

Turkish Area Studies Review

Bulletin of the British Association for

Turkish Area Studies



www.batas.org.uk



Annual Symposium 2020

and

Annual General Meeting

Emmanuel College, Cambridge,

St Andrew's St, Cambridge CB2 3AP

was scheduled for **Saturday 2 May 2020** and is now

POSTPONED

on account of the Coronavirus. A new date and details will be announced as soon as possible.

For more information see: www.batas.org.uk



**The 2020
John Martin Lecture**

Watch this space! and our website!

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

Editorial

With this issue of *TAS Review*, Dr Gareth Winrow joins Sigrid Martin as Co-Editor. Gareth is a writer and an independent researcher and previously spent many years lecturing in Turkey. We are also delighted to welcome Nick Baird CMG CVO as President of BATAS. Nick, who is currently a director with Centrica, joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1983, since when he has held diplomatic postings – including Ambassador in Ankara (2006-2009). Between times Nick held major posts involving the European Union. He takes over from William Hale, who has for several years made a crucial contribution to BATAS as Acting President – we hope Bill will continue to give us the benefit of his deep understanding of Turkish affairs.

Not surprisingly, we take into account in this issue the impact of the spread of the Covid-19 virus on political and economic developments in Turkey. In his overview of the political situation in Turkey, David Barchard examines the initial control measures taken by Ankara. His analysis also covers ongoing tensions between political parties and considers Turkey's recent military operations in northern Syria. Mina Toksöz, in her overview, notes the importance of Turkey's Eleventh Five Year Plan and new industrial policy, and looks at how the virus poses a serious threat to the recent economy recovery in the country.

The *Review* does not exclusively focus on Covid-19. In her presentation for the 2019 John Martin Lecture, Diana Darke concentrated on issues concerning the Turkey/Syria border. In addition to a discussion of recent Turkish-Syrian relations, she spoke of her personal experiences living in an Ottoman courtyard house in Damascus. Her presentation was followed by a lively Q and A session.

As usual, we have a diverse range of other contributions. These include a penetrating analysis of China's role in Central Asia, a different take on Winston Churchill's interest in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, and an exploration of the experience of Russian refugees and migrants passing through Istanbul. Articles on history and culture include the diary notes of a trip to Armenia, an examination of how the Beyoğlu district of Istanbul came to be known as such, and a look into the 1927 master plan of Ankara proposed by the French architect Leon Jaussely. In addition to collections of poems, there is also a piece on the lives of the poets Sylvia Plath and Nilgün Marmara. We optimistically include our 'Noteworthy Events' feature in the hope that at least some of the entries may soon become relevant again.

In our previous issue we noted with sadness the passing of Professor Clement Dodd, who played such an important role in the development of BATAS. In this issue we have brought together a collection of moving tributes from Clem's academic friends and family, his former colleagues and students, and from past and current representatives of Northern Cyprus.

As always, we are very grateful to all our contributors, our proof-readers and members of the Editorial Team, including BATAS Chair Celia Kerlake, who is currently 'locked-down' in Istanbul because of travel restrictions.

Sigrid-B Martin
Co-Editor

Gareth Winrow
Co-Editor

The 2019 John Martin Lecture

The Tuke Common Room,
Regent's University

Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS

22 November 2019



The Turkey/Syria border: deep past connections and deep present differences

by **Diana Darke**

Middle East Expert and Author

In choosing this title in spring 2019 my aim was to focus attention on what had been, in my view, the long neglected border between Turkey and Syria. Little did I know that it would become, in autumn 2019, the focus of worldwide attention. An unscripted phone conversation (on 6 October) between President Trump and President Erdoğan reportedly triggered two interconnected events – the sudden decision to withdraw US troops from northeast Syria and Turkey's incursion into Syria to attempt to create a long-demanded safe zone, 30 km deep, along the border.

Originally agreed by the French and the new Turkish Republic after World War I, the border is an 822 km line running from the Mediterranean eastwards, across the Euphrates, to Syria's northeast corner where the Tigris River forms the border with Iraq. I have visited the area regularly since the late 1970s, when writing and updating my Bradt guides to Eastern Turkey and Syria. It was on this border that my feet first touched Turkish soil, crossing from Syria at Bab al-Hawa, so I discovered Turkey 'backwards', entering from the east. Syria was the safe haven at that time, Lebanon was in the grip of civil war (I had just been evacuated from Beirut) and most of eastern Turkey was under martial law.

In Ottoman times there were no physical borders. There were only administrative boundaries for tax purposes. Under the French Mandate after World War I, what had been the Ottoman province of Syria gradually became smaller, losing Jerusalem and Gaza to Britain in the south, seeing Lebanon become a separate state created by the French and, finally, losing the Sanjak of Alexandretta (Hatay) to Turkey in 1939.



Syrian maps to this day show Hatay as part of Syria, since the transfer by the French was in clear breach of the terms of their Mandate.

During the 1930s Kurds were one of a number of religious and ethnic groups in Syria. Many of them inhabited areas along the border with Turkey, including substantial numbers who had arrived after World War I as refugees from Mustafa Kemal's new Turkish Republic. Non-Turkish minorities who stayed in Turkey were obliged to assimilate into a new all-Turkish identity and forgo their own cultural identities, so many left, either voluntarily or forcibly. The Kurds who crossed into Syria were later granted Syrian citizenship by the French Mandate authorities, only to have it taken away again by the Ba'athist government in 1962, leaving 300,000 of them stateless. They were known as *bidoon* (Arabic for 'without'). President Assad of Syria hastily announced he would grant them citizenship in reaction to the 2011 uprising against him, but the UN estimates there are still 160,000 stateless Kurds inside Syria and that the remainder have mainly left the country.

The area in which Turkey has now created its 'safe zone' – the stretch between Tal Abyad and Ras al-Ain – was historically a largely Sunni Arab and



Turkmen region, which is why Turkey chose it. It has been settled by Kurds only since 2012 during the Syrian civil war, often displacing the original Sunni Arab

population as part of their push for an autonomous region the Kurds named "Rojava". These Kurds belong to the PYD Syrian Kurdish political party, founded in 2003, the strongest of the seven main Syrian Kurdish parties. Though it seeks to deny such links today, the Syrian PYD is so closely affiliated with the Turkish PKK political separatist party that it is commonly called its Syrian wing. Both parties follow the ideology and teachings of the jailed Abdullah Öcalan, a fact made clear by his face appearing on battlefield flags and indoors in PYD office buildings. When the Assad regime's army quietly withdrew from these border regions in 2012, the PYD were the best organised Kurdish group and quickly took their place. They have kept their lines of communication open to the Assad regime, which continued to operate Qamishli airport and to pay local salaries for civil servants and teachers, in order to retain influence.

Unsurprisingly, the modern border cuts through historically linked areas. The trading cities on either side of the border – Aleppo and Gaziantep – whose citadels, caravanserais and souks are architecturally very similar, were built by the same Ottoman rulers. The souks sell the same produce, the same fruits, vegetables and nuts and the glue of the region was traditionally its commerce, with merchants from all



ethnicities and religions doing business with each other. Pockets of Christianity straddle the border; monasteries have been newly established on old foundations by Syriac monks – such as Father Joachim of Mar Augen¹, on the ridge above Nusaybin in Turkey, looking out over Qamishli in Syria and beyond into what was once the Fertile Crescent. Many Syriac communities found refuge here after escaping from the Sayfo massacre by the Kurds in 1915.

Inevitably, since the border was put in place, the two governments have had different development policies. Perhaps the most striking example of this has been Turkey's South-East Anatolia Project (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi) – or GAP – where the dams on the Euphrates produce water which has transformed the landscape. Irrigated cotton and wheat on a massive scale has brought employment and prosperity to parts of Turkey which were previously neglected.

Before the current Syrian war, the border was very open and easy to cross. There were no visa requirements for Syrians and Turks and, as a result, many took holidays across the border. Presidents Erdoğan and Assad even holidayed together, in a symbol of the close ties. The porous border though became a problem once *jihadi* fighters of all nationalities, including Europeans, started crossing it from 2013 to join ISIS in its newly-proclaimed caliphate based in Raqqa, on the Euphrates in eastern Syria. President Assad of Syria saw Raqqa as a provincial backwater and didn't care what happened there, while President Erdoğan of Turkey also underestimated what ISIS would become.



The four-month battle for Kobane starting in September 2015 was the turning point, when US troops teamed up with PYD Kurdish fighters to expel ISIS from the city. The US/Kurdish coalition was born and Turkey protested from the start against this alliance with Kurdish separatists whom it has considered 'terrorists' since the 1980s when the PKK first began a long-running guerrilla war against the Turkish army. In other words, the current problem that countries such as France have with fellow NATO member Turkey's actions against the PYD Kurds was foreseeable from the start. France and others took the short-term, expedient method of fighting ISIS using boots on the ground already there and only too willing to partner with the US and its allies. They wanted to defend Kurdish majority cities like Kobane and they also knew it would play well for them and their image in the long-term if they were seen to be reliable partners against ISIS.

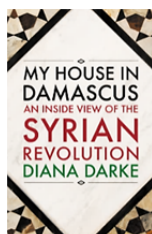
The PYD Kurds also showed themselves experts in PR. Photo features on their Kalashnikov-wielding female fighters appeared so often in the western media that one could almost be forgiven for thinking the female fighters fought

¹ When I had first visited Mar Augen in the 1980s the ruins were being lived in by a Yezidi family.



ISIS single-handed. Rarely mentioned is that many of those women were on the battlefield more to escape patriarchal dominance at home, notoriously prevalent in Kurdish society with its 'honour killings' and blood feuds. Some even set up all-female villages where they could live freely away from their controlling menfolk.

In order to bring my presentation showed pictures of my Ottoman Damascus and its restoration over help of Syrian craftsmen. It was me to become deeply embedded against the bureaucracy and every ordinary Syrian. The house



and, in stripping off the uniform white cement which has been suffocating the original multi-coloured house beneath, we are freeing Syria of the Assad regime and allowing it to breathe again. We have retained all the original features, sourcing any missing elements from salvage yards round the edge of the city. The only new elements which have come into the house are the electrical wiring, the plumbing and the drains, just as has to happen with Syria, where the corrupt malfunctioning system has to be stripped out and replaced with a new, efficient infrastructure. During the war the house became home to five refugee families, who lived there with my permission for three years.² For the last four years, another Syrian friend and his family have been living in the house, looking after it, tending my beloved plants in the courtyard.

down to the personal level, I courtyard house in Old a three-year period with the an experience which enabled in Syrian society, battling corruption of the system like becomes a metaphor for Syria



In conclusion I presented images of posters that can now be seen all over Syria. They display Russia's Putin and Syria's Assad, side by side in military fatigues and dark glasses; Assad alongside Iran's Rouhani and Nasrallah,



leader of the Lebanon-based Hezbollah. Together these images illustrate how the Assad-controlled regions of Syria are now propped up by his allies. As Syria's borders are redrawn again, much will depend on the actions of President Erdoğan. The Turkey/Syria border remains hotly contested and the futures of the communities on either side remain deeply intertwined.

CYPRUS

We are looking for a contributor who will write a **CYPRUS UPDATE** for our two annual issues. This will continue the coverage of new events in the island which was provided for many years by Professor Clement Dodd. If you might be able to write this feature for *TAS Review* please contact one of the Co-Editors.

² But then my lawyer, wrote a report to the *mukhabarat*, Assad's dreaded intelligence apparatus, accusing me of being a British terrorist with links to armed rebel groups. Soldiers were sent to the house and arrested all my friends, throwing them in prison. The third edition of *My House in Damascus* tells how I managed to get back inside Syria in late 2014, at the height of the war, and succeeded in retrieving my house.

The Covid-19 Emergency hits Turkey

David Barchard

Writer on Turkish history and society



The Covid-19 crisis has brought lock-down conditions to Turkey, though, so far, lockdown has not been formally proclaimed.³ The Minister of Health, Fahrettin Koca (a doctor himself and formerly chairman of Medipol, one of Turkey's top private health service providers), declared on 23 March that there was no need to proclaim an emergency but "everyone should declare their own [personal] state of emergency."⁴

The virus arrived relatively late in Turkey. There have been 3,629 cases diagnosed. The first death from the virus was announced on 17 March. Nine days later, there have been 75 deaths and the toll looks set to rise. Infections rose by over 1,000 on the last day that this bulletin was being prepared.

Covid-19 in Turkey has so far had a mortality rate of 2.0-2.4% – an alarming figure. Assuming a 40% infection rate, a death rate around this level would imply about three quarters of a million deaths. Though the government is not giving figures broken down according to provinces and towns, most Anatolian cities seem to be struggling with large numbers of cases. However, RTÜK, the radio and TV watchdog, has warned the media that they should "put (health) measures and warnings first" and that their news on the subject should have a "positive and integrating tone."⁵ Most of the media, in fact, headline the numbers of tests carried out and then give the daily totals for confirmed new cases and deaths. *Milliyet* newspaper, usually a government supporter, has called on the authorities to be more open about their reporting of the epidemic.⁶

In its first days in Turkey, Covid-19 claimed a prominent victim: General Aytaç Yalman, 80, a retired Land Forces Commander.⁷ Though detailed figures are not being published, every sizeable town in the country is reporting cases of infection and in some cases deaths.

Fatih Terim, the technical director of the Galatasaray football team, was diagnosed with Covid-19 on 23 March. There is a general mood of crisis across the country.⁸ Borders have been closed, and Turkish Airlines has cancelled all its flights other than to five international centres, two of them in

³ <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgwxHMZJvgkcvZZcMQhbWcBrGMjnL>

⁴ <https://ahvalnews.com/turkey-coronavirus/turkey-says-coronavirus-may-peak-two-three-weeks>

⁵ <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/koronavirus/rtukten-medya-kuruluslarina-koronavirus-yayinlarina-iliskin-tavsiyeler/1780450>

⁶ <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/son-dakika-turkiyede-corona-virusu-vaka-sayisi-kacayukseldi-kac-kisi-yasamini-yitirdi-saglik-bakani-koca-twitter-uzerinden-vaka-sayisini-duyurdu-6173367>

⁷ <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-confirms-third-death-from-coronavirus-a-former-general-153110>

⁸ <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/turkey-introduces-drastic-measures-as-coronavirus-death-toll-increases/news>

the USA.⁹ Wearing of masks seems to be widespread in Turkish towns. Persons over 65 are not being allowed to leave their homes. However, the Turkish public is resilient. At 9 pm every evening in towns across the country, people stand on their balconies and clap and cheer the country's health workers.¹⁰ It is the first such public display since the nationwide balcony protests in 1996 against concealment of the Susurluk scandal. This Turkish innovation has begun to be copied in the UK.¹¹

Measures to prop up the economy

The Turkish government is trying to contain the damage to the financial system with a series of measures mostly announced in the third week of March.

- The benchmark rate for bank borrowing was cut to 9.75% from 10.75%.¹²
- \$15 billion worth of liquidity has been pumped into the economy – a relatively small amount.
- Payments of various taxes are being deferred and banks are delaying payments of loan instalments. However, this is a deferment of only a few weeks.

Empty the prisons?

On the 23 and 24 March came proposals to release some of the 292,000 people in prison in Turkey – the UK has 92,000 prisoners. But, it seems that those whose release is envisaged would be convicted criminals including sex and drug offenders. Those accused of terrorism, including political offences, will probably not be set free. Among them are 88 journalists.¹³

Confrontation in the Grand National Assembly

Depressingly, the crisis has not spurred the political parties inside the Grand National Assembly to cooperate more closely. Proposals from the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) for dealing with the crisis, including research, were turned down flatly by the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), which used its majority (relying on votes from the Nationalist Action Party [MHP]) to push through its own proposals. This is in line with the AKP's apparently unwavering determination never to cooperate with the opposition.

PARTY POLITICS

Two new parties have been formed

After months of waiting, two new political parties have been formed. Both represent splits from the AKP, and are somewhat Islamist in character.

⁹ <https://onemileatatime.com/turkish-airlines-cancels-flights/> Flights to New York were suspended on 26 March because of the number of Corona Virus cases in that city.

¹⁰ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/latest-on-coronavirus-outbreak/turkey-applauds-health-workers-fighting-covid-19-/1773686>

¹¹ <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1260889/clap-for-nhs-video-coronavirus-nhs-applause-emergency-workers-covid19>

¹² <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-17/turkish-central-bank-monetary-policy-committee-says-it-met-today>

¹³ <https://tgs.org.tr/cezaevindeki-gazeteciler/>

Former prime minister and foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, announced the formation of the Future Party on 13 December. It claims to represent 'Conservative liberalism', moderate Islam, and parliamentary democracy. The party has no elected representatives other than the mayor of the small town of Sarıveliler, who left the AKP to join it.¹⁴

A second party, the Democracy and Advance Party (Deva), was established on 9 March by Ali Babacan, a former economics minister who was highly respected by the markets and who seems to enjoy the tacit approval of the USA. Babacan's style is cheerful and engaging and somewhat reminiscent of the late President Turgut Özal. Deva has one member of parliament, Mustafa Yeneroğlu – a relatively junior AKP politician who has represented Istanbul since 2015. Several former AKP MPs are also members. The most surprising name on the list of Deva's founders is that of Metin Gürcan, Turkey's widely-admired writer on strategic affairs.



Mainly there to shave AKP votes?

Despite a fair amount of international attention given to these two new parties, their prospects of surviving look weak. Currently, the polls suggest that in a general election the Future Party would pick up around 2% of the vote and Deva, 3.4%¹⁵ This places them well behind the Good Party (İP) of Meral Akşener, though both parties probably calculate that thanks to the electoral alliance system introduced by the AKP in 2017, they will be able to form a pact with the rest of the opposition and thereby secure a toehold in the Assembly.

The rest of the opposition seems not to regard either party as serious competition but as a useful means of chipping away support from the AKP. The ruling party's support seems to be sagging slightly, but it still has a substantial lead (around 15 percentage points) over the main opposition CHP.

One difficulty for the AKP is the cost of living, despite an inflation figure which is officially falling. In the last two months of 2019, groups of persons suffering economically committed suicide. The suicide of four elderly siblings in Fatih, in Istanbul, convulsed the country in early November.¹⁶ The government has prudently placed restrictions on the sale of cyanide.¹⁷

A poll by Optimar in early March suggested that the AKP has the support of 42% of voters, while the CHP is backed by just under 25%. In other words, neither party has changed its position very much since the elections. The crucial vote will be the next presidential elections due in 2023. President Erdoğan could expect to get at least 40% of the votes – a slight fall since 2018. But former President Abdullah Gül, sometimes fancied as a candidate, would probably receive only around 16% and thus not be a formidable challenger.

¹⁴ <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/gelecek-partisinin-ilk-belediye-baskani-halil-kulak-baska-belediye-baskanlari-da-var-5509226/>

¹⁵ <https://www.internethaber.com/adanin-son-anketinde-ali-babacanin-deva-partisi-surpriz-yapti-davutoglu-gecti-2088115h.htm>,
<https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/politika/2020/03/24/secim-anketi-yuzde-41-erdogan-yuzde-16-gul/>

¹⁶ <https://www.haberler.com/fatih-te-intihar-eden-dort-kardesin-uvey-12598823-haberi/>

¹⁷ <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/siyanurun-halka-satisi-yasaklandi-5479448/>

İmamoğlu biding his time

Gül, who has refused to step into the ring with either Deva or the Future Party, is unlikely to be the president's opponent in 2023. The real challengers to the AKP are almost certainly the opposition mayors of Istanbul and Ankara, Ekrem İmamoğlu and Mansur Yavaş. The two seem to have overcome problems arising from not having a majority in the municipal assemblies of either town. Yavaş, the mayor of Ankara, whose origins lie in the nationalist right, seems to be working well with his centre-left supporters. He has, however, ruled himself out as a potential candidate in the 2023 presidential elections.¹⁸

The CHP mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu, is by far the strongest potential opposition contender for the 2023 elections. During the last few months, İmamoğlu's attention seems to have been focussed on his work as mayor of the 15.5 million citizens of Istanbul, with a hands-on approach to administration. His popularity seems to be holding, and coexistence with national government seems (currently) less fraught than it did last summer.

Mayors being removed from office

All mayors in Turkey face possible action against them by the Ministry of the Interior or of Finance. Those under most immediate risk of removal and replacement (fresh elections are not held) are mayors in south eastern Turkey belonging to the pro-Kurdish HDP. Removal of these began on 20 August, when the mayors of Diyarbakır, Mardin, and Van were dismissed. This was followed on 13 November by the dismissal of mayors of four smaller towns in Diyarbakır and Tunceli provinces. On 23 March, the government sacked mayors of eight towns in south eastern Turkey. Three were detained, including the mayor of Batman. He was later released but will probably face prosecution.¹⁹ This brings to 15 the total number of HDP mayors recently deposed. By comparison, 107 mayors from pro-Kurdish parties were removed from office and in many cases detained in the period between 2014 and 2019.²⁰

Removal of local politicians on explicit terrorism or political charges does not happen in western Turkey, but some mayors have been removed on grounds of criminality, suspected or proven. However, they are not necessarily replaced by Ministry of Interior officials.

Nibbling at mainstream opposition mayors

It seems that while the government is removing mayors from the HDP in south eastern Turkey on terrorism or extremism charges, it is also nibbling at the opposition base elsewhere in Turkey by removing CHP mayors accused of irregularities. On 26 March, for example, the mayor of Ceyhan, a large town near Adana, was removed on the grounds that he had an undisclosed conviction for gun ownership.²¹ The mayor of Urla, near Izmir, was dismissed

¹⁸ <https://haber.sol.org.tr/turkiye/mansur-yavastan-cumhurbaskanligi-adayligi-aciklamasi-278938>

¹⁹ <https://dogruhaber.com.tr/haber/650736-batman-belediye-baskanligi-gorevinden-alinan-demir-serbest-birakildi/>

²⁰ <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/194424-son-2-senede-toplam-107-belediye-baskani-gorevden-uzaklastirildi>

²¹ <https://www.gercekgundem.com/siyaset/168406/chpli-baskan-kadir-aydar-gorevden-alindi>

and arrested on 18 December for alleged membership of FETÖ, the Gülen movement, and the Mayor of Yalova was fired on 6 March for alleged embezzlement. He was replaced by a local municipal councillor from the AKP.²²

In December, Mansur Yavaş fended off an investigation by the Ministry of the Interior for irregularities after a former CHP member of parliament accused him and two colleagues of taking bribes. Yavaş is very popular and the allegations do not seem to have been taken very seriously by the general public.²³

It is possible that further moves lie ahead. At the end of December, Süleyman Soylu, the Minister of the Interior, announced that 150 mayors, around 40% of them members of the ruling AKP, were being investigated, including in big cities, on possible corruption charges.²⁴

HUMAN RIGHTS

Turkey's human rights situation continues to be bleak, with regular arrests of journalists. The social media are widely monitored for unacceptable comments. Sixty-four persons were detained on 18 and 19 March, for example, for their 'baseless and provocative comments', mostly on Twitter and Facebook, about the Corona Virus emergency.²⁵

According to the Turkish Journalists' Union, the number of journalists in prison has fallen to 88 in mid-March. Two years ago, about 140 were imprisoned. But prosecutions and arrests continue.²⁶ Several journalists at the small but quite influential news channel Oda TV were arrested on 5 March and charged. They included its news reporter Barış Terkoğlu, and the channel's editor in chief, Barış Pehlivan. They were apparently being punished for reporting claims that Turkish officials killed in Libya belonged to the national intelligence organization. There was some shock at reports that Barış Pehlivan had been struck by one of his guards. This was instantly denied by the court authorities, but an investigation has now been launched into the claims, which appear to be credible.²⁷ Physical ill-treatment of detainees, once widespread and then largely eradicated as a result of EU influence in the 1990s, seems to be returning.

Crackdown on FETÖ continues

Raids on persons accused of membership of FETÖ, regarded as definitely terrorist by most Turks, though not treated as such by the US authorities, are announced each week. For example, ten men were detained in five provinces

²² <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/tutuklanan-chpli-baskan-gorevden-alindi-5515890/> and <https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2020/03/06/son-dakika-gorevden-uzaklastirilan-yalova-belediye-baskani-vefa-salman-yerine-o-isim-secildi>

²³ <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/chp-launches-disciplinary-action-into-former-deputy-amid-allegations-against-ankara-mayor-150206>

²⁴ <https://tr.euronews.com/2019/12/30/suleyman-soylu-150-belediyede-ozel-teftis-yaptiriyorum>

²⁵ <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/son-dakika-provokatif-corona-paylasimi-yapan-64-kisi-gozaltinda-6169480>, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/koronavirus/sosyal-medyada-asilsiz-ve-provokatif-koronavirus-paylasimlarina-24-gozalti/1769686>

²⁶ <https://tgs.org.tr/cezaevindeki-gazeteciler/>

²⁷ <https://www.duvarenglish.com/human-rights/2020/03/19/justice-ministry-investigating-beating-of-odatv-editor-in-chief-pehlivan-by-prison-guard/>

– Kocaeli, Izmir, İstanbul, Ankara, Giresun and Tokat – on 3 March.²⁸ Sometimes, there is leniency, which would seem to require explanation. On 19 March, a retired rear-admiral, Doğan Bozkurt, was given a nine year jail sentence for alleged links with FETÖ, and possessing its By-Lock encryption system on his mobile phone, but then released.²⁹

TURKEY AND SYRIA

From ‘Spring of Peace’ to ‘Spring Shield’: a tale of two campaigns

Last October, Operation ‘Spring of Peace’ was getting under way. The operation aimed to destroy the autonomous Kurdish cantons, known as ‘Rojava’, in northern Syria, and create a 32 km ‘Safe Zone’ south of the Turkish border. President Donald Trump withdrew US military backing for the Kurds,³⁰ helping Turkey to accomplish its first stage, and though there may be some autonomous Kurdish areas left in the extreme north east of Syria, most of the other Kurdish administrations have disappeared. But the safe zone has not been created, and Turkey controls only an area east of the Euphrates.

Turkey launched its main operations around Tel Abyad and Ras al-Ayn and it seems to have won a fairly easy military victory, but the effect of its intervention was to revive ties between President Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian Kurds. A deal was announced integrating Rojava into the Syrian administrative system. Syrian troops certainly moved into districts in the north, as did their Russian allies, and Russian soldiers seem to have stepped into positions vacated by American forces.³¹ However, relations between Russian and American soldiers seem generally tense, even descending into a fist fight at one point.³²

Sochi II – sharing northern Syria?

Operation Spring of Peace came to an end with yet another Turkish-Russian summit between Putin and Erdoğan on 22 October, which produced a ten point agreement.³³ Kurdish forces were given 150 hours to retreat about twenty miles from a 260-mile border strip, from north of Manbij in the west to the Iraqi border in the east. Following this withdrawal, joint Russian-Turkish military were to patrol a six miles-deep border strip, west and east of the Turkish held area. A few patrols took place. They were interrupted in February, when Turkey’s forces and those of the Syrian government (backed by Russia) clashed, but they resumed shortly afterwards.³⁴

What has happened to Mazloun Abdi?

The fate of any remaining Kurdish-run areas and of the Kurdish commander, Mazloun Abdi, detested in Turkey, and regarded as a valiant ally in

²⁸ <https://www.ozgurkocaeli.com.tr/fetö-haberleri.htm>

²⁹ <https://www.haberturk.com/son-dakika-haberler-feto-den-amirale-8-yil-9-ay-hapis-ve-tahliye-haberler-2618246>

³⁰ <https://www.nbcnews.com/world/former-u-s-officials-criticize-trump-s-decision-abandon-kurds-n1084156>

³¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gm3hH6_Nh0

³² <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20191230-us-and-russian-soldiers-in-syria-fist-fight/>

³³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/10/full-text-turkey-russia-agreement-northeast-syria-191022180033274.html>

³⁴ <http://www.anews.com.tr/world/2020/02/18/joint-turkish-russian-patrols-resume-in-northern-syria>

Washington, is not clear. On 20 February, Abdi held a meeting with a visiting US Congressman, Ralph Abraham (Republican) which was made public. On 23 March, Abdi instructed his followers (in Arabic) to comply with precautions against Covid-19. Rooftops of a modern city could be glimpsed behind him.³⁵

Idlib – Turkey’s unwelcome Syrian responsibility

The ten point Sochi Agreement of 2019 makes no mention of the other focus of Turkish interest in Syria – Idlib province. The population of the western province had more than doubled to three million with an influx of Sunni opponents of Bashar al-Assad. Idlib was largely administered by jihadi militants, controlled since the summer of 2017 by Tahrir Hay’at al Sham (HTS – Levant Liberation Committee), a hard-line Salafist group previously affiliated to al-Qa’ida.

Ankara regards these jihadists as allies, and as representing the legitimate government and army of Syria. This has put Turkey at loggerheads with both Moscow and Damascus, who complain of rocket attacks on their bases and air stations. Turkey was expected to disarm the jihadists in Idlib, but failed to do so. Turkey has insisted on remaining a protector of Idlib’s population and maintains 12 watch towers to ensure a ceasefire. However, in May 2019 Syrian government forces advanced into the province and stepped up their offensive in November.

Further Syrian Arab Army (SAA) advances in January and February surrounded the Turkish positions. This triggered about one million refugees living in Idlib to flee towards the Turkish border. But because of the two metres high wall Turkey has built along the border, they were unable to cross. Turkey could not possibly accept this latest wave of migrants. It is already housing 3.7 million registered Syrian refugees and this is deeply unpopular. Refugees from Idlib would include large numbers of jihadi terrorists and their families who would almost certainly go to ground.

As the Syrian attacks increased, supported by Russian jets (though Turkey refrained from mentioning this and pinned blame on the SAA alone), fighting concentrated on the town of Saraqib. Turkey moved large numbers of troops to Idlib to support its token forces there. This drew a sharp response from the SAA. On 27 February, it staged a land and air attack (in which Russia almost certainly played a part) on the Turkish army, killing at least 33 soldiers, though much higher numbers are circulating in Turkish private discussion.³⁶ The Turkish forces were bombed by two Russian Sukhoi Su-34 and two Syrian Su-22 fighter jets. Russians claimed that US-made MANPAD shoulder rockets were used against them.³⁷ President Putin was later to describe this as a tragic mistake caused by a Turkish failure to notify the Russians of the presence of Turkish soldiers.

Reaction by public opinion in both Russia and Turkey was very strong indeed. The Russian press reverted to its strongly anti-Turkish tone of 2015 and 2016.

³⁵ <https://twitter.com/MazlounAbdi/status/1230401388355739648?s=20>

³⁶ <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/erdogan-convenes-emergency-meeting-over-idlib-tensions/news>

³⁷ <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/02/turkey-syria-russia-deciphering-attack-on-turkish-troops.html> Russia denied the involvement of its planes.
<https://www.yahoo.com/news/russia-says-turkish-troops-hit-054652758.html>

Sections of the Turkish press did the same, though President Erdoğan's personal aim remained clearly the avoidance of a breach with Russia.

Nevertheless, it briefly looked as if there would be a full scale war between the relatively weak and exhausted SAA and Turkish forces. A new military operation, 'Operation Spring Shield,' was proclaimed in Ankara, amid calls from Turkish Islamists for Turkey to fight all out against Assad and annex Aleppo (not part of Idlib, but close to it) and eventually Damascus.³⁸ This is not the policy of Erdoğan, though it seems he plans for continued Turkish occupation of northern Syria as long as Assad is in power. The Turkish-controlled zones are being integrated into Turkey as far as administration and infrastructure (including energy) are concerned.

Turkey's biggest success in 'Operation Spring Shield' was the performance of its military electronics, which seem to have knocked out Russian Pantsir anti-missile ground stations. These stations were jammed by the Turkish electronic systems Koral and (apparently) Hisar. These are the fruits of a long investment in military electronics, which was originally triggered by the 1975 US arms embargo against Turkey.³⁹

Russia quickly prevented the Turkish-Syrian confrontation going any further. Erdoğan visited Putin for talks on 5 March. He had originally intended to hold a four power summit in Istanbul. The night before he departed, he made it clear that he expected a ceasefire and not a confrontation.

The ceasefire deal is regarded privately by many in Turkey as a humiliation for the president. The Syrian Army holds on to its territorial gains. Russia intends to resume the crackdown on terrorists – i.e. HTS. Turkey's main gain is a negative one: the refugees of Idlib will remain where they are. Just how Putin persuaded the Turkish leader to accept these terms remains a puzzle. One explanation is that Erdoğan regards his partnership with Moscow as an instrument for gradually removing Turkey from the Western world. The confrontation over Idlib saw unsubtle attempts by American officials to lure Turkey away from Russia. James Jeffrey and Senator Lindsey Graham both paid flying visits to Ankara, promising to back Turkey against the attacks on it by Syrian government forces inside Syria. The terms the Americans offered – the sale of Patriot missiles to Turkey on condition that it revoked the purchase of S-400 Russian anti-missile systems -- were obviously unacceptable. On 6 March, Ankara announced that S-400 Russian anti-missile systems are to be activated in April, finally dashing American hopes of an imminent rapprochement with Ankara.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the uneasy settlement in Idlib, and the knowledge that the Russian-backed Assad government is here to stay, makes it hard to see what advantage Turkey gains from its presence in Syria. For the time being, the ambition of becoming a regional hegemon in the heart of the Islamic world seems to have failed, while the costs of the military occupation are surely a major constraint on Turkey's economy.

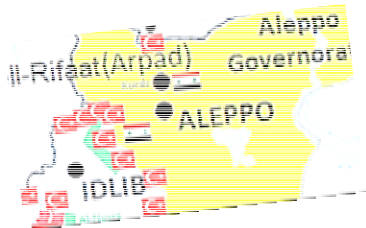
³⁸ <https://www.dirilispostasi.com/makale/halep-artik-turkiye-sinirlarina-dahil-edilmeli?fbclid=IwAR0rqet8Ax-maTkzNd1tgiqqDIDA9hDmVJROFbish5-2-43zPqNfxMjIwYE>

³⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sebastienroblin/2020/03/02/idlib-onslaught-turkish-drones-artillery-and-f-16s-just-destroyed-over-100-armored-vehicles-in-syria-and-downed-two-jets/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.duvarenglish.com/diplomacy/2020/03/06/turkey-to-put-s-400-missile-defense-systems-in-operation-in-april/>

Idlib and Corona-virus Crises threaten Economic Recovery in Short Term;

the 11th Five Year Plan and industrial policy point to a new growth model in the long term



by **Mina Toksöz**

University of Manchester Business School

The aim of these bi-annual reports on the Turkish economy is two-fold: to follow current developments and to highlight longer-term trends. However, in the past few years, the reports have mostly focused on the more urgent short-term economic impact of domestic and regional crises. This is where we are today with the Idlib crisis and the corona-virus that threaten the current economic recovery. But over the past year there were also two important policy initiatives regarding the future course of the Turkish economy: the 11th Five Year Development Plan (FYP) and an industrial policy. Hence we now have the opportunity to consider the potentially positive longer-term trajectory of the Turkish economy and at the same time its contrasting fragile current trends.

Turkish economy came ‘close to transitioning out of middle-income status’ by 2017

A World Bank report published in 2019 on productivity and growth in Turkey makes the remarkable statement that – between 2002-2017 – Turkey came ‘close to transitioning out of upper middle income status...a feat achieved only by a handful of countries in recent years’.⁴¹ This growth phase – coinciding with a strong global economy – was supported by the radical reforms in the aftermath of the 2001 crisis and driven mostly by absolute increases in labour and physical inputs. Meanwhile the contribution from productivity was less and ‘on a declining path in recent years’.

...then came the 2018 crisis that bottomed out in 2019

This structural weakness of the Turkish catch-up growth spurt was masked by historically low international interest rates and a strong appetite for high yielding assets after the global financial crisis. But as protectionist trends increased and regional conflicts with the US accumulated, investor sentiment towards Turkey turned negative, triggering the 2018 crisis.⁴² The recession that ensued (with three quarters of negative growth) bottomed out in mid-2019. The combined impact of counter-cyclical fiscal spending (that took the budget deficit to 3% of GDP), another (TL25bn) round of credit support from the Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF), and the rapid 1325 basis point interest rate cuts since mid-2019 by the Central Bank (CBT) (that turned real interest rates negative from January 2020) generated a 6% GDP growth by the fourth quarter of 2019. That managed to squeeze in a positive 0.9% growth for the year as a whole led by consumption on the demand side, and on the supply side, agriculture and services; but industry stagnated with only 0.2% growth.

⁴¹ World Bank, *Country Economic Memorandum: Firm Productivity and Economic Growth in Turkey*, 2019.

⁴² The 2018 crisis was covered in the Autumn 2018 TASR No 32 issue: <https://batas.org.uk/journal/>

Talk of the country going back to the IMF for funding and dire comparisons with various crisis-struck Latin American economies receded as the current account deficit reverted to a surplus from May and a \$1.7bn surplus for 2019 as a whole. This was helped by the 9.1% decline in imports and a 25% rise in net tourism receipts; although exports only grew 2.1% despite the competitive boost from the depreciated lira. There was also emergency liquidity support from Qatar that included a swap line of \$3bn (increased to \$5bn in November 2019). Meanwhile, base effects, weak domestic demand, and administrative price caps reduced inflation from a peak of 25.5% in September 2018 to 11.5% by end-2019. The Central Bank of Turkey expects inflation to slow to single digits by end-2020, but this looks difficult given the weakness in the lira since February.

But recovery in 2020 is being hit by the corona-virus outbreak and Idlib crisis

It is clear that the impact on the economy will be significant. The border with Iran and Iraq has been closed. The services sector is already affected – especially travel, transport, and tourism – and this is likely to worsen. The Turkish economy will have some cushion against these negative shocks from the decline in oil prices (every \$10 decline in the oil price saves \$4bn on the import bill). But a recent UN study found Turkey in the top-15 countries that are vulnerable to the interruption in supply chains from China.⁴³

Even before the additional threats to recovery from the conflict in Syria and the corona-virus outbreak, it was unlikely that the strong growth at end-2019 could be sustained into 2020 (the official GDP growth target is 5%).

- Confidence in the currency and monetary policy remains weak with FX deposits still over half the total banking sector deposits. Despite some \$2bn support by public sector banks and other measures such as tightening of swap limits, the Turkish lira saw another bout of depreciation as the Idlib conflict escalated in February; this pressure continued as the corona-virus outbreak led to the strengthening of the US\$.
- Foreign payments pressures are set to increase as the current account balance reverts to deficit in 2020. Trends on the capital account are not positive: in 2019, net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows were down 41% to \$5.5bn; of this, 57% went into real estate investments.
- Credit growth, led by public sector banks, picked up strongly from mid-2019. Despite this, fixed investment fell 3.6% in 2019. With a large unsold stock of new housing still remaining, there was an 8.6% contraction in the construction sector – one of the key drivers of growth in recent years.
- The banking sector recovered somewhat in the second half of 2019. Provisions for non-performing loans (NPLs) were increased while net repayments reduced banking sector FX debt. But NPLs will remain a drag on credit growth. In September 2019, the Banking Regulator (BDDK) instructed banks to reclassify \$8.1 billion of loans as non-performing. But there is more to come. Of the \$47bn credits to the energy sector \$12-13bn are reported to be impaired.

These vulnerabilities suggest that consumption-led growth based on the old formula of weak-currency-and-credit-stimulus is likely to become more difficult. However, with unemployment at 13-14%, the government is persisting on this track – necessarily more so since the escalation of the Syrian and Corona-virus

⁴³ UNCTAD, 'Global Trade Impact of the Coronavirus Epidemic, March 2020'. There are some anecdotal reports of supply chains in textiles, clothing, and chemicals being redirected from Asia to Turkey since the outbreak, but it is not clear how lasting or significant that will be.

crises. Given the real risk of a global recession, policy has become progressively defensive to limit the contraction in the economy from the corona virus. Low public debt and a relatively strong banking sector allows scope for this policy to continue for now. But once the short term impact of the epidemic eases, longer term growth needs a very different policy mix.

The 11th Five Year Plan (FYP) and Tech-driven Industry Initiative aim to fix structural issues

In the longer term, achieving sustainable growth requires a solution to the productivity problem identified by the above World Bank report. Growth has relied too much on low-productivity construction and services sectors while productivity has stagnated in manufacturing with the exception of a few break-out industries such as motor vehicles, basic metals and textiles. There is also a secular trend towards premature de-industrialisation. Public discussions of these structural issues have been mostly conducted in a polarised and misplaced debate pitting the 'interest rate lobby' against the 'real sector'. However, repeated warnings from business along with the persistent decline in private sector investment (except in housing) have prompted various government initiatives over the past decade culminating in the 11th FYP for 2019-23.

In the summer of 2019, the 11th FYP and an industrial policy – Tech-Driven Industry Initiative – were published with little fanfare or media attention. Yet the 11th FYP is an ambitious document aiming for an industrial technological upgrade to raise the share of exports of medium-high tech products from 39% to 50%.⁴⁴ There are project-based incentives for high-technology and export-oriented investments and a framework to attract FDI and increase integration with global value chains. These projects include bio-technology medication producers, a petrochemical hub in the Ceyhan Industrial Zone (already initiated), further support for techno-parks, and projects that increase the share of domestic production in transport and communications equipment used by the security and defence industries. Complementing the 11th FYP is the industrial policy (IP) called the 'Tech-Driven Industry Initiative' for 'end-to-end localization' from the Ministry of Industry and Technology. The IP initiative aims to curb import dependence in medium-high technology intermediate goods and reduce the current account deficit by some US\$30bn.

Industrial policy makes a comeback

Since the beginning of the republic, Turkey's industrialisation has been state-led and from the 1960s onwards directed by the State Planning Organisation (SPO)⁴⁵ and FYPs. The FYPs were only 'indicative' for the private sector. The purpose of the public sector – which focused on heavy industry -- was to support the private sector in consumer goods production. These aims were mostly achieved by the time the 'planned period' effectively ended with the liberalisation of the Turkish economy from the 1980s. Yet FYPs were continued and, paradoxically, under Turgut Özal's liberalisation reforms, when the state was supposed to be retreating, the investment and export incentives continued to expand (see chart: Incentive Certificates), although they became increasingly discretionary.⁴⁶ The

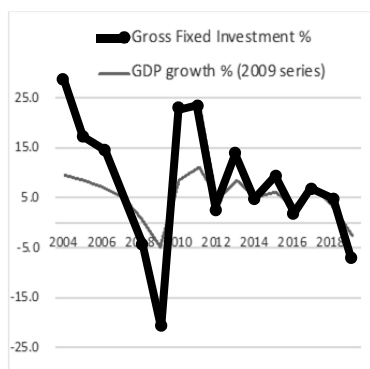
⁴⁴ The numbers breakdown was 36% medium, 5% high-tech in Turkish exports; this compares with 18% medium, 36% high-tech in Malaysia; and 36% medium, 18% high-tech in Poland. See Güven Sak, 'Türkiye neden içinden değer zinciri geçen bir ülke olamadı?', *Dünya*, 5 February, 2018.

⁴⁵ Where our TASR Editorial Team member, Brian Beeley, worked between 1962 and 1964.

⁴⁶ The transformation of the SPO from a 'neutral arbiter' run by committed technocrats in the early years into a highly politicised entity and another source of political patronage under

state's role in the economy did begin to retreat following the 2001 crisis. Many state-owned enterprises (SOEs) were privatised, with public investment directed mostly into infrastructure. IP was demoted in line with WTO and EU regulations and reshaped as 'neutral' and 'comparative advantage facilitating', with mixed results.⁴⁷

Meanwhile an appreciating lira from the mid-2000s eroded competitiveness, increased imports and encouraged the private sector to turn to foreign currency borrowing. It seemed that dependence on public support for industry was being replaced by dependence on private foreign capital. Chronic budget deficits of the 1980s-90s were being replaced by chronic current account deficits. The global financial crisis was a wake-up call that exposed the loss of competitiveness of industry and foreign payments imbalances and forced a re-think. Since 2009, government policies have moved towards a more active intervention in support of the 'real sector' – along with a weaker currency. This has led some analysts to ask if this was a new stage of 'neo-developmentalism' in Turkey.⁴⁸ In 2011, the Ministry of Science, Industry, and Technology issued an industrial strategy document that proposed Turkish industries become a med-and-high tech production base for Eurasia. Based on an analysis of Turkey's comparative advantage this document highlighted the automotive, white goods, machinery, and electronics sectors.



But it is different this time: Open Industrial Policy...

Legislative authority for these policies came with the 2012 Incentives Law that brought back the idea of 'strategic investments'. The new framework has been some years in the making, drawing on the lessons of previous industrial policies around the world. Rather than 'picking' specific sectors, general criteria for incentives are identified; these consist of sectors where dependence on imports is greater than 50% and projects with 40% domestic value added. It seemed as if industrial policy has gone full circle and returned to some form of 'import-substituting-industrialisation (ISI)' of the 1950s-60s. But not quite. This was ISI-2: in contrast with the old industrialisation of the 'planned period' behind tariff walls,

Turgut Özal is described by veteran planner Günel Kansu in his autobiographical book. *Planlı Yıllar: anılarla DPT'nin öyküsü* (İstanbul: Kültür Yayınları, İş Bankası, 2004).

⁴⁷ İzak Atiyas and Ozan Bakış 'Structural change and Industrial Policy in Turkey', in *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, Vol 51, (2015). The problem with IP seen in advanced as well as developing economies is the state picking the wrong sectors. One answer to this was to construct 'neutral' industrial policies that have 'horizontal' incentives -- such as tax-breaks for R&D or regional development objectives, that leave the sectoral investment decisions to private investors.

⁴⁸ See Mustafa Kutlay and Hüseyin E. Karaoğuz, 'Neo-developmental turn in the global political economy? The Turkish case', *Turkish Studies*, 19:2 (2018) pp 289-316.

this time the tech-led strategy was not inward looking but export oriented (drawing on lessons from Asia).⁴⁹ The 2012 Incentives Law also seems to have adopted many of the recommendations from the IMF (in another one of the IMF's radical U-turns) in what they call TIP: True Industrial Policy (or Technology and Innovation Policy).⁵⁰

Positive momentum...

There is some positive momentum in Turkey for a tech-led re-industrialisation. Some measures of digital preparedness for a technological leap show that Turkey stands reasonably well positioned: a Digital Evolution Index by Fletcher School in Tufts University put Turkey in the border of a 'Stand-Out' crowd of countries along with Poland and Malaysia.⁵¹ A techno-fest held in Istanbul in 2019 was packed out, with 1.7 million attending. The latest data (2017) on angel investments put Turkey in fifth place in Europe with €52.3m. According to the *Dünya* newspaper, investment into start-ups recovered in 2019 with \$101m into 92 projects.⁵² Significant state-supported big projects have been started including the domestic electric car production in Bursa with an annual capacity of 175,000, supported with incentives that include tax exemptions, investment site allocation, and public purchase guarantee.⁵³



There are also developments in the defence industries sector. Given Turkey's volatile geo-strategic location and defence spending of 2.5% of GDP, governments have sought to increase self-sufficiency in defence requirements since the 1980s. Four Turkish firms, including Aselsan, are listed among the top-100 global defence manufacturers and Turkish defence exports are in the top-15. Since 2010, investment incentives to defence projects have risen rapidly. One of the biggest investment incentive allocations in 2019 was to Aselsan Konya, a public-private defence industry project.⁵⁴ As in other countries, Turkish defence industries have the potential to become a significant conduit for high tech production – driven by what some observers call 'techno-nationalism'.

...with old problems?

It is possible that Turkish industry will make some headway in this. But the implementation of IP in late developing economies with weak market institutions faces a number of problems. One is the risk of increased patronage and corruption that could ultimately limit the developmental aims. This has become a growing risk in Turkey, as revealed in Turkey's Corruption Perceptions score tracked by Transparency International that has declined from a middling 50 in 2013 to 39 in 2018. There are also issues arising from the weakness of state

⁴⁹ Robert Wade, 'The role of the state in escaping the middle-income trap: the case for smart industrial policy', *METU Studies in Development*, 43 (April 2016) pp 21-42.

⁵⁰ Rada Charif and Fuad Hasanov, 'The return of the policy that shall not be named: principles of industrial policy', *IMF Working Paper*, WP/19/74, March 2019.

⁵¹ B. Chakravorti and Ravi S. Chaturvedi, *Digital Planet 2017*, The Fletcher School, Tufts University, July, 2017. However, an 'Ease of Doing Digital Business Index' by the same unit at Tufts put Turkey at the bottom end of 42 countries surveyed. Turkey scores towards the middle in digital & analog foundations and e-commerce; but it has low scores on data accessibility & sharing economy, and its pool of on-line freelancers is limited, partly reflecting the wide gender gap in financial inclusion.

⁵² Selenay Yağcı, 'Startup'lara 101 milyon \$ yatırım', *Dünya*, 2 Feb 2020.

⁵³ *Is Bank Weekly Bulletin*, 30 December 2019.

⁵⁴ 'Silah ve muhimyat yatirimlari 11 ayda 2 milyar liraya ulasti', *Dünya*, 7 January, 2020.

capacity in the organisation of the incentive schemes and credit support.⁵⁵ During the rapid roll-out of the CGF, which was expanded 10-fold in four months to 7% of GDP in 2017, 90% of the credits were used for working capital rather than new investment in machinery and equipment.⁵⁶ In recent years, it seems a raft of new incentives has been rushed out prior to every election. A recent OECD report noted the proliferation of '75 different incentive and subsidy schemes in place'.⁵⁷ The IMF has warned about the fiscal implications of these programmes and suggested a Comprehensive Public Sector Report covering all contingent liabilities of public-private partnerships (PPPs) and credit guarantees.⁵⁸

The overall framework is now one of a complexity that seems difficult to monitor. Combined with growing centralisation of decision making, this framework also increases the scope for discretion and weakens investor confidence. Despite the repeated rounds of credit stimulus, the ratio of machinery and equipment investments to total credits has been declining since 2013 when it was around 25%.⁵⁹ In February 2020, the government issued a three-pronged initiative to boost private sector investment: a new Investment Law, a Sanayi İcra Kurulu (Industrial Executive Committee), and an Investor Ombudsman. No doubt technical support to help resolve investor issues will help. But if the private sector is to fully participate in this tech-led investment project and make the next productivity leap, it will be necessary to repair the institutional fabric and aim for greater stability in foreign policy and in the macro-economic environment.

Churchill – a Good Friend of Turkey⁶⁰

by Erhun Kula

Non-residential Professor of Environmental
Economics,
Department of Economics,
İbn Haldun University, İstanbul



In Turkey Winston Churchill is known as an important historic figure of the twentieth century but also as an adversary of the Turks, largely due to the Gallipoli Campaign in which he was the major architect. The Campaign was a disaster for the Allied Forces and a great humiliation for Churchill which cost

⁵⁵ See Kutlay and Karaoğuz, 'Neo-developmental turn'. They list weak bureaucratic autonomy, problems with monitoring and steering the R&D funds, and problems of public-private coordination that constrain the developmental impact of the technological upgrading plans.

⁵⁶ IMF, *Article IV Consultation: Turkey*, April 2018. In 2018, the government hastily issued new instructions to ensure CGF credits were mostly allocated for capital investment and exporters.

⁵⁷ *OECD Economic Surveys: Turkey*, 2018, p 41.

⁵⁸ *Fiscal Transparency Evaluation Report: Turkey*, IMF, 2016.

⁵⁹ İsmet Özkil, *Dünya*, 28 January, 2020.

⁶⁰ I am grateful to Donald Cannon for providing me with the complete works of Churchill's Diaries.

him his job as First Lord of the Admiralty. For the Turks, however, Gallipoli was a great victory which erased the bad image created by the First Balkan War of 1912 which portrayed the Turks as easy meat. Gallipoli reversed that. The victory at Gallipoli has largely been attributed to the military genius of the field commander Mustafa Kemal, who in later years became the top figure in Turkish politics and the founder of the Turkish Republic. A British staff officer writing about the official history of the event argued that ‘seldom in history can the exertion of a single commander have exercised so profound an influence, not only in the course of a battle, but on the destiny of the entire nation’.⁶¹

The end game for the Ottoman Empire in the First World War came on October 30, 1918, when the British accepted the surrender in an armistice signed at Mudros. After Germany and Austria had in effect accepted defeat, there was no possibility for the Turks to continue the war effort against the Allied powers. The victorious powers then began to work on plans to divide what was left of the Ottoman Empire into various states and autonomous territories, but one person was against it, Winston Churchill, who succeeded in recovering his reputation and returned to the government in 1919 as Secretary of State for War.

The British people were tired of the First World War abroad and the Irish trouble at home and demanded demobilisation and drastic cuts in military expenditure. However, the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, intoxicated by the victory, did not want any of it and took a great pride in the further expansion of the British Empire even though this required more soldiers and a higher budget for security and administration. Churchill, on the other hand, insisted that Britain already had a huge territory containing a large and diverse population to manage and thus did not need parts of the collapsing Ottoman Empire. Adding more territory would be biting off more than the country could chew. Furthermore, the carving up of the Ottoman Empire by the French, Italians and Greeks as well as the British, and creating various new states and autonomous regions would cause enormous problems for everybody concerned. The Ottomans had ruled an empire of diverse regions reasonably well for centuries and no new administration could manage that.

Believing that Britain and her allies could do business with the Turks, Churchill insisted that instead of butchering the Ottoman Empire Britain should preserve it as before the war. Britain should also guide and advise the Turks in re-establishing peace and security in their pre-war territories and this would be beneficial for all.⁶² Premier Lloyd George dismissed Churchill’s suggestion, mainly for two reasons. First, he disliked the Turks and everything that they stood for. Second, the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war on the side of Germany had prolonged it for about two years and cost many casualties for Britain and her Allies. The Turks had to be punished harshly. So a process of carving up the Ottoman Empire got underway. An over-the-top peace treaty at Sèvres was drafted, to be imposed on the Ottoman Empire by force if

⁶¹ Alan Palmer, *The Decline and Fall of the Ottoman Empire* (London: John Murray 1995), p 129

⁶² Sean McMeekin, *The Ottoman Endgame* (London: Penguin Books, 2015), p.435.

necessary. The occupation of the Ottoman capital was also necessary. If the Turks resisted then Lloyd George was ready to accept 100,000 Greek troops to subdue the capital. He was confident about the success of the project because the Ottoman Empire was effectively finished. These ideas dismayed Churchill who believed that occupation of Constantinople would lead to the formation of a new parliament in Anatolia and – worst of all – could push the Turks into the arms of Soviet Russia, a powerful and menacing new country. But things went ahead. On March 15, 1920, the British fleet began landing armed troops at strategic points around the city. The Greeks and Italians moved into western parts of Anatolia and the French and British into the Middle East. In the east the Armenians rebelled. As Churchill had predicted, a new national assembly was created in Anatolia. Turks re-grouped, and against all odds, put up a fight and won by receiving some help from Soviet Russia. In October 1923 the new Turkish Republic was established.

Churchill was very pleased with the progress that the new republic was making. A secular country friendly towards the West and moving towards establishing a plural democracy had been unthinkable a few years previously, but it was happening. Therefore, he argued strongly, Britain should give every help and encouragement to Turkey.⁶³

When the Second World War started Churchill wanted Turkey on the side of the Allies. On 31 January 1941, he wrote a letter to İsmet İnönü, then the Turkish President, emphasising the unpredictability of Hitler's Germany. He wrote that there was evidence that the Germans were already threatening Bulgaria, just as they had attacked Poland despite their promises. They could bomb the Turkish cities of Edirne and Istanbul and dive bomb Turkish troops in Thrace. In addition Hitler could completely control the exits from the Dardanelles and thus complete the encirclement of Turkey in Europe and send mechanised troops towards Istanbul. Churchill promised to send at the earliest moment at least ten squadrons of fighter and bomber aircraft to prevent a German air assault on Turkey. In addition Britain was prepared to send many heavy weapons and also personnel either in uniform or in plain clothes.



On 30 January 1943, Churchill secretly met with İnönü in a train near Adana and stayed two nights in the carriage. Churchill wanted a safe Turkey strong against Germany. In November 1943, Churchill informed Joseph Stalin that Britain had sent a considerable consignment of munitions to Turkey including two hundred tanks from Syria.⁶⁴ There was a further meeting involving Roosevelt, Churchill and İnönü in Cairo on 4 December, to discuss again the possible entry of Turkey into the war on the side of the

⁶³ Winston Churchill, *The Second World War, Vol 3, The Grand Alliance*, chapters 12, 18 and 26 (London: Cassell and Co. Ltd, 1950).

⁶⁴ Winston Churchill, 1951, *The Second World War, Vol 4, The Hinge of Faith*, chapters 12, 18 and 26 (London: Cassell & Co Ltd 1951), p.625.

Allies – and the provision of more guns and ammunition. Despite all these efforts, Turkey did not enter the Second World War until its final stages and tried to maintain some distance between itself and the warring parties. In February 1945, when Germany was collapsing, Turkey declared war on the side of Allies against both Hitler and Japan.

The argument that Churchill was an adversary of Turkey is not true at all. In fact he was a friend of Turkey. He tried to stop the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire but the British Premier at the time, Lloyd George, did not accept that. Churchill predicted correctly what would happen if the Empire were carved up. Unfortunately, today the world's most intractable trouble spots are in former Ottoman territories such as the Balkans, Crimea, Caucasus, Middle East and North Africa. Churchill saw this more than one hundred years ago. He also supplied modern military equipment to Turkey in order to prevent a German invasion. And, most importantly, he advocated that modern Turkey should be supported in her endeavours to enhance her political standing and democracy. To this effect the United Kingdom has been doing this without fail since 1923. Indeed Britain and Turkey have not fallen out even during the most difficult Cyprus problem. May this continue indefinitely.



Russian Migrations:

The Making and Unmaking of Turkey's Black Sea Identity

by Tunç Aybak
International Politics and Law
Middlesex University

Part 1

As the Turkish state elites have adopted overtly regionalist geopolitical strategies to re-brand their state identity in an increasingly deregulated global market economy, Istanbul has gradually re-emerged as a regional metropolis of ethnic and cultural diversity and a site for everyday cosmopolitanism. Istanbul indeed plays a central role in this state-led regionalism and is home to the headquarters of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the Secretariat of the Black Sea Parliamentary Assembly (PABSEC). The PABSEC website claims that the new regional initiatives introduced by the states and governments, including twin city projects and children and youth festivals, have led to the strengthening of regional cooperation, civil society and increased people's awareness of a 'Black Sea identity'.⁶⁵

Since the end of the Cold War period, the Black Sea as a transnational site of exchange and movement has been the focus of renewed policy and academic

⁶⁵ See for instance the Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the BSEC. Annex VI to BS/FM/R(2006) 2, Moscow, 1 November 2006.



interest. Recently the deep penetration of globalization into the region has accelerated the processes of human mobilization and cultural exchange, undermining the bounded spaces of nationhood and ethnicity. Historically, the Black Sea divided the Russian and Ottoman empires along ideological lines. But the Black

Sea also served as a fluid space of connections, currents, counter-currents and migratory circulations allowing cosmopolitan practices and identities to flourish and intermingle. For many, the Black Sea also connotes images of travel, exile and historical memories.⁶⁶

I will look at the reflections and imagery of Russian refugees and migrants who passed through Istanbul during the disintegration of the Russian Empire, the Cold War and recent migrations. This will be set against the background of the ambiguous attitudes of the host society reflected in discourse and policies.

Tsunamis:

The mass exodus of Russians to Istanbul following the October Revolution of 1917 was unprecedented in its scale and speed. About two million citizens of the former Russian Empire found themselves abroad. Istanbul was one of the major destinations of Russian emigration. By November 1920, 167,000 refugees had landed in an Istanbul entirely unprepared for such an influx. As a result of the Bolshevik Revolution and the civil wars, the ruling classes, Russian aristocrats and the middle classes, the defeated soldiers and officers of General Wrangel's White Army had left one collapsing empire and found themselves in the capital of another decaying empire. Istanbul was still under allied occupation, while the armies of Atatürk had started a national war of independence in Anatolia. Russians were not the only refugees. The arrival of Turkish refugees escaping from the Greek-occupied parts of western Anatolia, as earlier in the Balkan wars had already put the social structure and resources of the city under enormous strain. As one journalist observed:

“Russian refugees are everywhere, selling flowers, kewpie dolls, oil paintings of Constantinople, cakes and trinkets, books and newspapers printed in Russian. They sleep in the open streets and on the steps of the mosques. They loaf, beg, work when they can find a job and sometimes sob with hunger. A few Russians have been lucky enough to find positions in restaurants as waitresses or coat-boys. A prince may bring the patron's coffee and a general hand him his stick. Professors, ex-

⁶⁶ Pamela Ballinger, *History in Exile: Memory and Identity at the Border of the Balkans*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press: 2003)

millionaires, women of right birth, beseech one to buy cigarettes or paper flowers".⁶⁷

The sudden arrival of Russian refugees had a tremendous impact on the moral order and the cultural life of the city. However, they were not just the victims of their circumstances but contributed to the economic life and the worldliness of the city. In his book documenting the rich social lives of Russian émigrés during this period Jak Deleon gives a detailed account of their daily activities and leisure. In many respects, Russians brought their own life styles and enriched the cultural life of the city by introducing mixed sea bathing and swimming costumes, sport activities, tennis clubs, ballets, charity organizations and educational establishments.⁶⁸ There were also mushrooming Russian restaurants, newspapers, tea rooms, gambling houses, dance-halls and Russian shops of every description.⁶⁹ Although their financial wealth had been left behind, most Russian refugees brought with them highly distinctive cultural and social skills. It was due to these skills that Russian exiles survived these difficult Istanbul years.

For the receiving citizens of Istanbul this was an unsettling experience. For instance, in a petition in 1923, thirty-two wives or widows of beys and pashas appealed to the Governor of Istanbul demanding the immediate expulsion of these agents of "vice and debauchery, more dangerous and destructive than syphilis and alcohol" and complained that "Russian women had wrought more destruction in two years than Russian armies in centuries".⁷⁰ And for the nationalists fighting in Anatolia, cosmopolitan Istanbul was the toxic other of the nascent Turkish national identity.⁷¹

The arrival of Russians upset the moral and public order of Istanbul and reminded the pious city dwellers of their own defeat and loss at the end of the war. On the other hand, for the Russians fleeing from the social upheaval, the imperial city provided a passage of melancholic reflection of their loss and displacement. This sense of collective loss, defeat and poverty can be found in the writings of many Russian émigrés. In their published diaries and writings, the Russian exiles Ivan Bunin, Vasily Sungin, Vertinski and many others described their experience of exile and loss during their Istanbul years.⁷² The collapsing and decaying city did not seem to have provided a final destination or sanctuary for the Russian exiles but a place of disintegration and disorientation, a bridge to the modern cities in the West –

⁶⁷ Nur Bilge Criss., *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923*. (Boston: Brill, 1999) p 31.

⁶⁸ Jak Deleon, *The White Russians in Istanbul* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi 1995) p 31.
Mine Eder and Öz Özlem, 'From cross-border exchange networks to transnational trading practices? The case of shuttle traders in Laleli, Istanbul', in Marie-Laurelle Djelic and Sigrid Quack, eds. *Transnational Communities: Shaping Global Economic Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 82-104.

⁶⁹ Kenneth L Roberts, *Why Europe Leaves Home* (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd, 1922), pp.191-192.

⁷⁰ Philip Mansell, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire. 1453-1924* (London: John Murray, 1995), p 401.

⁷¹ See, for instance, two Turkish novels, Yakub Kadri Karaosmanoglu's *Sodom and Gomorrah [Sodom ve Gomore]* and Atilla İlhan's *Morning Prayers in Beyoglu [Dersaadet'te Sabah Ezanları]*.

⁷² Orhan Uravelli, *Istanbul'dan Geçen Ruslar* [Russians who fled via Istanbul] (Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık 1985).

Paris, London, New York – and other cities of Eastern Europe. Jak Deleon, a direct descendant of a Russian refugee, estimated that nearly half a million White Russians passed through Istanbul between 1918-1921, most of whom moved on to France, the United States or Canada.⁷³

Bunin, who became an artistic and moral spokesman for the Russian diaspora in the aftermath of the Russian exodus, wrote extensively about experiences of the Russian diaspora. He left Odessa with his wife at the beginning of 1920 and fled to Istanbul. He had paid several visits to Istanbul previously and published his memoirs of the city.⁷⁴ In her diaries, Ivan Bunin's wife Vera Muromsteva-Bunina recorded their dread as they approached Istanbul on an overcrowded boat: "How this journey differs from others. There is terror and darkness ahead...."⁷⁵ "I see Istanbul...but I do not feel anything". Observing her husband she wrote: "Ivan ... doesn't even want to look at the city which he has so loved". In a different entry, she noted "We were very disturbed by the way we would be disinfected once we landed [in Istanbul]...herded naked through a barn...and then forced to take a shower on the rocky shore. ...Next morning we decided to leave there as soon as possible...We started petitioning for visas...for Sofia..."⁷⁶ This was the thirteenth and the last time that the Bunins visited Istanbul. A poem written in 1923 by Bunin reflects his sentiment.⁷⁷

One cannot count the losses, or forget them,
The slaps from soldiers can never be washed off - cannot be forgiven,
Neither can forgive the suffering, nor the blood,
Nor the convulsions on the cross
Of all those killed in the name of the Christ
As one cannot accept the coming of new order
In its terrible nakedness

In the memoirs of Russian exiles, Istanbul evokes feelings of otherness and danger and articulates the unsettling rite of passage of transformation which provokes mixed emotions of attachment to and detachment from the city. Orhan Pamuk observed that Orientalists like Nerval and Flaubert were disappointed on their arrival in the city because Istanbul was not the Orient they were looking for.⁷⁸ For the Russian exiles, however, Istanbul was the quintessential Orient. Bunin writes of how disturbing he finds the presence of camels in one of the fashionable high streets of Istanbul⁷⁹. In the memoirs of Bunin and others one can find countless references to mystic Persian and Arabic poems as well as nostalgia for the Byzantine past. Istanbul scarcely appears as a destination, but figures as an Oriental outpost where Russians desperately tried to obtain visas to travel to the West.

⁷³ Deleon, *The White Russians*.

⁷⁴ Thomas Gaiton Marullo, ed., *Ivan Bunin from the Other Shore: 1920-1933*. (Chicago: Ivan R Dee, 1995). See also Uravelli, *Istanbul'dan*, pp.11-40.

⁷⁵ Cited in Marullo, *Ivan Bunin*, p.41.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p.42.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.vii

⁷⁸ Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (Istanbul: Faber and Faber, 2004), p 258.

⁷⁹ Uravelli *Istanbul'dan*, p.36.

Liminal Passages: Brodsky and others:

In her book *Narrating Post/Communism*, Nataša Kovačević⁸⁰ shows how the literary narratives of Eastern European and Russian anti-communist dissidents and exiles helped to justify the transition to market capitalism and liberal democracy by internalizing the Orientalizing practices of the West. One of the most evocative examples of this can be found in the Russian dissident poet Joseph Brodsky's account of a visit to Istanbul during the Cold War in 1985. Brodsky arrives in Istanbul on his way to Athens. His *Flight from Byzantium* is full of contrasts between East and West which provide a civilizational background for his liminal reflections. Brodsky's Istanbul is a city situated on the very border between Europe and Asia – turned towards Asia yet to be drawn into the cultural world of the Roman Empire where the traveller as well as the locals abandoned all hope. Brodsky candidly declares that his desire to visit Istanbul was never 'a genuine one' but a voyeuristic urge. "After all, I spent thirty years in what is known as the Third Rome, about a year and a half in the First. Consequently, I needed the Second if only for my recollection."⁸¹



In Brodsky's reflections, Istanbul becomes a liminal site *par excellence*, neither 'East' nor 'West', 'North' nor 'South', where the geopolitical lines are continually re-drawn and re-juxtapositioned. "There are places where history is inescapable, like a highway accident – places whose geography provokes history. Such is Istanbul, alias Constantinople, alias Byzantium"⁸². He gazes at the Straits: "Also, of course, blue: for the Bosphorus-Marmara, Dardanelles, which separates Europe from Asia – or does it? Ah, all these natural frontiers, these straits and Urals of ours!"⁸³ In Brodsky's mental map the Ural Mountains extend to the South where the Straits turn into a liminal threshold separating East from West. Referring to Constantine's choice of the city as the capital of Byzantium – a literary and symbolic intersection of trade routes and caravan roads – he writes, "Transferring the capital to the extreme rim of the Empire transforms that rim into the centre"⁸⁴. The liminal passage can be a de-centring exercise in the voyage of the traveller, exile and migrant during which the centre shifts to the margins. I would argue that Brodsky's confessions are true reflections of a cosmopolitan experience which induces both a series of attachments to and detachments from Istanbul as a city of reflection. Liminal passages potentially prevent the incomers from forming a genuine relationship with the host and their habitat. If cosmopolitanism, as Hannerz⁸⁵ put it, is a general readiness to make one's way into other cultures and adopt a skilful stance in the management of the cultural experiences, then liminality

⁸⁰ Nataša Kovačević, *Narrating Post/Communism: Colonial Discourse and Europe's Borderline Civilization* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁸¹ Josef Brodsky, 'Reflections: Flight from Byzantium', *The New Yorker*, 28 October 1985, p. 39.

⁸² *Ibid*, p.48

⁸³ *Ibid*, p.47

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p.48

⁸⁵ Ulf Hannerz, *Two Faces of Cosmopolitanism: Culture and Politics*, (Barcelona: Fundació CIDOB, 2006)

potentially complicates and interrupts these experiences. Just before he leaves Istanbul, Brodsky sits in a cafe in Çengelköy on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, and gazes at the aircraft carriers of the Third Rome sailing slowly through the gates of the Second on their way to the First.

While Brodsky's was a trajectory of an exile escaping from 'the catastrophe' of the Orient, there were other Russians who followed their father's footsteps to Istanbul. Predrag Matvejević⁸⁶, known for his work *The Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape*, uses his visit to Istanbul to pay homage to his Russian father's journey from Odessa:

"I first visited the Greek-Orthodox and Russian Church Panaya Isotyan which is surrounded by iron bars, standing at the end of a self-contained courtyard and across a noisy restaurant on the Meşrutiyet Avenue. This church had been carefully described in the diary of my father who fled Odessa with the "White Army" in 1921 to seek refuge. The Russians, who all of a sudden found themselves without a country, congregated there especially right after Atatürk took power and were welcomed warmly on the dock where they landed."⁸⁷

Matvejević reflects on the waters of the Bosphorus: "I must confess that I was unable to resist Slavic sentimentality for long as I toured the Bosphorus by boat. The boat carrying my father, who was forced to leave his country and emigrate, must have followed the same route. As I found myself in a position between "exile and country" in Paris and Rome after the last war in the former Yugoslavia, I had thought of the unchanging destiny of immigrant families"⁸⁸

For Matvejević, an exile himself, Istanbul provides a point of reflection where he feels simultaneously near home but also far from home.

Finally, Alberto Manguel, a Canadian Argentine-born writer reminisces about his Jewish grandfather's journey from a village near Moscow to Istanbul via the Black Sea on his way to Rio de Janeiro.

"The sun was setting when my grandfather entered the Strait of Istanbul on a boat coming from the Black Sea. This was a sight he could never forget. The same scene is described by the Spanish poet José de Espronceda in a poem that my grandfather, who liked to read poetry aloud, recited from memory years later in Buenos Aires:

Asia on one side, Europe on the other
And in front of it; Istanbul!"⁸⁹

Manguel says Istanbul was not the final destination of his father but the memory of his father's passage to the West is still very much alive in Manguel's imagination as he retraces his parent's journey to the Black Sea. He stands on the balcony of the Pera Palace hotel where his grandfather gazed at the Golden Horn:

⁸⁶ See 'Istanbul, City of Protests - Predrag Matvejević', *Atlas* 1999, Special Issue (Accessed 21 May 2009) <http://www.wan-press.org/article3188.html>

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, *Atlas* 1999

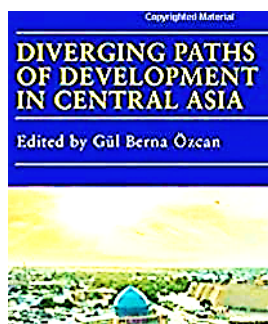
⁸⁸ *Ibid*. *Atlas* 1999

⁸⁹ See 'In the Footsteps of My Grandfather - Alberto Manguel', *Atlas* 1999, Special Issue (Accessed, 21 May 2009) <http://www.wan-press.org/article3181.html>

“But that evening on the balcony of Pera Palas Hotel, the same sunset that made my grandfather think there was a fire would take the breath of his grandson and great grandson in the same way. In fact, no warning could have prepared us for the surprising magnificence of these sunsets. Perhaps this kind of fascination cannot be passed from one generation to the next to preserve its impact. Perhaps these scenes should be seen anew every time as though they were never seen before, as though every visitor is a new ‘Adam’.”⁹⁰

This is the moment of transformation, a rite of passage in a temporal and spatial sense which is continuously repeated like all other rituals. For most Russian migrants and exiles Istanbul presents a threshold to a transformation which may never be completed. Perhaps migrants, refugees and travellers eventually reached their destinations in the West, but this recurring return to the liminal threshold which is almost like a rite of passage still plays an important role in their personal history, family trajectory and identities.

To be continued: Part 2 will focus on Russian women migrants.



Oligarchy and the Expansion of Sino-Capitalism in Central Asia

by Gül Berna Özcan

Reader in International Business,
School of Management, Royal Holloway
University of London
g.ozcan@rhul.ac.uk

When the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991, the newly independent states of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) initially declared their ambitions to pursue market capitalism and multiparty democracy as a path toward building prosperous societies.⁹¹ Western governments, led by the USA and the EU, along with international organisations, were engaged in policy recommendations, development aid and NGO mobilisation to build capitalism and civil society in the region and beyond. This prevailed until the so-called coloured revolutions struck, first in Georgia in 2003 (known as the Rose Revolution), soon followed by the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, and then the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in 2005. While the USA declared war on terrorism and invaded Iraq and Afghanistan, with Vladimir Putin’s ascent to power, the former Soviet party machine rejuvenated itself in conjunction with self-serving oligarchs. In

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, Atlas May 1999

⁹¹ An interesting example is Uzbek autocrat, Islam Karimov, who praised democracies in the early 1990s. I. A. Karimov, *Uzbekistan: The Road to Independence and Progress*, (Tashkent: Izdatelstvo, Uzbekiston, 1992).

doing so, capitalism without economic freedoms, and democracy without political competition, became core elements of a new form of statehood. Eventually, patrimonial systems were built around a dominant leader who reigned over what was left of Russian settler colonisation and the remnants of the Soviet hammer.

Three decades of post-Soviet independence and transformation have brought about the victory of oligarchy in Central Asia and in Russia. Despite their different polities and assets, these former command economies scrambled to function with the new rules of oligarchy. Their unaccountable regimes leave little room for economic and democratic freedoms and show no intention to allow for the rule of law or opposition. From Putin to Nazarbayev, and Karimov to Niyazov, Soviet-trained leaders managed to consolidate their oligarchies through varying combinations of co-optation, repression and pretensions of legitimacy.⁹² These oligarchies established economic re/allocation mechanisms to benefit themselves and their allies. In an earlier work, I argued that ruling elites operated a 'Mikado game' that controlled major economic assets with deception, periodic purges and cadre retention.⁹³ Some cadres did this in closed systems, as in Turkmenistan. Others went through a quick succession of disorderly political jumbles, as in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Within the Mikado game, Central Asia's elite constrained economic reforms and extended their control over the allocation regimes through vertically and horizontally spread mechanisms in social strata.

Chinese interests begun to diffuse into this structure, initially in the form of oil and gas pipelines in the 1990s, and in 2001 this was extended into a diplomatic framework of alliances through the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This organisation included all the Central Asian countries, bar Turkmenistan, along with Russia as founding members. The SCO was a major shift in post-cold war re-positioning and opened the Russian sphere of influence to China. In 2013, Premier Xi Jinping announced the One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative in Kazakhstan, a gateway nation for the OBOR's road and energy infrastructure. The OBOR is the linchpin of China's international ambitions, with a new connectivity and a model to utilise its overcapacity to maintain domestic economic growth. Promoted as a win-win strategy, it aims to link land and sea routes with a new transportation infrastructure. While OBOR is one of the hallmarks of Chinese international policy for trade and stability, it rests on dubious financial fundamentals.⁹⁴ Kazakhstan is the gateway to several land and sea ports in Iran, Pakistan, and other western regions (see Figure 1). China's growing loans and infrastructure investments, unconstrained by conditions on human rights or democracy, allow Central Asia's autocrats to deviate from the transition path leading towards democracy and the rule of law. This new state of affairs is the 'peaceful harmony' and 'mutual respect among equals' that China

⁹² N. Niyazbekov, 'Democracy, the Tokayev Way: Is democracy, the Tokayev way, just the same authoritarian regime skilfully imitating democratic institutions and procedures to legitimate itself?', *The Diplomat*, 3 March 2020.

⁹³ G. B. Özcan, *Building States and Markets: Enterprise Development in Central Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).

⁹⁴ See for an analysis: <https://www.rferl.org/a/majlis-podcast-one-belt-one-road-project-central-asia-china/28500388.html> (Accessed on 29 May 2017)

promotes, and it is primarily an accord only between Central Asia's ruling elites and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership, a structure that promotes rampant corruption. In Central Asia, China not only aims to access resources and land routes to new markets, but it displays the ambition to police this sparsely inhabited vast geography. To emphasise their new hegemony, China and Russia have been conducting joint military exercises in the region since 2015.

Russia's disastrous privatisation and deregulation policies of the 1990s, and Putin's antipathy to western influence in the region, played an important role in this rapprochement. China trod carefully as a strategic partner and refrained from openly challenging Russia's traditional hegemonic position in the region. As the largest beneficiary of Chinese loans and projects in the world,⁹⁵ Russia has a diminishing economic leverage. Its global prestige is simultaneously marred by military conflicts in the Ukraine and Syria. China's economic and political strategy, on the contrary, goes beyond its post-Soviet neighbourhood and quietly builds global footholds. Chinese diplomatic influence and economic benefits help the ruling elites of developing nations. This growing influence ranges from defending Myanmar's government against a punitive action in the UN Security Council over the massacre of Rohingya Muslims, to deploying troops to protect the threatened government forces in South Sudan, as well as acquiring a naval base in Djibouti.⁹⁶ These impacts are substantial, increasingly effective, and work to prop up authoritarian regimes.

There are five key elements of Chinese economic diffusion in Central Asia.⁹⁷ First, exported goods from China dominate the markets and suffocate domestic manufacturing development. This is a region-wide issue, but hits small economies hardest. Exports from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to China have fallen since 2010. Combined, the two exported \$475 million worth of goods to China in 2010; by 2018 exports dropped to \$337 million. Over the same period, imports from China rose by \$1.4 billion.⁹⁸ Second, in infrastructure and standards setting, Chinese state-owned and private firms build roads and railways with closed operational systems, bringing Chinese equipment and labour with only a tiny amount of local involvement through subcontracting. These investments, along with digital services, will lock the region into Chinese standards for many years to come (see Table 1). Third, Chinese companies hold equity in the energy and mining sectors. China owns 50% of Kazakhstan's oil and has long-term deals that account for well over half of Turkmenistan's gas exports. Fourth, the rising number of Chinese migrants pose a threat to the sustainability of local communities. Chinese firms increasingly operate in agricultural production, manufacturing and

⁹⁵ <https://eurasianet.org/who-wins-in-chinas-great-central-asia-spending-spree> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

⁹⁶ L. Odgaard, *Double-Edged Aid: China's Strategy to Gain Influence through Regional Assistance*, 2020, Hudson Institute <https://www.hudson.org/research/15807-double-edged-aid-china-s-strategy-to-gain-influence-through-regional-assistance> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

⁹⁷ In a public lecture at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington DC, co-hosted by the Kennan Institute and the Kissinger Institute, I discussed these aspects in detail. See the video from 20 February 2020: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GZQYZ2m7Tw>

⁹⁸ <https://eurasianet.org/who-wins-in-chinas-great-central-asia-spending-spree> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

services and hold influence in bureaucracy and markets. Finally, there is the threat of financial dependency and the danger of a debt trap. The Export-Import Bank of China (EXIM Bank China) is the largest single creditor to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively holding 49 and 36 per cent of their government debt.⁹⁹ Even resource-rich Kazakhstan owes money to China. One can infer from the figures in Table 1 that the per capita scale of loans to the sparsely populated region of Central Asia surpasses other regions. Desperate governments offer more than they financially owe. Tajikistan paid a Chinese company building a power plant with a gold mine; it even swapped some land for debt. Similarly, Sri Lanka handed over its port for 99 years to China when it could not pay back its loans.

What kind of economic model does China promote and can it be a new development magnet for Central Asia and beyond? Rapid economic growth improved the quality of life and ended poverty for millions of people in China. However, without understanding the key ingredients of this economic success, it is not possible to assess whether there is a model to replicate. Ever since Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic reforms, following his outmanoeuvring of the Gang of Four after the death of Mao, China has gradually moved towards capitalistic relations with an increasing number of private owners and lease holders. The CCP never wanted to relax its political control, however, and so promoted gradualism. Party cadres became salient partners in growing market opportunities. Institutionally, this happened through the maintenance of state ownership in finance and other major industries whilst allowing new forms of private ownership. First, this new capitalism evolved in a symbiotic relationship between the party-state and new property owners for a long time. In doing so, while insisting that the regime adheres only to communism, capitalist relations allowed cut-throat competition and export-oriented production. Second, special economic zones, built first in Deng Xiaoping's era, expanded as islands of economic privilege for FDI. Third, the drive for entrepreneurship and technology transfer took shape through several catalysing sources. For example, geographical spill-over effects of more advanced economies and their investments (such as Japan and Taiwan) brought knowhow and industrial capital. Overseas Chinese entrepreneurs and returnees created the knowledge and capital bridge. Finally, strong US ties allowed advanced scientific training for students, technology transfer and export trade that boosted capacity and earned hard currency. Some Chinese firms also acquired new technology without paying for intellectual property rights through imitation.

Sino-capitalism rests on strict control over the mobility of mass labour, a highly centralised and coerced bureaucracy, an indoctrinated society and production overcapacity. The lack of horizontal societal stakeholders and the suppression of civil society make it a market system shaped by widespread manipulation and corruption. President Xi's lifetime premiership is turning this structure into an imperial order, with the promotion of Han Chinese nationalism at the expense of communism. To this end, China is building

⁹⁹ A recent report from *The Financial Times*: <https://www.ft.com/content/0714074a-0334-11e7-aa5b-6bb07f5c8e12> (Accessed on 29 May 2017)

parallel institutions of governance in finance, investment and diplomacy around the world.¹⁰⁰

Many developing countries lack the most basic centralised and coordinated state apparatus and bureaucracy, let alone a steady stream of externalities that China depends upon. Many autocrats are willing to believe that there is no relationship between democratic freedoms and economic growth. This argument is flawed and firmly refuted by the renowned economists Acemoglu and Robinson.¹⁰¹ They show that economic growth cannot be sustained for long without democratic freedoms. The USSR is a telling case. Once globally powerful, the Soviet Union's industries became obsolete in a few decades because they relied on the central mechanism of a party state with no incentives. Other scholars point out that it is hard to find a logical coherence in China's pursuit of hybrid capitalism with strong state ownership. Peck and Zhang argue that Chinese capitalism has highly distinctive path-dependent characteristics.¹⁰² Others illustrate the messiness of Chinese economic growth, showing limitations of community level development.¹⁰³ Uncertainty around China's own economic system and political institutions casts doubt on whether it has a replicable model to export.

Furthermore, the most striking aspect of a one-party state in China is its intolerance to differences of opinion. Militarisation and the use of force against dissident voices is becoming more forceful. The internal repression against frontier nations of Tibetan and Uyghur identities and democracy activists in Hong Kong are ongoing cases. Even more extreme is the CCP's intention to wipe out Uyghur and other Muslims' identity in Xinjiang. Chinese leadership uses the pretext of counter-terrorism to justify the imprisonment of well over one million Uyghurs (along with Kazakhs and Kyrgyz) in concentration camps. It has established a suffocating surveillance system over the entire population in Xinjiang. This collective punishment has met little resistance from the international community. Most notably, it has been ignored by Muslim majority states. Central Asia's governments have also turned a blind eye to the plight of their ethnic kin and gone as far as supporting China in its "fight against terrorism".

Conclusion

Chinese institutions are shaking up the Mikado game's oligarchs that managed to operate reasonably well over the past few decades. They see China as a source of new finance and economic growth. China's effect on developing countries is increasingly being felt through its diplomacy, regional assistance and loans. Many aspects of this engagement in Central Asia resemble other regions where Chinese trade, aid and infrastructure investments have been growing. In particular, African states seem to display certain commonalities to Central Asia with their colonial history, weak

¹⁰⁰ For example, the SCO's role is growing in Asia, while in finance the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and EXIM Bank China now operate globally.

¹⁰¹ D. Acemoglu and J. A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail* (New York: Profile Book Ltd., 2013)

¹⁰² J. Peck and J. Zhang, 'A Variety of Capitalism...with Chinese Characteristics?' *Journal of Economic Geography*, 13 (2013), pp. 357-396.

¹⁰³ Y. Ray, 'Filling the Institutional Void in Rural Land Markets in Southern China: Is there Room for Spontaneous Change from Below,' *Development and Change*, 46, 3 (2015), pp. 534-561.

industrial base and resource-dependent economies. However, there is little sign of economic benefit to ordinary citizens from Chinese investments. Central Asia experiences economic growth without noticeable welfare benefits. Political liabilities are also increasing along with growing popular discontent.¹⁰⁴ There is deep-seated anxiety and resentment brewing over rumours that labour and land rights are being given away to Chinese firms¹⁰⁵ and Chinese mass migration is taking place.

As a frontier for Russia's imagined imperial realm, Central Asia inherited Soviet institutions and still remains under Russia's shadow, but its territorial and cultural continuity with Xinjiang Province makes China nervous. Hence the region is firmly squeezed between two giant states with no regional cohesion. The most alarming development is the silence of Central Asia's leaders to the plight of their citizens' relatives. Increasing evidence and leaked government documents show how extensive the system of long-term imprisonment is and how the systematic destruction of families and Xinjiang's physical environment proceeds.¹⁰⁶ A *Washington Post* report showed that thousands are sent to factories as forced labour to produce goods for global brands in western regions.¹⁰⁷ This collective punishment and surveillance amounts to cultural genocide.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the use of digital and biometric technologies for suppression and state violence shows the extent to which the one-party state can spread its social control at home and will likely utilise this capacity abroad.

As Western democracies bend towards right-wing nationalist populism, democracy is threatened by internal forces. To add to that, the authoritarianism that Russia and China promote through their oligarchies looks formidable. The rise of neo-fascist parties across Europe, the "America first" sentiment and Brexit are manifestations of scapegoating and not solutions. Those who recognise the need to protect democratic rights and freedoms know that the alternative will be a race to the bottom with Chinese Communist-style repression, social control and surveillance. Most regimes, China included, can survive with internal suppression or warmongering, but they will at some time encounter economic stagnation and social discontent. Eventually, Central Asia will face demands for inclusive political reforms, equitable economic allocation, and respect for freedoms.

¹⁰⁴ G. B. Özcan, 'Uyan Kazakistan!: Men Oyandım' [Wake up Kazakhstan: I Woke up], *Birikim Güncel*, 18 May 2019. <https://www.birikimdergisi.com/guncel/9601/uyan-kazakistan-men-oyandim> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, the 2016 protests across Kazakhstan against China about land rights <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-36163103> and in southern Kyrgyzstan against a Chinese mining company <https://www.rferl.org/a/chinese-mining-company-operations-kyrgyzstan-blocked-protesters/24987866.html> (Accessed on 29 May 2017)

¹⁰⁶ G. B. Özcan, 'E-Otokrasi ve Çin'in Toplama Kampları' [E-Autocracy and China's Internment Camps], *Birikim Güncel*, 12 July 2019, <https://www.birikimdergisi.com/guncel/9514/e-otokrasi-ve-cin-in-toplama-kamplari> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

¹⁰⁷ See the BBC reporting: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-51697800> (Accessed on 20 March 2019)

¹⁰⁸ J. Leibold, 'Time to Act on China's Cultural Genocide', La Trope University of Australia, Working paper, 24 July 2019, <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/news/articles/2018/opinion/time-to-act-on-chinas-cultural-genocide> (Accessed on 21 March 2019)

Tables and Figures

Figure 1- Railway and Energy Routes between Central Asia and China



Source: Jack Farchy and James Kyngé, 'Map: Connecting Central Asia', *The Financial Times*, 9 May 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/ee5cf40a-15e5-11e6-9d98-00386a18e39d> (Accessed on 20 February 2019)

Table 1- Chinese loans and credits to Central Asia and other regions between 2000-2014 in USD

	LOANS	GRANTS	EXPORT CREDITS	DEBT FORGIVENESS	OTHER	TOTAL
South East Asia	\$34,218,745,642	\$588,161,139	\$4,712,248,522	\$445,000,000	\$4,554,985,846	\$44,519,141,149
Central Asia	\$28,493,515,758	\$237,091,625	\$857,604,975	-	\$600,000	\$29,588,812,358
East Africa	\$10,954,783,826	\$1,094,524,120	\$1,659,638,699	\$386,617,492	\$339,503,359	\$14,435,067,496

Source: Odgaard (2020)



Aleppo: The Citadel, from Henry Maundrell, *A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem at Easter*, A. D. 1697 (Oxford: At the Theater, 1703).

OTTOMAN ALEPPO THROUGH BRITISH EYES

by Gerald MacLean

Founder & Co-Director of Turkish
Studies
University of Exeter

Part 2 (Part 1 appeared in *TAS Review* no.34, Autumn 2019, pp.36-43)

But conspicuous innovations could be a different matter. Certainly not everyone was happy about the increasing population of infidel Franks, and not all of their public activities were deemed acceptable. As early as the mid-sixteenth century the historian Ibn al-Hanbali (d. 1564) lamented that “nowadays the franks live in various areas of the city ... whereas in prior times they lived only in [a few] khans”¹⁰⁹ where their activities remained private. Over a century later, the Indian-born Irish poet and employee of the East India Company Eyles Irwin tells how an English merchant of Aleppo brought a “wheel-carriage” from London and “drove it one day on the road; but, unluckily meeting with the pacha and his suite, their horses took fright at the noise of the wheels, and galloped into the city, when an order was immediately issued for the suppression of such a nuisance!”¹¹⁰

Not all British innovations were considered objectionable, however. On the death of the first English consul William (or John) Barrett in 1584, “one of the oldest dated protestant cemeteries in the world” was established that year in the grounds of the Christian cemetery in the Azizeh district.¹¹¹ Passing

¹⁰⁹ Cited by Lamprakos, ‘Life in the Khans,’ p.146.

¹¹⁰ Eyles Irwin, *A Series of Adventures in the Course of a Voyage up the Red Sea, on the Coasts of Arabia and Egypt; and of a Route through the Desarts of Thebais, in the Year 1777: with a Supplement of a voyage from Venice to Latichea; And of a Route through the Desarts of Arabia, by Aleppo, Bagdad, and the Tygris, to Busrah, in the Years 1780 and 1781. In Letters to a Lady. By Eyles Irwin, Esq. In the Service of the Honble the East India Company. Illustrated with Maps and Cuts. The Third Edition*, 2 vols. (London: Dodsley, 1787): 2, p. 295. The anecdote appears only in the third edition, where Irwin terms the ‘wheel-carriage’ a “capriole” – a usage which is unrecorded in the Oxford English Dictionary, and perhaps a simple error on Irwin’s part.

¹¹¹ Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City*, p.57; and see Stephen Gaselee, ‘The British Cemetery at Aleppo,’ *N&Q* 177 (12 Aug 1939):pp.111-112, cited in Andrew Lake, ‘The First Protestants in the Arab World: The Contribution to Christian Mission of the English Aleppo Chaplains, 1597-1782,’ PhD thesis, Melbourne School of Theology, 2015, p.52. There is some confusion whether the first consul’s first name was William or John; he is called “John Barret” in Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations*; see Wood, *A History*, p.15; and Davd Wilson, ‘List of British Consular Officials in the Ottoman Empire and its Former Territories, from the Sixteenth Century to about 1860,’ (July 2011), p.35 at

through Aleppo in the summer of 1797, the explorer William George Browne “observed the tomb of an Englishman, dated 1613”.¹¹² Although the British residents were by no means the first to encourage the production and consumption of wine, they were – by their own account at least – responsible for the importation of beef and sea fish. Henry Teonge observed that “of late, some beef, [was being] brought only to the English” in Aleppo.¹¹³ Patrick Russell noted that “sea-fish is rarely brought to town, except for the Europeans”, while William George Browne commented that “Meat is good and in plenty [but] there are no fish, save a few small eels”, while “wine is very dear, none being produced in the neighbourhood”.¹¹⁴ Abraham Parsons, who was consul in Iskenderun from 1767 until 1772, described how beef and cod were exchanged between the British communities of Aleppo and Iskenderun:

We often salt and send them [cod fish] to our friends at Aleppo, and they in return send by the messenger a fine piece of salted beef. On such occasions the messenger carries from thirty to forty pounds weight, and obliges himself to go to Aleppo in forty-eight hours from the time he leaves Scanderoon, and to return in the same period. His pay is four piasters, or ten shillings English, for the whole journey, besides which he gets a present of a piaster at Aleppo, and another at his return, if he complies with his engagement.¹¹⁵

Parsons continued by noting how in addition to cod, red and grey mullet, john dory, and sole were seasonally available in Iskenderun.

During the course of the eighteenth century, the Levant Company merchants increasingly found it difficult to make profits in Aleppo for a number of reasons.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, even while commerce started to fall off, the British presence continued to contribute to the city’s social and cultural development. On 30 November 1747, Alexander Drummond founded “The Union Lodge from Drummond Kilwinning from Greenock” in Aleppo; the first chartered Masonic Lodge outside his native Scotland. Among the founding members was a fellow Scot, Patrick Russell, who at the time was serving as surgeon aboard the *Delawar*, which regularly called in to Iskenderun, giving him opportunity to visit his older brother Alexander Russell, the Levant Company physician in Aleppo, whom he replaced in 1753.¹¹⁷ In 1751, Drummond was

[www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey\(1581-1860\)-D_Wilson.pdf](http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey(1581-1860)-D_Wilson.pdf) accessed 30 December 2018.

¹¹² William George Browne, *Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, from the Year 1792 to 1798* (London: Cadell, Davies, Longman and Rees, 1799), p. 387.

¹¹³ Teonge, *The Diary*, p.162.

¹¹⁴ Russell, *The Natural History*, 1: p.175; Browne, *Travels*, p.388.

¹¹⁵ Abraham Parsons, *Travels in Asia and Africa; Including a Journey from Scanderoon to Aleppo, and over the Desert to Bagdad and Bussora* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1808), pp.2-3.

¹¹⁶ As early as 1744, Matthew Decker commented on “the Turkey Company, whose Trade is at most dwindled away” in his *An Essay on the Causes of the Decline of the Foreign Trade*, (1744; rpt. London: Brotherton, 1750), p.41. See also Wood, *A History*, pp.136-78, and Masters, *Aleppo*, pp. 48-50.

¹¹⁷ Edited by Tobias Smollett, Drummond’s *Travels Through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece, and Several parts of Asia, as far as the Banks of the Euphrates: in a Series of Letters* (London: by W. Strahan for the Author, 1754), mistakenly claims that he founded the lodge of this name in Izmir; but for an authoritative account of the discrepancy, see Maurits H. Van den Boogert, ‘Freemasonry in Eighteenth-Century Izmir? A Critical Analysis of Alexander Drummond’s *Travels* (1754),’ in Maurits H. van den Boogert, ed., *Ottoman Izmir: Studies in*

appointed consul to Aleppo, but it was a later consul, John Barker, who single-handedly introduced medical, industrial, and agricultural improvements. In 1803 Barker inoculated his own children against the small pox. The practice was soon adopted by some local Christian and Jewish families, though not by the Muslim population of the city.¹¹⁸ In 1820, Barker set about improving the local silk industry by importing “the best silk-worm eggs to be procured from France; and every subsequent year he received fresh seed (eggs) from France and Italy, which he had “brought up” in his wife’s silk-mulberry plantations at Souedeeyah” (Samandağ).¹¹⁹ Visiting in 1848, the traveller and self-styled ‘cosmopolite’ Frederick Arthur Neale reckoned that, as a result of Barker’s importations, Aleppo silk was “now the finest in any part of the east”.¹²⁰ Barker also introduced a number of previously unknown fruit and vegetable varieties: potato, tomato, loquat, plum, greengage, Chinese quince, mandarin orange, sweet-kernelled apricots and peaches, as well as many shrubs and flowers.¹²¹

Evidently, by the later eighteenth century, the male-only community of British expatriates in Aleppo had become a thing of the past. Although John Barker was not the first Englishman in Aleppo to have been accompanied by an English wife, the practice seems to have been very recent. Eyles Irwin recalled being entertained in Aleppo in March 1781 by the consul and his wife, and also by ‘Mr. Hays and his agreeable lady.’¹²² This would have been consul John Thomas Abbott (1733-1783), the merchant David Hays and his wife, Louisa (née Vernon), who on David’s death in 1784 married Robert Page Abbott. Abbott had been serving as factor for the Levant Company in Aleppo since John Thomas Abbott’s death in 1783. In June 1800, John Barker married Marianne Hays (b. 1779), Louisa’s daughter with David, having arrived in Aleppo in May 1799.¹²³ Writing in 1794, Patrick Russell observed that “female society is very confined”, claiming curiously that “none of the English are married”. But he added a provocatively vague footnote asserting how: “Circumstances are much altered in this respect since the year 1752, the female society at Aleppo having had an agreeable accession of several married Ladies from Europe”.¹²⁴ Of these European “Ladies”, Russell tells us no more, though he does observe how in former times “French subjects of

Honour of Alexander H. de Groot (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2007): pp.104-121.

¹¹⁸ Edward Barker, ed., *Syria and Egypt under the Last Five Sultans of Turkey: Being Experiences, During Fifty Years, of Mr. Consul-General Barker*, 2 vols. (London: Tinsley, 1876), 1: p.89.

¹¹⁹ Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, 2:p.1.

¹²⁰ Frederick Arthur Neale, *Eight Years in Syria, Palestine, and Asia Minor, from 1842 to 1850*, 2 vols. (London: Colburn, 1851), 2: p.62; Neale’s ‘Twenty-Seven Years of a Cosmopolite’s Life: Being Pages of Adventure and Travel,’ was later serialized in *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*, vols 24-25 (1857-58).

¹²¹ Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, 2: pp.2-3. And see Kais Firro, ‘Silk and Agrarian Changes in Lebanon, 1860-1914,’ *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 22:2 (May 1990): pp.151-69, who ignores English sources for the period

¹²² Irwin, *A Series of Adventures*, 2: p.292.

¹²³ See David Wilson, ‘List of British Consular Officials in the Ottoman Empire and its former territories, from the sixteenth century to about 1860,’ (July 2011), p. 37, online at: [www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey\(1581-1860\)-D_Wilson.pdf](http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey(1581-1860)-D_Wilson.pdf) accessed 30 December 2018. See also Barker, *Syria and Egypt*, pp.28-9 and p.359, and Wood, *A History*, p.162.

¹²⁴ Russell, *The Natural History*, 2: p.11.

inferior rank, find their way into the Levant, and by intermarriage with the native Christians, produce a half French race, or Mezza Razza". Although "not many years ago, a royal edict" was issued recalling all such Frenchmen, "several families still remain at Aleppo, of which some are visited by the Europeans, and the ladies are an agreeable accession to the public assemblies".¹²⁵

We also learn from Robert Abbott's nephew, Henry Abbott, who grew up in Aleppo, that an Italian physician had his family with him; young Henry learned Italian from his three daughters and together they "frequently got up plays from Mitastasio & Goldoni ... which we exhibited upon a neat little theatre he had built for the purpose".¹²⁶ Visiting Aleppo in the 1770s, Colonel James Capper of the East India Company confirmed that "the Europeans ... have built a small theatre ... [where] they perform French and Italian comedies".¹²⁷ Although British trade had dwindled, in 1820 the traveller John Fuller reckoned that "Aleppo was by far the most cheerful place in Syria", in part because of the remarkable hospitality of the Jewish community from whom, he writes:

I received very great civility and attention during my stay, and frequently went to their houses, especially on the day of their Sabbath, when they received visits of ceremony. On these occasions the ladies of the family, some of whom were very pretty, made their appearance in their best dresses.¹²⁸

Aleppo's characteristic culture of sociability, described by Sakhnini, clearly extended to the Jewish community in ways unimaginable in parts of Europe at the time.

Ottoman Aleppo was open to such "cosmopolitan encounters", and if the British were not foremost in promoting theatrical entertainments, they had long been leaders in organising sporting activities. By the time Henry Teonge arrived in 1676, the English 'custom' of riding out of town to camp by the side of the river Queiq was well established. Teonge describes how "a princely tent was pitched; and we had several pastimes and sports, as duck-hunting, fishing, shooting, handball, cricket, scrofilo, etc.; and then a noble dinner brought hither, with great plenty of all sorts of wines, punch, and lemonades".¹²⁹ (this, by the way, is the only appearance of the term 'scrofilo', *OED*). A century later, Patrick Russell recounts how "the English gentlemen keep excellent horses, and usually take an airing every day". Throughout the winter months from November to March, they ride out into the country twice a week to go "hawking and hunting", while "the other Europeans use in general less exercise".¹³⁰ Setting up camp by the river, playing cricket and bowls, hunting hare and gazelle with greyhounds, shooting duck, partridge, woodcock, and snipe: the British residents continued to enjoy such activities

¹²⁵ Russell, *The Natural History*, 2: p.6.

¹²⁶ Sakhnini, 'In the Eyes of Some Britons,' p.54 citing Abbott's unpublished memoirs at British Library, Mss Eur B412.

¹²⁷ James Capper, *Observations on the Passage to India, through Egypt, and across the Great Desert; With Occasional Remarks on the Adjacent Countries, and also Sketches of the Different Routes* (London: Faden, Robson and Sewell, 1783), p. 178, cited in Sakhnini, p.54.

¹²⁸ John Fuller, *Narrative of a Journey through some Parts of the Turkish Empire* (London: Murray, 1830), p. 494.

¹²⁹ Teonge, *The Diary*, p.146.

¹³⁰ Russell, *The Natural History*, 2: p.15 and p.18.

throughout the eighteenth century even as their numbers declined with the falling off in trade.¹³¹

By the turn of the nineteenth century, however, British trade had shifted to Izmir and Istanbul, and most of the British merchants had withdrawn from Aleppo: by 1824 consul John Barker “was the only Englishman residing in the city”.¹³² The following year the Levant Company was dissolved and control over Anglo-Ottoman trade passed to crown authority.¹³³ When Francis William Newman, Cardinal Newman’s younger brother, arrived in January 1831 en route to Baghdad to join the missionary Anthony Norris Groves, he discovered that “there are no English residents here at present; Mr Barker formerly consul here, is now at Alexandria”, and, greatly to Newman’s dismay, “there is only one Protestant besides ourselves in the city: he is a Swiss watchmaker”. Newman was also alarmed by the condition of the city itself, observing “There is something fearful in the general signs of a break-up all round one here... the internal signs of decay are what one cannot mistake”.¹³⁴ Allowing that the earthquake of 1822 had destroyed large areas of the city, Newman attributed



the ‘decay’ to the corruption of the Ottoman government. A few years later, in 1848, Frederick Arthur Neale reported that some of the khans had been refurbished by one Vincenzo Marcopoli, the “wealthiest merchant and most charitable man in all Aleppo”. Neale unearthed two English merchants residing in Aleppo, though he also observed that British trade, such as it was, was being handled by Greek agents.¹³⁵ Two and a half centuries of British presence in the city came to an end with the disappearance of the expatriate merchants. They left behind modifications to the

buildings in which they had lived and conducted business, some varieties of non-indigenous flora, improved strains of silk worm, and the Protestant cemetery as monuments to their presence. But otherwise, once the last resident merchants had died off or returned home, the British influence faded into obscurity and the amnesia it enjoys today.

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¹³¹ See Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, 3 vols. (London: Printed for the Author, by W. Bowyer, 1745), 2: p.152; Parsons, *Travels*, pp.63-66; and Ambrose, ‘English Traders’, p.266.

¹³² Wood, *A History*, p.196.

¹³³ Wood, *A History*, p.202

¹³⁴ Francis William Newman, *Personal Narrative, in Letters, principally from Turkey in the years 1830-1833* (London: Holyoake, 1856), pp.13, 16 and 25.

¹³⁵ Neale, *Eight Years in Syria*, 2: pp.96 and 111.



JEREMY SEAL

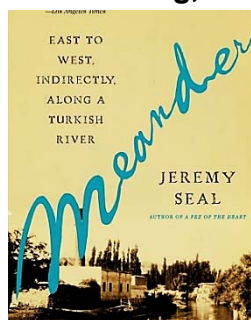
Writer and Broadcaster

Interviewed by Gül Ülgen Greenslade¹³⁶

Jeremy Seal,¹³⁷ author of travel and history books on Turkey, including *A Fez of the Heart*, *Nicholas: the Epic Journey from Saint to Santa Claus* and *Meander*, after spending years travelling in Turkey – not only on planes, trains and automobiles but also on buses with dodgy brakes, several mules, a postal train and once on a kayak – now organises cultural tours in Turkey. In his new book, he looks into darker pages of the country's history.

I left university in 1984 with an English degree and without any idea on how I should make my living in the World, says Jeremy: I did an English-as-a-foreign-language course in London and was offered jobs in various countries: Casablanca, Morocco, Oslo and in Ankara. I ended up thinking, where's this place Ankara? So I packed my bag and ended up working for a school there. Within a couple of weeks, I was transfixed by the place; I thought it was fascinating. My first impressions were of an amazing place, wonderful food, incredibly rich culture, really interesting history and a great sense of landscape. There was so much to understand, particularly, for the European market, the possibilities for tourism; Turkey was then really an emerging destination. Also, I suppose, it was a bit of dark time four years after the coup of 1980; there was a strong military presence and to me that was interesting too.

The teaching experience only lasted a year. I came back to England in the summer of 1985 and I went into publishing in London. But, within a couple of years, I was missing Turkey. Back then, there was quite a lot of demand from newspapers and magazines for copy about the country. So, from 1989 onwards, I began increasingly to return to Turkey to write about it for a number of newspapers and magazines including *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, and the Australian newspaper, *Sydney*. Gradually, I began to develop a knowledge of Turkey as I visited ancient sites, and talked to old *bekçi* guardians on the sites. As I began to acquire some Turkish, I felt it was a subject I wanted to know more about. By 1993, I was thinking, I've done a certain amount of journalism. So I came up with the idea of writing my first book, *A Fez of the Heart*, based upon the idea that it might be interesting to explore Turkey through the lands of that old Turkish national hat, the fez.



A Fez of the Heart (translated into Turkish in 2016 titled *Fes* and published by Koton Kitap) was an instant success in the UK and was the first of a series of travel books including *Nicholas: The Epic Journey from Saint to Santa* (2005) and

¹³⁶ www.gulgreenslade.com

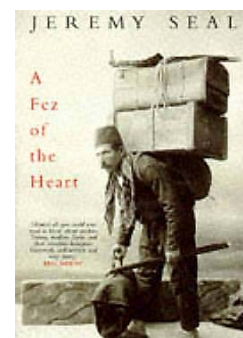
¹³⁷ See Jeremy Seal, 'Turkey Tourism' by, *TAS Review*, No.31, (Spring 2018), pp. 27-29

Meander: East to West, Indirectly, Along a Turkish River (2012) among others. Yes, *The Fez* was the first book, says Jeremy; After that I wrote *The Snake Bite Survivors' Club* which was published in 1999 and *Treachery at Sharpnose Point* about a Scottish ship, the *Caledonia* (2001). Those two books were more travel writing but they were not based in Turkey.

To me, as a travel writer, the material tends to be really thin if you travel in ordinary ways, says Jeremy; If you travel in interesting ways, you tend to get interesting experiences, I think that was certainly true of the *Fez* book set in deep mid-winter. It was January as I travelled in eastern Turkey when it was very cold and there was a lot of snow about. There's not a lot of material you get out of a hired car, whereas if you travel on a post train or go hiking or – in the case of *Meander* – go by a kayak, you see aspects of a country that you would otherwise miss. Furthermore, I always wanted to listen to ordinary country people. If I look back to 1993, I think Turkish people, generally, were much more interested in travelling foreigners, because we were quite exotic in a way we may not be now. I did find people very open to me on buses or in coffee shops or while visiting sites.

At this point I can't help asking: "Where do you find your people?" Jeremy laughs: Of course, there's a certain amount of setting up prior to a visit; it's all about me putting out feelers to contacts saying, is there anybody in that part of the country that I can go to see? There's a certain amount of manufacturing of visits and contacts going on – I think – in most travel books. It doesn't all happen as naturally as it sometimes appears. But in many cases I just approach someone to ask a question, asking directions or make a comment and we start talking; speaking Turkish also helps, naturally, as the people I meet often don't expect that. And many incidents just happen naturally, coincidentally. For instance, I remember well, on Akhtamar Island in Lake Van some guys who were also visiting. They were really friendly and they knew I was travelling on my own and, when we returned to Van where I was staying at a hotel, they invited me to an amazing dinner in a quite strange but rather smart restaurant. However, suddenly, somebody insulted somebody else. It just turned into a big fight and they thought they had to protect me and deliver me back to the hotel. It was a very colourful incident.

'When the altercation spilled on to the garage forecourt, it promptly turned into a fight. Men in flapping jackets and with ties draped over tight bellies were throwing fists at each other while friends and employees were attempting to bundle them into waiting cars. A man, face black with anger, swerved past me as he ran to thump another man, and apologised to the foreigner as he did so... We raced round a corner and came to a halt outside my hotel in a squeal of tyres. 'Go straight inside and stay inside,' somebody told me urgently as if my life depended on it before kissing me on both cheeks. Never before had life felt so deliriously like a gangster movie. Next morning's bruises suggested I attempted an impulsive



forward roll through the hotel door as if to avoid the inevitable gunfire.'

(*A Fez of the Heart*, Picador, p 230)

Jeremy and I (GÜG), both laugh aloud as we remember that relevant chapter of the book. **What was interesting about it is**, Jeremy continues, **from my perspective, you get a really strange mixture in Turkey of extreme hospitality and friendliness and also a combustibility whereby people often fall out with each other and disagreements flare very easily. I think you see that more often in Turkey than you do in England.**

Let me tell you another story which, to me, defined the whole process of my falling in love with Turkey, continues Jeremy; I remember the summer of 1985 at the end of my teaching in Ankara. I went travelling with friends from England. We got to a place called Göksun which is on the way to Kahramanmaraş, in the middle of the country. We arrived on a Saturday afternoon to find all the hotels full. One of the locals said that what people normally did in such situations was to stay in the prison. I don't know if it's still the tradition. We took a taxi to the prison and the guy there seemed completely relaxed about us wanting to stay inside; he said, 'You can stay in the cells if you like or you can stay in the exercise yard'. It was a nice summer evening, so we set up our tents in the exercise yard and then he brought us some *sigara böreği* which was lovely. Then he asked: 'Do you want to meet some of the prisoners?' and we said: 'Oh, yeah? What have you got?' He said. 'We have only two prisoners at the moment.' One was a guy who was done for fraud, the other one was a murderer. We said: 'Can we meet the murderer please?' One minute later, out comes this little, quiet guy in handcuffs, and this is the murderer! He sits down and asks polite questions about where we've been and are we enjoying our time in Turkey, and he's really polite but we all want to know, what did you do? Who did you murder? But we were all too polite to ask which, I think was to our credit, so we just had a long, polite conversation and, after a while, they took the murderer away and, in the morning, we packed our bags and left.

Yet Jeremy admits that, lately, there has been a change in *The Turkish way*. I remember people recently saying how they could no longer talk as freely as they used to because relations with some *others*, particularly politically, became too poisonous, became really hard. I also remember, back in the 1980s and 90s, when I was travelling in Turkey, people would talk about everything. I remember that phrase *Herkes Serbest*, everyone's free. We would talk about whatever, as far as I was able to with my limited Turkish – politics and religion. That's simply not the case anymore. People feel uncomfortable about exploring areas of discussion which they think would cause trouble. I think that's definitely one of the downsides of Turkey nowadays.

We've been talking about Turkey and Jeremy's travels nearly for an hour now, but before I let him go, I have two further questions. The first is about his new book. I'm lucky having the chance of reading it probably before his publisher did! It's brilliantly written but it's not a travel book. I also know that he's been researching nearly three years for this book. So, what's it all about?

My fourth and fifth books were definitely a return to putting Turkey central to my interests and enthusiasms, says Jeremy. **The *Santa* book, which is about St Nicholas, is largely based on Turkey and is an examination of the**

evolution of the cult of St Nicholas from its very beginning in the early Byzantine period right through to the modern day, using St Nicholas, an Anatolian figure as the focus. How did he go from being an Anatolian Orthodox bishop to ending up as Santa Claus in Western culture? And then the fifth volume, *The Meander*, is an attempt to immerse myself in the heart of Turkish rural culture.

I think the important thing to say about my latest book is its coming to terms with what I recognise as the darker side of the Turkish experience. The earlier books are quite sunny but this one addresses a subject that seems to me to be very well understood in Turkey but not at all in the West, and as such it may well be a really interesting window for Western readers into what makes Turkey tick.

The book is about Adnan Menderes and the 1960 military coup in Turkey, a page from recent Turkish history, and should be published soon.

Adnan Menderes causes very strong emotions and very strong reactions in Turkey. People on the religious, conservative right regard him as a hero and those on the left see him as a villain. And I was really interested in exploring how this man has helped shape Turkish politics and society, says Jeremy. I first came across him when I was walking in a village near Milas in south-west Turkey where I was invited into a local's cottage – another example of hospitality – by an old man called Mehmet who gave us tea. I noticed photographs and paintings on the wall, most of them of his own family but, among them all, there was a photo in a nice gilt frame of what was clearly a 1950s politician in the company of two other politicians. Because you never see photos of politicians in public places in Turkey, I asked who this man was. Mehmet told me he was Adnan Menderes, who was the Prime Minister in the 1950s until he was overthrown in the coup of May 1960. The fact that he was still on the wall in 2015 made me wonder, why does he matter to this old man – and are there lots of other people to whom he also matters! That was what got me embarked on the journey to find more about him.

Without spoiling much, I can only add that the book is not a biography of Adnan Menderes; neither is it all about history; there's still a lot of travel but perhaps to darker places in history.

It's almost the end of our conversation and Jeremy is getting ready for yet another journey, a cultural tour in Turkey this time. My last question is about the Turkish Tours he regularly organises.

These are partly because I wanted to find ways of communicating my enthusiasm for Turkey, he explains. I don't think I'm obsessive but I like to dig as deeply as I can into a contained area rather than exploring the world. Most of the travel writers I know tend to explore as widely as they possibly can, whereas I, for my own reasons, have increasingly limited my travels into Turkey and, to a degree, to areas which are similar to Turkey.

But from about 2012-2014, with the rise of the internet, the amount of travel journalism I could do on Turkey has dwindled really fast and so I was looking around thinking, how else can I continue my interest in Turkey in other ways, when somebody said that I would make a good tour guide. In 2015 I did some talks on tour guiding and really enjoyed it. It was

communicating to small groups on the sites verbally rather than writing for a larger audience. I liked the intimacy; you got a smaller number of people who're in Turkey because they want to be there and want to understand the context and make more sense of what it is they're seeing. Then, in 2016, I started leading some tours on my own with a good friend, Yunus Özdemir, who's a registered Turkish guide. We do six or seven tours every year – most of them based on *gulets*, which function as floating hotels.

Jeremy Seal is soon leaving for another cultural tour in Turkey; so I wish him *iyi yolculuklar*, a good and safe journey.

For tour details go to www.somewherewonderful.com/tours

Beyoğlu

by Colin Imber

Honorary Research Fellow, University of Manchester,
Reader in Turkish until retirement in 2005



Folk-etymologies are features of every language, but seem to be especially abundant in Turkish. People in Turkey have explained to me that Anatolia is 'Anadolu' because, when the Turks first arrived there, it was 'full of mothers' (*ana dolu*); and that Balıkesir is so called because it was once a city (*balık* – think Khanbaliq, the Mongol capital of China) where prisoners (*esir*) were incarcerated. Konya received its name because when two saints were floating by on a cloud, and one of them decided to stop there and make it their home, he said to his companion: 'Kon, ya!' (Come on, stop here!). A number of these etymologies have made their way into serious history writing. The first Ottoman ruler Osman, we are frequently told, won a battle over the Greeks at a place called Dinboz. Perhaps he really did, and perhaps it is mere coincidence that his victory over the Christians happened at a place called 'destroy religion' (*din boz-*) ...



There is, however, one instance where popular etymology turns out to have some historical substance. This is Beyoğlu ('son of the *bey*'), now part of Istanbul, but until 1453 part of the Genoese town of Pera. The name itself might be a folk-etymology concealing an earlier form – *bailo* has been suggested, as the Venetian *baili* resided there – but its present form reflects a real historical memory as we know who the *bey* was and, more importantly, his son. The *bey* was Andrea Gritti (1455-1538), a Venetian merchant and diplomat



resident in Pera from about 1476 until his imprisonment as a spy in 1499 and return to Venice three years later. In 1523, he was elected doge¹³⁸, and so he remained until his death. His son was Alvise Gritti (1480-1534), one of apparently three brothers born to Andrea and a Greek mother. Alvise spent most of his life in the Ottoman Empire, accumulating great riches and political influence during the early part of the reign of Süleyman I. Both he and his father resided in Beyoğlu, the district whose name preserves their memory.

In one respect, history has done both father and son an injustice. In 1523, Andrea Gritti's opponents in Venice tried to prevent his election as doge on the grounds that he had produced 'three bastard sons' and Alvise, too, is



usually described as 'illegitimate'. Illegitimate he undoubtedly was in the eyes of the Roman Church, but it is unlikely that the Ottoman authorities would have regarded his father's liaison with his Greek mother as anything other than perfectly legal and above board. Istanbul was a major commercial city with large numbers of resident merchants and diplomats from western Europe, all of them male. No doubt these enjoyed all kinds of relations with local women, but if they wished to remain within

the law, their options were restricted. They could not marry Muslims. They could marry Christians, but this might be a problem when they returned home. In law (if not always in practice) they could not own slave-concubines and, even if they did, there would be a problem over the status of offspring. There was, however, a legal solution which the Frenchman Guillaume Postel, who spent altogether four years in Turkey in the mid-sixteenth century, was the first to describe. The foreigner, he wrote, would make an agreement with a local woman who would give him the use of her own, or another house and, in return, he would agree to pay her a certain sum when he finally went home. In the meantime, he would maintain her at his own expense and, when she made him a "gift of linen or embroidery" remunerate her twice over. He would be obliged to maintain both her and any children, but would enjoy no rights over her "except in the use of her body". When the terms were settled, the couple would go before a *kadı* or city-governor to swear an oath "on the faith of God and your law". According to a Venetian *bailo* in the 1590s, when the oath of agreement was concluded the *kadı* "took the thumbs of both and touched them together from the inside out, as a sign of the faith that they give". These arrangements, if we are to believe Luigi Bassano, were very common. Writing on the basis of his observations in the 1540s, he remarked: "Many Christian merchants do this, because it is not permitted among the Turks for Christians to have concubines, either Turkish or Christian, and for this reason they get the judge to register [her] as their wife". In Ottoman eyes, the woman was indeed the man's wife, the sum payable to her on his departure being seen as equivalent to the *mahr* or *kâbin* in Islamic law, payable from a groom to a bride.

The arrangement had several advantages. It gave a legal status to all of the parties – husband, wife and offspring. It was a way of providing female companionship for non-Muslim temporary residents and, from the point of view of the Ottoman authorities, it was a way to domesticate a large body of

¹³⁸ The chief magistrate of Venice or Genoa

young and footloose males. The system existed at least until the late eighteenth century, and must already have existed long before Postel's time.

Our *bey* Andrea would certainly have contracted this kind of marriage with his son Alvise's Greek mother and so, whatever the pope might think, it is a calumny to refer to our *beyoğlu* as "bastard son".



Diary Notes from a Trip to Armenia

27 September to
3 October 2019



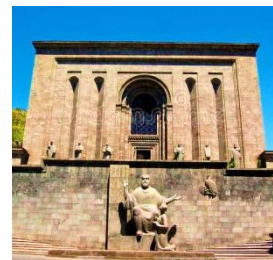
by Belma Ötüş Baskett

Friday 27 September and Saturday 28 September 2019

I have visited all of the countries bordering Turkey now that I have visited Armenia. The border between the two is closed, so visitors have to fly to Yerevan from Istanbul via Onur Air. All flights going east from Istanbul leave around midnight. The flight took three and a half hours. We arrived at our hotel, 'Aviatrans', at 4.00 am and were allowed four hours sleep. We were a group of sixteen men and women of all ages and different nationalities – Turks, and expats from Britain, France, America and Serbia living in Istanbul. Our common language was English. At 9.00 am we met our local guide, a young Armenian woman named Takuhi, for a tour of Yerevan on foot. We asked how long we would walk. She was vague, mentioning a twenty minute walk and a coffee break.

We started walking from our hotel, just off the Republic Square, where there was a large fountain and the City Hall building. We walked from one square to another. The fourth square was decorated with banners and posters of the Coffee Festival. We were offered coffee in thimble-sized paper cups and kept walking. The squares became shabbier and the buildings became dilapidated Soviet blocks. At the foot of a hill, the elderly in the group, including me, sat on roadside benches and refused to move. We had been walking three hours. Takuhi was at the top of the hill already. For three hours she had walked and talked and paid no attention to the group. We were the victims of a new wi-fi system which the Turkish tour leader had brought from Istanbul. We had earphones connected to a black box worn around our necks. Takuhi talked into a microphone connected to another black box. She could be a long way off and we would still hear her. Often she did not see us and we did not see her. The new system had promised us freedom of movement while hearing what the guide said. We did not need much freedom when we could not speak Armenian and nobody spoke English. We could not read the signs which were in Armenian or Russian script.

Takuhi arranged a taxi for us to get to the top of the hill to see the Matenadaran Museum. The taxi left us at the bottom of the thirty steps to the building. Takuhi instructed us to meet her on the second floor. Once in the building, luckily, we could find a lift. Takuhi was not aware that we were displeased. I think she thought the new gadget was all that we needed. We could not be cross with her for long because the museum was so marvelous. We admired the building, made of wood with arches and niches, all hand-carved, which displayed rare manuscripts most beautifully illuminated. The manuscripts had been collected from old churches and monasteries in an area between Aleppo and Yerevan. The texts were Bibles and books of religious teachings of early Christianity, some in Aramaic, and the rest in old Armenian script. We all would have liked to spend hours there but it was already 2.00 pm and we were late for lunch. Very reluctant to leave, we could not protest too much because we were so hungry.



The meal was in a garden restaurant. Two women squatted around the well of a clay oven making flat *lavash* bread – we could have been in a village in Anatolia, where it has the same name. We were offered cheese to make *dürüm*, a roll. We felt quite at home and relaxed sitting at a table set under large trees. The first dish was eggplant filled with meat. The two Americans shouted *imambayıldı* (the priest fainted) – the name of an eggplant dish without meat. They were instantly corrected by the Turks in the group who called the dish *Karnı yarık* (split-belly). Then came the kebabs, chicken and pork made deep in the oven. The dessert was Armenian *baklava*, but the dough was thick, had very few walnut pieces and was served with a drizzle of honey from a jug – a far cry from Turkish *baklava* which has very thin layers of dough saturated in syrup, displaying a thick layer of walnuts. Coffee was served in Turkish-style small cups but was quite weak.

After lunch, Takuhi took us to a money changer where we were given 6,000 Drams for one US dollar. We visited the Urartu Archeological Museum, which displayed objects we were familiar with from museums in Turkey. On our own in the evening, five of us went to a café called *Jazzve*. The name was a corruption of the Turkish word *cezve* – a small coffee pot – and referred to the jazz music they played. We ordered Armenian beer, which was quite good, and ate crêpes. My mushroom and cheese crepe hardly had any cheese. The soup a friend had ordered came last and was quite cold. The staff were not well-trained and were not used to tourists.

Sunday 29 September 2019



We travelled to the Khor Virap monastery, at the foot of Mount Ararat. On the way, we stopped and took excellent photographs of Mount Ararat. We were lucky with clear skies and lots of sunshine. Takuhi insisted that the best view of Mount Ararat was from the Armenian side. Khor Virap was two hours away from Yerevan. Its importance comes from the fact that it was built as a shrine to celebrate the adoption of Christianity in

Armenia in 301 AD. All that is left was a small church open to the sky. The next church we reached after a climb, the Noravank monastery, was even smaller.

Lunch was served in the village of Areni in a winery famous for its red wine. We ate in the open air – mezes and kebabs with the red wine. The fried eggplant dish served with walnut pieces was delicious. The winery made all kinds of wines. They served us a sour cherry wine. It reminded me of the sour cherry drinks in the Balkans and was similar to vishnovka. We also drank a clear, colourless vodka made from apricots. Thinking the meal had ended, some of us left to walk around. But we were called back to have a glass of ‘cognac’ which tasted like Turkish *kanyak* – which literally fires the blood. We listened to live music through lunch. A young girl sang local songs in a very sweet voice accompanied by a younger boy who played a reed flute like *the kaval* Turkish shepherds play. They called the instrument *duduk*. *Dūdük* in Turkish also refers to a kind of horn, but I could not establish a connection between the words.

Takuhi received a telephone call about available tickets to a national dance and song presentation in Yerevan at 6.00 pm. We were all interested as we had seen the dancers in national costume walking in Republic Square as we boarded the bus in the morning. But our drive never seemed to end. We were late so Takuhi cancelled our tickets. Arriving at Yerevan at 8.00 pm, we were told we could go in the theatre to watch the show. This shows the different concept of time and sense of organization in Armenia. We never got to some of the places on our program such as the fresh fruit market or the handicraft market. Worst of all, the brandy factory visit, which could have been the highlight of the trip, was so rushed that we could not finish drinking the second glass they offered us! The factory and the sales room closed exactly at 5.00 pm, so we could not buy anything. This factory has a rich history and makes the only brandy that the French allow to be labelled *cognac*. It was, we were told, Winston Churchill’s favourite drink. Stalin had offered it at the Yalta Conference, and Churchill liked it so much that Stalin sent him several cases at Christmas every year.

Monday 30 September 2019

The visit to the restored temple at Garni again took several hours. Dating back to the first century AD, the temple was at one time a large complex of palaces, temples and buildings serving as a summer residence for Armenian kings. To visit Garni Gorge nearby, we took jeeps down to the riverside to admire the fantastic basalt formations. The side of the mountain coming down to the little river was black and covered with signs like hieroglyphics. These were formed from volcanic eruptions. This was our most interesting day. We also visited the Geghard Cave Monastery – a small area of flat rock with a low-rising side wall of rock into which dwellings had been carved that were no longer in use. The monastery was not as interesting as Cappadocia, but was reminiscent of it. This was our last night in Yerevan and Takuhi had promised us a banquet. We walked to Yerevan Taverna where we were told we had no reservation. Apparently, there was a branch of this taverna on the outskirts of Yerevan



where our reservation had been made. Takuhi had to find taxis. This branch of the taverna was a hangar-like place with several long tables, just for tourists. Alas, the atmosphere was not comparable to the center of town taverna.

We were with some Polish and Estonian groups. The rest of the taverna was empty. The food was quite tasteless. On a stage, dancers and singers performed. The music sounded at times Russian, and at other times Turkish. The dances were reminiscent of those in 'The Brothers Karamazov' film. One group danced something like an Azerbaijani dance. I am familiar with Armenian culture in Istanbul: in Arnavutköy our neighbours were Armenian. At Robert College I had Armenian classmates and we have regular re-unions. In Istanbul, Armenian culture is similar to Turkish culture. Armenian music is like classical Turkish music. There have been many Armenian composers. Armenians in Istanbul have their own successful businesses. Many of their ancestors worked in the Ottoman Palace as translators and clerks.

What we call Armenian cooking in Istanbul – dolmas and coffee, for example – is similar to Turkish cooking, but in a richer vein, with more olive oil and stronger coffee. The food in Armenia was not of the same quality. The Armenian economy is in trouble. There are no jobs for the young. Many come to Turkey to work mostly in the service sector. Women work as childminders and the men work in light industry. They make good salaries and like to be paid in US dollars.

Tuesday 1 October 2019

Today was special. We visited Sevan lake, which one Armenian writer has called 'the blue eye of Armenia'. It is a fresh water lake of volcanic origin at an altitude of about 1900 meters. In the Soviet period its waters were used by industry and so the water level has receded twenty meters and the island in the lake has become a peninsula. In the middle of this peninsula is a building in the modernist style, built as a writers' rest/ holiday center in Soviet times. The lake was beautiful but we had to rush. As on other days, we visited two monasteries. The Haghartsin monastery is described as a school of architecture. It took about 300 years to build, with each generation adding structures that merged with previous designs. The monastery blended with and enhanced the natural surroundings. We also visited the Akhpat monastery. All the monasteries we saw are on the UNESCO World Heritage list.



Back in the hotel, we talked of the lake and wished we had gone closer to it. Takuhi had not wanted to talk about the building on the peninsula. She was content to show us only monasteries. But, according to an internet article which we found, the writers' holiday home was an architectural masterpiece. The architects were Gevorg Kochar and Mikael Mazmanyan whom Stalin had banished to Siberia because they did not follow the architectural rules of the time. The building is a fine offering of avant-garde imagination of the 20th century. Sometimes referred to as Khrushchev modernism, the building created a stir when it was built. Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir were among the first celebrities to visit it. Many

Armenian writers have visited and written about it. In his book, *Journey to Armenia*, Osip Mandelstam wrote how he “spent a whole month in the lake area which is 2,000 ft. above sea level”. He also wrote about the nearby monastery. His wife, Nadezhda Mandelstam, used her new Zeiss camera to create a unpretentious display of the anonymous tombstones, which were each of a different lively colour. The writer, Vasily Grosman, described the area as a “rough-hewn plate made up of black, blue and rust coloured stones” and in the middle is “the endless blue of the lake”. We felt cheated that we had not spent time at the lake.

A young woman- an Armenian from Istanbul – excitedly told us her name was Sevan and added, “I did not know there was a lake of that name”. She had visited the lake and liked it very much. The Turkish name for the river *Danube* –*Tuna* – is likewise a popular name among Turks.

Wednesday 2 October 2019

All day we were on the bus to reach a new state-of-the-art thermal hotel on a mountain top where there was a closed hot pool. We could not swim because nobody had told us to bring swimming suits. Our rooms had fabulous bathrooms with nice fixtures produced by a Turkish factory. The newly-built public toilets in the mountains came from the same factory. This area was full of spectacular volcanic mountains. Although it was autumn, snow flakes fell in the evening.

Thursday 3 October 2019

The next morning we descended from the barren mountains. The plains had orchards and a few skinny sheep, which might explain the scarcity of meat on the menus. Our trip ended when we reached the Armenian-Georgian border. There, we saw large lorries laden with Turkish manufactured goods entering Armenia. There is now hardly any production in Armenia. There were factories in the Soviet era which produced parts for cars and tractors that were assembled elsewhere. When the Soviet system collapsed, these factories were demolished.

We became aware of the complicated bureaucracy when our Turkish guide was refused exit at the Georgian border. She had entered on an electronic visa. At the border she was told she had to get a new visa. She travelled to Yerevan with Takuhi and eventually rejoined us after two nights and a day, ending her ordeal and our anxiety. Now I can say: “All is well that ends well”.

JOURNAL OF ANGLO-TURKISH RELATIONS

This new peer-reviewed electronic journal is to appear twice each year, with an additional special issue every two years. Edited by Behcet Kemal Yeşilbursa (Uludağ University), it aims to cover political, economic, military, and cultural links between the two countries, with articles in English or Turkish. The first issue appeared in January of this year with three articles in Turkish and three in English- including one by the then Acting BATAS President William Hale on Kim Philby in Turkey 1945-48. Further details of the journal on www.dergipark.org.tr/pub/jatr



Sylvia
Plath
1932-1963



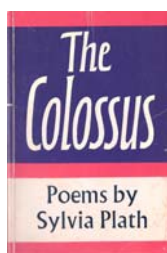
Nilgün
Marmara
1958-1987

TWO SWAN SONGS:

Two Statements of Finality and the Joy of Life In the Poetic Worlds of Sylvia Plath and Nilgün Marmara

Yusuf Eradam
TED University,
Dep of English Language & Literature
Çankaya/Ankara

Both Sylvia Plath and Nilgün Marmara made their statements in life and in their poetry. Plath wrote for about seven years (1956-1963) and committed suicide by gassing herself on 11 February 1963, aged 30. Marmara wrote for ten years (1977-87) and decided to end her life on 13 October 1987, aged 29.



Plath's and Marmara's lives and works reflect the kaleidoscopic nature of existence, a life made up of many fragments, which defies rational explanation and categorization. After *The Colossus* was published many critics were fascinated by Plath's revelation of both physical and mental pain and her stunning use of language. The same can be said for Marmara's poetry, which is like an epitaph to the 'I' that is lost in time and haunted by the reality of death. However, Plath is fascinated with the idea of death to the extent that she can be described as 'conjuring with the unknown'. Here is Plath in 'Lady Lazarus':

**Dying
Is an art, like everything else
I do it exceptionally well.¹³⁹**

Almost the same determination for death is present in Marmara's 'Swan Song':

**My poems, swan songs before death
The black-gowned night watch secrets of my rolling life
Every pain I've postponed for so long
Is cracking now, and a new song starts
- this poem-
As my life and my unknown parts stagger
I've gotta stay a friend to me and to you all**

¹³⁹ Sylvia Plath, 'Lady Lazarus', *The Collected Poems*. (ed Ted Hughes). New York: Perennial Library, 1981). p.245.
(Hereafter all references to Plath's poems will refer to this edition.)

**'Cause it has split from the aggressive
From the great desire that breaks its sleep
- this poem-**

**If it takes its magic from a sincerity
then lives its own pure violence
The quiet-space of the beauties I cannot make
the obedient reflection of the unattainable
calls out your name
with love!¹⁴⁰**

Death in Marmara's poetry is the embodiment of all, and mirrors a hope for change. Suicide, a word she never utters, is the only way to overcome death. It is her own choice against "being made to see".¹⁴¹ Everything but suicide is presented to her and is not her choice. She would accept death as fate but suicide as her own "statement of finality".



As Marmara states in her article 'Sylvia Plath: A Female Lazarus',¹⁴² Plath engages in the question of finding the difference in her own existence, and then transforming it. When this difference turns out to be "nothing", suicide is natural. Both Plath and Marmara tried to cling on to a meaningless reward, a trophy, but gave up in the end. In her poem 'Düşü ne biliyorum', whose title can be read as a pun in Turkish meaning both 'I know what her dream is' and also 'I can think', Marmara addresses the earth:

Ey, iki adımlık yerküre
Senin bütün arka bahçelerini gördüm ben!
**Hey earth, I can walk you up and down in two steps
I have seen all your backyards.¹⁴³**

From their very first poems in their collections ('Conversation Among the Ruins' by Plath, and 'Impressionistic Poem' by Marmara) to their last works, their poetry is a course, a flow toward what I call 'nullifying' everything. In their poems, both in effect nullify their mothers. This is seen in Plath's 'Mother, mother, what an ill-bred aunt' – where everything loses its meaning.

In her first poems, Marmara's persona is still the 'I'. In some of the later poems there are personae used – a child, a dog and other animals and, most important of all, nature. This shift of interest to the lower forms of natural life is reminiscent of Plath's detached attitude in her early poems in *The Colossus*,¹⁴⁴ for instance in 'Mushrooms', 'Hardcastle Crag' and 'Frog Autumn'. Later, Marmara moves to the first person plural '**We**' as her persona. Here, she wishes to hide in the ultraviolet light (in the purple) where she

¹⁴⁰ Nilgün Marmara, 'Kugu Ezgisi' ('Swan Song'), *Daktiloya Çekilmiş Şiirler (DCS, Typed Poems)*. (Istanbul: Şiir Atı 1988). p.103

¹⁴¹ Nilgün Marmara, 'Beduh 1', *Argos*. April 21- 22, 1987, pp.58-59.

¹⁴² Nilgün Marmara, 'Sylvia Plath: Bir Dişi Lazarus' ('Sylvia Plath: A Female Lazarus'), *Şiir Atı: Book 4*. (Istanbul: Şiir Atı 1987). pp.169-72.

¹⁴³ Nilgün Marmara, 'Düşü ne biliyorum' ('I know now what her dream is'/'I can think'), *DCS*: p.168.

¹⁴⁴ Sylvia Plath, *The Colossus* (1960) (London: Faber and Faber, 1987).

suffers from self-alienation. In ‘The Expression of the Egocentricity of the Long Ago’¹⁴⁵ she has lost all her desires, which cannot be recaptured though she still asks them: “Where are you?”. When analysed stylistically, this both means that she does not know where her desires have gone and that she is not responsible for having lost them. It is again the unknown, this game of death-in-life, which caused her to lose touch with life.

It is as though Marmara woke up one day (before June 1977, the date of her first poem) to the daunting reality that all is nothing, life is death’s synonym, death is the ultimate reality and there is nothing we can do about it. Thus she began to observe the world and, suffering from real agonies of the psyche, she ended up in self-alienation and depersonalization. In her last text, titled ‘Who Is It Coming Towards Me, Or A Mobile First Person Singular In the Present Tense’, she watches with a taut state of mind the person coming home, and humorously questions her dance, saying ‘for the time being I have given in to the will of the air current and while the flies are raping my extensions, I am pushing my dance into this vertical coffin, from day into night, night into day’.¹⁴⁶ While the flies raping her extensions remind us of the flies walking on Kate Chopin’s Edna Pontellier and her crying not knowing why, we also remember Plath’s *In Plaster*, in which the relationship of the persona with her other self is ‘like living with my own coffin’.¹⁴⁷ It is more than a coincidence that Plath also has a poem ‘I am vertical’, in which she longs for the horizontal state, because we know that Marmara studied Plath’s poetry for her graduation paper. Both Plath and Marmara believe that the remedy to this despair and status is not available. Plath expresses it in ‘Conversation Among the Ruins’: ‘What ceremony of words can patch the havoc?’ The expression of chaos and futility is also apparent in the voice of Marmara’s persona who speaks with some dignity: “What is to be said beyond words?”¹⁴⁸ The bareness of their poems heightens the impact. A sense of spontaneity and of release captures the reader.

The bleak landscape presented in the poems of Plath and Marmara paradoxically draws our attention to the ‘how’ of reaching this knowledge of nothingness, and the awareness of death-in-life. They make us conscious about the world we live in, and we are left thinking about some fundamental issues of the outsider that have disturbed many great poets: Who am I? Who is it coming toward me? What is it all about? What is the point?

Marmara, in ‘Heading for the Red’ expresses her determination to commit suicide. She decides that life and death are the same and the angel of death sends its message through the toy of a child, a red top:

Sözcüğü diyor söndüreğim yerinde
sezinlediğim biçimi
Gireğim güllerin bahçesine
orada duracak

¹⁴⁵ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Pek Öncelerin Ben Merkeziliğinin Dışavurumu’ (‘The Expression of the Egocentricity of the Long Ago’), *DCS*, pp.14-15.

¹⁴⁶ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Bana Doğru Gelen Kim? Ya da Şimdiki Zamanda Bir Mobil Birinci Tekil Sahıs’ (‘Who is it Coming Toward Me? Or A Mobile First Person Singular in the Present Tense’), *Metinler (Texts)*. (Istanbul: Şiir Atı, 1990), p.29.

¹⁴⁷ Sylvia Plath, ‘In Plaster’, *The Collected Poems*, p.160.

¹⁴⁸ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Böyle’ (‘Like This/Such’), *DCS*, p.67.

beni vuracak

**I will extinguish the word it says
and the form wherever I sense it
I will enter the garden of the roses
It will stand there
and hit me.¹⁴⁹**

She also talks about a flow, a deadly process called life, a process of “dragging our corpses again on our circumference” and that is when “that web of the unknown is undone”.¹⁵⁰ In ‘Compulsory Tunnel’,¹⁵¹ God is punitive and unknown. Sometimes, the sky is as peaceful as a child’s overall and the solitude of it brings everything to a safe and secure colour (blue) and is somehow reminiscent of death, which reveals its associations in psychic blue and purple.¹⁵² This eternal blue gives her the energy to reach the target, which is “sustaining life and not tearing it apart from death”.¹⁵³

Both in Plath’s and Marmara’s poetry there is the wish to be reborn: the myth of the phoenix in Plath’s ‘Lady Lazarus’ and in Marmara’s ‘Karmelites Thérèse’. Marmara, although she knows that it is the ultimate end, wishes to be reborn. Immortality is going back to childhood. This intimidates and shakes her, this “purple togetherness that is beyond us”¹⁵⁴ calls. Whipping this red top is similar to Yeats’s gyre image, and it is also expressed as finding the secret of the ruby-coloured glass and knowing; even this is some good reason to be: life is an endless circle, an infinite turning, an inevitable and incessant repetition. Nietzsche has elevated and approved of this. Yeats, visualising it, formulated his perception in:

**Cast a cold eye
on life, on death.
Horseman, pass by!¹⁵⁵**



Marmara casts a cold eye on life and on death and keeps the lid of the grave open, because she believes that “till we die, we are throwing in it the flying moments, thoughts, sensations as we experience them, and then, when we cannot accumulate and produce, we get into it and pull the lid over ourselves, until a new opening”.¹⁵⁶ It is obvious that Marmara yearned for immortality.

Like many other poets, Plath and Marmara hold on to writing to justify their very being and, more importantly, to reflect the need to assert a creative life.

**Reading, thinking, writing, are the third sex, in a way,
fantasizing the possibility of the existence of a third sex;
because times, all times, are limited to those permanent two
sexes and their derivatives and variations. However, what’s**

¹⁴⁹ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Kirmiziya Yonelis’ (‘Heading for the Red’), *DCS*, p.23.

¹⁵⁰ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Kalik Ag’ (Static Web), *DCS*, p.13.

¹⁵¹ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Zorunlu Tunel’ (‘Compulsory Tunnel’), *DCS*, pp.18-19.

¹⁵² Nilgün Marmara, ‘Basliksiz’ (‘Untitled’), *DCS*, p.37.

¹⁵³ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Hedef’ (‘The Target’); *DCS*, p.45.

¹⁵⁴ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Ancak Yazgidir Bu’ (‘This is Nothing but Fate’) *DCS*, p.12.

¹⁵⁵ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Beduh 1.’ p.59.

¹⁵⁶ Nilgün Marmara, ‘Beduh.1.’ p.58.

**covered and hidden is the manhood and childhood in a woman;
and the womanhood and childhood in a man! ¹⁵⁷**

Nilgün Marmara's poetry is not different from many other great poets' works which reflect a quest to find a more constant reply than nature. What then is "speaking" a shield against? The act of speaking is a shield against the space, the vacuum between the "I" and the "rest," the rest including.

her brain that works faster than the engines, lies, truths, the past, the future, all possibilities, ...heavenliness, earthliness, masculinity, femininity, ...what's visible, what's invisible, choices, givings up, changes, gods, atheists, prayers, haters, those trying to bear new lives and then burning with regret, those who desire madly, those who have to hide their desires, those hoping for a great love, those who have erased the word 'love', those who wait for death because it is fate, those who rebel against it, ... I can think about all these and wriggle about endlessly... ¹⁵⁸

Marmara seems to have fallen into this deep vacuum, which is vertical and she naturally longs to be horizontal. When vertical one has the possibility to fall, but when writing one does not fall. When writing loses its meaning it is time to stop sharing the inherent 'I' because the new self starts living all the anxieties, miseries and pains over again. The more she speaks, the lonelier she becomes. The artist must decide when to sing her swan song, before which she might have to define "madness":

Madness, my love, is not based on one word, it pushes that which exists, digs it, makes for itself room there. One morning, I wake up with a pain that has captured all the cells of my body, a pain which will from now on be multiplied when my eyes meet yours, not knowing where they look. I'll drag it along, so that my share from a love nightmare that cannot be exposed to an assumed property by definable days and nights finds its respect in the inherent world of the indefinite 'I'. ¹⁵⁹

Both Plath and Marmara tasted the joy of life but when they fell into the vacuum of this indefinite 'I' they realized that the only perception comes through damnation. Going to the island is not the solution, either. The ultimate truth is loneliness. Both Plath and Marmara talk about silhouettes and shadows. Sometimes the voice of the poems observes these shadows. By "joy of life" I mean the consciousness of life deep inside, feeling it more than anyone else, which is the equivalent of being an outsider. For the outsider this wriggling process is a torture that tears language apart from sound, and words from reality. Poetry, on the other hand, builds an affinity with everything by means of analogies. However, writing poetry also means accepting that they will be read and shared and judged.

The critique of violence, as in most women poets, is a central motif in Plath's and Marmara's poetry. A ruthless and mostly philosophical terror is directed to

¹⁵⁷ Nilgün Marmara, 'Beduh 1', p.59.

¹⁵⁸ Nilgün Marmara, 'Untitled Text', *Metinler (Texts)*, p.6.

¹⁵⁹ Nilgün Marmara, 'Untitled Text', *Metinler (Texts)*, p.23.

the inside, to the psyche, to the miserable 'I', the haunted self that is longing for the blissful moment to pass to 'then' (immortality).

...Çocukluğun kendini saf bir biçimde
akışa bırakması ne güzeldi. Yiten bu işte!...
**...How beautiful it was when childhood so
innocently
let itself go with the flow. This is what's lost!...**¹⁶⁰

This is the final statement that sums up Marmara's poetry, which is itself the swan song, the statement of finality. Since the innocence of childhood is lost, her suggestion is to get rid of time and space and move into 'then'.¹⁶¹ As Erözçelik states, "Marmara was the witness to a wild society and questioner of it. She was unusual, unlike others and being on the margin; she was a poisonous flower presented to this wild society."¹⁶²

In all their poems, both Plath and Marmara observe this world and themselves under a bell-jar and present poisonously arresting verse characterized by the shrewdness and intellect of a neurotic self-émigré (Plath) and the silenced cry of a vagrant (Marmara).

Burada daha ne kadar öleceğim?
Yeryüzüyle gökyüzünün aracısı olarak bulutu haraca kestiğiniz
yerde?
**How many more times shall I die here?
Where you have exacted tribute from the cloud, the
mediator between sky and earth?**¹⁶³

In their quest for autonomous self, both poets led marginal lives, creating a poetry of intellectual muteness and deformity filled with blurred imagery revealing a wish for immortality, rebirth and invisibility. Their awakening is to their private realities: how miniscule one is in the hands of gods and how weary a job it is to drag this soul along this painful tunnel, the end of which is already assigned. Their poetry is that of this awakening, before a surrender to sleep, so that they give birth to a new identity. Like Plath, Marmara lived and wrote quietly.

**With no attachments, like a foetus in a bottle The
obsolete house, the sea, flattened to a Picture
She has one too many dimensions to enter.
Grief and anger, exorcised,
Leave her alone now.**¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Nilgün Marmara, 'Untitled final couplet,' *DCS*, p.175.

¹⁶¹ Nilgün Marmara, 'Zaman, Yer, Sonra' ("Time, Space, Then"), *Metinler (Texts)*, p.21.

¹⁶² Seyhan Erözçelik, '...Çocukluğun Kendini Saf Bir Biçimde 'Akışa Bırakması Ne Güzeldi, Yiten Bu İşte!...'
(How Beautiful It Was When Childhood Yielded Itself to a Pure Flow, This is What's Lost!...'), *Argos* November 1988, p.186.

¹⁶³ Nilgün Marmara, 'Untitled Text', *Metinler (Texts)*, p.22.

¹⁶⁴ Sylvia Plath, 'A Life', *The Collected Poems*, p.150.

Two Poems by Erhun Kula

Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul

NOSTALGIA

In the winter of my journey
the blossoming trees
only a distant memory
but
when a whisper
of an old Turkish song
comes my way
a waft of summer scent
laden with pollen
hits my nostrils
draining my eyes.

Erhun Kula



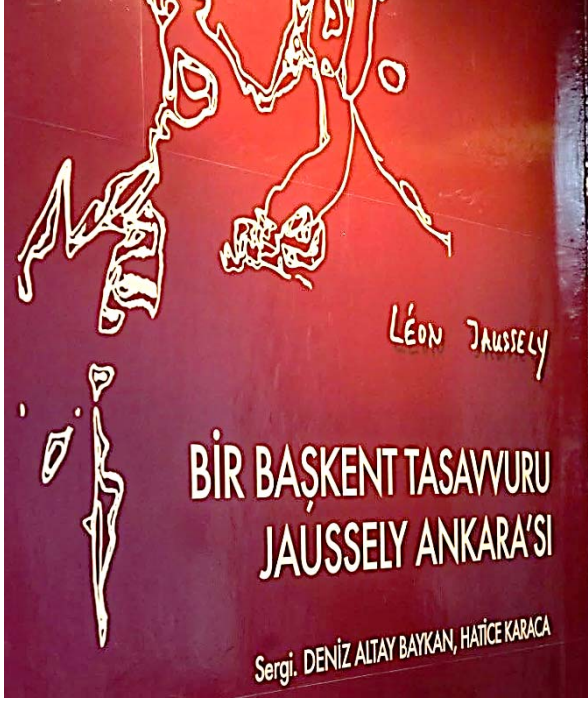
BEGINNING

In the beginning
and yet
there was no beginning
there was nothingness
next to somethingness
a 'tiny flicker' of energy
as one may say.

Nothingness could only exist
in relation to somethingness
and the same goes
right across.

In the beginning
and yet
there was no beginning
somethingness wanted to
merge
with nothingness
and it did.

At this time
and yet there was no time
the 'tiny flicker' of energy
became infinite
in relation to nothingness
its 'tiny' power
became omnipotent
the 'tiniest' wisdom
omniscient
and the rest is history
and yet
there is no history.



IMAGINATION OF A CAPITAL CITY; JAUSSELY'S ANKARA

An exhibition prepared by
Deniz Altay Baykan,
Bilkent University,
Department of Urban Design &
Landscape Architecture

This exhibition focused on the master plan of Ankara proposed by the French architect and urban designer, Léon Jausseley for the Invited Master Plan Competition of Ankara, 1927.

With visuals showing the contextual structure and urban culture of Angora, Baykan fully documents the story of Ankara.

Léon Jausseley (1875–1932), a French architect, trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, received the Grand Prix from the French academy in Rome in 1903. He was considered by his contemporary colleagues as one of the most outstanding planners of his time. He had a phenomenal professional career in France and took part in several important international planning competitions such as those in Barcelona (1905), Berlin (1910), and Paris (1920).

In the Early Republican Period, the small town of Ankara, which had been destroyed after an outbreak of malaria and a series of fires, was chosen as the capital of the new regime. This brought the project of reconstruction of the town onto the agenda.

The life of the French architect and urban designer Jausseley attracted public attention when he participated in the invited urban master plan contest in 1927 for Ankara. This was the second such plan, following the first attempted by German architect Lörcher in 1924.

Our research continued over the winter of 2016 in France and Turkey on the work of Jausseley and his 'Plan d'Angora', which was awarded the second prize in the 1927 competition. The winner was the German architect;

Hermann Jansen, who adopted the concept of a 'garden city' – a concept important in that period. Jaussely, while designing a new capital, paid attention to the transportation and green spaces system, and helped construct a monumental city based on the French Beaux Arts tradition. Although Jaussely's project was appreciated, it was very expensive given the economic situation of the country at the time.

An important achievement of this research, conducted by Bilkent University, Department of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture faculty member Deniz Altay Baykan, is an exhibition produced with Hatice Karaca, from the same department, presenting the plans and documents of Jaussely found in the French State Archives. The exhibition, sponsored by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality and Bilkent University, was first opened to the public at the Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum on 13 March 2020. This was precisely when extensive anti-Covid-19 measures were being taken in the country – resulting in the cancellation of all arts and sports activities. We very much hope that Jaussely's image of Ankara will be on display again at the Erimtan Museum in Ankara soon after the pandemic is over.



Gülay Yurdal-Michaels, poet and translator

POLİTİK

Geçmiyor günler kavgalı günler
Durmuyor öncelikleri gönül kasabının
Bellekte dolanıyor kilitli
Korular içinde dalgın
Bir dere ile dört ördek

Yetmesini öğreniyor kendine
Tüm sevmesini sezerek
Budansa da bilgi ile istek
Fıskırır suyu varı yoğu dilinde
Köprüsü günlerinin geyiklerle gezer

POLITICAL

Days don't go away days of strife
Priorities of the heart's butcher don't stop –
Locked in the mind go about
Absent-minded in the groves –
A brook and four ducks

She learns to be self-sufficient
And to love intuitively
Even if knowledge and desire are pruned
Her water spurts out, all is on her tongue
The bridge of her days roam with flocks of deer

Noteworthy Events

compiled by Ayşe Tuğrul Colebourne

LECTURES/TALKS /CONFERENCES

Occupied Istanbul: Urban Politics, Culture and Society, 1918-1923

Organisers: British Institute at Ankara (BIAA) inter alia

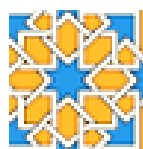
Date: 25-27 September 2020

Venue: Boğaziçi University 34342 Bebek/Istanbul

The conference will be hosted at the Boğaziçi University Department of History, in partnership with the American Research Institute in Turkey, BIAA, and the Institut Français des Études Anatoliennes. The participation of the American, British, and French research institutes in Turkey and prestigious local partners will help ensure the promotion of the conference and dissemination of its findings to the widest possible audience, bringing together at times nationally segregated historical traditions and sources.



Political Economy of Turkey



British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) Annual Conference

Dates: 29 June – 1 July 2020, has now been postponed to **end of April 2021**

Venue: University of Kent, Canterbury

More Information: www.brismes.ac.uk

A part of the conference is devoted to Turkey and the Turkish area.

EXHIBITIONS

Ottoman manuscripts at Istanbul exhibition

Organiser: The Istanbul Research Institute

Date: 18 October 2019 – 25 July 2020

Venue: The Istanbul Research Institute, Meşrutiyet Caddesi No.47, 34430 Tepebaşı – Beyoğlu – İstanbul

More information: <https://en.iae.org.tr/Exhibition/Memories-of-Humankind/206>

The exhibition *Memories of Humankind: Stories from the Ottoman Manuscripts*, explores the Ottoman manuscript culture which gradually lost its importance as the printing press became widespread in the 19th century.

CONCERTS

Free lunchtime recital

Organiser: Talent Unlimited



Soloist: **Dilyan Todorov**, piano
(first half)

Soloist: **Siqian Li**, piano
(second half)

Date and time: Wednesday 8 July 2020, 1.00 pm

Venue: St James's Church, Piccadilly, London.

Contact: canan@talent-unlimited.org.uk

Free lunchtime recital

Organiser: Talent Unlimited

Soloist:: **Juhee Yang** violin (first half)

Soloists: **Laure Chan** violin, **William Jack**, guitar/cello (second half)

Date and time: Friday 21 August 2020 1.00 pm

Venue: St James's Church, Piccadilly, London

More information: <http://www.talent-unlimited.org.uk/future-events.html>



MISCELLANEOUS

Turkish Business Networking

Organiser: CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing)

Date and time: Sunday, 7 June 2020, 12:00 noon – 17:00pm

Venue: Southbank Centre Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

More information: mete@hotmail.co.uk, 07999007686

A group of well-connected business professionals who are committed to sharing connections and generating business opportunities for each other offers an opportunity to meet Turkish business starters, accomplished professionals, experts or artists, face to face.

Ottoman Summer Program (OTSP)

Organiser: Koç University İstanbul

Dates: 6 July – 14 August 2020

Venue: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) Beyoğlu İstanbul

More information: <https://anamed.ku.edu.tr/en/summer-programs/ottoman-summer-program/>

This 6-weeks intensive summer programme aims to develop the students' reading and comprehension skills and expertise on a variety of Ottoman sources including archival documents, manuscripts, and epigraphic material. The languages of the programme are English and Turkish.

Cappadocia in Context Summer Program (CAPP)

Organizer: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED)

Dates: 14 - 28 June 2020

More information: <https://anamed.ku.edu.tr/en/summer-programs/cappadocia-in-context-summer-program/>

Organized by Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED), with the support of Cappadocia University, this 15-day intensive programme is open to young researchers at the master's and doctoral level. It aims to provide methods of conceptualisation to understand the rich cultural heritage of Cappadocia's Byzantine and Post-Byzantine past in historical and artistic contexts, accompanied by field studies, research and presentations.





From Enemies to Allies 4th Workshop

Britain, Turkey and NATO
1945- 1960

by William Hale

British Institute at Ankara – Koç University – British Association for Turkish Area Studies present a workshop at Koç University Rumelifeneri Campus, Istanbul, 26 - 27 September 2019

This was the fourth and final meeting in the series 'From Enemies to Allies' launched by the BIAA in 2015, and covering relations between Britain and Turkey between the Young Turk period and the high point of the cold war (for programme details see www.biaa.ac.uk/papers/type/previous).

After introductory contributions by Professor Umran İnan, the President of Koç University and Jennifer Anderson, Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Ankara, the first day began with keynote addresses by Professor İlder Turan of Bilgi University, and Sir David Logan, the Vice-President of the BIAA. Subsequent sessions included presentations by Professor Ekavi Athanassopoulou (University of Athens) on *Turkey's relations with Britain in the context of the post-war shifting balance of power*; Professor Şuhnaz Yılmaz (Koç University) on *The Britain-Turkey-USA triangle at the advent of the cold war, 1945-1952*; Professor Mark Webber (Birmingham University) on *Turkey's accession to NATO: the promise and pitfalls of alliance*; and Professor Dilek Barlas (Koç University) on *Britain-Turkey-USA relations, from NATO accession (1952) to the Eisenhower doctrine (1957)*.

The second day's sessions began with addresses on the chief personalities of the foreign policy of the two countries by Dr Warren Dockter (Aberystwyth University), on *Churchill, Bevin and Eden*, and Professor Zafer Toprak (Boğaziçi University) on *İnönü and Saraçoğlu, Bayar and Menderes*. In the final two sessions, other important aspects of the British-Turkish relationship were explored by Dr Seçkin Barış Gülmez (İzmir Katip Çelebi University) on *Determinants of the British-Turkish showdown over Cyprus between 1954 and 1960*; Professor Robert Holland (King's College, London) on *"Playing the Turkish card": British policy and Cyprus in the 1950s*; Dr John Kent (London School of Economics) on *Foreign policy and military strategy: the contradictions of British Middle East policy, Turkey and the Baghdad Pact*; and Professor Behcet Kemal Yeşilbursa (Uludağ University, Bursa) on *The revolution of 1960 and British policy towards Turkey*.



Sincere thanks are due to our contributors for their valuable papers, to Koç University, and especially to Professors Şuhnaz Yılmaz and Dilek Barlas for their organising work and for the University's splendid hospitality, and to Professor Stephen Mitchell, Chair of the BIAA's Council of Management, together with the Institute's administrative staff in Ankara and London.

Preparations are also under way for the publication of the papers delivered in a special issue of the journal *Middle Eastern Studies*, planned for the autumn of 2020.

Surveillance and Repression of Muslim Minorities: Xinjiang and Beyond

by Gül Berna Özcan
Royal Holloway
University of London



SOAS China Institute,
University of London
Conference

Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre

Saturday, 7 March 2020, 9.15am-5pm

A well-attended one day conference at SOAS examined the plight of the Uyghurs of China under the current situation of mass surveillance, repression and internment camps while also addressing the conditions of other Muslim minorities facing state brutality (touching on Kashmir, India, Myanmar and Palestine). The event was one of the last face-to-face academic conferences held before mass cancellations and social distancing measures were imposed due to the COV-19 virus pandemic. The conference was hosted by the SOAS China Institute and supported by a number of UK universities including Kings College London, the London School of Economics, the Citizens, Nations and Migration Network of the University of Edinburgh and Queen Mary University of London. Readers may access video recordings of the presentations online (<http://bit.ly/2W9NUJp>), to add to the key arguments and discussion points I address here.

The scope of technological, conceptual and moral challenges facing democratic societies is intensified immeasurably by the COV-19 pandemic. All our basic freedoms and daily routines seem to be distant luxuries under self-isolation. You may find reading about surveillance and repression neither timely nor uplifting during these uncertain times. However, now is precisely the right time to think differently about the fate of our suffocating planet, unfettered materialism and the many humanitarian crises around the world. What is happening in Xinjiang epitomises many of these ills. Scholarship presented in this conference shows why even we are connected to the 12 year old Uyghur child whose DNA becomes a digital weapon in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party.



With a desperate need to control pandemics, maintain social order and sustain shaky economies, the attractiveness of one-party states may increase. Are such regimes better equipped to deal with crises with their exaggerated efficiency and security surveillance? Should we shelve democracy for the sake of convenience? The evidence presented in three panels here firmly refutes this. The atrocious face of right-wing politics, racist nationalism and Islamophobia has spread around the world. The conclusions go beyond a specific faith or people and encompasses all of us who may 'differ' in opinion, if not in outlook, or be in a 'minority'.

PROGRAMME

Welcome: Tim Pringle (SOAS, University of London)

Opening Remarks: Aziz Isa Elkun (SOAS, University of London)

Panel 1: Islamophobia and the Global War on Terror

Chair: Dibyesh Anand (University of Westminster)

Speakers: Rachel Harris (SOAS, University of London) • Nitasha Kaul (University of Westminster) • Asim Qureshi (CAGE)

Panel 2: Surveillance, Capital and State Power

Chair: Tim Pringle (SOAS, University of London)

Speakers: • Darren Byler (University of Colorado, Boulder) • Rahima Mahmut (World Uyghur Congress, UK) • Nisha Kapoor (University of Warwick) • Maya Wang (Human Rights Watch)

Panel 3: Are we talking about Cultural Genocide?

Chair: Eva Pils (Kings College London)

Speakers: • Joanne Smith Finley (University of Newcastle) • Penny Green (Queen Mary, University of London) • Ondřej Klimeš (Czech Academy of Sciences)

Looking to the Future: Responses to the Crisis (open discussion)

Chair: Rachel Harris

•Halmurat Harri Uyghur (Uyghuraid)

Aziz Isa Elkun, a writer and poet, delivered the opening talk based on his own experience of being in exile since 2001. Elkun stressed how President Xi Jinping has personally mobilised the Communist Party to intensify suppression in Xinjiang and how this reached an unprecedented level with the creation of internment camps. Elkun joined the widespread student protests in 1989 during his second year at the university in Xinjiang and this created a lifelong problem for him. His father was born during the short-lived East Turkestan Republic (1944-1949), but when he died Elkun was denied a visa to attend his funeral. He later discovered in April 2019 that his father's tomb was destroyed along with other Uyghur cultural and historic sites. His sister was detained in an internment camp for more than a year and a half. Elkun said: "we are now a minority in our homeland".

The first panel provided a stimulating analysis of the broader political and ideological grounds of surveillance and repression with examples from around the world, focusing on Kashmir, Tibet and Xinjiang. The US-led anti-terrorism discourse and growing Islamophobia, following 11 September 2001, have provided convenient justifications for governments' extra judicial practices. **Dibyesh Anand** outlined how surveillance is an old state device but stressed that there is now an unprecedented level of repression over the living and dead that extends to the obliteration of cemeteries, historical monuments and even forests, as observed in Tibet, Xinjiang and elsewhere. In a paper, Talad Asad has assessed how the global war on terror by the USA is used in everyday life¹⁶⁵.

Nitasha Kaul argued that the rise of the global right presents itself in some places where formerly colonised states practice new forms of colonialism. India, supposedly a democratic state, is silencing people's voices in Kashmir, causing shortages of medicine, and deploying extra troops. Narendra Modi's Hindu-nationalist government depicts two hundred million Muslims as internal enemies. Indian Muslims do not speak up for Kashmiri Muslims either, just as Muslim majority states have been quiet about the plight of Uyghurs. Readers may consider Filkins's (2019) chilling *The New Yorker* analysis of the BJP (Indian People's Party) and Modi's political trajectory¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶⁵ T. Asad, 'Thinking About Terrorism and Just War,' *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 23:1 (2010), pp. 3-24.

¹⁶⁶ D. Filkins, 'Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi's India', *The New Yorker*, 9 December 2019.

Rachel Harris, one of Britain's leading experts on Uyghur culture and music, described how state suppression towards frontier regions with distinct ethnic identity began in 2009 with Tibet and was extended with similar logic to Xinjiang. She elaborated on how a radical form of Islamophobia is encouraged by China's increasing racist nationalism. This approach, ironic for the days we live in, provides absurd analogies. It depicts non-Han Muslim Turkic people as infected by an extremist virus and requiring cures. Chinese authorities target *halal* practices and deliver pork to households and pressure Han men to take Uyghur wives. This panel highlighted how neo-liberal right-wing nationalism takes shape under postcolonial processes. These nationalisms bring a messianic discourse, promising to return to a romanticised ideal past. The special insight is in how this discourse goes hand in hand with crony capitalism favouring political insiders and authoritarian systems.

The second panel focused on surveillance, capital and state power and began with **Darren Byler's** presentation on surveillance practices in internment camps and across Xinjiang. His talk is based on his highly original PhD dissertation which examines the cultural repression of Uyghurs¹⁶⁷. He also conducted new research among the former Kazakh inmates of camps who were able to escape to Kazakhstan. These eyewitnesses confirm how having WhatsApp and Facebook accounts as well as any sign of Turkic and Muslim messages were considered to be signs of extremist thoughts. As people were tailed and watched intensely in their homes as well as in prison camps, they had no privacy: "our home became like a government office" said one. Many such people displayed symptoms of regression and changed their daily behaviour. The authorities scan their bodies with various gadgets and systematically collect blood and DNA samples. He reminded us that David Lowe's analysis of "policing terrorism" under the banner of "the war on terror" can be applied to Iraq and Palestine and it takes on "Chinese characteristics" in extraordinary ways¹⁶⁸. Byler stated that technologies of for-profit colonialism help China's repression and cultural annihilation in Xinjiang to expand fast and that these practices are likely to be implemented elsewhere¹⁶⁹. A number of Chinese technology firms, which are internationally expanding, are reportedly involved in this surveillance such as Hikvision and Xianchuang Technology Firm¹⁷⁰. He displayed a Hong Kong graffiti that reads: "Today Xinjiang, tomorrow Hong Kong".

In an immensely distressing and painful talk on the abuses of women's bodies, **Rahima Mahmut**, an Uyghur activist, singer and translator, explained how as culture bearers and transmitters, women have been the object of rape, sterilisation and abortion in prison camps. Mahmut has translated for many former inmates and came face-to-face with their horror and ordeals. Her personal story is similar to other Uyghurs abroad. The last time she talked to her brother

¹⁶⁷ D. Byler, 'Spirit Breaking: Uyghur Dispossession, Culture Work and Terror Capitalism in a Chinese Global City', PhD Thesis, University of Washington, Department of Anthropology, 2018, (https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/42946/Byler_washington_0250E_19242.pdf)

¹⁶⁸ D. Lowe, *Policing Terrorism: Research Studies into Police Counter-terrorism Investigations* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2016).

¹⁶⁹ See also U.S. Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (New York: New York University Press, 2018).

¹⁷⁰ See reporting in the *Guardian*, 17 February 2020, on UK ties of Hikvision: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/feb/17/uk-to-promote-chinese-firm-hikvision-implicated-in-uyghur-rights-abuses>

was in 2017, and she expressed the agony of being unable to learn about what has happened to her other relatives. “Every family has a horrible story, one worse than others”. She described learning more as she worked on the ITV documentary, *Undercover: Inside the Chinese Digital Gulag* (2019) and translated Söyüngül Chanisheff’s book, *The Land Drenched in Tears*¹⁷¹. Mahmut stated that China’s brutal treatment of Xinjiang has long been colonial style, reminding us that their name of the province means “new territory”. The massacre of Ghulja in 1997, when hundreds of Uyghurs were killed or imprisoned after participating in a peaceful demonstration, is one example of longstanding colonial brutality among many. Mahmut also explained why the term ‘Eastern Turkistan’ is in use as an historical and appropriate cultural designation of the region.

Nisha Kapoor reminded the audience that the surveillance technologies used by China rest on US technologies, and there are various little-known US military-surveillance programmes. She recommended journalist Nafeez Ahmed’s writings on the Pentagon’s social science programmes¹⁷². While collaborative projects between the Pentagon and Google were at least discussed, state compliant Chinese technology firms are highly secretive but still have access to western markets and are expanding worldwide. The surveillance technology linked to Chinese companies, she explained, has spread to 62 countries including those associated with the One Belt, One Road (OBOR).

Maya Wang, a senior China expert at Human Rights Watch, who joined the conference via Skype from Hong Kong, stressed that the use of artificial intelligence and automated decision-making on marginalized people will erode human rights and democracy around the world. She provided information on mass surveillance in Xinjiang from back to 2000, and how this has now developed into a multidimensional programme. Initially relying on ID numbers, it now extends to the use of biometrics, DNA scans and various other biological and technological methods.¹⁷³ In Xinjiang, samples are routinely taken from children as young as twelve. China also uses multiple authentication techniques that are accessible at checkpoints. These data sets identify who you are and what you do, and if there are any of scores of triggers of “abnormal behaviour” in the data, they provide an alert. For example, consuming too much electricity is regarded as suspicious and a sign of potentially terrorist activity. Wang explained how Chinese authorities are using technology to maximise arrests even if only to burden hundreds of thousands of people with criminal records. China’s use of face recognition technology is also extensive and racially classified to distinguish Han versus non-Han peoples. The great firewall is a model and can extend beyond China, Wang stated. Unlike in Hong Kong, in Xinjiang there is no law to regulate private information. A settler colonial strategy is pursued in Xinjiang, where the assets include 20% of all oil in China, 80% of cotton and other valuable resources. Moreover, the region is the geographical gateway for OBOR reaching westward.

Three speakers in the next panel examined the theme of cultural genocide. **Jo Smith Findley**, one of Britain’s finest Xinjiang experts, discussed Bradley

¹⁷¹ S. Chanisheff, *The Land Drenched in Tears*, translated by Rahima Mahmut, (Hatfield: Hertfordshire Press, 2018).

¹⁷² See the blog <https://www.nafeezahmed.net/journalism>

¹⁷³ Human Rights Watch, *China’s Algorithms of Repression: Reverse Engineering a Xinjiang Police Mass Surveillance App.*, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/05/01/chinas-algorithms-repression/reverse-engineering-xinjiang-police-mass-surveillance>

Campbell's theory of genocide as social control. Campbell¹⁷⁴ wrote that 'genocide is defined here as organised and unilateral mass killing on the basis of ethnicity. While some have focused on genocide as a type of deviance, most genocide is also social control – a response to behavior itself defined as deviant'. As such, it can be explained as a part of a general theory of social control. Smith Findley demonstrated how China is committing this crime through discourses about "correction of deviant behaviour" and "removing a parasite" and such corrective education becomes part of "de-extremization". Incarcerating over a million Uyghurs in internment camps, breaking up families and communities, coerced intermarriages and the destruction of the physical environment and worship places are all parts of cultural genocide. Numerous Google Earth images displayed by her showed how graveyards and old neighbourhoods were erased in order to create "clean" new urban spaces. Uyghurs become invisible as their cultural history is removed from school textbooks¹⁷⁵. This extends to the "disappearance" of intellectuals. Professor Rahile Dawut, an internationally renowned scholar of Uyghur studies, disappeared in China in December 2017, as has Ilham Tohti, who was awarded the European Parliament's top human rights award, Sakharov Prize, in 2019¹⁷⁶.

Ondřej Klimeš began his speech by stressing how unprecedented this new wave of oppression in Xinjiang has been. Genocide is associated with totalitarianism. It is important to look at the evolution of the political system along with a revival of bipolar national discourse in China. A distinction between the healthy versus the infected put forward by the regime presents Muslims and Uyghurs as disease-ridden. Surveillance and repression are causing serious mental harm to members of Uyghur communities. The Xinjiang elite first perished in 1937 under the Soviets, and intellectuals were attacked then as part of the class struggle, but this was also a targeted ethnic cleansing and similar to actions that took place across Central Asia. However, the first attempts of the Hanification of Uyghurs dates back to 1820. In response to a question equating Guantanamo with the Xinjiang camps, Klimeš cautioned care in applying conceptual frameworks to examine events. First, he stressed that most inmates in Guantanamo were combatants, not civilians as in Xinjiang. He contrasted the scale of the Guantanamo prison with around 800 inmates to the repression of entire ethnic groups and over a million in detention in Xinjiang. Third, Guantanamo prisoners had access to lawyers and were allowed to pray, none of which applies to Uyghurs in internment camps, he stated.

Penny Green, who researched state crime in many countries, including Turkey and Israel, spoke about Myanmar's genocide against Muslims. Citing Raphael Lemkin, who coined the word genocide, Green stressed that genocide is a process that takes place over a long period of time. In a recently completed project, Green and her colleagues examined the genocide against Rohingya Muslims by the state of

¹⁷⁴ B. Campbell, 'Theory of Genocide as Social Control', *Sociological Theory*, 27:2 (2009), p. 151.

¹⁷⁵ J. Smith Finley, *Uyghur Islam and Religious "De-Extremification": On China's Discourse of "Thought Liberation" in Xinjiang* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). Available at: <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/Public/focus.html>.

J. Smith Finley, 'Securitization, Insecurity and Conflict in Contemporary Xinjiang: Has PRC Counter-Terrorism Evolved into State Terror?', *Central Asian Survey*, 38:1 (2019), pp. 1–26.

¹⁷⁶ See BBC reporting at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-50166713>

Myanmar¹⁷⁷. China's support to the Myanmar regime signals an alliance in suppressing Muslim minorities. China also does not recognise arbitration or the international law on genocide.

The closing session was chaired by **Rachel Harris**. **Halmurat Harri**, a blogger and Uyghur rights campaigner, explained how he was not previously actively involved in Uyghur affairs and did not know what was happening in Xinjiang until he learned that his father was taken to an internment camp. He grew up in a highly secular family and could not first believe that his father could be accused of being an Islamic extremist. He spoke about how he created the #metoouyghur campaign and brought many voices together.

The day ended with an open discussion. There was also a call to inform the British public, parliamentarians, diplomats and policy makers about the continuing tragedy of the Uyghurs and China's growing global surveillance technology. Others, suggested campaigns and boycotts of brands that carry goods produced by forced labour, and boycotts of technology firms which supply equipment for surveillance and repression in China. Readers of this review are also encouraged to extend their support.

As a final note, we can all admire the inspirational courage of all these contributors, who examined state surveillance and repression under highly risky conditions and provided valuable insights.

SPEAKERS

Darren Byler is a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Asian Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA.

Aziz Isa Elkun is a poet, writer and researcher. He was born in East Turkistan (Uyghur Autonomous Region, China). He graduated from Xinjiang University majoring in Russian and Chinese languages.

Joanne Smith Finley is Senior Lecturer in Chinese Studies in the School of Modern Languages, Newcastle University, UK.

Penny Green is Professor of Law and Globalisation and Head of the Law Department at Queen Mary, University of London.

Rachel Harris is Professor of Ethnomusicology and Director of Research for the School of Arts at SOAS, University of London.

Nitasha Kaul is a novelist, poet, artist, and economist. She has published and spoken on themes relating to identity, democracy, political economy, and Hindu nationalism.

Nisha Kapoor is Associate Professor in Sociology at the University of Warwick, UK. Her research interests are in critical race and postcolonial theory.

Ondřej Klimes is a researcher at the Oriental Institute of Czech Academy of Sciences. His expertise is in contemporary Xinjiang and China issues with a focus on ethnic policy, ideology, and propaganda.

Rahima Mahmut is a Uyghur singer, human rights activist, and award-winning translator of the poignant prison memoir, *The Land Drenched in Tears*, by Soyungul Chanisheff.

Asim Qureshi is the Research Director at the advocacy group CAGE, and since 2003 has specialised in investigating the impact of counterterrorism practices worldwide.

Maya Wang, a senior China researcher for Human Rights Watch, has written extensively on the use of torture, arbitrary detention, and the use of technology in mass surveillance.

Halmurat Uyghur is a Uyghur activist based in Finland. He began to campaign on Uyghur rights issues when his parents were sent to one of the concentration camps in 2017.

¹⁷⁷ P. Green, with T. MacManus and A. de la Cour Venning, *Countdown to Annihilation: Genocide in Myanmar*, (London: International State Crime Initiative, 2015).

Books



Erdoğan Rising: The Battle for the Soul of Turkey

by Hannah Lucinda Smith

London: William Collins,
2019, 395 pp.



Erdoğan's Empire: Turkey and the Politics of the Middle East

by Soner Cagaptay

London: I. B. Tauris,
2019, 369pp.

These two books, with titles directly pointing at Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, were published within two weeks of each other last September, but could hardly be more different. Hannah Lucinda Smith's *Erdoğan Rising* – which was launched at SOAS on 3 September as noticed by Gül Greenslade in the *TASG Review* 34 (Autumn 2019) – is a compelling account of Smith's travels throughout Turkey as Istanbul correspondent for *The Times* since 2013, recording her observations on the lives and attitudes of the great variety of people she has met and interviewed along the way. Soner Cagaptay's *Erdoğan's Empire* – the author and publisher evidently agreed to dispense with Turkish diacritical marks throughout the book – by contrast, offers a comprehensive and detailed analytical account of Turkish foreign policy during the ascendancy of President Erdoğan's personal leadership of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) that has governed Turkey since 2002. Both, in different ways, are concerned with describing the consequences of Erdoğan's increasingly autocratic rule, though the Istanbul-based foreign correspondent is concerned with reporting changes within Turkish society and culture, while the Washington-based political analyst focuses almost entirely on the fluctuating fortunes of Turkey's relations with other nations and international organisations such as NATO and the EU during Erdoğan's ascendancy.

Smith's highly personal account describes how, following some months reporting on the Syrian civil war, she moved to Istanbul in 2013 and at once found herself "fascinated" by the nature and scope of Erdoğan's political power and status as a cult figure (p. 10). At the time he was, she writes, "just tipping over from a flawed but largely tolerated democrat to a relentless autocratic populist" (p 15). Before long Smith discovered that his continued support was not simply the product of his personal charisma but also, and perhaps more importantly, the result of canny and aggressive public relations campaigns. These have been directed since 1994 by brothers Erol and Cevat Olçok of Arter Advertising. Despite Erdoğan's obvious lies, corruption, and persistent flouting of rules, the Olçoks have enabled him to maintain a base of faithful supporters – among the religious poor who felt left out of the secular republic established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923, and among the ambitious young, who realise their future success demands membership of the AKP and loyalty to Erdoğan (pp 63-69).

Written in a lively and inviting style, *Erdoğan Rising* reveals what has been going on inside Turkey since Erdoğan abandoned the early democratising principles of

the AKP and set himself up as the Turkish Republic's single and incontestable authority. Smith reports on her journeys throughout Turkey and its borders in search of those who can help explain or, at least, illuminate Erdoğan's years in power. Thematic chapters cover the war in Syria, the resulting migration crisis, the repression of popular protest movements following the Gezi demonstrations in 2013, the resurgent Kurdish problem, Erdoğan's fury at the success of the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) in the 2015 elections, the 2016 coup attempt which made Erdoğan look "old and terrified" (p 206), and which resulted in his 'erraticism, domestic crackdowns and foreign misadventures' as he "burned almost every democratic check and balance in his country" (pp.292-3). Along the way, Smith drinks a lot of tea while chatting to Erdoğan's fans and critics, introduces us to descendants and staunch supporters of Atatürk, interviews people-smugglers, witnesses US airstrikes against ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) forces occupying Kobani, describes the governmental destruction of Kurdish neighbourhoods in the south-east and records the struggles of the Jewish and LGBT communities. She visits luxurious *halal* holiday resorts where the beaches are screened from the open sea, preventing women bathers being seen from passing boats, and where alcohol is never served.

If Smith's regular and explicit criticism of an all-powerful President who is notorious for brooking no censure means she has risked the loss of her press visa to remain and work in Turkey, in *Erdogan's Empire*, Cagaptay goes out of his way to avoid writing anything that might sound like personal criticism that would threaten his right to return to his native land. Instead, he adopts a seemingly dispassionate style of analysis that, while sometimes noticing how Erdoğan's policies may have "failed" to achieve their intended purpose, avoids making any suggestion that the man himself has ever done anything wrong. We hear nothing of jailed journalists and academics, of the deposing of duly elected mayors who belong to pro-Kurdish political parties. Only careful readers will notice a passing reference to "the corruption charges pressed against him and his family members" (p.148) and wonder what is at issue since nothing more is explained. Cagaptay, in line with his position as Director of the Turkish Research Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy – an academic think-tank that advises on the foreign policy of the United States – describes himself as a "historian-cum-policy-maker" (p ix), a dual or hybrid position that shapes the nature and range of this book.

Although careful not to offend its eponymous subject, *Erdogan's Empire* takes little for granted on the part of its implied readers. After a Prologue and Introduction outlining the aims of the book – to show how Erdoğan has set out to reshape Turkey in his own (Islamist) image rather than that (secular) of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk – it opens with four chapters providing general background to Erdoğan's rise to power since 2003, followed by a chapter each on how he dealt with a declining relation with the EU and how he negotiated changes in US foreign policy under G W Bush and Barack Obama. There is probably little here that will be news to readers of the *TAS Review*, while a good deal of the opening material is reprinted from Cagaptay's earlier book, *The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey* (2017).¹⁷⁸ The next five chapters describe how,

¹⁷⁸*The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2017), again, no Turkish diacritical marks. In 2018, Cagaptay also published an essay titled 'The New Sultan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey' in *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 53:4 (2018): 1-15, again without diacritics, which summarizes the argument of the 2017 book and reprints a short version of the final concluding chapter.

between 2008 and 2011 Erdoğan assumed absolute power and then, in league with Ahmet Davutoğlu, devoted the next five years to shaping a neo-Ottoman Turkish foreign policy in dealings with Syria, Moscow, Tehran, and the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East. In line with this overall chronological structure, the final five chapters pick up after the 2016 attempted coup and recount Erdoğan's continuing foreign policy efforts to turn Turkey into a major international power, based on Islamist ideals rather than the secular principles of Kemalism. A Conclusion turns from history to policy, as it were, and suggests directions that Erdoğan might follow in order "to revive Turkey's Ottoman-era greatness" (p 288).

As a history of recent Turkish foreign policy, *Erdogan's Empire* offers an invaluable and comprehensive descriptive survey written in a lucid style. It illuminates how Erdoğan's ambitions have shaped Turkey's foreign relations in recent years and will prove essential reading for scholars of modern Turkey. In keeping with its aim of causing no offence, however, it often reproduces the official line at the expense of accuracy. We learn, for instance, that Erdoğan single-handedly "established" "his AKP" in 2001 (p 32; also p 35), and that it was he alone who "delivered phenomenal economic growth" (p 3; also pp.5, 20, 62). In his earlier book, *The New Sultan*, Cagaptay noted that "Gul's economic team, headed by the minister of economic affairs, Ali Babacan, led Turkey's *Wirtschaftswunder* – a period of unexpected economic growth and stability" (p 92), but in the book under review, we read of "Erdoğan's economic miracle" (p 105) while Babacan is never once mentioned. In a similar way, the book reproduces Erdoğan's current hostility towards the Kurds, insisting that the Syrian Kurdish organisations, the PYD (Democratic Union Party) and its military wing, the YPG (People's Protection Units) are "offshoots" or "franchises" of the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party), but no evidence is ever offered (see pp 116, 124, 127, 130). We read that "the PKK and YPG share overlapping command structures and are closely linked and intertwined" (p 109) without any supporting data. Whatever links there might be between the PYD, YPG and the PKK, these remain to be proven and there are experts who consider them doubtful.¹⁷⁹ Instead, Cagaptay simply echoes the insinuations of the Erdoğan-controlled Turkish press without providing any concrete proof or even putative sources for such claims. This is poor history.

Meanwhile, despite the efforts of an impressive catalogue of "research interns and assistants" who are thanked for fact-checking (p ix), there are curious historical errors. We read: "In 2008, when Erdogan, with then Turkish Foreign Minister Gul's support, launched an initiative to establish ties with Armenia...." (pp.214-5) – an error which conflates a 2005 governmental "initiative" with Gül's residential visit to Yerevan in 2008.¹⁸⁰ (The source offered for this passage, by

¹⁷⁹ Most recently see Cameron Abadi, 'Why is Turkey Fighting Syria's Kurds? Turkey's president says Syrian Kurdish fighters are terrorists – but he's a very unreliable narrator,' *Foreign Policy* (17 October 2019) online at <foreignpolicy.com/2019/10/17/turkey-claim-syrian-kurds-terrorists-not-isis-pyg-pkk-sdf/> accessed 16 December 2019.

¹⁸⁰ See my discussion in *Abdullah Gül and the Making of the New Turkey* (London: Oneworld, 2014), pp. 254-55, 270-75.

the way, has nothing to report on either of these events.)¹⁸¹ My favourite slips, however, are the claims that the Ottoman sultans “extended an olive branch to the Dutch republic in 1581, after the United Provinces gained independence from [sic] the Hapsburg Empire in a revolt”, and that “other rising Protestant nations’ such as ‘the Swedes and British” were later invited to “open permanent embassies” (p.268). No sources are provided for any of this, but it was of course the English who first signed trading Capitulations with the Ottomans in 1581, while the Dutch followed suit in 1612 while still in the midst of the Eighty Years War (1568-1648); the Swedes sent their first ambassador, Claes Ralamb, in 1657. While such errors are perhaps incidental to the book’s significant argument, they cast a shadow of doubt over many aspects of the book’s historical narrative, especially when added to a general tendency to make historical claims without evidence.

Nonetheless, Cagaptay the political analyst is doubtless correct in his view that Erdoğan, like a resentful Turkish version of Donald Trump, feels he is on a mission “to make Turkey great again and Muslims proud” (p.270) by making Turkey a powerful player in international affairs. He usefully observes that what Erdoğan imagines to have been the key to Ottoman greatness – “making Islam the centrepiece” of domestic and foreign politics – represents a distorted and “caricatured version of the Ottomans” that was promoted by the Kemalists and advanced in the school textbooks of Erdoğan’s childhood to “explain” the decline of the Ottoman Empire” (p 52). That being so, political Islam is clearly no way forward today any more than an aggressive Ottoman-style military imperialism would solve Turkey’s problems with neighbours. However, Cagaptay clearly approves of the idea of making Turkey “a great power”, and struggles in his concluding chapter to define what that might mean in terms that would square with Erdoğan’s personal ambitions: “a wealthy state that is the envy of its neighbours, based on a political system that is embraced by all of its citizens” (pp. 299-300). To achieve this nationalistic ideal (is generating envy really the way to solve problems with neighbours?), Cagaptay argues that Erdoğan should resolve the Kurdish problem by “granting broad cultural rights for all”, while also “providing freedom of religion and freedom from religion”, in the hopes of “keeping as well as attracting talent and capital” since “capital and creative classes alike are fleeing the country” faced with Erdoğan’s current policies (p. 301). Cagaptay admits “I am not holding my breath” that Erdoğan will follow this advice, and ends the book observing: “but if he does, I know that he would then make Turkey great again” (p 302). This may be true, but leaving it up to a populist autocrat to solve the very problems he has generated does not say much for the future of democracy in Turkey.

Gerald MacLean
macindedetroit@hotmail.com



¹⁸¹ See Amberin Zaman, ‘Intel: Why Armenia wants to make peace with Turkey,’ *Al-Monitor* (11 December 2018) online at: <al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/12/intel-armenia-peace-turkey-pashinian-erdogan.html> accessed 16 December 2019.

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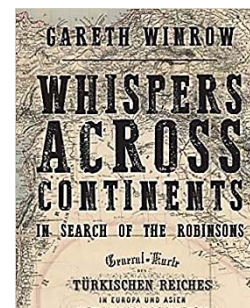
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Compiled by Arın Bayraktaroğlu

In Memoriam



Clement Dodd

1926 - 2019

An Academic Appreciation

by William Hale

Emeritus Professor of Politics at SOAS, Turkey Specialist



Many of us will remember Clement Dodd, who died last year, as a very valued friend, colleague and teacher. It is worth recalling, also, that he was a pioneer in the study of Turkey's modern politics and history, and a prolific researcher, author, editor and publisher. His first book, *Politics and Government in Turkey* (Manchester University Press, 1970) was arguably the first attempt by any British scholar to describe and analyse Turkish politics in much the same way as one would address the politics of any other modern democratic or quasi-democratic state, and on its own terms, rather than as some exotic 'oriental' plant, or as a problem in modern European diplomatic history (the 'Eastern Question'). In this and all his subsequent writing Clem was a notable exponent of the then new behaviourist approach to the study of politics, emphasising observed practice rather than legalistic, normative or theoretical proposals, and based on verifiable data with objective analysis.

Clem developed his ideas in a short general survey, *Political Development* (Macmillan, 1972) besides bringing together a useful documentary survey of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which he co-edited with Mary Sales, *Israel and the Arab World* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970). Clem returned to Turkish politics with *The Crisis of Turkish Democracy* (1983, reprinted in a second enlarged edition in 1990). This and nearly all his subsequent work was published by the Eothen Press, which, in a typical display of energy, he established and ran himself, and which issued additional and valued books on Turkey by other authors.

After 1990, Clem's writing concentrated on the Cyprus problem, beginning with *The Cyprus Issue: a Current Perspective* (1995), and continuing with *The Cyprus Imbroglia* (1998), *Storm Clouds over Cyprus; a Briefing* (2001) and ending with *Disaccord on Cyprus: the UN Plan and After* (2004). He also made an important contribution with two edited collections, *Cyprus, the Need for New Perspectives* (Eothen, 1999) and *The History and Politics of the Cyprus Conflict* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). In writing about Cyprus – a field in which most of the literature is hopelessly one-sided, either pro-Greek or pro-Turkish – Clem was admirably neutral and objective. Apart from its

originality, this and all his writing was distinguished by a clear, straightforward and jargon-free style, making it accessible to the widest circle of grateful readers.

Clement Dodd: A Family View

by Hilary Menhennet



My father Professor Clement Dodd, who has died aged 93, was a respected political scientist and academic, and an expert in modern Turkish politics and democracy. He was deeply interested in the Cyprus question and was always balanced and committed to justice and fair play in his portrayal of the Turkish Cypriot case. He became one of the most respected commentators on Cypriot affairs in the UK, and continued lecturing and writing on Cypriot politics until his death.

Born in Chester, the son of well-to-do farmers and family butchers Arthur Dodd and Margaret May Harris, he won a scholarship to the King's School Chester. He went to university in London aged 17 to study Turkish and Persian, his interest in the Middle East inspired by a history teacher at school. After just a year, he was called up and served in British military intelligence in Singapore and Java, narrowly missing being shot at point blank range. He met his future wife Nesta, the daughter of a Welsh farming family, during his initial military training in Anglesey. On leaving the army in 1948, he resumed his studies at Edinburgh and Bangor universities, completing two honours degrees, one in Turkish and Persian and another in History and Political Theory.

Clement lectured in politics at Leeds, Durham and Manchester universities before becoming Professor of Politics at Hull University at the age of 44. The department he inherited was in some chaos. Over time Clement restored academic discipline (so much so that the department was often referred to as 'the Clemlin' in the student newspaper), and by the time he moved on from Hull, the department was listed by reviewers and students alike, as one of the best politics departments in the country.

Forced to retire from his professorship at Hull at age 60 as a result of Margaret Thatcher's higher education reforms, Clement was not ready to quit academic life so early. Securing funding from Shell and from Turkish sources, he set up a post-graduate programme in Modern Turkish Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London

Clement is survived by his three children, Rosemary, Hilary and Nigel, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild.



Left to right: Hilary Menhennet, Clement, Nesta, Nigel Dodd and Rosemary Hawkes. Taken in July 2014 on the occasion of a granddaughter's wedding.

An additional note by Celia Kerslake, Chair of BATAS: From the time of his move to SOAS, Clement constantly championed the cause of Turkish area studies in a UK-wide context. For a number of years he chaired the Standing Committee of University Teachers of Turkish Studies (SCOUTT), which tried to defend this field of study from financially driven retrenchment. In 1988-9 he played a leading part in reconstituting the SOAS-based Turkish Area Study Group as a nationwide membership association. He served as a council member of TASG from 1990 to 2014 and vice-president from 2010 to 2014. He was a constant source of inspiration to TASG, which in 2013 changed its name to the British Association for Turkish Area Studies (BATAS), reflecting the ambitious vision to which Clement had dedicated so many years of his life.

Clem's special project: Northern Cyprus - TRNC



Our dear friend Clement Dodd

Thoughts by Oya Tuncali,
Representative of North Cyprus, London

We are profoundly saddened by his passing, as one of the most eminent political scientists of his time, a renowned academic, and also a true friend and supporter of the Turkish Cypriot people. His extensive works will surely live on and continue to shed light on the plight of the Turkish Cypriots and the complex Cyprus question. We have always been enlightened by his works and the perspective through which his research observes our unique case. Studies regarding Cyprus are richer and more multi-faceted thanks to his dedicated research.



Clement Dodd – A solemn fighter for fair-play and justice

by Ergün Olgun, Turkish Cypriot Negotiator,

Former Undersecretary of the TRNC

I met Professor Dodd (Clem) in 1992, when I was a lecturer at the Eastern Mediterranean University. He wanted to edit a book on North Cyprus and asked me to write a chapter on the economy and on 'sectoral' analysis for it¹⁸². My contacts and friendship with Clem then grew, particularly after I

¹⁸² C.H. Dodd, ed., *The Political, Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus* (The Eothen Press, 1993).

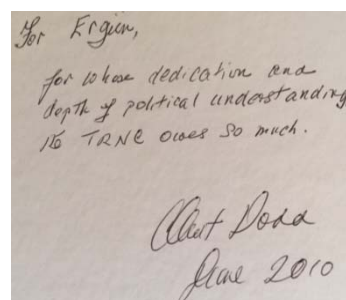
became Political and Research Adviser to the Presidency of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1993, and this friendship extended to our wives Nesta Dodd and Netice Olgun.

Clem had a strong sense of justice and fair-play and was very disturbed by the way Turkish Cypriots were treated, by both Greek Cypriots and the international community, after the usurpation of their seats in the bi-communal partnership Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriots in 1963. He therefore started to research on the Cyprus imbroglio and published many articles, booklets and books.

In the years that followed Clem and Nesta bought and renovated a village house in Alsancak and spent much of the spring and autumn seasons in North Cyprus. Each year, in the lovely citrus orchard of this house, they



organised cheerful garden parties, bringing together friends from the Turkish Cypriot and ex-pat communities. During these stays he always met with founding father President Rauf Denktaş and other political leaders and gathered material for his next book or article. Clem also



regularly crossed to south Cyprus, visiting bookshops to find out what was available on the politics of Cyprus and to chat with ordinary Greek Cypriots.

We were all very sad when Clem and Nesta decided to sell their house. Though very active and dynamic, Clem was then over 80 years old and both he and Nesta felt that they had to spend more time in the UK for health reasons. They continued to travel to Cyprus once a year – staying with us the year after the sale. We subsequently also visited them in their lovely house in Huntingdon. It must have been 2013 when they decided that it would be too risky for them to travel overseas. This was the beginning of a difficult time for them both. But Clem continued to write his half-yearly update on Cyprus for the bulletin of the British Association for Turkish Area Studies (BATAS) and we remained in regular touch by e-mail. Clem published all his books, except the last one, through his own Eothen Press. His last comprehensive title on Cyprus was *The History and Politics of the Cyprus Conflict* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

The following is part of what Clem wrote to me on 15 July 2017 on the collapse of the Crans-Montana Cyprus Summit:

A federal solution seems beyond possibility now. If I were a Turkish Cypriot I would not vote for such a solution. It is difficult to see any way forward now unless some Plan B emerges with something other than a federal solution 'guided' by the UN. I suppose that sometime in the future a Turkish Cypriot plan will come forward for a two-state solution. As I mentioned in my last article, if the Greek Cypriots do not accept such a solution they will, it looks pretty certain, have the TRNC looking like, and almost being part of, Turkey. I suspect that the USA, and the UK, would not find a two-state solution dangerous for their interests. As long as they did not actively promote it there would be no reason for the Greek Cypriots to hold it against them, and so it would probably not endanger the bases and other facilities GB has in the South.

It is a great pity that Turkey has not taken the GCs to the International Court of Justice for their abandonment of the 1960 treaties. On what grounds could the Greek Cypriots be acknowledged as having sovereignty over all Cyprus? I wonder if Turkey could take the present hydrocarbon issue to the Court on the grounds that it offends against the 1960 Treaties.

On 9 May 2019 Clem sent me an article by Prof Mehmet Şükrü Güzel on 'The doctrine of necessity and the thirteen points amendment to the Cyprus constitution' and insisted that the arguments in this article should be pursued. The last mail I received from him was on 12 May, three months before we lost him. On 19 August came the sad message from his son Nigel that Clem had died the previous day after deciding to come off dialysis as his general health had deteriorated to the point where he could no longer pursue his academic interests.

Friendship and dedication know no boundaries. The loss of someone dear is never easy. While Clem is no longer physically with us, I hope all the cherished memories that his family have of him will bring light to his family during this dark time. As for Turkish Cypriots, we will never forget the honest support we received from Clem in our struggle against domination.

Former Students



Breaking ground with a Modern Turkish Studies programme

by Ekavi Athanassopoulou
Assistant Professor of International Relations
University of Athens

In 1988 the School of Oriental and African Studies launched a one-year MA programme on Modern Turkish Studies. The syllabus provided a rounded view of Turkey that was great news to those like me who were interested to learn more about Turkey because, until that point, no British or European university for that matter offered an MA degree programme with a focus on modern Turkey. I was one of the founding students. We were, I think, seven or eight students in total, two of us Greek the rest British. The father of the programme was Professor Clement Dodd who successfully translated an exciting idea into an exciting learning reality. I remember how we were all academically stimulated in class. This was particularly the case in his class on Turkish politics. We often had very lively discussions (that carried on in the SOAS cafeteria afterwards) for he encouraged the expression of differing opinions. It was a great learning experience for me and, I believe, for all my fellow-students.

The MA programme also benefited enormously from the ‘Turkey forum’ discussions which Professor Dodd also developed in 1988. The ‘forum’ met every fortnight during the academic year, with the participation of eminent scholars, diplomats and businessmen all of whom having first-hand knowledge of Turkey. Each presentation was followed by a one-hour discussion. A great range of subjects were discussed; there were regular attendees and a welcoming attitude towards those new to the field. Besides enhancing the understanding of Turkey, it offered great networking, as students and junior scholars had the chance to regularly interact with professionals with an interest in Turkish issues, in a most relaxed atmosphere. The forum was absolutely fantastic, a great success with students and continued after Professor Dodd left SOAS.

I was lucky that Professor Dodd asked me to help him with the organisation of the ‘Turkey forum’, which I did for six years. So I had the advantage of developing a closer professor-student relationship than I would have had I been just one of the MA students. I also enjoyed the side-benefit of meeting his wonderful wife Nesta, whose kindness and cheerfulness were inspiring. Professor Clement Dodd was a low-key, modest man, who encouraged freethinking and was ready to offer personal support and insightful guidance. He epitomised some of the best values of the British academic tradition: he was liberal, judicious and most importantly humane.



Jeremy Barnett
Turkish tourism

It was a sultry afternoon in Cairo when – as a 50-something – I wrote my letter of resignation to British Council HQ. I took out the flyer from the drawer and read it again and again. It revealed the possibility of taking an MA course in Turkish Studies at SOAS directed by Professor Clement Dodd. Despite being a committed Arabist, the prospect of studying something Turkish over a full academic year was tempting. But I was nervous. Would I be able to cope with academe? In the event family pressure prevailed and I sent off my application.

I am glad I did. The first day dispelled my self-doubt; from day one I formed friendships which have endured. There were a dozen of us on the core programme, including a broadcaster from Sofia, a social worker from Tottenham, a young classics graduate from Cambridge and a retired businessman. We all did politics (with William Hale), language and an elective. I wisely chose Economic Geography for the latter as we were two students with profs from Southampton and the Open University but we saw the politics seminars as the kernel of the programme – sessions with Bill Hale were always riveting. Lots of debate. This was the most exhilarating and exciting course I have experienced. I have never read so widely. From time to

time others dropped in on our classes and there were popular lunch-time seminars which brought us into contact with academics from other departments. A few open lectures, too. It all made for a great inter-disciplinary experience. My dissertation on the Free Trade Zones in Turkey proved to be an exciting new field as it involved interviews across the country.

What did the programme do for me? After more than 25 years, I recall it as a personal watershed. I have never been so stimulated – or worked so hard! My MA helped me get jobs in archaeological and cultural tourism in Turkey and neighbouring areas. Thanks to Clem Dodd's initiative my interests have been widened. Now in the third phase of my life, working with Syrian refugees, I still feel a debt to his MA programme.



Prof Dodd

by **Natalie Martin**

Assistant Professor in Politics &
International Relations,
University of Nottingham

I first met Professor Clement Dodd when I arrived in his office at SOAS sometime in early 1991 with a degree in Philosophy and an interest in Turkey, wanting to know if I could do the MA in Modern Turkish Studies he had just established there. My only relevant experience was having spent a few months in Diyarbakır teaching English as a Foreign Language and I was grossly under-qualified for the course. However, Prof Dodd, as he was affectionately known, not only gave me a place - based on my 'enthusiasm' – but also a bursary to help me along. I did the MA at SOAS part-time whilst working as a journalist in Nottingham and my day a week in London became a highlight. I loved SOAS and I loved the course so much that sometime later I did a PhD and I am now an academic. This would not have been possible without Prof Dodd's magnanimity and willingness to take a chance all those years ago. His deep knowledge of Turkish history and politics – having lived through much of it in Turkey – was obvious and the lectures were delivered with an insouciant panache and dry wit which made them highly entertaining. I was not a talented or diligent linguist and have always suspected that Prof Dodd may have massaged my language results to enable me to progress. For this I remain especially grateful.

Like many alumni of the SOAS course we kept in touch and my chance to repay Prof Dodd, came with the invitation to join what was then the Turkish Area Study Group (TASG) and is now the British Association for Turkish Area Studies (BATAS). Working with the group over the past decade or so has been a pleasure and a way for me to give something back for the generosity shown to me earlier in my life journey. Prof Dodd and the other SOAS staff are remembered very fondly by us alumni of the MA in Modern Turkish Studies and we remain grateful to them all.

Former Colleagues



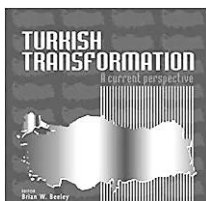
Malcolm Wagstaff

Emeritus Professor of Geography
University of Southampton



Clem and I met in Ankara early in my first visit to Turkey in 1964. I remember walking to the house where he lived with Nesta and striding over the low gate they had put up to prevent their youngest child from escaping. Clem and I were at Durham University at the time; he was Professor of Politics there and on secondment to Ankara. Back in Durham later I enjoyed Clem's sharp contributions to seminars that the University's Middle East Centre organised. We also enjoyed social times together. Nesta gave my wife Pat a Turkish earthenware casserole which we still use. Their great love for Turkey and its people was infectious.

Clem and Nesta moved to Hull and we moved to Southampton. Clem and I continued to meet at conferences of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies where he organised some of the most interesting sessions – on Turkey. We also met at SOAS where Clem was a lively contributor to seminars on Turkey arranged by Margaret Bainbridge. In later years he renewed this initiative when he became affiliated to SOAS on his own retirement. At SOAS Clem embarked on a lively campaign to promote Turkish studies more widely. He had a way not only of persuading people to become involved and take on jobs but also of finding sponsorship for Turkey-related activities. A major aspect of his campaign was the development, with William Hale, of the MA course in Turkish Studies to which Brian Beeley and I contributed a module on the economic geography of Turkey for a decade from 1989. Clem was also a guiding spirit of the Turkish Area Study Group (now the British Association for Turkish Area Studies); he persuaded me to be the Group's secretary. Working with him was a great pleasure. I came to admire his subtle but firm steering of Council discussions, his ability to find contacts and the way in which he drew in both the Turkish Embassy and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. I think TASG strengthened Clem's supportive network, as well as extending his personal influence. Accompanying him to business meetings made it clear that he knew everyone interested in or connected with Turkey.



Brian Beeley

Senior Lecturer, Open University (UK),
retired




One evening in 1986 my wife Jane and I were invited by Clem to join him and Nesta for dinner at the Divan Hotel in Istanbul. One outcome was that I found myself signed up as a ‘visiting tutor’ on the Modern Turkish Studies programme at SOAS which Clem was hoping to develop. Several SOAS and visiting staff were to be involved, including Malcolm Wagstaff with whom I was to combine on an economic geography module with a focus on the spatial reality of the Turkish rectangle, including its physical and human resources and prospects for national and regional development. We worked with small groups of students who brought their own experiences and ambitions to add to the mix of our seminars. For me the experience was as enjoyable as it was rewarding. Clem was always within reach to co-ordinate the various parts of the M.A. programme and to support his tutoring team.

Another of Clem’s initiatives at SOAS was to develop the series of open lunch-time seminars on Turkey which continue to this day. Indeed Clem energetically encouraged members of his team to pursue their own interests in matters Turkish. With me he worked to update Turkish bibliography. One of his major efforts was to persuade members of the then Turkish Area Study Group to combine in the production of a book – which he himself published. Most of the contributors remain active in BATAS today. Clem insisted on having a two-day session at SOAS to enable contributors to *Turkish Transformation*¹⁸³ to co-ordinate their thinking and approaches while it was in preparation. His advice, as ever, could be as robust as it was supportive.

Clem’s energy in his academic commitment to the study of Turkey and Cyprus was combined with a real attachment to the area and its place in the modern world. He lost no opportunity to promote Turkish studies. At a conference on one occasion he was one of an audience waiting for a session on Turkish politics. When the advertised speaker failed to appear several of those present began to leave whereupon Clem said to me “I can talk on the topic. Will you take the chair?”. The result was a most successful presentation and discussion which ended with applause for Prof Dodd...

...



Update on Cyprus
2018/19
With a reminder of the historical context
by Clement Dodd

¹⁸³ Brian W Beeley (ed.), *Turkish Transformation: New Century New Challenges*, 2002, (Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, The Eothen Press).

Another Reminder!!

Invitation

Our regular **Noteworthy Events** contributor would be grateful to receive information about events for inclusion in the list, ideally by the end of September, for events starting in December.

Contact: Ayşe Tuğrul Colebourne at aysetugrul@yahoo.com

**We need a regular contributor for our slot
'Northern Cyprus TRNC' for the TAS Review:
Please come forward!!!**

If you might consider this for our two annual issues please contact one or both 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 in A4 format and, preferably, sent electronically to the Co-Editors at garethwinrow@yahoo.com and/or sigimartin3@gmail.com. Submissions for the Autumn issue would be particularly welcomed by 15 August 2020 or earlier.

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Turkish Area Studies Review

Co-Editors:

Dr Gareth Winrow, 73 Middle Way, Summertown, Oxford OX2 7LE

☎ 0787-6134684, email: garethwinrow@yahoo.com

Sigrid-B Martin, The Red House, 49 Hackington Road, Tyler Hill, Canterbury, Kent CT2 9NE,

☎ 01227-471222, email: sigimartin3@gmail.com

Editorial Team:

Dr Ciğdem Balım, Dr Brian Beeley, Dr Celia Kerslake, Stephen Parkin, Jill Sindall

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