The West takes inspiration from the East. Yet from Güllü Yıldız we learn how, by the late nineteenth-century, Persian pilgrims passing through Constantinople were surprised and delighted by the city's pleasure gardens, and regarded them 'as a sign of progress,' clearly having forgotten or lost touch with their own native gardening traditions (Yıldız, p 58).

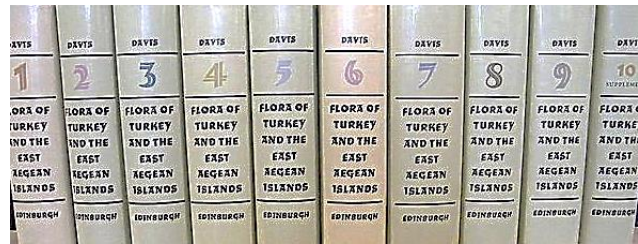
For Europeans, however, the botanical legacy really took off during the Renaissance, with the travels of Pierre Belon between 1547 and 1549 that resulted in his *Observations de plusieurs singularités* (1553), an encyclopaedic catalogue of the Ottoman Empire's trees, fruit, herbs, gardens, fish, birds, and wild animals. The urge to collect and possess, on the other hand, starts with Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, the Habsburg ambassador at the court of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520-66) between 1554 and 1556, who sent horticultural specimens – most notably tulips and lilacs – back to Europe: it was Busbecq who purchased, on behalf of Emperor Ferdinand, a rare illustrated manuscript copy of Dioscorides' *De Materia* from

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<sup>65</sup> John H. Harvey, 'Turkey as a Source of Garden Plants,' *Garden History* 4: 3 (Autumn 1976): 21-42, especially pp. 21-2.



Süleyman's physician and sent it Vienna.<sup>66</sup> Gülnur Ekşi, in an informative paper on the historical development of botanical artistry, provides a chart of thirty-three 'principal botanical collectors and artists' from Belon and Busbecq to the twentieth century's Peter H Davis (1918-92), editor of the multi-volume *Flora of Turkey and the East Aegean Islands*, published by Edinburgh University Press (Ekşi, p 282). While it isn't clear what readers are meant to make of the chart, Ekşi does argue that, while the earliest drawings of plants date back 'about 2000 years,' at the Renaissance new forms of 'realistic' and 'stylized' illustration appeared, only to be replaced by 'semi-stylized' conventions between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, 'naturalistic' forms during the nineteenth century, and 'scientific' styles during the twentieth century (pp 275, 280).

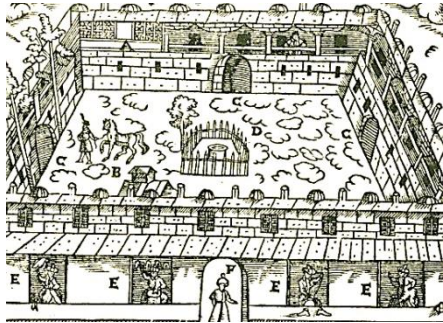


Ottoman gardens are the subject of two chapters. Susan Scollay discusses the history and development of the gardens of the imperial palace at Edirne. Started by Sultan Murad II (r.1421-44, 1446-51) shortly before his death, by 1475 the palace was completed by Sultan Mehmed II (r.1444-46, 1451-81), and continued to be developed into the early eighteenth century. It included 'a *gülhane*, literally a 'rose house' in the grounds of the hospital complex where rose water was still being produced when Evliya Çelebi visited in 1653, commenting: "its rosewater is unique among the lands of the world" (Scollay, p 34). Under Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87), new pavilions were added, including the innovative Saadabad Pavilion that, constructed in 'the Persian tradition,' was unlike the 'enclosed and private world of ritualized garden' spaces typical of the fifteenth-century palace buildings. Instead of being walled off, it 'opened onto an enormous pool,' thereby becoming 'the focus of a more open and visible way of life for the Ottoman court' (p 36). This semi-public garden pavilion would inspire his son, Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703-30), during the *Lâle Devri* ('Tulip Period' when he built a palace at Kağıthane outside Constantinople which featured innovative outer gardens that were accessible to the public and named it Saadabad, 'the Abode of Happiness' (p 39). Curiously, Scollay does not refer to any of the illustrated copies of the *Zenanname*, the famous poem on women by Enderunlu Fazıl (1759?-1810), which shows a variety of women publicly enjoying the numerous pleasures of the Saadabad gardens at Kağıthane (eg British Library Or. 7094, fol.7a).

Nor, for that matter, does Gürsan Ergil when interpreting Ottoman garden culture through miniature art. Instead, he examines illustrations to three manuscripts, the *Khamsa-yi Nizami* of 1399, the *Surname-i Hümayun* of 1583, and the *Surname-i Vehbi* of 1720. Since the illustrations of Nizami's five poems exemplify 'untouched nature as perfect,' Ergil argues, they represent the ideal of 'a perfect garden in its pure form,' that is, places where trees and flowers grow without human intervention (Ergil, p 290), though one could equally argue that these are not gardens. Examples from the two *Surnames* represent palace gardeners parading examples of their artistry on wheeled platforms before the Ottoman court and nobility during circumcision celebrations held in the hippodrome. These, according to Ergil,

<sup>66</sup> See Ogier de Busbecq, *Turkish Letters*, ed. Philip Mansel (London: Sickle Moon, 2001), pp. 163-4 and note 75, p. 174.

demonstrate how ‘natural gardens were replaced by formal models and influenced by European ideas and forms’ (p 296), which might well be true, but would be more convincing had the evidence being offered consisted of representations of actual gardens – such as illustrations of the Saadabad gardens in copies of the *Zenanname* – and not artistic and stylized representations of platforms planted with trees and flowers; the examples from 1720 are not even images of actual plants but of replicas made from sugar. The illustration of an imperial palace garden by the German traveller Solomon Schweigger made between 1577 and 1581 would also usefully nuance Ergil’s argument, since it shows an oval space enclosed by a double row of trees that is divided into quadrants with different kinds of plants scattered haphazardly in each quarter section, two of which are evidently orchards, one given over to vegetables, while a fourth contains trees, an ornamental fountain, a kiosk and a pavilion placed at random.<sup>67</sup>



Several chapters focus on individual travellers and their contributions to our understanding of Ottoman flora. Priscilla Mary Işın’s study of Evliya Çelebi’s account of all the fruits he described tasting with pleasure and discrimination, during his half century of travelling throughout the Ottoman world, brilliantly introduces not only Evliya’s interest in food, but also his care in cataloguing the truly enormous varieties of fruits he encountered, ‘giving names for around 260’. In Pécs he records ‘one evening we ate forty-seven varieties of pear,’ and in Nazilli he lists twenty-three varieties of fig, in Kütahya seven varieties of cherry, while reporting how, once upon a time before urbanization, Istanbul grew six varieties of peach, *kumru* apricots grew in Fatih, and celebrated red nectarines came from Kasımpaşa (Işın, pp 44, 45). Tobias Mörike convincingly argues against some scholars that Frederik Hasselquist and Pehr Forsskål, students of Carl Linneaus who travelled and collected specimens from Turkey, Yemen, and Egypt during the mid-eighteenth century, were motivated by scientific rather than religious ambitions. Janet Starkey introduces readers to Adam Freer (1747-1811) and the other Scottish travellers who, following the lead of Alexander and Patrick Russell, collected and classified the botanical samples from Ottoman Syria that helped form the basis of the RBGE. Alison Rix examines George Maw (1832-1912), an enthusiastic amateur and traveller who made himself the leading expert on the crocus, alongside some of the eminent collaborators who assisted in the production of his *Monograph of the Genus Crocus* (1886). Frank H. Hellwig and Kristin Victor introduce Carl Haussknecht (1838-1903), whose activities collecting samples in Turkey and Persia led to the establishment of the Herbarium Haussknecht in 1896 at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. Another important nineteenth-century herbarium – that of Georges Vincent Aznavour (1861-1920), once held at Robert College in Istanbul and now in Geneva – is the subject of Necmi Aksoy’s tribute to Aznavour, the last Ottoman botanical collector. Irene Linning similarly pays tribute to Violet Dickson (1896-1991) for her groundbreaking study of the flora of Kuwait.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Reproduced in Metin And, *Istanbul in the Sixteenth Century: The City, The Palace, Daily Life* (Istanbul: Akbank, 1994), p. 133 from Solomon Schweigger, *Reyssbeschreibung auss Teutschland nach Constantinopel u. Jerusalem* (Nürnberg: Dankenberger, 1608).

<sup>68</sup> Freer, Maw, and Dickson are notably missing from Ekşi’s list.



British gardens today would unquestionably be dull affairs were it not for the tulips, lilies, hyacinths, narcissi, anemones, carnations, crocuses, lilac, hollyhocks, and numerous other flowers, shrubs, and trees introduced from Anatolia since the days of Belon and Busbecq. But times have changed since Evliya Çelebi enjoyed nectarines from Kasımpaşa. More recently, in 1955, Violet Dickson described how, since the discovery of oil in Kuwait, 'a veritable dustbowl has formed' (Linning, p 186). Environmental change and denudation form the substance of the chapter by Martin Gardiner and Sabrina Knees describing how overpopulation, fires, pests, grazing and climate change have devastated the cedars, firs, pines and spruces native to lands once governed by the Ottomans. Yet in his learned and compelling chapter on the literary and artistic representation of the cedar from the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh* to a 2017 *Operetta for the Cedar*, Paul Starkey assures us that the cedar 'has come a long way' since the ancient Mesopotamian epic, 'but depleted in numbers as they may be, they show no sign of giving up' (Starkey, p 270).

Gerald MacLean  
macindetroit@hotmail.com

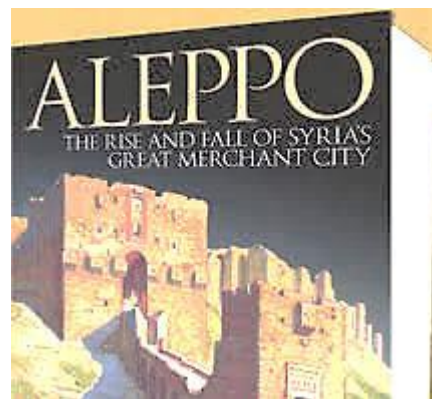


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## Aleppo: The Rise and Fall of Syria's Great Merchant City

by Philip Mansel

I.B.Tauris: London & New York, 253 pp  
ISBN: 978 1 78453 461 5  
cISBN: 978 0 85772 924 8



Fate has not been kind to Ottoman cities. In Turkey for decades, the Kemalist establishment regarded the cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire either as something to be ignored or, worse, something to be destroyed. In the Balkans only about two per cent of Ottoman domestic, commercial and monumental architecture survives, most of the rest swept away by zealous nationalist governments. During the war in former Yugoslavia, Serbian forces were almost as intent on destroying Ottoman monuments as they were on decimating the non-Serbian population. One part of the old Empire where this dismal picture was slightly less dismal was Syria. Here – at least in Damascus and Aleppo – there was some effort to maintain the historic urban fabric. Furthermore, something survived of the old Ottoman way of life, which allowed different ethnic and religious groups to live together in relative harmony. The official line was to promote Arabic and Arab nationalism but – possibly

because the ruling clan themselves belonged to a minority sect – nationalism did not have the same stifling effect as in, say, Turkey or Greece. People were not afraid to identify themselves as Circassian, Armenian, Albanian or Turcoman and churches co-existed with mosques and Mevlevi *tekkes*. However, the establishment of Da'esh in the north-east, and then a murderous civil war, with rebel groups enjoying the support of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, have brought Wahhabism – the most intolerant form of Islam – to the country.

If the civil war has snuffed the life out of what remained of Ottoman Syria, the destruction of Aleppo in 2018 drove the final nail into its coffin. Philip Mansel's book serves as an eloquent obituary of the old city.

Aleppo, as the title of the book implies, was a merchant city, although one cut off from its sources of mercantile wealth by the imposition of artificial borders after 1918. It is this aspect of the city's history that attracted the author, who has a well-informed and long-standing interest in the cosmopolitan trading cities of the eastern Mediterranean. Aleppo, it is true, is not a 'Mediterranean city', but it was linked to the Mediterranean via the port of Tripoli-in-Lebanon and, from the late sixteenth century when attacks by Bedouins and Nusayris made this route too dangerous, via the



scarcely less bandit-infested route through Iskenderun.

It was also the terminus for caravans bringing silk from Iran and Indian goods coming via the Gulf. The city was already an entrepôt for international trade before the Ottoman conquest in 1516, with Venetian consuls established there and in Damascus to represent Venetian commercial interests. Other nations followed



during the Ottoman centuries, with France, England, the United Provinces and Prussia establishing consulates. The presence of consuls and resident national communities made Aleppo a magnet for western travellers where they could hope to enjoy the company of their fellow countrymen, and consular assistance if required. Many of the travellers who visited Aleppo and its surrounds left accounts of their journeys, and it is, above all, these that form the core of the book. The first half of the book takes us on an enjoyable and invigorating canter through the history of Aleppo from the Ottoman conquest, through to the regime of the two Assads and the city's destruction. The sources for this account are, above all, the writings of European consuls and travellers, and it is a compendium of these travel writings, from botanist Leonhard Rauwolff in the late sixteenth century to the archaeologist Leonard Woolley in 1920, that makes up the second part of the book. For the more recent decades, the author's narrative is enlivened by the personal recollections of members of leading Aleppine families.

This is clearly not an academic book, depending as it does almost entirely on European sources, and obviously – for the academically minded – raising more questions than it answers, but this does not matter. It is written for a general, and not an academic audience, and for readers brought up on the old tropes of 'Turkish misrule' and 'the Ottoman yoke' it serves to show that 'liberation' from the Ottoman yoke was not always an unalloyed good. But then, I confess that I too share Philip Mansel's nostalgia for the old Levantine cities.

Colin Imber

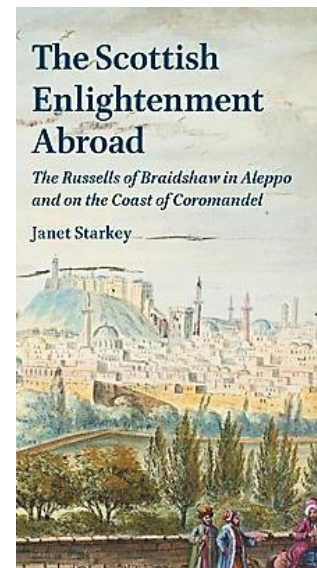


## The Scottish Enlightenment Abroad:

The Russells of Braidshaw in Aleppo  
and on the Coast of Coromandel

by Janet Starkey

Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018, pp xvi+467  
hardback/e-book,  
ISBN: 978-90-04-36212-3/978-90-04-36213-0.



Those who know Aleppo and remember, with nostalgia, its charm and fascination, and those who are interested in the British in pre-colonial India will find much of interest in this scholarly work largely based on the study of the two editions of *Natural History of Aleppo* (1756, 1794), although a substantial bibliography reveals extensive complementary reading. The first edition (hereinafter referred to as *Aleppo 1*) was written by the Scottish physician, Alexander Russell, and included *Diary of the Progress of the Plague in 1742, 1743 and 1744*. The second edition (*Aleppo 2*) was a substantial re-write by Alexander's half-brother, Patrick, a physician-naturalist, who went on to publish his *Treatise of the Plague* in 1791. Both men served as physicians to merchants or factors of the English Levant Company's factory in Aleppo. Subsequently, Patrick and brother Claud served the East India Company in Madras on the Coromandel Coast of India. For the purposes of this review, I shall focus on the chapters dealing with Aleppo only.



Dr Starkey reminds us that until the 19th century the term 'Natural History' embraced not only the study of flora and fauna, but also that of anthropology, ethnology and medicine. This explains the wide range of subjects covered in both volumes, listed in Table 3<sup>69</sup>. This 'Age of Enlightenment', or 'Age of Reason', grew out of an intellectual, secular, liberal and religious search for 'truth', bringing about a period of intense change between 1685 and 1800 in Europe, with the Scottish Enlightenment reaching its zenith between the 1750s and 1780s. In 1634 Charles I (Starkey refrains from reminding the reader that he was Scottish and the second Stuart monarch to rule over England and Scotland) had requested that the Levant Company help to bring home Arabic and Persian manuscripts to discover clinical practices unknown in Europe and to search for original manuscripts whose meaning had been lost in translation, a project already evolving in Italy since the Renaissance. Starkey says there were two phases: the first was of a philosophical and religious nature; the second was called the 'Common Sense Enlightenment'. "Its intellectuals

<sup>69</sup> p.389

optimistically believed humankind could change society and nature for the better”<sup>70</sup>. She points to the importance of the Scottish diaspora in disseminating these ideas, especially in America, and deduces that this must also have occurred in more far-flung areas where Scots traded, lived and worked, but asserts that the Russells’ “acquisition of knowledge had nothing to do with power, domination or colonisation”<sup>71</sup>. She maintains that *Aleppo* “was certainly a creation of the Enlightenment”<sup>72</sup>. The range of subjects in *Aleppo* as covered in Starkey’s book and listed in the contents page is impressive: non-Muslim inhabitants; political structure, law and order; food and diet; the harem; music; coffee houses and puppet shows; medical, clinical practice and therapeutics; epidemics and pathology; science, flora and fauna; gardens.

Both Patrick and Alexander studied medicine at Edinburgh University. The career path of most graduating physicians and surgeons at that time was to serve first as an apprentice to a local doctor, then enter the army or navy, the Levant Company or the East India Company. Alexander joined the Levant Company and his first posting was to Alexandretta where he learned Arabic. He was transferred to Aleppo in 1740, and resigned in 1753, returning to London in 1755. *Aleppo 1* was published in 1756, was well-reviewed in wide ranging compendia of voyages and in book reviews and such was its popularity that it was stocked not only by booksellers, but by public lending libraries. Furthermore, it was translated into Dutch, German and French.

Patrick joined Alexander in Aleppo in 1750, succeeded his brother as Physician to the Factory and left in 1771. He was described as a “good and kindly and witty man: and an indefatigable Botanist who left enduring evidences of his scientific worth”<sup>73</sup>. Rana Kabbani<sup>74</sup> has presented Alexander as an “empathetic, credible travel writer”<sup>75</sup>, rejecting any notion that he was a Saidean Orientalist. Both Patrick and Alexander established an “extensive practice among all ranks and degrees of people”<sup>76</sup> in Aleppo. When he returned to London he became friends with Charles Burney, father of diarist “Fanny, who wrote *General History of Music* and who recognized Patrick as an authority on Turkish music,” having procured for Dr Burney some curious information from Aleppo of the modern state of music in Arabia”<sup>77</sup>, including a paper about musical scales used in Aleppo. He worked extensively on revising *Aleppo 2* and his own contributions were so significant that he was encouraged to re-publish it under his own name. By now Arabic typefaces were available on printing presses in London, as the East India Company had sponsored various publishers to produce books in Arabic and Persian, and thus Arabic words could appear in Arabic script in *Aleppo 2*, unlike its predecessor. He died in 1805 after a brief illness, aged 79.

Arguably, the most important section of *Aleppo 1* is Alexander’s research into and experience of treating victims of the plague. Epidemics of the plague had bedevilled

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<sup>70</sup> P.9

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*

<sup>72</sup> P.186

<sup>73</sup> P. 317, quoting Edward Smith in *The Life of Sir Joseph Banks: President of the Royal Society* (CUP 1911)

<sup>74</sup> Syrian poet and widow of the late Patrick Seale (author of several authoritative books on Syrian politics)

<sup>75</sup> P.2

<sup>76</sup> P. 41, quoting Abraham Marcus in *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity* (Columbia University Press 1989)

<sup>77</sup> P.93 quoting Charles Burney in *Music, men and manners in France and Italy* (1771 London)



the area for hundreds of years, and had such a demographic impact on the area as to affect its history profoundly. In *The Last Century of Byzantine Syria: A Reinterpretation*<sup>78</sup> Hugh Kennedy makes the case that, contrary to the results of earlier research which claimed that depopulation of the area occurred mainly as a result of the Arab invasion in 640, the bubonic plague epidemic of 540 had decimated one-third of its inhabitants, thus facilitating the conquest. The 18th-century occurrences of this appalling scourge obviously impacted on the lives – professional and personal – of both Alexander and Patrick. “There were eight plague pandemics over 15 years during the eighteenth century that killed 15% to 20% of the population of Aleppo: over 80,000 died there from the plague in 1760 alone”<sup>79</sup>. Alexander wrote a chapter on the subject in *Aleppo 1*, and Patrick expanded on this considerably in his *Treatise of the Plague: containing an historical journal, and medical account, of the plague, at Aleppo, in the years, 1760, 1761 and 1762*<sup>80</sup>. Both brothers visited Mediterranean *lazarettos* on their way home from their Aleppo postings to research the management of quarantine stations and the social and economic impact of the 1753 Quarantine Act which required British ships to stay in Mediterranean ports if there were suspected incidences of plague in the area. Patrick supported the recommendation originally made by Alexander in 1758 and reintroduced by the prison reformer John Howard that British ships be quarantined in British ports to reduce costs and reduce the risk of contagion. Consequently, a *lazaretto* was established near Chatham in 1800.

The long hours devoted to research and writing by both Russell brothers were made possible by the lack of occupation other than work for merchants and physicians alike. Wives did not accompany their husbands, so there was no family life. Musical and theatrical evenings were organised in homes of other foreigners but, although many merchants spoke Arabic, few were intellectually curious about their surroundings or the history of the area. The many visitors passing through the town provided a welcome diversion, bringing news of both East and West. However, by the mid-18th century Aleppo had become less important as a commercial centre, and more so as a gateway to India, especially to British officials in the service of the East India Company. Nevertheless, since both Alexander and Patrick spoke Arabic, “to assert the Levant Company’s political position”<sup>81</sup>, they continued to represent the British government in paying court to local dignitaries on the occasion of their arrival to take up positions in the city and to local notables at religious feasts, when they proffered gifts of textiles and clothes. (Dr Starkey uses Ramadan as an example of a religious feast, a rather glaring error which should have been spotted by the editors.) They both wore local dress, and on Patrick was bestowed the rare honour of permission to wear a white turban, one rarely granted to non-Muslim foreigners. Alexander was ‘raised “to a degree of eminence in the city, that required no uncommon share of prudence to support with such dignity and temperance, as to avoid the envy naturally excited among a bigoted people when they see honours conferred on strangers



<sup>78</sup> *Byzantinische Forschungen 10*, Amsterdam 1985, reproduced in Hugh Kennedy, *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East* (Ashgate Publishing, 1988)

<sup>79</sup> P.251

<sup>80</sup> London: G.G.J. Robinson 1791

<sup>81</sup> P.162



supposed to be enemies of their faith". In the 1750s, Alexander was almost constantly at the Pasha's court, leaving Patrick to run the rest of the practice.<sup>82</sup>

Dr Starkey writes that her "current book has, above all, been a celebration of the Scottish Enlightenment abroad,"<sup>83</sup> and "a celebration of Scottishness"<sup>84</sup>. *The Scottish Enlightenment Abroad* is based on Starkey's PhD thesis *Examining Editions of the Natural History of Aleppo: revitalizing eighteenth century texts* (University of Edinburgh, 2013) and the Scottish element seems a rather tenuous hook on which to hang this account of the Russells. The book contains so much detail that it might have been preferable to divide it into three volumes: one concentrating on the Russells in Aleppo, a second on their work in London, and the third on Coromandel. The author has so much material that she has found it difficult to decide whether the publication should be a reference book or a book of general interest to the wider public. Either way, it is difficult to navigate and requires editing. Nevertheless, Dr Starkey's book is fascinating, stimulating further enquiry into the many subjects covered.

**Jill Sindall**  
Ottoman Historian



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### LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

<sup>82</sup> P.170 quoting *Aleppo* 2 ii: 313-314.

<sup>83</sup> P. 375

<sup>84</sup> P. 114

Akkuş, Faruk, Bayırlı, İsa & Özyıldız, Deniz. *Tu+ 1: Proceedings of the first workshop on Turkish, Turkic and the languages of Turkey*. (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018). ISBN-10: 1983844020.

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**Compiled by Arın Bayraktaroğlu**

**In Memoriam**



## Ara Güler

### 1928-2018

*'A photojournalist has a mission. Guys like me, we write history. We capture important events from this era for the future generation. We immortalise what we see.*

*We are visual historians.<sup>85</sup>  
~ 2013 ~*

The death of Ara Güler at the age of ninety sees the passing of one of the grand master photographers of the second half of the 20th century, a powerful spirit-catcher who for many around the world was the unchallenged eye of his country, place and time, capturing people, scene and life with a nuance palpably physical, aroma and perfume, mood and emotion leaping off each grayscale.

His finest epitaph comes from his friend Orhan Pamuk, writing in the foreword to the iconic 2009 collection, *Ara Güler's Istanbul*. "Ara Güler's Istanbul is my Istanbul. The Istanbul of the 1950s and 1960s – its streets, pavements, shops and dirty, neglected factories; its ships, horse carts, buses, clouds, private taxis, shared taxis, buildings, bridges, chimneys, mists and people; and the soul in all these things, so difficult to recognise at first sight – is nowhere as well documented, preserved and protected as it is in the photographs of Ara Güler". A recent opinion piece by Pamuk, *I Like Your Photographs Because They Are Beautiful*, is essential reading.<sup>86</sup>

Whatever the considerable use he has made of its currency, Pamuk's Istanbul, the gentler-paced, sprawling metropolis of his 2003 *Istanbul: Memories and the City*, translated into English by Maureen Freely two years later, wasn't his alone of course. Seventy years ago, my father Irfan Orga, born a generation before, put the place on the post-war map with his autobiography, *Portrait of a Turkish Family* (1950). Ara Güler's black-and-white 35mm Leica images, consciously abandoning the populist trail, and instead going down forgotten lanes and history's backwaters, daily reminded him of where he had been born, grown up and then forced to leave in 1947. One day, in 1956 or '57 I think, while he was writing *The Young Traveller in Turkey* in a West London tenement, I remember a box of Güler prints arriving from Istanbul. Each brought memories for him – the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, Galata Bridge, the smoke stacks and rusting ironwork of swaying ferries, rutted, crumbling

<sup>85</sup>Derya Taşdemir, 2013 interview, *British Journal of Photography*, 19 October 2018.

<sup>86</sup>*New York Times*, 1 November 2018.

winding streets, market stalls, freshly watered fruit, lamplight, the dice and tea of old men, gulls ... Editing Eland's 2014 publication of *Dark Journey: The Legend of Kamelya and Murat*, I had Güler's photographs beside me, each an encapsulation of the places and tensions my father was describing, a way somehow of touching, of re-journeying, youth and the passing of age in the Republican twenties and thirties. Güler crystallised instant and atmosphere like no one else: his take on Galata Bridge at midday, 1954, is a masterpiece of incident. Of his generation Yaşar Kemal crossed my path, the pianist Ayşegül Sarıca rather more so. But, to my regret, I never met Ara - though I suspect we might well have passed each other more than once in the broken streets of his neighbourhood, he of the scarf, small hat and rumpled coat, the powering yet wistful look, the wide, baggy eyes, the beard greying into white, the imposingly hooked Armenian nose of the East. Domed, bald, liver-spotted head. Swearing, cursing. Heading for the shelter of some fading *kahvehane*, masculinity's last preserve, or his favourite table at the Kafe Ara off İstiklal, in a building once owned by his mother. In the eighties, it would have been the intellectually liberated Papyrus Bar, home to film men and actors.

"Truth is the best picture", Robert Capa used to say. Güler documented corners rather than landscapes, dusty gutters before marbled halls, rooms in shadow, a steamy, rain-spattered, half-curtained pane brightening the darkness, the torments and passions, the aftermaths within, left to our imagination. He picked up on people's physical characteristics and manner. An urban, social reporter, and not, in his own estimation, an artist – however much an artist he might have been in his decision-making and subjective choices - he never set out to beautify reality or fabricate fictions. He gave us analogue truths in the raw. The years have turned them into melancholy and nostalgia. But in their moment of capture, the rapid click of a shutter, they were the breath of the hour.



All sorts made up Güler's people. Alfred Hitchcock, dictatorial director, in his office at Universal Studios in 1974 – a six-hour shoot. Large, leathered shoe soles on a table in the foreground (the point of the photograph), menacing fleshy hands clasping an armchair, pressed trousers, buttoned jacket stretched across a corpulent midriff, a reclining jowled head rendered small, suggestive of a pond turtle. Sophia Loren's beauty - the appraising gaze of her right eye, lips yielding, aristocratically chiselled nose, the tone and down of her flesh whitened in the light, pearls about the neck - was engaged in a close-up of bone structure and curled, loose-styled hair, her features highlighted in heavy blacks and shadows (1957). Arthur Rubinstein snapped *d'humeur détendue* – the handsome, concert-tailed Jew in Cannes, saviour of Chopin (1970). Khachaturian in Moscow, whose Armenian dialect wasn't Güler's (1971). Orson Welles cocktailing (1958). Every Turkish president from İsmet İnönü to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Closer to home, the young man in Beyoğlu lighting a cigarette in the dark, iron-grilled window behind him, raked Sinatra trilby centering the image (1954), conveys emptiness, loneliness, desolation. What thoughts are going through his head, what hour is it, where is that street corner, what tango had consumed him, who was his girl? All slightly out of focus (not for the first or last time), a hazy dream. Five years later, in Tophane, we meet a man in a bar, a worn-out soul of indefinable age but

born, one would suppose, in the death-throes of Empire. The stubbled face is a deeply lined inverted pyramid, the eyes wide apart, inebriated in their communication, the nose broken or sent out of true in some past fight. A corduroy worker's cap. Toothbrush moustache. He holds a glass, his finger nails ingrained with dirt and oil. What has this man of the Balkans not seen, what errands has he not run, what small-time deals has he not cut? "Güler's men in coffee houses", Zeynep Uğur reminds us, 'are **waiting**, as the opposite of **circulating** or **producing**'.<sup>87</sup>

In 1965, photographing 'people's lives and troubles', Güler wandered up to a shanty-town above Eyüp to photograph some water carriers. Permeating the background are the mosques and skyline of Istanbul. In the middle ground there's the bright curve and reflections of the Golden Horn – from the angle Loti knew so well and which Patrick Balfour (Lord Kinross) put into words so wonderfully in *Europa Minor* (1956). In the foreground a stony path, a fragmented house of tiled roof, crooked chimney and patched up timbers, women and children. Curious children, scarved strong women, maternal and muscular, their menfolk no doubt portering somewhere down by the docks at Galata. The image is nuanced. The old-fashioned Beyoğlu pharmacist in Tepebaşı (1958) – territory Güler knew so intimately from childhood – peers out at us differently. A tidy, bushy-browed, bespectacled gentleman in a white coat surrounded by his potions and spells, bottles carefully arrayed in spindle-crowned mahogany and glass cabinets, the diagonals and verticals of the *mise-en-scène* broken only by the polished curves of a rustic chair for *madame* in the left corner.

These chiaroscuros, exposure after exposure, each a 'silent echo', faces in transit, haunt the senses. "A form of magic", Güler believed, "by which a moment of experience is seized for transmission to future generations".

"The crucial, defining characteristic of an Ara Güler photograph", asserts Pamuk, "is the emotional correlation he draws between cityscapes and individuals. His photographs also made me discover how much more fragile and poor the people of Istanbul appeared when captured alongside the city's monumental Ottoman architecture, its majestic mosques and magnificent fountains". The genius within Ara Güler lay in the horizons and *hüzün* of his monochromatic output. He worked in colour too, but – by comparison – those photographs are (or anyway seem) less special. "Colour", he maintained, "lacks the solidity of black and white". He carried on a tradition entrenched in the photography of the thirties, forties and fifties (and still pursued by, for example, David Pisani in Malta, who for the past forty years has been chronicling the slumber and decay of Valletta pre-gentrification), the notion of stark contrasts to enhance subject matter and atmosphere. Black-and-whites were like the swirls of a dress, colour was the bareness of a nude, the one inviting us to imagine beyond, the other not to. The Bosphorus in turquoise is brilliant and immediate. Water seen through flecks of grey, white and black is brooding and infinite. What lurks beneath? Social media images posted these days by Alternatif Fotoğraf Topluluğu yield an almost daily raft of pictures potently capturing inter-war and post-war Europe in monochrome. In the early 1960s Güler was associated briefly with the Magnum Agency in Paris, founded in 1947 by Capa, Cartier-Bresson, George Rodger, David Seymour and others. Marc Riboud joined a few years later. Capa, Riboud and Cartier-Bresson all photographed Istanbul in black-and-white – in 1946, 1955 and 1964 – often shooting the same localities, scenes and people-types as

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<sup>87</sup> *Ajam Media Collective*, 26 November 2018.



Güler. Capa and Riboud came closest to Güler's mood and eye, yet without quite his penetration or complexity. For many, at best, a fish is a sliver of silver, a darting flash of orange and pink. For Güler it was something caught by an old man and a line pondering life by the boat-station at Sariyer, autumn leaves on a north-easterly from Russia. "Being a photographer of the city is to smell it, to enjoy it and to present it to other people".

The mechanics of photography interested him little. Content, on the other hand, was something else. "For the content, you have to have a soul, a spirit. Not only an eye for detail, but you have to be cultured. You have to know the world and everything in it. You have to understand what you see. You can't watch Natalia Medvedeva play tennis and think it's a dance [*laughs*]. Most importantly, you have to feel it".<sup>88</sup>

Born Mıgırdıç Aram Güleryan<sup>89</sup> to Christian Armenian parents and raised in Beyoğlu – Galatasaray specifically – Güler was a patriarchal son of the district. His mother, Verjin Şahyan, came from a 400-year-old Istanbul dynasty; his father, Dacat Derderyan (a Dardanelles veteran who'd lost his Black Sea family in 1915) ran a successful pharmacy on İstiklal Caddesi, supplying the wealthy of the city with medicine, actors with make-up, and the film industry with industrial chemicals. With the Turkish Surname Law in June 1934, the family name was changed to Güler, Aram, not yet six, becoming Ara. Brought up in a linguistically, artistically cultured home, he went to the Getronagan Armenian High School in Karaköy, founded in 1886 and notable for the number of writers, intellectuals, architects and musicians it has produced, including an older peer of Güler's, Karekin II Kazanjian (1927-98), the 83rd Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. When asked, Güler favoured neither Armenian nor Turkish ethnicity, calling himself simply, if with historical licence, Ottoman. Experiencing ethnically sensitive times in the forties and fifties, and indeed later too, it was not a subject he liked to talk about.

Through his father, who gifted him his first camera, Güler, still in high school, got involved with studios and the cinema, as well attending drama courses given by the actor and director Muhsin Ertuğrul, like my own father a *bona fide* Ottoman, credited as the founder of modern Turkish theatre. In the Indian summer of glossy photo-journalism during the fifties and sixties, a Klondyke gold-rush for the talented few at the top, Güler found his outlet. While studying economics at Istanbul University, he joined *Yeni İstanbul* in 1950, transferring subsequently to *Hürriyet*. In December 1958 he became the first Near East correspondent of *Time-Life*, leading to commissions from *Paris Match*, *Stern* and the *Sunday Times* in London. Completing his military service in 1961, he was appointed head of the photographic department at *Hayat*. He



travelled the world and its wars, as much literary voyager as photographer, the books under his name attesting to the breadth, intensity and mysticism of an extraordinary legacy. "Art can lie, but photography only reflects the reality". Last August, in failing health and a wheelchair, he attended the opening of a new museum and research centre in Bomontiada, the old Istanbul brewery turned social space, housing his archive, negatives, slides and prints.<sup>90</sup> Exactly how many images he left, many unpublished, is anyone's guess: between 800,000 and two million one reads (Pamuk

<sup>88</sup>Taşdemir, *ibid.*

<sup>89</sup>Terteryan in some sources, erroneously.

<sup>90</sup><https://www.theguideistanbul.com/ara-guler-museum-turkish-photojournalist/>

says 900,000). In 2000 the French Government bestowed upon him the Légion d'honneur, Officer des Arts et des Lettres.

'A hunter of light and shadows... a king, in palaces, slums, and art circles'.<sup>91</sup> Born 16 August 1928, died 17 October 2018, 23:20, Ara Güler was married twice, without issue – to Perihan Sariöz (1975, ending in divorce) and Suna Taşkiran (1984, died 2010). He died of a heart attack in intensive care, having for several years suffered from kidney failure, needing dialysis three times a week, a treatment that severely darkened and depressed his last days. With tributes paid to him by the presidents of both Turkey and Armenia, he was buried in the Şahyan-Güler family plot in the Armenian Cemetery, Şişli,<sup>92</sup> the funeral service having taken place at the Üç Horan Armenian Church in Beyoğlu. 'The history of the world is the sum of the lives of the everyday people, the atoms of this world. And it is this magnificent world that Ara Güler wanted to preserve' – Bishop Sahak Maşalyan.

*'Even without an in-depth examination of their political and historical significance, Güler's photographs are compelling in their beauty and narrative power. Whether viewed as art or documentation, they capture a moment in Turkey that has long since vanished.'*  
~ Vanessa H Larson, 2014<sup>93</sup> ~

**Ateş Orga**  
Musicologist



## Şerif Mardin

### 1927 – 2017



Şerif Mardin, who died on 6 September 2017, was a highly erudite and independent-minded sociologist, political scientist and intellectual historian, who attained a worldwide esteem far exceeding that of any Turkish social scientist before him.

He was born in Istanbul into an elite family that had roots in eastern Turkey but many international connections. As his father was a diplomat, Şerif's early childhood was spent with an aunt and uncle in Egypt, speaking mostly French. He received his high school education in the USA and went on to undergraduate studies in Political

<sup>91</sup>Krystalli Glyniadaki, *Agenda Magasin*, 1 November 2018.

<sup>92</sup>A video extract from the graveside is available on [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/video/video\\_haber/1116928/Ara\\_Guler\\_son\\_yolculuguna\\_ugurlandi.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/video/video_haber/1116928/Ara_Guler_son_yolculuguna_ugurlandi.html)

<sup>93</sup>*Washington Post*, 4 February 2014.

Science at Stanford, followed by a Masters in International Relations at Johns Hopkins University. The doctoral thesis that he subsequently wrote at Stanford formed the basis for the book that brought him to international scholarly attention, *The genesis of Young Ottoman thought* (Princeton, 1962), a study of the first manifestations of liberalism among the Ottoman Muslim elite of Istanbul in the 1860s. His academic career included posts at a number of Turkish and American universities (Ankara, Boğaziçi, the American University, Sabancı, Şehir) and visits to Princeton, Harvard, Columbia, Oxford and EHESS (Paris).

The processes of modernisation in the late Ottoman Empire and the socio-cultural fissures that these engendered remained one of Mardin's major preoccupations throughout his career. It was lectures that he gave on these subjects during two visits to Oxford, in 1973 and 1979-80, that first made me aware of this remarkable scholar. Some images and insights that excited me then have remained with me to this day. One was the contrast between Islam as a map (showing the believer his/her place in the order of an unchanging world) and Islam as a flag (mobilising believers to defend their faith against the modern onslaught of alien ideas). Another was the observation that, down to the 1820s, a Turkish boy graduating from primary school would not be able to write a letter to his grandmother; this was Ottoman history imagined 'from below', as I had never encountered it before.

Şerif Mardin will probably be remembered above all as the first Turkish scholar to focus attention on the role of Islam in Turkish society at the 'microsociological' level, looking at what religion meant to ordinary people in their everyday lives. This was not a subject that most Turkish scholars of his generation were at all keen to get involved with. The Kemalist revolution had been predicated on the belief that a modern Turkish nation could be built only on a post-Enlightenment understanding of the world and of human society. Modern education and the principles of Kemalism would, it was believed, lead the people to 'civilisation' and prosperity. The old Islamic order had become an irrelevance and must be suppressed. Not surprisingly, the 'progressive' academics of the Republic were not concerned about the sociocultural rupture suffered by ordinary folk in the removal of so many of the supports of their traditional 'life-world' (such as the *medrese* and the religious brotherhoods known as *tarikāt*) and their replacement by the secular school (*okul*) and teacher (*öğretmen*). Any 'survivals' of the old religion-based order were seen by the Kemalists as 'reactionary' and potentially dangerous; they were to be combatted, not studied.

Against this background, Mardin's wide-ranging investigation of the life of the religious revivalist Said Nursi (1876-1960) and his extraordinary influence during the early decades of the Republic (*Religion and social change in modern Turkey*, SUNY Press, 1989) can be seen as exemplifying the author's intellectual courage as well as his penetrating analytical powers. David Shankland, Director of the Royal Anthropological Institute and a specialist on Islam in Turkey, assesses the importance of Mardin's magnum opus as follows:

This remarkable analysis has never been superseded, and was the result of decades of close interest in the Nurcus (followers of Nursi). In it, Mardin makes clear the way that Nursi reconciled modernity and belief, and how he organised and led the movement to a dominant position amongst the wide variety of such resurgent faith organisations. From it, we understand how, not quite a *tarikāt*, not quite a political party, Nursi created something unique that had aspirations to global power yet claimed to be peaceful and

non-violent. Given recent events in Turkey, this work is likely to be returned to again and again as a source of inspiration and profound understanding.

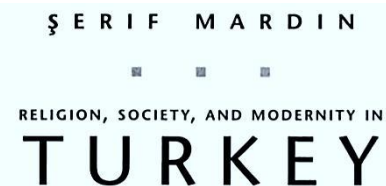
Another British anthropologist, Richard Tapper (professor emeritus, SOAS) pays tribute to Mardin's generosity to academic colleagues:

Nancy and I spent time with Şerif mainly between 1979 and 1984, when we were doing field research in Eğirdir. He was immensely helpful and encouraging as we explored the possibility of fieldwork in Turkey; in particular, he was one of the very few Turkish sociologists we spoke to who took seriously our plan to investigate daily practices of Islam in a provincial town - he was of course at the time in the middle of his own researches into Said Nursi and the Nurcus.

Mardin contributed a paper on *The Nakşibendi order in Turkish history* to a workshop convened by Richard Tapper and Professor Clement Dodd at SOAS in 1988, the proceedings of which were published as *Islam in modern Turkey* (I.B. Tauris, 1991).

Because of the polarisation of Turkish society on the issue of religion, Mardin was often – despite his own completely secular lifestyle - denigrated as *dinci* (Islamist). In an interview given to a *Hürriyet* journalist in 2007 (<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/turkiye-ne-malezya-olur-diyebilirim-ne-de-olmaz-7292235>), he said this was because he was prepared to give religious people credit where he thought it was deserved, for example in the case of high-quality research work that some of them had published.

Shortly after the above interview, Mardin found himself at the centre of a political controversy. In his book of collected essays *Religion, society and modernity in Turkey* (Syracuse University Press, 2006) he had used the expression 'neighbourhood pressure' to describe the way in which traditionalist communities in Turkey try to resist the encroachment of Western lifestyles. Although put forward as a neutral sociological observation, this phrase (*mahalle baskısı*) was seized upon by secularist journalists in Turkey in 2007-8 as encapsulating a kind of discriminatory behaviour that they claimed was encouraged or at least condoned by the ruling party (AKP). Thus ironically, Mardin, known in academic circles as a severe critic of the Kemalist approach to modernisation, became 'popular' in the last years of his life as a 'soft' critic of AKP conservatism (Tayfun Atay in *Cumhuriyet*, 8 September 2017).



ŞERİF MARDİN  
RELIGION, SOCIETY, AND MODERNITY IN  
TURKEY

In the *Hürriyet* interview cited above, Mardin provided some insight into his actual political beliefs. Democracy, he said, is inherently chaotic; disagreement and tension are healthy, but one must be constantly vigilant and raise one's voice if democracy comes under threat. These words reflect the generosity and integrity of a man who had the best interests of his country at heart and was not prepared to allow politically dominant opinion, however strongly weighted against him, to impede his pursuit of truth.

**Celia Kerslake**





**BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR TURKISH AREA STUDIES****Thirtieth Spring Symposium****Saturday, 11 May 2019****Emmanuel College, Cambridge**  
Upper Hall**Programme**

- 10.00 - 10.40** Registration and Coffee (Entrance to Upper Hall)
- 10.50** Opening remarks: **William Hale**, Acting President of BATAS
- 11.00** **Dr Katerina Dalacoura**, London School of Economics & Political Science  
*Late Ottoman and Republican Turkish Discourses on Islam and Civilization: Global History, Global Modernity*
- 11.50** **Dr Keya Anjaria**, SOAS University of London  
*The Spirit of Gezi: Taksim Square in Perihan Mağden's Two Girls and Orhan Pamuk's Black Book*
- 12.45 - 14.00** Break for lunch (Robert Gardner Room, next to Upper Hall)
- 14.10** **Dr Natalie Martin**, Nottingham Trent University  
*Journalists as terrorists? The case of Turkey*
- 15.00** **Dr Gareth Winrow**, University of Oxford & Independent Analyst on Turkey  
*The Extraordinary Life of Hannah (Fatima) Robinson*
- 16.00 - 16.30** Tea (Robert Gardner Room), followed by BATAS Annual General Meeting (Upper Hall)

## Abstracts of Symposium contributions 2019

**Dr Katerina Dalacoura**, K.Dalacoura@lse.ac.uk

Associate Professor in International Relations, Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

### **Late Ottoman and Republican Turkish Discourses on Islam and Civilization: Global History, Global Modernity**

The presentation focuses on the history of late Ottoman and Republican Turkish discourses on Islam and civilisation in the context of debates on global history and global modernity in the discipline of international relations. It traces the emergence of the concept of and ideas about civilisation in the late Ottoman period and focuses its development over three generations of intellectuals in Republican Turkey. The first generation, which centred on the figure of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, depicted Islamic civilization as the antithesis of the West. The second generation, which included thinkers such as Ali Bulaç and Üsmet Özel, rejected historical Islamic civilizations, including the Ottoman one, and argued that Muslims must look back to the ideal time of the prophet for inspiration and guidance. The third generation, among whom Ahmet Davutoğlu stands out, 'returned' to history and focused particularly on the Ottoman civilization; they did not necessarily see a clash between East and West but held on to an essentializing discourse about Islamic civilization.

The central argument of the presentation is that Islamist discourses on civilization in Republican Turkey, even when they emphasise specificity and difference, and project it back onto history, are firmly rooted within a nineteenth century terminology which is distinctly modern. This shared vocabulary, and above all the concept of 'civilisation' itself, points to the existence of a common modern experience across seemingly divergent societies. Building on the terms 'global history' and 'global modernity', the presentation re-evaluates and reaffirms the depth and significance of the nineteenth century conceptual revolution to reassert a modified modernization thesis, one which reflects the historical record more accurately than either a crude Western-centrism or a narrative of cultural specificity.

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**Dr Keya Anjaria**, ka13@soas.ac.uk

Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East, SOAS

### **The Spirit of Gezi: Taksim Square in Perihan Mağden's *Two Girls* and Orhan Pamuk's *Black Book***

On the morning of 28 May, 2013 a small occupation of around 50 people had begun to take shape. They had gathered to protest against the redevelopment of Gezi Park, a green space on the European side of Istanbul. The protests quickly transformed from localized action to a national one. Under the banner of the 'Gezi Park Protests', the nation resounded in the cacophony of disparate protest platforms: workers' rights; environmentalism; civil, Kurdish, and LGBTQ rights; anti-government; anti police brutality, among others. Six years on, and now a well-known story, the Gezi Park protests remains a significant moment for Turkish contemporary history.

At the same time, these protests have also brought many questions to the fore: how did a local, Istanbul-specific protest attract so much support nation-wide? What were the protests about? How did protestors forge their networks across these disparate causes, especially given the historically polarized landscape of Turkish politics? To date, the scholarship surrounding Gezi, has answered these questions by way of politics, sociology and even technology, but I surmise that more can be said about 'spirit of Gezi', as it has been forged in the Turkish cultural sphere.

This paper, thus, will approach these questions about the development and legacy of the Gezi Park protests from an altogether different angle. It will consider how the spaces of the Gezi park protest (prominently, Taksim Square) has been envisioned in the Turkish novel and will argue that even from the earliest Ottoman novels,

Taksim has been imprinted onto Turkish culture, as a symbolic home. With special attention to Orhan Pamuk's *Black Book* and Perihan Mağden's *Two Girls* – both novels which feature Taksim square prominently – I argue that the 'spirit of Gezi' is a compelling cultural force in the Turkish national imagination, filled with melancholy and rage – rather than rationalist political discourse. In the end, this paper speculates that the power and disparateness of the Gezi Park protests and its legacy can be anticipated through the 20th and early 21st century novels, which has engendered a distinct 'spirit' in this central square.

\*\*\*\*

**Dr Natalie Martin**, natalie.martin@ntu.ac.uk

Senior Lecturer, Department of Politics and IR, Nottingham Trent University

### **Journalists as terrorists? The case of Turkey**

Turkey remains notorious as an oppressor of journalism seeking to "speak truth unto power" and the situation has worsened since the attempted *coup d'état* in July 2016. This paper argues that the AKP government has stifled the free press in order to minimise opposition to the establishment of an authoritarian state under its control. It has done so by labelling the legitimate scrutinising of journalism instead as 'terrorism' aided by the State of Emergency powers assumed following the attempted *coup*. This has enabled it to persecute and prosecute journalists who, literally, do not toe the AK Party line thereby stymying current debate of government policies and deterring future scrutiny. This paper applies securitisation theory and discourse analysis to explain and understand how and why this was done. It concludes that speaking truth unto power is now a highly risky activity in Turkey and is likely to evoke an authoritarian response.

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**Dr Gareth Winrow**, garethwinrow@yahoo.com

Part-time Tutor at Oxford University Dept. of Continuing Education and Independent Analyst on Turkey

### **The Extraordinary Life of Hannah (Fatima) Robinson**

The extraordinary story of Hannah (Fatima) Robinson is surprisingly little known even though one of her children – "Ahmed Robenson" – was one of the late Ottoman Empire's most celebrated sportsmen. Much of the information about her life that is known has been distorted by official propaganda or been manipulated and then misunderstood by family members.

One of the first female converts to Islam in late-Victorian England, Hannah migrated to Constantinople after marrying a supposed Afghan warlord who turned out to be a charlatan and a scoundrel. Her messy divorce case, together with her impassioned pleas for financial support from the Ottoman court, caused some discomfort among the authorities in London. This was a sensitive time in British-Ottoman relations given Tsarist Russia's ambitions in Afghanistan.

Amazingly, the determined Hannah was able to establish close relations with key members of the Ottoman elite and secure financial support, and a third husband – a rising military officer – from Sultan Abdül Hamid II himself. Benefitting from the Sultan's continued largesse, Hannah would be provided with free accommodation on the prestigious *Akaretler* next to the Dolmabahçe Palace. Her young sons came under the protection of Mustafa Zeki Pasha, the Field Marshal of the Imperial Arsenal of Ordnance and Artillery, who had earlier provided a refuge for Hannah's daughter, Maud. Hannah also appeared to strike up a close relationship with 'Abdullah' Quilliam, the self-styled Sheikh of Liverpool, who came to enjoy warm ties with Sultan Abdül Hamid. Hannah eventually passed away in 1948 at the grand age of ninety three.

An enterprising and resolute woman, here was someone who unexpectedly flourished in what was a totally alien environment. Looking at Hannah's life, one is provided with a fascinating glimpse into late Ottoman society.

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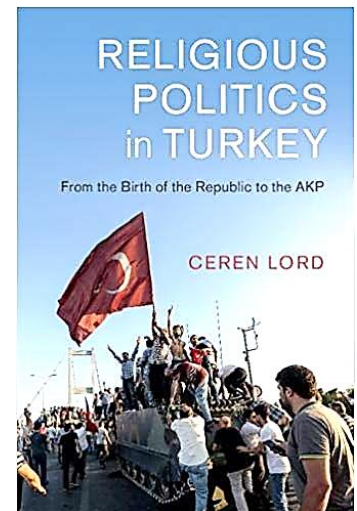
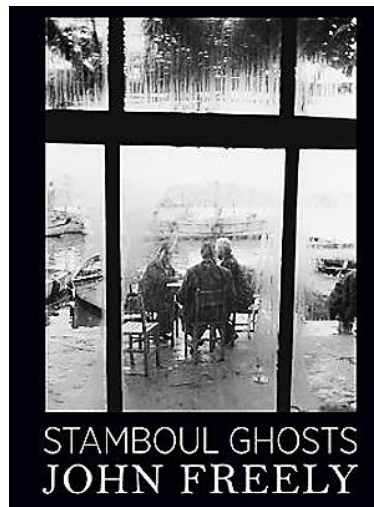
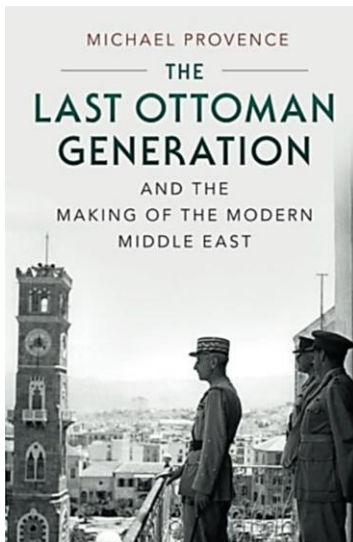
## Another Reminder!!

### Invitation

We need a regular contributor for our **Noteworthy Events** feature. If you might consider compiling such a list for our two annual issues please contact one of our Co-Editors for more details.

## 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 [cigdembalim@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cigdembalim@yahoo.co.uk) and/or [sigimartin3@gmail.com](mailto:sigimartin3@gmail.com). Submissions for the Autumn issue would be particularly welcomed by 31 July 2019.





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Dr Arın Bayraktaroğlu, 70 Queens Way, Cambridge, CB2 8AY, ☎ 01223-700130, email: bayraktaroglu@btinternet.com, **to be replaced** by Dr Çiğdem Balım for the next issue. cigdembalim@yahoo.co.uk

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