

Turkish Area Studies Review

Bulletin of the British Association for

Turkish Area Studies



www.batas.org.uk



SYMPOSIUM 2021

(postponed from 2 May 2020)

to be held by Zoom on Saturday, 22 May at 5.30 pm UK time.

Sir Noel Malcolm, Dr Yaprak Gürsoy and Dr Murat Akser

will explore the theme

**Perceptions of the Other:
the Ottoman Empire/Turkey and the West**
from historical, contemporary and cinematic perspectives

The 2021 John Martin Lecture

November 2021

Speaker:

Dr Colin Imber,

Lecturer in Turkish Studies (Ret.), University of Manchester

The joy of Fatwas: A glimpse into the Ottoman mind

Further details will be available on the BATAS website nearer the time.



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

Editorial

The co-editors are very pleased to present another rich edition of the *BATAS Review*. This is quite an achievement considering the pandemic situation and the immeasurable loss of our very valuable contributor on Turkey and Turkish affairs, David Barchard (obituary on page xx). Our traditional writer on the economic situation in Turkey, Mina Toksöz, was herself affected by the virus and therefore unable to produce her piece. However, we secured the help of Andrew Finkel, a true expert on Turkey, to provide his analysis of recent developments in Turkey. William Hale treated us to an extremely informative article on the historical background and the current situation concerning relations between Turkey and Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh war. We are also happy that Cyprus figures again with the help of Peter Millett – a former High Commissioner to the country – who presents his views about the recent ‘presidential’ election in the TRNC.

We have obviously had to adapt to the changing circumstances caused by the virus, and this has led us to introduce a number of webinars. This issue includes summaries of two webinars presented in October and November 2020. These were on the topics of the ‘Persecution of Uyghurs’ and ‘Turkey’s relations with the EU and US’, respectively. In our History Section Gül Tokay reports on Anglo-Ottoman relations in respect of the Aegean Islands on the eve of the Great War. World War One also features in John Moreton’s personal observations on the continuing relevance today of John Buchan’s book, *Greenmantle*.

The ‘Culture’ section comprises quite varied articles on the ‘Salar language of Yellow Uyghurs’, part 2 of Trevor Mostyn’s ‘Sunni-Shia divide’ and a piece on ‘Turkish literature in translation’. There is also our usual information about upcoming ‘Noteworthy Events’. The section on book reviews includes contributions by Çiğdem Balım and Mohammed Alrmizan. Both books appeared in 2020 and deal with historical themes. Arin Bayraktaroğlu’s compilation of recent and forthcoming books concludes this section.

Two events have taken place recently and they will be referred to in our next issue. These were the webinar on ‘Hagia Sophia’ (23 January 2021) and the ‘John Martin lecture 2020’ (27 February 2021) on ‘Turkish Foreign Policy in Flux’ which was presented by Professor Ziya Öniş.

The co-editors wish to thank all contributors, those members who help us find new authors, and BATAS’ reliable proof-readers. Our Chair, Celia Kerlake, has had to remain in Istanbul for nearly a year (and more recently suffered quite severely from Covid 19), but she has worked tirelessly on behalf of BATAS at a distance – so our profound thanks and admiration go to her as well. Further events will be hosted through Eventbrite link and information is available at www.batas.org.uk and in the notices of the events that will be distributed by email and posted on Facebook.

Sigrid-B Martin
Co-Editor

Gareth Winrow
Co-Editor



Recent Developments in Turkey

Andrew Finkel

Correspondent & Columnist, was based in Turkey for over 30 Years,
Co-founder of P24, an Istanbul-based NGO for
freedom of expression and press integrity


The new aphorism, that the world will emerge from the coronavirus crisis differently from the way it went in, applies to Turkey where the future is being shaped by the length and severity of the pandemic, along with the ability and credibility of the political establishment to address the needs and the fears of the population. The challenge confronting Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is no easier than that faced by most governments on earth in having to perform a politically fraught triage, i.e. to balance the imperative to stop the rate of Covid-19 infection through lockdowns and social-distancing against the need to limit the economic damage and the deteriorating welfare of its people which such measures entail. It is the optic through which we view recent events.

Previous AKP governments have faced low-growth and global stagnation and have proved themselves able to mobilise manpower and resources and, at the end of the day, pursue orthodox remedies and common sense. The AKP's reputation among its followers is predicated not just on giving vent to conservative and religious cultural values but having led the economy to dry land after the 2000-1 economic crises and being quick off the blocks in rebounding from the global financial crisis of 2007-2008. At first glance, with recently released figures showing a 1.8% annual increase last year in GDP (one of the few countries, along with China, to register growth), Turkey appears to be muscling its way out of the viral induced recession elsewhere and that, in turn, would appear to have positive implications for AKP's determination to complete two decades in power (in 2022) -- and still to be there to blow out the candles to celebrate the centenary of the republic in 2023. And yet that positive perception is not reflected in opinion polls which show AKP support, not vanishing, but dropping to an estimated 36 percent of the vote compared to 42% last election.¹

All the evidence is that growth, induced by over-egged consumer demand, has left the economic recovery vulnerable and the population exposed. Weighing on the government's mind must be the March 2019 municipal elections – well before the pandemic began but in the aftermath of the 2018 currency crisis – when the AKP lost the mayoralties of major cities including Ankara and Istanbul. Those with longer memories may recollect another natural catastrophe – the 1999 earthquake in the north-western industrial heartland of the country which, with uncanny speed, sought out the cracks in a system of corrupt administration along with the fault lines in the earth. There is no direct causal connection between that event and the economic dissatisfaction two years later that helped sweep the newly formed AKP to power, but there is much to suggest that the public disillusionment with not just the political class but also the army cleared the way for a new political movement.

¹ <https://paturkey.com/news/reuters-analysis-with-poll-support-dropping-erdogans-party-looks-to-change-turkish-re-election-law/2021/>

Growth has been a high-wire act, achieved as the currency wobbled and inflation soared to its current annual rate of over 15% – with 80% of the respondents to a recent Metropoll survey showing 80% believe the real figure to be much higher.² The dimensions of the resulting hardship are likely to deepen even if Turkey's ministry of health manages to head off yet a third wave of the pandemic. Officially, unemployment has fluctuated between 12-13%. Unofficially, including those who have stopped looking for work, the rate could be as high as 40%, or (according to the union confederation DISK-AR) 10.7 million people.³ A World Bank analysis cites women and the lower skilled as being most affected by job losses and projects that the crisis will force an additional 1.6 million people into poverty.⁴ A separate survey by the Deep Poverty Network (Derin Yoksulluk) in January revealed half of respondents in Istanbul were reliant on food handouts from the municipality. Per capita GDP declined in 2020 to US\$ 8,600 – its lowest level since 2006 -- from around \$9,200 in 2019, and a peak of over \$12,000 in 2013. The pro-government press has contested a widely reported news item in mid-February that it was destitution which drove a young couple in the Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul first to deposit their 18-month-old child with the neighbours and then commit suicide -- but the story has had a chilling effect.⁵

The government has designed a programme of 'controlled normalisation' to get the country back to work. This consists of dividing the country, province by province, into four tiers: blue, yellow, orange, red – a system that UK readers will recall to be fraught with pitfalls – with restrictions on dining out, schools opening and public gatherings relaxed accordingly. Those over 65 are now allowed an extra hour outside their homes (between 10.00 and 14.00) as are the under twenties (between 14.00 and 16.00). A curfew that lasted the entire weekend has been relaxed for Saturday but a daily night-time curfew between 21.00 and 05.00 remains nationwide. Turkey relies exclusively on the Chinese manufactured SinoVac vaccine.  Deliveries of an initial three million doses began mid-January and the Ministry of Health says the figure will rise to 105 million by the end of May – enough to inoculate fully nearly 60% of the population (from the present 11%). The process is far from transparent, nor is it clear that the programme will succeed in kick-starting the economically crucial tourism season, but anecdotal evidence (from the writer's friends in Istanbul) suggests that as long as there is supply, the vaccine does reach its targets.

The pandemic is not the only news. Indeed, a UK sensitivity, accustomed to the media tracking hour by hour every twist and mutation the virus takes, may find it disconcerting to see the story in Turkey very often relegated to the internet equivalent of 'beneath the fold'. This is in part due to the government's attempt to control the news cycle and in its own vocabulary 'manage perception'. Very early on in the pandemic, the editor of one local paper, briefly detained for revealing two corona-linked deaths in Kocaeli province, confirmed that he would no longer carry news of the pandemic other than

² <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-economy-inflation-food-analysis/analysis-less-for-more-in-turkey-costly-food-starves-economic-rebound-idUSKBN29K0G6>

³ <http://disk.org.tr/2021/01/disk-ar-ocak-2021-issizlik-ve-istihdam-gorunumu-raporu-yayimlandi-issizlik-artiyor/>

⁴ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/europeandcentralasia/urgency-promoting-more-equal-recovery-insights-covid-19-crisis-turkey>

⁵ <https://t24.com.tr/haber/gecim-sikintisi-nedeniyle-intihar-ettikleri-iddia-edilen-genc-anne-baba-batman-da-yan-yana-defnedildi,932806>

from official sources.⁶ In its 29 September 2020 edition, the BMJ reported continuing scepticism among the Turkish medical community about official Covid-19 statistics and its growing confrontation with the government.⁷ It quoted a tweet from Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the National Action Party (MHP- the unofficial junior partner in the ruling coalition) calling for legal action against dissident doctors and the closure of the Turkish Medical Association which he described “as dangerous as coronavirus”.

An early example from last April of the government trying to exert its control is striking – not because it is so egregious but because it is so absurd – and concerns a court imposing an internet ban on access to 273 news items about the demolition of an illegal construction in a protected historical neighbourhood of Istanbul, built by the head of the presidential communications directorate, Fahrettin Altun. The justification for the court order was that the reporting served to “disrupt or obscure our country’s success in the fight against the global coronavirus pandemic despite many European countries’ failure”.⁸ A criminal investigation was launched against the reporter and photographer for *Cumhuriyet* newspaper which had reported the building violation and the public agency which oversees the placing of public advertisements placed a 35 day ban on such ads against the paper for publishing ‘news not reflecting the truth’ and in which there was no public interest. At a court hearing in December, the prosecutor asked for the photographer to be tried for invasion of privacy, criminal charges that carry a maximum five-year sentence.⁹

The New York based Human Rights Watch is unequivocal that “The Covid-19 pandemic has become a pretext for the Erdoğan government to double down on autocratic rule and stamp out criticism and opposition at the expense of uniting the country during a public health crisis”.¹⁰ An example is Law No 7262 on Preventing the Proliferation of Financing Weapons of Mass Destruction which was hastily enacted without consultation by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in the final week of 2020. It was ostensibly designed as a response to the threat of grey listing by the international money laundering watchdog agency, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). However, the bulk of the legislation (37 of 43 clauses) is concerned with tightening state control over non-governmental organisations. The most potentially damaging articles would allow for snap audits and the replacement of officers of an association, suspected (rather than convicted) of abetting terrorism related activities with state appointees – noteworthy, given that abuse of anti-terror legislation to quell dissent is probably the most cited abuse of judicial power in Turkey.¹¹ Freedom House, the USA-based rights group, warned that provisions to regulate contact with organisations outside Turkey “is chillingly similar to so-called ‘foreign agents’ legislation used in Russia and other measures used by repressive governments in the region to silence NGOs and strip away fundamental rights”. The law in its draft form prompted a letter of protest that was signed by some 700 civil society organisations

⁶ <https://bianet.org/english/health/221825-we-no-longer-chase-after-coronavirus-news-after-being-detained>

⁷ <https://www.bmj.com/content/370/bmj.m3787>

⁸ <https://ahvalnews.com/cumhuriyet/turkish-opposition-daily-has-advertising-cut-story-erdogan-spokesman>

⁹ <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/fahrettin-altunun-evini-fotografyadi-5-yil-hapsi-isteniyor-6150649/>

¹⁰ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/01/13/turkey-covid-19-pandemic-used-strengthen-autocratic-rule#>

¹¹ <https://www.mondaq.com/turkey/aviation/1021346/new-law-to-fight-against-proliferation-of-financing-weapons-of-mass-destruction>

on Twitter in #SivilToplumSusturulamaz (Civil Society Cannot be Silenced). These include not just the usual suspects of rights campaigners but the Edirne Autism Association and the Şişli Association for the Hearing and Speech Impaired. As an aside, it remains questionable whether the law is fit for its stated purpose of restricting the financing of nuclear proliferation.¹²

There were other stories claiming the headlines, although it is hard not to view them through the glass darkly of the pandemic. In the past, cynics accused the government of cleverly distracting public attention with news of pharaonic megaprojects, foreign adventures and domestic threats. Now such stories only seem to place the concerns of Turkish citizens for their own health and welfare in starker contrast:

- The most dramatic story was the disappearance from public view of the now former finance minister and presidential son-in-law Berat Albayrak which was accompanied by an overhaul of the Central Bank leadership. This was almost certainly to stave off financial collapse. The markets accuse Mr Bayrak of squandering some US\$ 100 billion in reserves to prop up the lira. Paradoxically the most effective measure he took to rally the currency was to submit his resignation on 8 November 2020 over Instagram¹³ (as one wag put it, “to spend less time with his family”¹⁴). Similarly, the markets broke out into a cold sweat at the end of the February when Mr Albayrak reappeared in public to defend his policies – and appeared to have the endorsement of the president. Mr Albayrak is associated with what is called the Pelican Group in the AKP politics, a faction credited with having forced the resignation of Ahmet Davutoğlu back in 2016 and for their aggressive use of social media. His resignation poses a dilemma for Mr Erdoğan who can either rehabilitate a highly unpopular politician or concede the failure of policies over which the president himself should have been in control.
- Turkey’s best and brightest? Or as the ever-belligerent Devlet Bahçeli would have it ‘terrorists’, ‘vandals and barbarians’.¹⁵ There were confrontations between police and students on campus and students at Boğaziçi University following the sudden New Year’s Day appointment of a new rector from outside the university. Melih Bulu, a founding rector of İstinye University appears to have credentials more as an AKP loyalist than as a professor of business administration (his defence against the accusation of having plagiarised parts of his doctoral thesis is that he neglected to put in quotation marks). Faculty members joined in the protest in a socially distanced ceremony of turning their backs. His appointment is being interpreted as an attempt to undermine the academic freedom of a place of liberal learning. For context, recall that one of the first acts of the Board of Higher Education following the failed 2016 coup was to ask for the resignations of all faculty heads in an apparent attempt to put institutions of higher education under government control¹⁶ – a move which Nobel Prize winner Joe Stiglitz described at the time as blocking Turkey’s road to a knowledge economy. Mr Bahçeli’s remarks, including likening the students to “poisonous snakes whose heads should be crushed” were blocked on Twitter as were remarks comparing the protestors to LGBT perverts by interior

¹² <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/24/turkey-draft-law-threatens-civil-society>

¹³ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-08/turkey-s-finance-minister-albayrak-resigns-citing-health-issues>

¹⁴ https://twitter.com/is_fink/status/1325501673041752064?s=20

¹⁵ <https://www.duvarenglish.com/twitter-removes-mhp-chair-bahcelis-tweet-targeting-bogazici-university-students-news-56140>

¹⁶ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-07-19/turkey-extends-purge-to-universities-asking-all-deans-to-go>

minister, Süleyman Soyly. This was in reference to four students who were arrested over a poster used in the protests, depicting a rainbow flag draped over the Kaaba in Mecca.

- A brawl erupted between government and opposition over who was responsible for the botched rescue effort which resulted in the execution mid-February of 13 security force members – police, soldiers and two intelligence officers – who had been held by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in the mountains of Dohuk Province in northern Iraq, some for more than five years. This is just one factor pushing the AKP's de facto coalition partner, the MHP, to push for the closure of the Kurdish nationalist People's Democratic Party (HDP) – a move which would suit the MHP (now polling at around 8% of the vote, beneath the current 10% threshold it would need to re-enter parliament) but could well alienate conservative Kurdish citizens whose votes the AKP requires. Even so, judicial pressure against the HDP continues – not just with the continued detention of its former co-leader, Selahattin Demirtaş, despite a Grand Chamber ruling by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on 22 December 2020 for his immediate release (the ruling also upholds a rare Article 18 violation which, in short, concludes that the conviction by the Turkish court was politically motivated)¹⁷ but also with the 16th Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeals on 19 February 2021 upholding a prison sentence given in 2018 to HDP deputy and medical doctor, Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu on charges of 'terrorism propaganda'.¹⁸
- With Turkey not due to go to the polls before June 2023, and a highly centralised presidential system sucking the oxygen from the cut and thrust of its own party politics, Turkish pundits' have had to make do with another presidential contest, the election in America of Joseph Robinette Biden who will almost certainly deal with the potentially explosive disputes between the US and Turkey in a less forgiving way than his predecessor. Mr Erdoğan waited until the 10 November to congratulate the 46th president and, in his turn, Mr Biden has not (as of writing) phoned the Turkish leader for a courtesy chat. This is in contrast with Barack Obama paying his first overseas visit in 2009 to Turkey in an apparent attempt to rebuild the US's badly damaged esteem in the Muslim-majority world. Mr Biden famously accused the Turkish president in a December 2019 New York Times interview of being an autocrat who should be ousted at the polls and in August 2020 Mr Erdoğan repaid the compliment by charging Candidate Biden with "pure ignorance, arrogance and hypocrisy". That Turkey would have preferred Donald Trump to stay in power no doubt derives from his reluctance to force the issue of Turkey's deployment of Russian S-400 anti-aircraft systems which violates NATO protocols or that of the potentially devastating case against state-owned Halkbank for defying sanctions against Iran.¹⁹ Already, the Biden State Department has adopted a more aggressive tone, calling on Turkey to release Osman Kavala and condemning the execution of the Turkish security forces (see above) *if* it were confirmed the PKK were responsible. Following a Turkish protest, (17 February) the US spokesman offered unreserved condolences. This was an echo of a similar set-to earlier in the month when the State Department expressed indignation at Interior Minister Soyly's accusation that the United States was behind the 2016 failed military coup. State Department spokesperson Ned Price also condemned

¹⁷ <https://www.expressioninterrupted.com/european-court-orders-selahattin-demirtas-s-immediate-release/>

¹⁸ <https://www.birgun.net/haber/yargitay-hdp-li-gergerlioglu-na-verilen-hapis-cezasini-onadi-334786>

¹⁹ <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/erdogans-bad-bank-on-trial-shedding-light-on-an-alleged-plot-to-evade-iran-sanctions-a-bd705f81-bfcd-42fc-b3b1-55bdbe2c8339>

the detention of the Boğaziçi students as well as “the anti-LGBTQI rhetoric surrounding the demonstrations”.²⁰

- Kanal Istanbul, the ersatz Bosphorus, designed to provide a parallel navigation route from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara, was once the mother of all megaprojects. It now seems a litmus test of the sanity of policy makers. The current price tag is just over \$10 billion (TL 75 billion) although previous costings were closer to \$16 billion and might seem a sum better spent mitigating the poverty caused by a pandemic, given that the economic slowdown has turned other public private partnerships like the new Istanbul airport or the Osmangazi suspension bridge into the whitest of elephants. The project no longer graces the top carousel of the transportation and infrastructure ministry’s website but is buried deep inside.²¹ Even so, Murat Kurum, minister of environment and urbanisation, echoed the president’s insistence that the project go out to tender this year.²² Notable by its absence from his Final Declaration of Turkey’s Fight Against Climate Change were any new targets. Turkey has, however, cancelled two planned coal projects although 25 remain in the planning stage. With South Sudan now ratifying the Paris Agreement and the US back on board, Turkey joins Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Yemen as a remaining holdout.
- A Richter 7.0 earthquake on 30 October 2020 along the Samos fault in the Aegean was to leave 117 people dead in Izmir province and serves as a reminder of the Black Swan that hovers over Istanbul — a city that suffered such devastation from the 7.6 Izmit quake in August 1999.²³ Two of the borough municipalities that suffered most in that event, Avcılar and Esenler presented a report to the parliamentary commission on earthquake measures, projecting medium or high level damage to 200,000 buildings, affecting some three million Istanbul residents. While there is much greater awareness of the need for earthquake preparedness than in 1999 and far tighter regulation, most spending had gone into urban renewal projects – a lucrative source of income for the largely pro-AKP construction industry – rather than readiness. A tax on telecoms equipment and Internet usage imposed after Izmit to fund quake protection has disappeared into the Treasury’s general revenue accounts.²⁴
- Turkey’s president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a past master at consolidating his own power under the aegis of reform, has unveiled a human rights action plan and called for a brand new constitution.²⁵ There have been no details of the latter and the former has appeared too late to be evaluated here. The first reaction by many is that the package would indeed make an impact and is an admission that Turkey is not on the right path in protecting the rights of its citizens. However, the government could make that same impact tomorrow by respecting the rulings of the ECtHR to release Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtaş or demand the release of the over 60 journalists in Turkey now in prison. These include the award-winning novelist and former editor-in-chief, Ahmet Altan, who has been in



²⁰ <https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-lashes-out-against-criticism-of-anti-lgbtqi-rhetoric/a-56450691>

²¹ <https://www.uab.gov.tr/>

²² <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/bakan-kurum-2021-yili-kanal-istanbulun-basladigi-bir-yil-olacak-543185.html>

²³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/zmirturkey-earthquake-situation-report-no-03-31-october-2020>

²⁴ <https://paturkey.com/news/turkeys-best-know-black-swan-threat-another-istanbul-earthquake/2021/>

²⁵ <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/it-is-time-to-draft-a-new-constitution-erdogan-says/news>

prison for over four years. The 70-year-old Altan's petition to be vaccinated against Covid-19 has so far gone unanswered. An uncharitable interpretation is that the measures are a stalling tactic to fend off criticism from the Biden administration and an increasingly hostile EU.

- The EU Council meeting last December postponed a decision to March 2021 to upgrade sanctions taken in November 2019 against an unspecified number of Turkish officials and entities over Turkey's hydrocarbon explorations in the Cyprus Exclusive Economic Zone.²⁶ It might be fanciful to suppose that Turkey, sensing the world focused inwards on the deteriorating health of its population (coupled with the domestic-centric policies of the former US president) feels it can be bolder in asserting a new geo-political role – in the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa, the Caucasus, and along its south-eastern borders with Iraq and Syria. The starkest example of what is unquestionably a more aggressive foreign policy is Turkey's spat with France – President Erdoğan went as far as to say that Emmanuel Macron needed to get his head examined in the aftermath of the row last October after the French president called for legal monitoring of his country's Islamic community and the subsequent beheading of a French schoolteacher who had led a classroom discussion on the 2015 attack on the satirical French magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*.²⁷ There have been positive diplomatic overtures since.
- *Charlie Hebdo's* own response to the above at the end of October was a lewd caricature of President Erdoğan (sitting in his underwear, guzzling a beer and staring up a woman's hijab). If Turkish sensitivities see this as shocking rather than simply puerile, it is because of the unqualified respect the courts now demand for the Turkish president through legislation shielding him from insult. Statistics released in December 2020 document 128,872 judicial investigations over the past six years for presidential insult that resulted in 9,556 cases of imprisonment.²⁸ Proceedings had been initiated against 264 children between the ages of 12 and 14. Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı, the chair of the Turkish Medical Association's Central Committee was fined TL 7,080 on 16 February 2021 by an Istanbul Court for a tweet made during the 2013 Gezi protests when Mr Erdoğan was Prime Minister.²⁹ Journalist Ender Imrek, however, was acquitted last December for in an article criticising the President's wife, Emine for the ostentation of toting a \$50,000 Hermès handbag.³⁰ The indictment said that Imrek had insulted the First Lady by "not praising her". That acquittal is now being appealed.
- With Facebook promising to open a representative office in Turkey, Twitter along with Periscope and Pinterest are the lone standouts to efforts to make social media platforms with over one million users accountable. It now faces fines but also progressive cuts of up to 90 percent of its bandwidth by May, rendering it effectively unusable except through some virtual private networks (VPNs). Turkey is not the only country concerned over the power of such platforms. However, the *Financial Times* cites concerns that the regulations "will stifle dissent in a country where opposition politicians and activists, as well as social media users, have been jailed for speaking out."³¹ It quotes Yaman Akdeniz, a law professor at Bilgi University

²⁶ <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=536ad1a6-b4b2-4b54-a5d1-5921bfd61596>

²⁷ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/muslims-call-for-french-goods-boycott-to-protest-caricatures-emmanuel-macron-french-muhammad-teacher-muslims-b1346020.html>

²⁸ <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1779401/middle-east>

²⁹ <https://www.expressioninterrupted.com/freedom-of-expression-and-the-press-in-turkey-282/>

³⁰ <https://ahvalnews.com/emine-erdogan/erdogans-lawyer-appeals-acquittal-journalist-accused-insulting-turkish-first-lady>

³¹ <https://www.ft.com/content/38456302-9d78-49d0-a56c-d44a1e47fbf8>

who campaigns for cyber rights, saying “Companies will become the long arm of the Turkish judiciary, compelled to comply with all decisions.”

- Fans of film star Cüneyt Arkın, whose *Star Wars* ‘tribute’ (to put it politely) *The Man Who Saved the World*, achieved cult status, or of Kutluğ Ataman’s po-faced mockumentary *Journey to the Moon*, will be cheered by the Turkish president’s stated intention to “make contact” with the moon in time for the 2023 centenary festivities. And while this may seem ambitious for the country’s two-year old space agency whose annual budget is US\$ 5.4 million, the greater intention according to some experts is an upping of defence capabilities.³² While it may not lead to a space race in the region, it could lead to one of missile proliferation.



To conclude, the government is in trouble and has yet to develop a strategy for improving its standing with either its base or the country at large. Under those circumstances, it is unlikely to dismantle the authoritarian apparatus it has created. At the same time, it is aware that this apparatus is increasingly ineffectual even counter-productive if it needs the cooperation of its allies in getting the economy back on track. A photo of the gates of Boğaziçi University chained shut has become a meme of government cutting itself off from its young, educated population. After the 2016 failed military coup, the president became much stronger if ruling over a much weaker country. Then came the pandemic. By now, that weakness affects his own standing.

In short, Turkey is in a continuing period of uncertainty with only limited resources and options. The bright spark who coined the phrase “may you live in interesting times” is more likely than not self-isolating while taking therapy over Zoom on how to be less careless what to wish for.

To join the

British Association for Turkish Area Studies

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Or email the Membership Secretary,
 John Moreton – J.E.Moreton@leeds.ac.uk

 and ask for an application form,
 or consult pp 75/76

³² <https://twitter.com/aaronstein1/status/1359625966767792129>



Nagorno-Karabakh

Turkey, Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh War: Events, Consequences and Prospects

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Crowded out by the global Covid pandemic, the US elections and President Trump's post-election antics, the short but bitter war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, between 27 September and 10 November 2020 received only fleeting attention in the world's media and has had little subsequent analysis. It is nevertheless worth examining, since it was not widely predicted, and opened up the prospect of a possible conclusion to one of the longest-running frozen conflicts of the post-cold war era, as well as potentially important shifts in regional power balances.



The Historical Background

Following centuries of uneasy coexistence, with occasional outbreaks of tragic violence, the potential contest between Armenians and Azeri Turks acquired a distinct territorial dimension under the Soviet constitution, which designated the Armenian-inhabited district of Nagorno-Karabakh as an autonomous *oblast* within the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). Equally, the Azeri province of Nakhichevan was established as an 'Autonomous Republic' – in effect, a detached province of Azerbaijan, sandwiched between Armenia and Iran, with a short border with Turkey (see map). Until its dissolution in 1991, the Soviet state suppressed the regional ethnic conflict but, on 2 September 1991, following a declaration of independence by Azerbaijan, the Armenian inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh followed suit, to be followed by Armenia on 21 September.³³ On 26 November, against the Turkish government's advice, the Azerbaijan parliament withdrew the autonomous status of

³³ For an extended account see William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (3rd edn., Abingdon, Routledge, 2013) pp.211-14.

Nagorno-Karabakh, setting Azerbaijan and Armenia on a collision course. In February 1992 Turkish President Turgut Özal made a last-ditch attempt to prevent a war, when he proposed a territorial swap between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in which Armenia would acquire a land corridor between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh (the 'Lachin corridor') in return for a parallel Azeri corridor between Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan proper (the 'Zangezur corridor'). Although the plan was supported by US President George Bush, Ayaz Mutalibov, then the President of Azerbaijan, rejected the idea.

Full-scale fighting erupted in February 1992, lasting until 1994, when both sides realised, they had fought one another to a standstill. In May 1994 they accepted a Russian-brokered ceasefire, by which time Armenian forces had occupied Nagorno-Karabakh as well as a large buffer zone in the Azeri territory between the enclave and Armenia proper – representing in all about 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory – and had driven out 684,000 Azeri citizens who became refugees in other parts of Azerbaijan.³⁴ The Armenians also ignored four UN Security Council Resolutions calling for a withdrawal from occupied areas of Azerbaijan.³⁵ In June 1993 ten nations within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)³⁶, including the US, Germany, Russia and Turkey, set up the 'Minsk group' in an attempt to resolve the conflict, but this failed to achieve any results over the following 17 years.

In October 2009 a breakthrough in Turkish-Armenian relations seemed to have been achieved when the two countries' foreign ministers met in Zurich to sign two protocols for the establishment of diplomatic relations, the mutual recognition of frontiers, and the re-opening of the Azeri-Armenian and Turkish-Armenian borders, closed by Turkey and Azerbaijan in 1993. The mass killing and deportations of the Ottoman Armenians during the First World War – widely, but not universally, accepted as genocide – was the subject of a second protocol, on which a committee of historical enquiry was to be established.³⁷ Unfortunately, under strong nationalist pressure from both sides, the Zurich protocols soon fell apart. Meanwhile, the main change during the years of deadlock was the strong growth of Azerbaijan's oil-powered economy, and its external economic relations – notably through the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil export pipeline, via Georgia and Turkey, in 2005,³⁸ and the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP)/Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) for the export of natural gas, connecting the Azeri gas fields with southern Italy, via Georgia, Turkey, and Greece, completed at the end of 2020.³⁹ These developments naturally strengthened the mutual economic dependences of Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The Autumn War and its Aftermath, 27 September 2020 to 30 January 2021

Between 1993 and 2020, in spite of periodic border clashes, it seemed that the Armenian-Azeri deadlock could continue unresolved with both sides realising that

³⁴ Sabine Freizer, 'Twenty Years after the Nagorny Karabakh Ceasefire: an Opportunity to Move towards More Inclusive Conflict Resolution', *Caucasus Survey*, Vol.1, No.2, (2014) p.2: UN High Commission for Refugees, *UNHCR Publication for CIS Conference (Displacement in the CIS) – Conflicts in the Caucasus* (www.unhcr.org/publications/refugeemag) (1 May 1996).

³⁵ UN Security Resolutions 822 (30 April 1993), 853 (29 July 1993), 874 (14 October 1993) and 884 (12 November 1993).

³⁶ Subsequently, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

³⁷ For the text of the Zurich protocols, see www.mfa.gov.tr/site_media/html/zurik-protokolleri-en.pdf.

³⁸ See British Petroleum, 'Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline' (www.bp.com/en_az/azerbaijan/home/who-we-are).

³⁹ For a critical analysis, see Marco Siddi, 'The EU's Botched Geopolitical Approach to External Energy Policy: the Case of the Southern Gas Corridor', *Geopolitics*, Vol.24, No.1 (2017) pp.129, 131.

neither could win a war easily.⁴⁰ However, in July 2020 tensions were ramped up by an attack by Armenian forces on the 'Ganja gap', north of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is the land passage for Azerbaijan's main transport links with the outside world (the BTC and TANAP pipelines, plus the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway). This appears to have triggered the Azeri response, with full-scale attacks on Armenian positions north and south of Nagorno-Karabakh, beginning on 27 September. During October the Azeri forces made gradual advances, mainly by deploying attack and reconnaissance drones supplied by Israel and Turkey to destroy tanks, artillery posts, missile launchers and communications behind the Armenian defensive lines. Azerbaijan also deployed a force of some 2,600 Syrian mercenaries, although how effective these were is disputed. The decisive turning point in the war came on 8 November, when Azeri forces advancing from the south captured the strategic city of Shusha, just inside Nagorno-Karabakh and controlling access to Stepanakert, the capital of the enclave.⁴¹ The war had been short but fought at tragic cost with over 5,000 military personnel reported dead on the two sides, plus several hundred civilians killed, to say nothing of the thousands of ruined homes and other buildings.⁴²

In the circumstances, the Armenians were obliged to accept a ceasefire, brokered by Russia, and signed on 10 November by President Putin, İlham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, and the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. Under its provisions, Azeri forces would remain in control of the areas they had captured during the war, with the remaining Azeri territory captured by the Armenians in 1993-4 returned to Azerbaijan by 1 December 2020. Russian peace-making forces, numbering 1,960 troops equipped with arms and armoured vehicles would be installed along the contact line between the two sides in Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Lachin corridor, effectively putting the Karabakh Armenians under Russian protection. These forces would be installed for an initial five years, with Azerbaijan guaranteeing the security of passengers, cargo and vehicles moving through the Lachin corridor in both directions.⁴³ The final paragraph of the agreement stated that 'all economic and transport connections in the region shall be unblocked', with the opening of a second corridor (the 'Zangezur corridor') between Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, to be overseen by Russian border guards.⁴⁴ If achieved, this would be similar to the Özal-Bush plan of 1992, with the important difference that it would be policed by Russia. Turkey had initially been left out of these arrangements but, after telephone calls between Presidents Putin and Erdoğan, it was agreed on 11 November that Turkey and Russia would set up a 'joint centre' to 'monitor and inspect' the implementation of the 10 November agreement. The centre was duly established on 30 January 2021 with the participation of a Turkish General and 38 other staff, giving Turkey at least a

⁴⁰ See International Crisis Group (www.crisisgroup.org) *Briefing 60/Europe & Central Asia* (8 February 2011) 'Armenia and Azerbaijan: Preventing War'.

⁴¹ Ragıp Soyulu, 'Why Turkey Returned to the Caucasus after a Hundred Years', *Middle East Eye* (www.middleeasteye.net) 11 December 2020: Fuad Chiragov, 'Azerbaijan Makes Strategic Advances along Karabakh's Northern, Southern Flanks', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, (<https://jamestown.org>) Vol.17. Issue 146, 19 October 2020: Paul Goble, 'Shusha Once Again Key to War and Peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan', *ibid*, Vol.17, Issue 160, 12 November 2020: Ed Butler, 'The Syrian Mercenaries Used as "Cannon Fodder" in Nagorno-Karabakh', BBC News website, 10 December 2020.

⁴² See International Crisis Group, *Briefing 91/Europe & Central Asia* (22 December 2020) 'Improving Prospects for Peace after the Nagorno-Karabakh War', section II.

⁴³ 'Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and President of the Russian Federation, November 10, 2020' (www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/64384) paragraphs 1-6.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, paragraph 9.

token presence on the ground.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, on 12 January Presidents Putin and Aliyev, with Prime Minister Pashinyan, met in Moscow to sign what was referred to as a 'development pact'. This would set up working groups to develop 'concrete plans for the development of transport infrastructure and the region's economy'. Again, Turkey was not explicitly included in these arrangements, but President Aliyev emphasised that 'neighbouring countries will also participate in the process of establishing transportation connections' – a clear reference to Turkey as well as Iran.⁴⁶

Explanations and Results

The outcome of the autumn war came as a shattering surprise to the Armenians and their supporters, but it should not have done. Some Armenians blamed the West for failing to come to their aid,⁴⁷ but it had been clear that the western powers were never likely to be more than spectators in a remote region widely recognised as Russia's back yard. Prior to the débâcle, Armenians seemed to be blissfully unaware of the political and economic changes in the region which had fundamentally weakened their position since their military successes of 1992-4.⁴⁸ Writing in 2015, Sergey Minasyan, of the Caucasus Institute in Yerevan, confidently maintained that for the 'external actors... the current situation seems to suit them well enough', leaving Azerbaijan with 'only one option left – to threaten Armenia with a resumption of fighting'. However he considered it was unlikely to exercise this option, due to 'a military-technical balance with Armenia, or the presence of serious foreign policy constraints'.⁴⁹ The Armenian forces were able to defend their positions in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, he claimed, and were even 'capable of devastating industrial and communications centers and infrastructure deep within Azerbaijan'.⁵⁰ He and others seemed confident of Armenia's 'strategic partnership with Russia', conferred by its membership of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation set up in 2002 by Russia and five other ex-Soviet republics.⁵¹ However, under the Treaty, Russia would only be obliged to come to Armenia's aid if the recognised territory of Armenia were invaded (hence, excluding the Azeri territory occupied by Armenia in 1992-4).

A fundamental shift in the power balance in Transcaucasia during the period between 1994 and 2020 was plain to see. Azerbaijan always had an advantage in numbers, with a population around ten million compared with three million for Armenia. Thanks mainly to its oil and gas revenues, Azerbaijan's GNP in 2019 stood at over \$40 billion, compared with Armenia's \$13.7 billion, with annual defence expenditure at \$1.9 billion compared with \$670 million for Armenia.⁵² Azerbaijan's arms purchases jumped further in the first nine months of 2020, with \$123 million in defence and aviation equipment from Turkey alone.⁵³ Shifts in the diplomatic balance were equally significant. In November 2015 Turkey's contest with Russia over the Syrian civil war reached a crisis when a Turkish F-16 fighter aircraft shot down a Russian SU-24 attack

⁴⁵ *Hürriyet Daily News*, (www.hurriyetdailynews.com) 11 November 2020, 30 January 2021.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 12 January 2021.

⁴⁷ Peter Osborne, 'Caught between Russia and Turkey, Armenians Say West has Abandoned them', *Middle East Eye*, (see note 10) 13 November 2020.

⁴⁸ My impressions from a visit to Armenia in the autumn of 2014.

⁴⁹ Sergey Minasyan, 'The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict in the Context of South Caucasus Regional Security Issues: an Armenian Perspective', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol.45, No.1 (2017) p.133.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp.136-7.

⁵¹ See Collective Security Treaty Organisation, 'The CSTO Structure' (<https://en.odkb-csto.org/structure>).

⁵² Data from 'Country comparison Armenia vs. Azerbaijan' (<https://countryeconomy.com/countries/compare/armenia.azerbaijan?sc=XE34>).

⁵³ Reuters, 'Turkish Arms Sales to Azerbaijan Surged before Nagorno-Karabakh Fighting', 14 October 2020.

plane which Turkey said had entered its territory. Russia retaliated with economic sanctions, forcing President Erdoğan into a full U-turn which by the end of 2016 had produced an unexpected rapprochement between Ankara and Moscow.⁵⁴ The result was what Nicholas Danforth aptly calls 'a relationship with Russia that is simultaneously cooperative and competitive' in both Syria and Transcaucasia.⁵⁵ The most striking example of this was Turkey's purchase of the Russian S-400 missile system, causing a serious rift in its relations with Washington. Putin had similarly cultivated a broadly cooperative relationship with Azerbaijan, supplying arms to both sides in Transcaucasia, while the Azeri state oil and gas company SOCAR cooperated with Russia's Gazprom.⁵⁶ According to Turkish press reports, Putin saw Pashinyan as 'pro-American', as he had ousted the previous 'pro-Russian' Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan in 2018.⁵⁷ We can be fairly certain that, in broad strategic terms, Putin saw a rapprochement with Turkey and Azerbaijan as being more beneficial for Russia than an exclusive alliance with Armenia. While Russia retained important land and air bases in Armenia, it would not become directly involved as a belligerent unless Armenia itself were invaded, which seemed very unlikely.

Gains, Losses and Prospects

Armenia was clearly the loser from the autumn war. Between 1994 and 2020, Armenia could probably have exchanged the occupied Azeri territory for a Russian-brokered deal with Azerbaijan providing for autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh, and a land bridge with Armenia through the Lachin corridor – which Azerbaijan would have accepted at the time.⁵⁸ By moving Armenian settlers into the occupied zones (illegal under international law) it lost the ability to trade territory for peace. Instead, Armenia went for maximalist aims, by demanding full independence for Nagorno-Karabakh, which could then opt to join Armenia.⁵⁹ Presumably, the Armenians expected they could hold this line indefinitely; instead, they lost all their advantage in 2020, at the cost of thousands of casualties, lost equipment and destroyed infrastructure.

Besides Armenia's losses, it was unclear how much Azerbaijan, Russia and Turkey, had gained. Azerbaijan had won a clear military victory and could re-settle its refugees in the former buffer zone. But it had failed to settle the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh. Russia was a clear winner, with its troops now stationed as 'peacemakers' in a region where it had been absent since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Without firing a shot in anger, it had established itself as the dominant actor in the region, since none of the other regional states could act without a positive nod from Moscow. Following the autumn war, Matthew Bryza, a former US Ambassador to Azerbaijan, described the outcome as 'a huge geopolitical shift in Turkey's favour',⁶⁰ but this conclusion has not been widely supported. As the Turkish journalist Fehim Taştekin suggested, following a meeting in Moscow on 11 January 2021 between

⁵⁴ See William Hale, 'Turkey, the U.S., Russia and the Syrian Civil War', *Insight Turkey*, Vol.21. No.4 (2019) pp.30-31.

⁵⁵ Nicholas Danforth, 'Perspectives: What did Turkey Gain from the Armenia-Azerbaijan War?', *Eurasianet*, 11 December 2020 (www.eurasianet.org/perspectives-what-did-turkey-gain-from-the-armenia-azerbaijan-war).

⁵⁶ See statement by Gazprom, 'Congratulations from State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR)' (www.gazprom.com/about/history/events/20years/congratulations/abdulayev).

⁵⁷ Merve Şebnem Oruç, 'How Vladimir Putin Punished Nikol Pashinian', *Daily Sabah*, 23 November 2020.

⁵⁸ International Crisis Group, 'Improving Prospects' (see note 11) section VI.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, section II,

⁶⁰ Quoted, Soylu, op.cit.

Putin, Aliyev and Pashinyan, 'Russia is rebuilding its leadership in the Caucasus, leaving little room for Turkey'.⁶¹ Turkey had expanded its role in the region, by helping to re-arm Azerbaijan and training its forces. However, as Nicholas Danforth concludes, 'Moscow benefits to the extent it faces off directly against Turkey, it will always have the stronger hand militarily'.⁶² The stark imbalance in the size of the two countries' peacekeeping forces was a clear sign of this.

On the positive side, Turkish sources stressed the prospective opening of the Zangezur corridor between Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan as the 'beginning of a new era for Turkish foreign policy', providing direct access for Turkey to Azerbaijan and Central Asia.⁶³ How valuable this would be could be questioned, however. Since the turn of the century, Turkey had developed important routes to Azerbaijan by pipeline, road and railway, avoiding Armenia by passing through Georgia, with which Turkey enjoys good relations. One project which was brought forward was the construction of a new railway link between Turkey and Nakhichevan, opening the prospect of a direct line to Azerbaijan. However, this would duplicate the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars rail line, opened in 2017, which would appear to have plenty of spare capacity.⁶⁴ The need to duplicate existing oil and gas pipelines via Georgia is also questionable, given that Europe's oil and natural gas consumption is expected to decrease with the switch to renewable energy sources, and the emergence of liquid natural gas as a commercially viable alternative to pipeline-delivered gas supplies.⁶⁵ In fact, for President Erdoğan, it is likely that his main gain from the autumn war was not economic or geo-strategic but in domestic politics, as he strengthened his credentials with nationalist opinion in Turkey – especially in the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) whose support he needed to maintain his parliamentary majority.

The post-war agreements also raised the question of a re-opening of the Turkish-Armenian border to trade and travel, given that the blockade had originally been imposed by Turkey as a reaction to the Armenian occupation of Azeri territory in 1993. In December 2020, the possibility of re-opening the border along with the establishment of normal diplomatic relations with Armenia was publicly referred to by Tayyip Erdoğan and his Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu.⁶⁶ This time, however, Armenia was reluctant. After the battlefield defeat, Armenian public opinion strongly opposed any reconciliation with Turkey, with one commentator suggesting that in Armenia 'the mere suggestion of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation is enough to be branded a traitor, to be publicly lynched'.⁶⁷ Later, it was reported that Azerbaijan might be reluctant to have the Turkey-Armenia border reopened without a simultaneous opening of the Zangezur corridor.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, there seemed to be some emerging

⁶¹ Fehim Taştekin, 'Russia Crowds Out Turkey in Post-War Caucasus', *al-Monitor* (see note 2) 15 January 2021.

⁶² Danforth, op.cit.

⁶³ Anadolu Agency, 'Karabakh: Big Win for Turkish Foreign Policy in 2020', 30 December 2020.

⁶⁴ Fehim Taştekin, 'How Realistic are Turkey's Ambitions over Strategic Corridor with Azerbaijan?' *al-Monitor*, 4 December 2020: Onur Uysal, 'Baku-Tbilis-Kars Grows Fast'. *Rail Turkey* (www.railturkey.org) 9 October 2020.

⁶⁵ Manfred Hafner, 'The Geopolitics of Gas: Main Players and Dynamics', *Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale* (www.ispiononline.it/it/publicazione) 21 February 2020.

⁶⁶ 'Turkey Could Open its Borders to Armenia: Erdogan', Anadolu Agency, 10 December 2020: 'Relations with Armenia Can Be Normalized – Turkish FM', *Trend* website, (<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3357855.html>) 30 December 2020.

⁶⁷ Diana Yayloyan: quoted, Amberin Zaman, 'Who Really Won in South Caucasus?', *al-Monitor*, 11 November 2020.

⁶⁸ Amberin Zaman, 'Turkey's Talk of Peace with Armenia Rings Hollow', *al-Monitor*, 4 February 2021.

recognition on the Armenian side that they could not hold out indefinitely against a re-opening of the border with Turkey, given that President Pashinyan had – at least in principle – signalled his assent when he signed the 10 November agreement.⁶⁹ As Richard Giragossian, head of the Yerevan-based think-tank Regional Studies Centre, admitted in February 2021, ‘if Turkey unilaterally opens the border we have no response planned, no scenarios planned, and we could lose all the diplomatic dividends by saying “no don’t open it, we’re not ready, what about national security” and so on.’⁷⁰ With time, it seemed possible that the Armenians might reluctantly assent to reopening all their borders.⁷¹

A notable – and presumably deliberate – omission from any of the post-war agreements was reference to the future political status of Nagorno-Karabakh. The most likely workable compromise would probably be the re-establishment of Nagorno-Karabakh as an autonomous region within Azerbaijan, with international security guarantees for its Armenian population and free passage to Armenia via the Lachin corridor. The difficulty here is that Armenia has not publicly announced any deviation from its pre-war hard-line position, and that Azerbaijan, in its post-war rhetoric, appears to have taken autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh off the table.⁷² As the Brussels-based International Crisis Group suggests, any forward movement would probably have to take an ‘evolutionary approach’, with a period of resettlement, reconstruction and perhaps reconciliation preceding a viable agreement.⁷³ Since neither Russia nor Turkey have publicly opposed a peace settlement on these lines, there seems to be at least some chance that this may be achieved eventually.



Update on Cyprus

Turkish Cypriot elections, 2020

by **Peter Millett**

High Commissioner to Cyprus (2005 to 2010)

British Ambassador to Jordan (2011 to 2015)

British Ambassador to Libya (2015 to 2018)

Turkish Cypriots went to the polls in October 2020 and elected Ersin Tatar as their new leader. His insistence on a two-state solution will make reaching a Cyprus settlement harder.

⁶⁹ Through the statement in the last paragraph that ‘all economic and transport connections in the region shall be unblocked’ – see above.

⁷⁰ Ani Mejlumyan, ‘Armenia Considers Prospect of Open Borders with Turkey’, *Eurasianet*, 11 February 2021 (www.eurasianet.org/armenia-considers-prospect-of-open-borders-with-turkey).

⁷¹ See the statements by Anna Naghdalyan, spokesperson for the Armenian Foreign Ministry, and Foreign Minister Ara Aivazyan, quoted, *ibid*.

⁷² International Crisis Group, ‘Improving Prospects’, (see note 11) section IV.

⁷³ *Ibid*, Section VI.

Election Process

Any article on Cyprus has to tread carefully with vocabulary. Words acceptable to one community are often unacceptable to the other. For Turkish Cypriots, the elections in 2020 were for the 'President' of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)', the state which is only recognised by Ankara. To the rest of the world, the election was for the Leader of the Turkish Cypriot Community.

The role of 'President' is more ceremonial than executive. The person who holds the position has the right to dismiss the 'Parliament' when a government cannot be formed within sixty days or three successive governments receive a vote of no confidence. He – and so far, the role has only been held by a man – can also chair the 'Council of Ministers', approve the appointment of the judges and the president of the Supreme Court. One of the most important and influential parts of the job is to act as the main representative of the Turkish Cypriots in negotiations to settle the division of the island. Only five people have held this position. Rauf Denktaş launched the role with the declaration of TRNC independence in 1983. He remained 'President' until 2005 when he was followed by Mehmet Ali Talat (who was leader of the Turkish Cypriots when I was High Commissioner from 2005-10), Derviş Eroğlu and Mustafa Akıncı.

Elections are held every five years and usually include two rounds. There are usually multiple candidates in the first round and the list is then narrowed down to two unless one candidate secures 50% of the vote. Whoever gets more than 50% in the second round, wins.

The election in 2020 was scheduled to take place in April but was postponed to October because of Covid 19. The first round was held on 11 October and there were eleven candidates. They included the incumbent, Mustafa Akıncı, standing as an Independent; Ersin Tatar, an economics graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge and at that time 'Prime Minister' representing the National Unity Party (known by its Turkish acronym, UBP); Kudret Özersay for the People's Party (HP); Tufan Erhuman for the Republican Turkish Party (CTP); and Serdar Denktaş for the Democratic Party (DP).

Political parties on the left and right are well-established in the Turkish Cypriot community and have a key role in the way elections are managed and won.

Akıncı won 29.84% of the vote in the first round; Tatar got 32.35%, so they went through to the second round. On 18 October Tatar secured 51.69% of the votes and Akıncı 48.31%. Tatar was therefore deemed to be the winner.

Policy Positions

As the incumbent, Akıncı's slogan was "The Answer is Akıncı". His campaign highlighted his reputation for sincerity, honesty and trust. He focused on the federal model for the future relationship with the Greek Cypriots, arguing that the Turkish Cypriots deserved to benefit from membership of the European Union and should not be dependent on Ankara.





Tatar's slogan was "We are walking to a new future". He argued that the federal model pursued by Akıncı had failed and advocated a two-state solution for Cyprus, with separate Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot states as members of the European Union. He also promised to open Varosha, the beach resort that had been a fashionable holiday destination in the 1960s and 70s but had been a ghost town since the Turkish invasion in 1974.

In the run up to the elections, it was clear that Turkey favoured the election of Tatar and was actively working against Akıncı. Indeed, Akıncı complained publicly about campaigning by Turkish groups, urging people not to vote for him. On 6 October Tatar visited Ankara and was received by President Erdoğan. In a joint press conference, Tatar announced the partial reopening of Varosha on 8 October, a move that had the explicit backing of Erdoğan. This pre-election stunt caused alarm in the international community. The United Nations Security Council issued a statement demanding the reversal of the decision and respect for Security Council resolutions which explicitly oppose the settlement of Varosha by people other than its original inhabitants (ie Greek Cypriots).

Following the second round, Tatar was immediately congratulated by Turkish President Erdoğan. Tatar thanked the Turkish Cypriot electorate as well as 'motherland Turkey' and President Erdoğan. He promised to build stronger relations with Turkey and made clear that he was open to talks on the resolution of the Cyprus Problem but that any solution had to be based on two states. Akıncı congratulated the winner and noted that "this was not an election conducted under normal circumstances". He then announced that he would retire from politics.

Greek Cypriot reaction was one of disappointment. President Anastasiades said that the result had to be respected. The left-wing AKEL party called the result a "negative development".

Why Tatar Won

One of the main reasons Ersin Tatar won the elections was the disappointment among Turkish Cypriots that efforts to reach a settlement to the division of the island had failed. There was also a loss of hope in the prosperity and stability that they had thought would come from full membership of the European Union.

When Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, the whole island became part of the Union. The north is therefore legally part of the EU but Brussels recognises that the north is outside the control of the Greek Cypriot-led government of the Republic and that EU legislation does not apply there. As the Greek Cypriots benefitted from membership of the EU and acquired the euro, Turkish Cypriots hoped that efforts to reach a settlement would lead to membership.



I was in Ledra St on 3 April 2008 when the concrete wall that had separated this iconic street since the inter-communal clashes in 1963 was demolished. That evening there was a huge party in the Turkish Cypriot part of Nicosia just north of Ledra St. The euphoria was tangible, the Efes flowed freely, there was music and dancing and speeches expressing optimism; one of the key messages was that membership of the EU was in sight.



Since then, efforts to reach a settlement have foundered, most recently at Crans Montana in 2017. The representative of the Turkish Cypriots at that negotiation was Mustafa Akıncı. In the following three years there were no substantive efforts to continue the dialogue and the visits by the UN envoy Jane Holl Lute were unable to lead to an agreement on next steps.

Tatar, therefore, had a ready audience for his main message: that the old formula of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, the central tenet of the negotiations for many years, had failed. He affirmed that Turkish-Cypriots should insist on their own state and their own sovereignty and negotiate accordingly. If the safe harbour of the EU was no longer a viable option, then dependence on the benevolence, security and investment offered by Turkey was better. That said, his victory was not a land slide. Akıncı won over 48% of the votes. Behind this figure is the strong feeling in the Turkish Cypriot community that they do not want to be absorbed into Turkey. Turkish Cypriots are proud of their separate identity, their history and culture. They fear 'Turkification' and loss of their distinct identity, fears that are symbolised by their unhappiness at the influx of settlers from mainland Turkey and the number of new mosques and statues of Kemal Atatürk that have appeared in many towns and villages in the north.

For many Turkish Cypriots, the hope of reuniting Cyprus, reconciliation and collaboration with Greek Cypriots and full EU membership is still alive. Many of Akıncı's supporters had hoped that there would be more tangible signs of Greek Cypriot interest in a settlement and that these signs would boost Akıncı's prospects. These hopes were not realised. Akıncı was, therefore, unable to convince voters that he could deliver the solution that they hankered after.

Tatar also benefited from a strong and professional campaign run by his party, the UBP, whereas Akıncı ran as an independent. The visible and high profile backing of Turkey and Erdoğan no doubt also played well with parts of the electorate.

What Next?

Efforts to reach a Cyprus settlement have always been dependent on the timing of elections. When leaders face the prospect of elections, they do not want to be seen to be compromising. With the Turkish Cypriot leader's elections out of the way and Presidential elections in the Republic due in 2023, there is a window of opportunity for the UN to try again. Anastasiades and Tatar met at the residence of the UN Special Representative, Elizabeth Spehar, on 3 November. The UN's public announcement following the meeting revealed little:

“Mr Tatar and Mr Anastasiades expressed their determination to positively respond to the UN Secretary-General’s commitment to explore the possibility to convene an informal five-plus-United Nations meeting, in a conducive climate, at an appropriate stage.”

The next step should be a so-called 5+1 meeting, ie the three guarantor powers (Greece, Turkey and the UK), the two leaders and the UN to explore the scope for a new negotiation. This meeting is planned for March.



During his campaign and at the meeting with Anastasiades on 3 November, Tatar made clear that he favoured a two-state solution, ie a Turkish Cypriot and a Greek Cypriot state both as members of the European Union. This starting point would mean abandoning the bi-zonal, bi-communal federal approach and the bulk of the agreements reached between the two sides so far. It means that the convergence on the basic parameters of a settlement, which has often been the starting point for negotiations, is absent this time.

The prospect of agreement to Tatar’s and Turkey’s demand for a two-state solution is remote. The Greek Cypriots will not accept it. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that the European Union would welcome a second Cypriot state as a full member state, let alone one that would be likely to follow instructions from Ankara, thereby giving Turkey a proxy vote in Brussels. Nor could the UK favour such an approach. The Treaty of Guarantee requires the parties to guarantee the independence, territorial integrity and security of Cyprus.

It is of course possible that Tatar’s two-state proposal is a maximalist opening position and that he might be open to some sort of compromise. Much will depend on the views in Ankara and whether there is the political will to negotiate flexibly. The negotiations at Crans Montana showed that they were willing to do so, but four years later some of the dynamics have changed.

The question of access to hydrocarbons in the Eastern Mediterranean is one fraught issue where Ankara has made clear that it is willing to confront the Europeans and the international community. One example is the way Turkey has sent exploration vessels into areas which are under (Greek) Cypriot sovereignty; another is the signing of an agreement with the government in Tripoli to divide their maritime territory, encroaching on areas regarded as belonging to Greece.



The opening of Varosha is also highly provocative. On his visit to the island on 6 October, President Erdoğan visited Varosha amidst supporters waving Turkish and Turkish Cypriot flags. This highly nationalist approach plays well in Turkey and among some Turkish Cypriot supporters. But it plays very badly among Greek Cypriots, many of whom are refugees from the north or the offspring of refugees. Varosha is a symbol of the property they have lost and the prosperity they could gain if they were able to return.

Conclusion

Momentum is building behind a fresh effort to solve the Cyprus Problem. The willingness of the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres to devote time, resources and energy to Cyprus again is reassuring. It is also welcome that the UK Government regards this issue as a priority. The visit of Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab to the island in February 2021 was an important signal of support for the UN-led effort.

Reaching a position where genuine negotiations can take place and there is a final deal in sight will not be easy. It will require engagement by the international community – including pressure on the island from the new Biden Administration in Washington and from Ankara and Athens.

The prize is significant. The island has suffered greatly from Covid 19, partly from deaths from the virus, but notably from the collapse of tourism, one of the central planks of the economy. The economic benefits of the two communities working together have always been strong, but are now more important than ever.

Compromise is essential, as in any negotiation. And the people who will benefit are the people of the island, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.



BATAS Webinar 31 October 2020

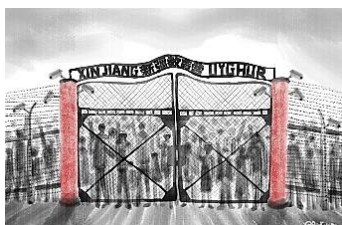


Image courtesy of Badiuca

The Persecution of Uyghurs and the Chinese Communist Party's Digital Dungeons

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You Tube Recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzIKUoBXb5g>

The long repression and cultural diminution of Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples in China turned into a systemic annihilation and cultural genocide in Xinjiang with the establishment of a vast network of concentration camps. Using a wide range of sources and my own research on displaced Uyghurs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in this talk I illustrated the extensive digital surveillance and punishment designed to eradicate Uyghur culture. My contribution here rests on a historical political analysis of Central Asia and its colonisation by two distinct powers. I set the scene in the broader history of colonising Turkic peoples in Central Asia by Russia and China during



the 18th and 19th centuries. Consolidation of communist regimes and the emergence of autonomous states created new possibilities. While the Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) became independent states after dissolution in 1991, China's interior frontiers of Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang lost even their limited autonomy under the increasingly nationalist Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

With a renewed return to imperial ambitions, regional dynamics are today changing fast. China's reinterpretations of an old imperial dictum of 'strong law' are shaping its new nationalist governance and relations with international organisations and bilateral ties around the world. Digital technologies offer critical tools for this grand ambition while also enabling the capacity of the CCP to govern domestically through internal social control. Deepening capitalist practices and growing income inequality lead to new problems across diverse regions. The CCP promotes Han nationalism as a convenient ruse to hide these troubles and promotes popular hatred towards 'internal enemies' and old 'colonial rivals'. Over the recent decades, the party developed a two-faced ideological identity: communism enhanced with Chinese characteristics (opportunistically combined with Confucian edicts) and a Han nationalist imperial discourse. Chairman Xi Jinping, who came to power in 2013, gave new shape and speed to this transformation. This system rests on an exchange of consumer driven material goods in return for the political loyalty of the masses. The populace accepts practical niceties which come with digital devices and software, while the surveillance capacity of the state grows through its absolute control over data generated in digital media and the application of artificial intelligence. This occurs irrespective of firm ownership.

In the main body of the talk I illustrated the way in which this cultural genocide has been unfolding. First, hundreds of thousands of people are placed arbitrarily and extrajudicially in concentration camps. These are heavily protected centres where victims are monitored 24 hours a day with cameras everywhere, including in toilets. Inmates are subject to extensive brainwashing, worship of Xi Jinping and the CCP as well as other forms of torment, such as sleep or food deprivation. Eyewitness accounts also point out various forms of abuse including beatings, torture and sexual exploitation. Secondly, there is a forced labour programme, which takes place during incarceration in factory sites. Many Chinese companies using Uyghur forced labour supply their products to western brands. The Chinese government categorically denies the existence of forced labour but it has been identified in cotton harvesting as well as in the production of export goods. Third, the systematic disappearance of intellectuals and leading academic figures, such as Ilham Tohti and Rahile Dawut, points to an all-out attack on the knowledge capital of the Uyghur people. Fourth, extensive surveillance and racial profiling are systematically applied to Turkic Muslims. Iris scans are collected, DNA data and blood samples are taken from anyone in Xinjiang, including children. Through mandatory spying programmes and mobile apps, individual movements are monitored, and daily actions are classified. Human Rights Watch clearly documented how intrusive the system has been. Home visits by officials constitute another form of abuse conducted through the uninvited intrusion of party officials. These men sleep with families for days and sometimes weeks to observe their loyalty to the CCP, often in households without a mature male around, as many are now in camps. Fifth, the attack on reproductive capacity and generational continuity is a further hideous practice. As children are abandoned by the disappearance of parents in concentration camps, many are taken to orphanages to be re-educated as a model Han citizen. Women's bodies have not been spared as

forced sterilization, abortions and other forms of abuse have been reported in eyewitness accounts. The region's birth rate has plummeted, as revealed in official statistics. Finally, the physical environment of cultural and historical legacies has been under systematic attack. Mosques, cemeteries, artistic heritage sites and historic neighbourhoods have been bulldozed and traces of Uyghur culture are being buried under concrete slabs.

In the final section, I argued that cultural genocide against Turkic Muslims is symptomatic of the CCP's brutal rule. The prime victims of the CCP's one-party-society are its political opponents (which are being systematically eliminated by Xi Jinping's purges) along with minorities with distinct religious and ethnic identity, most specifically Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongols. More recently, Hong Kong's pro-democracy people have been similarly targeted. There are dangerous implications: the CCP's methods of social control through digital surveillance and the abuse of human rights may become common practice by authoritarian regimes with a weak capacity to rule. This will threaten the future of opposition groups, civil society organisations and minorities (ethnic or religious) around the world. In my final comments, I stressed the perils of state surveillance and digital technologies in democracies and called for an end to neo-liberal policies and unhindered capitalism for profit maximisation. The alternative is a race to the bottom with China. In a dystopian future we may face digital fascism encroaching into our lives inch by inch.

In the meantime, the tragedy in Xinjiang continues to unfold and each emerging story and new evidence bring worse news than before. The recent reporting by the BBC has confirmed what has been feared: women's bodies have become a principal target of this genocide. Through birth control, forced abortion and the separation of young children from their families, the CCP is destroying family lineages. It doesn't stop there. Systematic rape and sexual assaults indicate the deeper, more hideous and revolting character of these willing executioners and their masters. This all-out attack on an ethnic and religious minority is reminiscent of the Nazi era. There is no doubt that China is committing gross human rights crimes, and this is a planned and directed act by the CCP and Xi Jinping personally. The urgent requirement is to bring all perpetrators to the international human right courts. This may take many years as we know from past autocracies, but the Xinjiang file will remain open until justice prevails.

BATAS SECOND WEBINAR

Turkey and the West: Future Challenges and Opportunities

**27 November 2020,
17.00 – 18.30**
By zoom.

Subject of the webinar

Two expert speakers will look at the prospects for Turkey's relations with its Western interlocutors (primarily the USA and the European Union) in the aftermath of the US presidential election, months of tension in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Turkey 2020 Report of the European Commission.

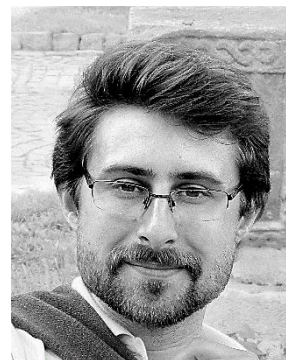
Dr Nicholas Danforth
Hellenic Foundation for
European and Foreign Policy

**Professor
Meltem Müftüler-Baç**
Sabancı University

US-Turkey Relations during the Biden Administration: New beginnings or New depths?⁷⁴

Nicholas Danforth

Non-resident fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Athens



In the weeks leading up to America's 3 November 2020 election, Turkey carried out a high-profile test of its new Russian air defence missiles, announced it would be continuing hydrocarbon exploration in contested waters off the Greek island of Crete, and sentenced an employee of the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul to five years on spurious terrorism charges.⁷⁵ Next, on 10 November, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan officially congratulated President-elect Joe Biden, stating that "the strong cooperation and ties of alliance between our countries will continue to provide a vital contribution to the cause of world peace, in the future as they have in the past".⁷⁶ Then, as some commentators spoke optimistically of a "reset" between Ankara and Washington, columnists in Erdoğan's loyal pro-government press predicted Biden would try to destabilize or subjugate Turkey, charged Turks who welcomed his election with treason, and, for good measure, repeated wild rumors about his sexual perversions.⁷⁷ It was, in short, the opening of yet another chapter in a deeply dysfunctional relationship.

In fact, the challenge facing the incoming administration extends beyond the problems in the headlines. Since 2016, Ankara has been quite candid in its embrace of a new security doctrine – one whose impact has sometimes been obscured by the chaos of

⁷⁴ A version of this article appeared as 'Between cooperation and containment: new US policies for a new Turkey', Brookings Institution, February, 2021.

⁷⁵ Suzan Fraser and Lolita Baldor, 'Reports: Turkey tests Russian-made S-400 defense system', *Associated Press*, October 16, 2020, <https://apnews.com/article/turkey-black-sea-ankara-military-and-defense-russia-a4b0d8149908fbf5ea976204518866c3>; 'Turkey extends disputed East Med gas exploration mission again', *Al Jazeera*, November 1, 2020; <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/1/turkey-extends-disputed-east-med-gas-exploration-mission-again>; 'US consulate employee receives 5-year jail term', *Associated Press*, October 27, 2020. <https://apnews.com/article/turkey-ankara-fethullah-gulen-istanbul-1512597bfd4b4d283f647a53b36e717>.

⁷⁶ Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Joe Biden'i tebrik etti', *Deutsche Welle Türkçe*, November 10, 2020. <https://www.dw.com/tr/cumhurba%C5%9Fkan%C4%B1-erdo%C4%9Fan-joe-bideni-tebrik-etti/a-55556614>.

⁷⁷ Burhanettin Duran, 'Making sense of Erdoğan's most recent steps', *Daily Sabah*, November 17, 2020. <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/making-sense-of-erdogans-most-recent-steps>; Mehmet Barlas, 'Amerika'da bugün başkan seçimi var ama iklimimiz yine İzmir'de', *Sabah*, November 3, 2020. <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/barlas/2020/11/03/amerikada-bugun-baskan-secimi-var-ama-aklimiz-yine-izmirde>; Engin Ardıç, 'Her türlü namussuzluğa hazırlanın', *Sabah*, November 9, 2020, <https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/ardic/2020/11/09/her-turlu-namussuzluga-hazirlanin>; İsmail Kılıçarslan, 'Bir tek Türkiye'yi sevmiyorlar iyi mi?', *Yeni Safak*, November 10, 2020, <https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/ismailkilicarslan/bir-tek-turkiyeyi-sevmiyorlar-iyi-mi-2056753>.

the Trump administration.⁷⁸ Convinced that the West is both hostile and in decline, Erdoğan and his circle have called for a more independent foreign policy that they believe will ultimately enable Turkey to reset its relations with Europe and America on their preferred terms. This approach relies heavily on the assertive use of hard power, both to advance Turkey's interests in an unstable world and to thwart a perceived axis of regional states seeking to encircle it. Until these ideologically-based and widely-shared assumptions change, meaningful cooperation will remain impossible and the ties of alliance will continue to fray.

Against this backdrop, successfully managing relations with Ankara will require Washington to be clear-eyed about what the United States actually needs from Turkey, to downplay these needs as much as possible, and to use targeted political pressure to achieve those that cannot be minimized. With Ankara now facing off against a growing number of American allies across Europe and the Middle East, U.S. policymakers will also need to coordinate closely with these countries. This will enable Washington both to support them in resisting Turkish provocations and to lead efforts to de-escalate confrontations that arise. Washington should be prepared to take advantage of short-term tactical shifts in Erdoğan's policies while maintaining the possibility of rebuilding the relationship in the more-distant future. In other words, Washington must seek to preserve incentives and opportunities to work together with Turkey while recognizing that the decision is ultimately Ankara's and no one should hold their breath.

Approaching Ankara's New Foreign Policy

The Turkish government, firmly dominated by President Erdoğan but backed by a wide coalition of nationalists and religious conservatives, has seen both threats and opportunities in the tumultuous events of the past decade.⁷⁹ Although many of the threats have been self-created, and many opportunities may prove short-lived or illusory, they nonetheless shape Ankara's strategic thinking. Erdoğan and his allies view hostile Western policies as part of a concerted effort to bring a newly powerful and independent Turkey to heel but remain convinced that projecting Turkish power and independence will eventually force the West to accept the country's new status.⁸⁰ The result is a coherent, if not always accurate, worldview that fuses Erdoğan's political needs with a widely-shared vision for Turkey's emerging role on the global stage.

On the third anniversary of Turkey's July 2016 coup attempt, Erdoğan declared: "Despite our political and military pacts with the Western alliance, the fact is that once again the biggest threats we face are from them".⁸¹ More than anything, it was the coup attempt itself that had consolidated this conviction. With so many members of

⁷⁸ Perhaps the most comprehensive examination of Turkey's new foreign policy is provided by Stephen Flanagan et al, 'Turkey's Nationalist Course', (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2589.html.

⁷⁹ On Turkey's religious nationalism, see Howard Eissenstat, 'How New Is Turkey's 'New Nationalism'?', Center for American Progress, February 14, 2018, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2018/02/14/446403/new-turkeys-new-nationalism/>.

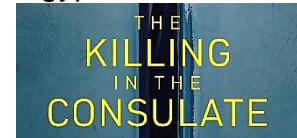
⁸⁰ The assumptions informing Ankara's new foreign policy are analyzed in Ryan Gingeras and Nicholas Danforth, 'Into the Abyss: Turkish Impressions of a U.S.-Turkish Break', *Bipartisan Policy Center*, August 17, 2018, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/into-the-abyss/>.

⁸¹ 'Erdoğan'dan S-400 açıklaması!', *Sözcü*, July 17, 2019, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/son-dakika-erdogandan-s-400-aciklamasi-5229776/>.

the U.S.-based Fethullah Gülen movement involved in the putsch, many in Turkey were quick to blame it on Washington. Since 2016, Erdoğan's government has consistently promoted these conspiracies theories for political gain but, more problematically, almost certainly believes them as well.

The Syrian civil war also came to compound the threat Ankara perceives from the West. The collapse of the Turkish-backed Syrian opposition and violent breakdown of an implicit truce with ISIS was only the backdrop to a more dangerous development for Turkey: the burgeoning relationship between Washington and the Syrian Kurdish YPG (People's Protection Units). Since the 1990s, a growing number of Turks grew convinced that the U.S. was supporting Kurdish separatism, even when Washington was actually helping Turkey fight it. Now, suddenly, this paranoia had become reality.

In the wider region, Turkey has increasingly found itself on the wrong side of almost all of Washington's friends. In the wake of the Arab Spring, Erdoğan saw the deepening anti-Islamist alignment between Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates as a direct threat. The 2013 coup against Egyptian President Mohammad Morsi, 2017 blockade of Qatar, and 2018 murder of Jamal Kashoggi in Istanbul made the feeling all the more personal and principled. At the same time, Turkey's disputes with Israel, Egypt, Greece, and the Republic of Cyprus led to its exclusion from the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum, a joint effort to exploit the sea's recently discovered natural gas resources. While perhaps a predictable result of Turkey's policies, this development only further intensified Turkey's sense of encirclement.



In the face of these threats – real, self-created, and imagined – Ankara has sought to exploit the opportunities inherent in a changing global order to turn the tables in its favour. With cross-border military operations in Syria and Iraq, military deployments in Libya and Azerbaijan, and some literal gunboat diplomacy in the Eastern Mediterranean, Ankara has been quick to bring hard power to bear in disputes where it feels the reigning status quo is both unfavourable and brittle.⁸² Moreover, Turkey has also sought to forge a new relationship with Moscow that combines competition and cooperation to strengthen Turkey's position against regional adversaries and a weakening West.

The problem for Washington is that Turkey's new combative approach to foreign policy has already brought Erdoğan enough domestic political benefits that, whatever happens, he is unlikely to abandon it any time soon. These wars have proved popular, consolidating Erdoğan's flagging base.⁸³ What's more, some of the fights most provocative for the U.S. and the EU – against YPG forces in Rojava and Greece in the Mediterranean – have the broadest appeal across Turkey's political spectrum. And to the extent that they provoke hostile reactions from Western powers, even Erdoğan's most committed critics are often quick to rally around the flag in response.

⁸² Turkey's turn toward hard power is analyzed in William Armstrong, 'Turkey's foreign policy takes hawkish turn over 'Blue Homeland'', *BBC Monitoring*, July 6, 2020, <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/product/c201vkcr>.

⁸³ For an argument about the importance of national security rhetoric in Erdogan's political strategy, see Selim Koru, 'Erdoğan's Turkey and the Problem of the 30 Million', *War on the Rocks*, June 4, 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/erdogans-turkey-and-the-problem-of-the-30-million/>.

In strategic terms, Turkish interventions have also secured real gains. Although they carry a host of long-term risks and are not always as impressive as Ankara insists, Turkish military power has indubitably changed facts on the ground in Syria, Libya, and now Nagorno-Karabakh. Crucially, because Ankara already assumes pre-existing hostility on the part of its neighbours and former allies, the actual hostility these interventions create only reinforces Turkish policymakers' assumptions – rather than appearing as a dangerous and lasting cost of their policies.

Turkey's relationship with Russia, along with its clear risks and costs, has also brought real benefits. Turkish commentators have consistently claimed that they do not want to replace dependence on Washington with dependence on Moscow.⁸⁴ They are also well aware that Putin does not have Turkey's best interests in mind, as demonstrated most dramatically by Russia's role in killing 33 Turkish soldiers in Idlib last spring. Yet the two countries have worked out a win-win form of competitive cooperation. Through their regional conflicts, both sides are able to consolidate control over their proxies at the expense of other actors, then further curtail Western influence by negotiating resolutions on bilateral terms. The problem for Ankara, of course, is that while Turkey can bring considerable military muscle to bear, to the extent it finds itself facing off against Russia without Western support, Moscow will always have the upper hand. Thus, while Russia has accommodated significant Turkish gains in some theatres, it has also been quick to enforce red lines, and, as in Syria, ensure that its interests ultimately win out when necessary.

What all of this means for the new administration is that:

- Washington should not expect to resurrect the old U.S.-Turkish alliance or achieve some sort of lasting reset. The fundamental assumptions of Turkish foreign policy thinking ensure that both countries will continue to work at cross purposes and face future crises. Exerting further pressure will only confirm Turkey's belief in Western hostility, while concessions will be taken as evidence that Turkey's aggressive tactics are effective.
- Washington cannot count on Turkey to balance Russia. Turkish-Russian competition works for both countries because it excludes the West. But the dynamics of the relationship may eventually force Turkey to make a partial recalibration toward Washington.
- Washington will have plenty of opportunity to work with regional partners, as well as the EU, to push back against Turkey's adventurism. But there is also a real risk that if these efforts escalate too quickly, Washington could be faced with a war pitting a NATO ally against other friendly powers.

Beyond Cooperation

For the last four years, the debate over U.S. policy toward Turkey has been between those who want to 'get tough' with Erdoğan and those who continue to seek new avenues for engagement. This debate will likely continue within the Biden

⁸⁴ A nuanced account of the emerging Turkish-Russian relationship can be found in Dimitar Bechev, 'Russia and Turkey: the promise and the limits of partnership', in Nicu Popescu and Stanislav Secieru (eds.), *Russia's Return to the Middle East: Building Sandcastles* (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2018).

administration, which includes advocates of both approaches. The imposition, in December, of sanctions over Turkey's purchase of Russian air defence missiles will contribute to a tougher stance from the outset. So will the trial, beginning in March, of Turkey's Halkbank for its role in violating U.S. sanctions against Iran. But, at the same time, the administration may well look for areas where the two countries can still pursue a positive agenda. Were Ankara to couple its talk of a reset with sincere gestures, such as the release of civil society figure Osman Kavala, it would help build the case for engagement. In the more likely event that this rhetoric proves hollow, the debate will gradually shift in favour of those calling for something closer to containment.

While this debate unfolds, participants should keep in mind that – given Turkey's new foreign policy – neither carrots nor stick will secure the cooperation that Washington wants from Ankara. The understandable desire for a way to save the U.S.-Turkish alliance has sometimes prevented policymakers from stepping back and having a wider debate about Turkey's place in U.S. foreign policy. During the Cold War, Washington worked with Turkey to contain successfully the Soviet Union. After the Cold War, Washington hoped that, with American support, a strong, wealthy, democratic and EU-aligned Turkey could help integrate its turbulent region into an expanding liberal order.⁸⁵ But so long as Turkish foreign policy facilitates the expansion of Russian influence and destabilizes its neighbourhood, cooperating with Ankara is no longer inherently in Washington's interest. Rather, policymakers will be forced to ask themselves how best to advance their goals about Turkish cooperation.

At the very least, this will likely lead Washington to continue reducing its strategic dependence on Turkey and to develop alternatives for military facilities currently on Turkish soil. Turkey will and should remain in NATO for the foreseeable future; if nothing else, maintaining Turkey's territorial integrity in the face of foreign invasion remains a shared U.S.-Turkish interest. The problem is that Turkey has already proved willing to use its veto power to extract concessions in ways other alliance members see as disruptive. In November 2019, Turkey threatened to block NATO defence plans for Eastern Europe until the alliance recognized the YPG as a terrorist group.⁸⁶ While NATO's structure will make it difficult, members can begin thinking seriously about mechanisms to prevent Ankara from abusing its veto power. More broadly, U.S. policymakers should be fully aware that any regional strategies requiring Turkish participation will give Ankara renewed leverage over U.S. policy.

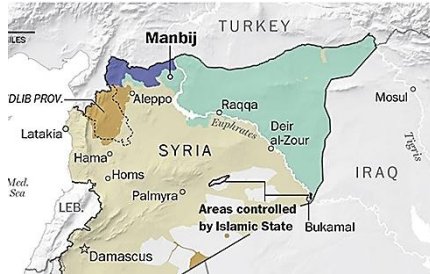
The risk is that working around Turkey will intensify Ankara's efforts to play the spoiler role, as it already has in the Eastern Mediterranean. To counter this possibility, Washington can work more effectively with a growing number of countries alarmed by Turkey's new foreign policy. If done correctly, such a strategy would both strengthen pressure on Ankara while simultaneously reassuring other actors and minimizing the dangers of unintended escalation. Moreover, as the incoming administration seeks to

⁸⁵ On the relationship between Turkey's authoritarian turn and the growing challenge of foreign policy cooperation see Kemal Kirişçi and Amanda Sloat, 'The rise and fall of liberal democracy in Turkey: Implications for the West', (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, February 2019), <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-rise-and-fall-of-liberal-democracy-in-turkey-implications-for-the-west/>.

⁸⁶ Robin Emmott, 'Exclusive: Turkey holds up NATO military plans over Syria dispute – sources', *Reuters*, November 26, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-summit-turkey-exclusive-idUSKBN1Y01W0>.

restore ties with the EU, Washington and Brussels would be well served by working together in dealing with Turkey.

In the most recent round of escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean, European leaders seemed to have ultimately achieved a workable good cop-bad cop routine, with France pushing for sanctions while Germany offered Turkey a path to back down through negotiations. Washington can seek to emulate both aspects of this approach. Indeed, between 2018 and 2019, Washington managed Turkish threats against the Syrian territory of Manbij using a similar strategy: deploying U.S. forces to stop a Turkish invasion while simultaneously conducting ongoing, inconclusive negotiations under the rubric of the ‘Manbij Roadmap.’ The term that some have applied to this strategy – “containgement” – undoubtedly captures how awkward and cumbersome it may prove.⁸⁷ But to date, it still appears the most plausible method for Washington to check Turkey’s destabilizing policies.



In his approach to both foreign and domestic politics, Erdoğan combines short-term flexibility with long-term consistency. He has repeatedly made tactical pivots under pressure, offering positive rhetoric and limited concessions to countries with whom he previously tussled. As shown by his willingness to temporarily warehouse the S-400s or free Andrew Brunson, Erdoğan can certainly back down when necessary. But the pattern of Turkish policy shows that he reverts to aggressively advancing his interests as soon as he feels it is possible. This means that Washington does indeed have real leverage over Ankara, especially if Turkey’s economy continues to worsen or its relationship with Russia becomes more unbalanced. But it also means that this leverage would be best used to secure concrete concessions rather than pursue lasting diplomatic achievements or some sort of elusive ‘reset’.

There is a built-in limit to how aggressively Western governments can use sanctions: Trump secured Brunson’s release by threatening to ‘totally destroy and obliterate the Economy of Turkey’.⁸⁸ The threat worked in part because Trump appeared genuinely unfazed by the destabilizing consequences of carrying it out. A Biden administration, by contrast – not to mention European governments – will be more worried about the financial blowback they would face from pushing Turkey’s economy off a cliff. This is all the more reason to tie sanctions to specific and realistic targets, while also employing them in conjunction with other non-economic forms of leverage.

No amount of U.S. pressure will bring about a peace deal between Ankara and the YPG or a maritime settlement between Greece and Turkey so long as these are irreconcilable with Erdoğan’s political survival. Were the conditions for such

⁸⁷ Panayotis Tsakonas, ‘Containgement’: An EU Strategy towards Erdogan’s Turkey’, *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy*, September 22, 2020, <https://www.eliamep.gr/en/publication/%CE%B5%CE%BE%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%80%CE%B7%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE-%CE%B4%CE%AD%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B7-%CE%BC%CE%AF%CE%B1-%CF%83%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%B3/>.

⁸⁸ Donald J. Trump (@RealDonaldTrump), Twitter, October 7, 2019, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1181232249821388801>.

breakthroughs ever to emerge, Washington would be wise to support them, but these conditions do not currently exist.

In the meantime, limited cooperation will only be possible on subjects where clear and common interests are already present. In regions where Turkey appears truly committed to confronting Russia, such as Idlib or the Black Sea, limited U.S. assistance could still pay dividends. Washington can also work with Ankara to assist Syrian refugees, if only for the refugees' sake. It will also be important to expand opportunities for cultural and educational exchange, rather than allow them to fall victim to political tensions. But more significant cooperation will have to wait until Ankara and Washington once again share a broadly compatible worldview.

Ultimately, it will be up to a democratically-elected Turkish government to decide that Turkey would benefit from restoring ties with the West. Until then, the challenge for Washington will be to maintain enough pressure to make this apparent without rendering the relationship so hostile it becomes impossible.



Understanding Democratic Decline in the European Periphery: Turkey and the European Union

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In 1989, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent systemic transformation led to the global acceptance of democratic governance as a right, and democracy was seen as 'the only game in town'.⁸⁹ Fast forward 30 years, contrary to these expectations, authoritarianism is on the rise globally, with democratic systems undergoing internal turmoil, transforming into hybrid regimes or autocracies.⁹⁰ Turkey, Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Brazil, Egypt present themselves as prime examples of this democratic decline. These countries, without consolidated democratic systems, emulate global tendencies for authoritarianism, and move further away from liberal democratic order. With autocracies on the rise in the last 20 years, an erosion of key pillars of democracy – free elections, separation of powers, strong opposition, independent media – is visible in many countries, even in the USA, European countries, and the G20 members. Failing democracies are afflicted with incompetent governance. The factors that enhance democratic regimes' vulnerability and make them more prone to democratic regression and/or breakdown are multifold.

Advanced democracies in the West are losing ground internationally, facing new challenges from rising powers such as China, Russia, and even Iran, where alternative

⁸⁹ Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M. E., Cheibub, J. A., & Limongi, F. (2000). *Democracy and development: Political institutions and well-being in the world 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁹⁰ Plattner, M. (2014) 'The end of the transitions era?' *Journal of Democracy* 25(3): 5–16.

modes of governance provide new models for the developing world. As democratic systems in traditional great powers are faltering with failing governance structures and political dysfunction at home, their ability to diffuse democratic norms, governing tools to the rest of the world is in sharp decline. Geopolitical shifts underway since 2008 are putting the liberal international order under significant strain.⁹¹ Sets of factors that seal the fate of democracy in most of the world, and definitely in the European periphery, are external changes in the international liberal order, a vacuum left by the demise of the democratic West, internal dynamics at home with erosion of checks and balances, increased anxiety at the international borders, and the allure of strongmen. The international climate and geopolitical conditions at the systemic level are posing significant challenges to democracies, enabling authoritarian powers to exert a more visible presence globally. As a result, there is an urgent need to understand root causes of democratic breakdown. This is precisely why political changes in Turkey – an acceding country to the European Union – need to be understood within the broader perspective of systemic global change.

Democratic regression is highly visible in the European periphery and Turkey. Democratic breakdown in these countries intensifies conceptual challenges to the role of international/external factors in enhancing resilience in democracies. Accordingly, the following topics pose major theoretical and empirical challenges to scientific inquiry and policy making: how to study democratic transformation, to assess causes of its decline and possible breakdown, to account for variation across different polities and approximate core requirements for the prevention of democratic demise. Liberal international order, which traditionally rested on the rise of democracy globally,⁹² open international borders, and expanding economic interdependence⁹³, faces unprecedented threats with backsliding onto authoritarianism,⁹⁴ and rise of populism in European democracies.⁹⁵ Protests all around the world indicate a new turning point has arrived. The rise of mixed, illiberal, hybrid regimes where seemingly democratic regimes gravitate towards autocratic rule or use majoritarian tools to consolidate their power has become one of the most common elements in democratic breakdown.

In this light, Turkey, and Central and Eastern European countries emerge as unexpected cases of democratic breakdown. Domestic level factors such as weak democratic institutions,⁹⁶ authoritarian political actors,⁹⁷ and nationalist movements⁹⁸ figure in assessing democratic breakdown. Democratic breakdown – more likely when

⁹¹ Bermeo, N. (2016) 'On Democratic Backsliding', *Journal of Democracy*, 27(1), 5-19.

⁹² Diamond, L. (2002) 'Thinking about hybrid regimes', *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2): 21–35 and Diamond, L. (2008) 'The democratic rollback: The resurgence of the predatory state', *Foreign Affairs* 87(2): 36–48.

⁹³ Schmitter, P. (1994) 'Dangers and dilemmas of democracy', *Journal of Democracy* 5(2): 57–74.

⁹⁴ Levitsky, S., & Way, L. (2005) 'International linkage and democratization', *Journal of Democracy*, 16 (3): 20–34.

⁹⁵ Hanley, S. & Vachudova, M. (2018) 'Understanding the Illiberal Turn: Democratic Backsliding in the Czech Republic', *East European Politics*, 34(3): 276-296.

⁹⁶ Bieber, F. (2018). 'Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans', *East European Politics*, 34(3), 337-354

⁹⁷ Ostojic, M. (2014) *Between Justice and Stability*, London. Routledge.

¹¹ Freyburg T. & Richter, S. (2010) 'National identity matters: the limited impact of EU political conditionality in the Western Balkans', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 17(2): 263-281

democratic institutions are weak⁹⁹ – is by clientelistic and patronage structures,¹⁰⁰ when ethno-nationalist movements are on the rise,¹⁰¹ or when there are crises concerning migration,¹⁰² economy¹⁰³ or even public health, such as COVID-19. For example, the public health crisis in 2020 has demonstrated the fragility in Western democracies, and their inability to provide a role model. Norm diffusion,¹⁰⁴ liberal order, and the central pull of the liberal democracies¹⁰⁵ were stressed previously as major factors in promoting democratization. However, this picture has now been reversed with democratic regression globally,¹⁰⁶ in the European periphery,¹⁰⁷ as in countries such as Turkey.

Changing global balances can be seen at the very root of this decline.¹⁰⁸ As authoritarian countries such as China, Iran, and Russia become more visible players in geopolitical balances, their allure as models for political stability gets stronger. They are likely to be emulated by smaller players that are increasingly alienated from Western political systems, which are themselves facing political dysfunction at home. Whether democracy has lost its momentum is a key question.¹⁰⁹ Yet there is no consensus in the scientific literature on how democracy is conceptualized,¹¹⁰ or its travails assessed.¹¹¹

Several challenging questions are crucial to understand the emerging global order on the one hand, and to uncover possible threats that are undermining liberal norms on the other: comparative analysis of institutional structures in the European periphery (including Turkey) shaping their democratic regression – specifically, judicial constraints on executive power. This is also tied to the EU's emphasis on judicial independence, and primacy of the rule of law. This is also how Turkey provides a unique illustration of the limits of the EU on promoting democracy and the prevention

⁹⁹ Cianetti, L., Dawson, J. & Hanley, S. (2018) 'Rethinking 'democratic backsliding; in Central and Eastern Europe-looking beyond Hungary and Poland', *East European Politics*, 34 (3): 243-256.

¹⁰⁰ Levitsky, S., & Way, L. (2010) *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰¹ Linz, J.J and Stepan, A. (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University

¹⁰² Burnell, P. & Schlumberger, O. (2010) 'Promoting democracy – promoting autocracy? International politics and national political regimes', *Contemporary Politics*, 16(1), 1-15.

¹⁰³ Gerring, J., Bond, P., Barndt, W.T. & Moreno, C. (2005) 'Democracy and Economic Growth: A Historical Perspective', *World Politics*, 57 (3), 323-364

¹⁰⁴ Börzel, T. A. and Risse, T. (2012) 'From Europeanization to Diffusion: Introduction', *West European Politics* 35(1): 1–19

¹⁰⁵ Bohle, D., Greskovits, B. (2012) *Capitalist Diversity on Europe's Periphery*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

¹⁰⁶ Whitehead, L. (2004) 'Democratization with the Benefit of Hindsight: The Changing International Components.', *The UN Role in Promoting Democracy*. Newman, E and Rich R.(eds.). New York: United Nations University Press. 135-67.

¹⁰⁷ Schimmelfennig, F. & Scholtz, H. (2008) 'EU democracy promotion in the European neighbourhood - Political conditionality, economic development and transnational exchange', *European Union Politics*, 9 (2): 187-215

¹⁰⁸ Diamond, L. and Plattner, M. (2015) *Democracy in Decline?* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press

¹⁰⁹ Levitsky, S. & Way, L. (2015) 'The Myth of Democratic Recession', *Journal of Democracy*, 26 (1): 45-58.

¹¹⁰ Putnam, R., Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R.Y. (1994) *Making Democracy Work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

¹¹¹ Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem). (2020) *Autocratization Surges—Resistance Grows Democracy Report 2020*.

of backsliding. The erosion of separation of powers in Turkey and European neighbour countries feed onto their democratic decline, despite the EU's engagement in these countries.

Countries aspiring for accession such as Turkey¹¹² and Western Balkans¹¹³ need to satisfy EU's accession criteria and adopt and implement measures that would guarantee judicial independence. For example, the backslide into authoritarianism and systematic violations of the principle of the rule of law in Turkey makes that case¹¹⁴ an interesting example of the limits of conditionality on the one hand,¹¹⁵ and the difficulties of norm diffusion with regard to the rule of law on the other. Understanding the dynamics of the authoritarian capture of democracies in Europe is part of building a conceptual framework to understand democratic regression at a more abstract level. That is because there seems to be no uniform pattern of regression into authoritarianism. Different countries are experiencing subtle variations in different components of democracies, enhancing the conceptual and methodological challenges in accounting for democratic decline. For example, historical legacies in Turkey and other countries in the European periphery emerge as key factors in shaping the foundations of democratic transformation. This might mean that country specific factors need to be teased out to understand modalities of political change in Turkey. Similarly, factors in a comprehensive and comparative understanding of democratic regression are institutional level dynamics – such as judicial and legislative constraints on the executive power – and the EU's possible influence with its legal rules and norms.

As a result, democratic breakdown at the systemic level, global factors and changing power dynamics impact Turkey's relations with the EU, contributing to its moving further away from the European political sphere of influence. Given the increased anxiety about international borders and the decline in the European model as a source of aspiration, Turkey's future with the EU does not seem promising. This is, of course, disheartening given the convergence of interests between Turkey and the EU, and the centuries long interdependence. The reshaping of Turkey's relations with the EU is needed to create a new momentum in this vital relationship and to prevent further democratic regression.



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¹¹²Müftüler-Bac, M. (2016a) 'The Pandora's Box: Democratization and Rule of Law in Turkey', *Asia-Europe Journal*, 14(1),.61-77

¹¹³ Richter, S., & Wunsch, N. (2019) 'Money, power, glory: The linkages between EU conditionality and state capture in the Western Balkans', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1-22.

¹¹⁴ Müftüler-Bac, M. (2016) *Diverging Pathways: Turkey and the European Union, Re-Thinking the Dynamics of Turkish-European Union Relations*, Berlin: Budrich publishers.

¹¹⁵ Müftüler-Bac, M. (2000) 'The Impact of the European Union on Turkish Politics', *East European Quarterly*, 34(2), 159-179 and Müftüler-Bac, M. (2005) 'Turkey's Political Reforms: The Impact of the European Union', *Southeast European Politics and Societies*, 10(1), 16.30.'

Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Question of the Aegean Islands 1912-14: A Reassessment

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This article re-assesses Anglo-Ottoman relations and the origins of World War I between 1912 and 1914, namely from the emergence of the Balkan Crisis until the Ottoman-German alliance of 2 August 1914. However, the emphasis is on the question of the Aegean Islands in conjunction with the Balkan wars leading to the alliance.

With the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese (Oniki Ada) during the Ottoman-Italian war of 1911-12 (*Trablusgarp Savaşı*), and the Greek occupation of the remaining Aegean Islands during the early stages of the Balkan Wars, the question of the Islands became an ongoing issue, not only in Ottoman-Greek relations but also in European political developments, leading to the Great War and events thereafter. It took over 30 years for the question of the Islands to be “officially settled” and for them to be transferred to Greece. Nevertheless, controversies surrounding the question remain and often create tension not only between the two neighbouring states but also in the contemporary European political arena. For many, the issue has not been resolved either by international law or at the conference table.

For British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey (1905-16), in particular, it was vital for the status quo in the Eastern Mediterranean not to be challenged by a third party. This no doubt delayed resolving the question of the Islands. Furthermore, British support for the Greek position not only delayed a solution but also made the issue become an international one.

There was a gradual deterioration in Ottoman-British relations under Sir Edward Grey. Thus, when World War I broke out in late July 1914 and the British entered the war soon after, Grey insisted on Ottoman neutrality. He believed neutrality was essential for the preservation of the Ottoman Empire’s integrity and for peace among the rest of the Balkan states.

This article does not intend to tackle all the questions on the Aegean Islands or on the origins of the Great War. What it aims to do is to partially fill a gap in the historiography

of the late Ottoman period and also contribute to current debates on the Great War and what followed.

Emergence of the Aegean Islands' Question during the Balkan Wars

In the late spring of 1912, when the Italians occupied (temporarily) the Dodecanese archipelago in the Aegean during the Ottoman-Italian War (1911-12), tension between the Ottomans and the rest of the Balkan states was already escalating. This accelerated the development of alliances between the Balkan states in May 1912 and would lead to war.¹¹⁶

With regard to the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese, the Great Powers (*Concert of Europe*) had serious concerns because the political equilibrium among the powers in the eastern Mediterranean was important for all and, as expected, tensions escalated as a result of the Italian action. The Ottomans were uncomfortable that occupation would have a serious impact on Ottoman-Greek relations, which undoubtedly speeded up the signing of a peace treaty between the Ottomans and the Italians.

The Peace of Ouchy was signed with the Italians on 15 October 1912. The next day, the Ottomans broke off diplomatic relations with the Balkan states and a state of war was declared with the Balkan allies.¹¹⁷ At the outbreak of the Balkan War, all the European powers declared neutrality and hoped to keep the war local.

When the Ottoman defeat became inevitable in the early stages of war, an armistice was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan allies on 3 December. Greek naval forces occupied most of the Ottoman-held Aegean Islands by December 1912.¹¹⁸ The Ottomans were particularly worried that a Greek occupation of the islands so close to the mainland would present a permanent threat to the safety of the Ottoman Aegean coast and to Asia Minor.¹¹⁹

Following the armistice, two conferences opened in London: the St James Conference, between the Balkan allies and the Ottoman Empire, and the Ambassadors Conference, under the presidency of Sir Edward Grey with the signatories of the Berlin Treaty of 1878 – namely the Great Powers.



The Balkans had scarcely been an issue in European politics since the Treaty of Berlin. However, with the Balkan Wars, they had become significant and posed again a threat to European peace.¹²⁰ Therefore, the Great Powers decided to discuss issues of mutual interest, including the Aegean Islands, the future of Albania, and the question of Adrianople (Edirne) and to mediate among the Balkan states on matters that they believed were too important to leave the Balkan allies to deal with alone.

¹¹⁶ Gül Tokay, 'The Balkan Wars, Ottoman Diplomacy and the Question of the Aegean Islands', *The Centenary of the Balkan Wars (1912- 1913), Contested Stances*, Mustafa Türkeş (ed.), (Ankara: Turkish Historical Association/ Türk Tarih Kurumu /TTK, 2014), pp. 217-30.

¹¹⁷ Tokay, 'Aegean Islands', pp. 217-230.

¹¹⁸ Sinan Kunalalp, *Ottoman Documents on the Origins of World War One, vol. VI, The Aegean Islands Issue* (Istanbul: Isis, 2011), p.41. For the British documents see Bilal Şimşir, *Ege Sorunu, Belgeler/ Aegean Question, Documents, 1912-3* (Ankara: TTK, 1989, II. edition).

¹¹⁹ Kunalalp, *Aegean Islands Issue*, pp.11-13.

¹²⁰ TNA, Adm (The National Archives, Admiralty) 1/8384/ 193, Arthur Limpus, Constantinople, 31 January 1914.

Grey's priority was to prevent any of the Great Powers acquiring a naval base in the Aegean, which would threaten the *status quo* in the Eastern Mediterranean and Egypt. For the British, their naval strength was the one great balancing power which was crucial to the peace in Europe.¹²¹ On the other hand, the establishment of the new Albanian state was the priority of the Austrians and Italians. Under these circumstances, the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese and the Greek occupation of the Aegean Islands became a bargaining tool among the Great Powers during the course of the Balkan Wars.

Among the belligerents, for the Greek Prime Minister, Eleftherios Venizelos, the Aegean Islands, including the Dodecanese, were of political and strategic importance. He, therefore, insisted on keeping them and hoped to gain the support of the British Foreign Secretary. For Venizelos, the Islands were already occupied by the Greek troops and most of the people inhabiting them were Greek, and these issues had to be given serious consideration at the conference table.¹²²

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Foreign Ministers, Gabriel Effendi and his successor Said Halim Pasha (after the January coup of 1913), were convinced that the ceding of the Islands to Greece posed a strategic and commercial threat to the Ottoman Empire, as well as challenging the equilibrium in the Mediterranean. Some of the Islands were at the entrance to the Straits, and others were close to the mainland of the Ottoman Empire. If the Ottoman Empire was forced to accept the secession of the Islands, there would be little tranquility in Ottoman-Greek relations and war would be all but inevitable.¹²³

The Ottomans hoped to use Crete as a bargaining tool. They withdrew all their claims to Crete while they pressed their claims for the rest of the Islands. But this ended in disappointment for the Ottomans. Crete was unified with Greece in 1913 and none of the powers showed any sympathy for the Ottoman claims.

The Balkan allies, as well as the European powers, backed Greek possession of the Islands, with the exception, due to their strategic proximity to the Ottoman mainland, of Imbros (Gökçeada) and Tenedos (Bozcaada), once the Greeks evacuated southern Albania. The Ottomans hoped that the Italians and Austrians would take a more pro-Turkish view on the conference table, but they were not willing to dissociate themselves from the other powers.¹²⁴ The priority of the Italians and Austrians was the settlement of the Albanian issue and reaching a lasting consensus with the Greeks on the southern borders for the future Albanian state.¹²⁵ Therefore, they were ready to give full support to the Greek demands on the question of the islands including the Dodecanese.

¹²¹ Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis (1911-1914)*, vol I, (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1923), p.184-88; Tokay, 'Question of the Aegean Islands', pp. 217-30.

¹²² Kuneralp, *Aegean Islands Issue*, Gabriel to envoys, Constantinople, 22 January 1913, p. 53.

¹²³ Kuneralp, *Aegean Islands Issue*, Gabriel to Naby, Constantinople, 17 January 1913 and further correspondence, pp. 50-53; TNA, FO (Foreign Office) 800/69, Grey to Elliot, London, 21 January 1913.

¹²⁴ Kuneralp, *The Aegean Islands Issue*, pp. 11-13.

¹²⁵ Tokay, "Aegean Islands", in Türkeş (eds.), pp. 217-30.

Meanwhile, Grey tried to take the leading role on the question of the Islands – those under both Greek and Italian occupation – about which he was willing to reach an agreement with the consent of the Great Powers.¹²⁶



It became obvious that the Great Powers were ready to grant the Islands to Greece, not only because of their favouritism towards the Greeks, but also as a compromise on the Albanian issue. The Ottoman Foreign Minister, Said Halim was convinced that once the Italians evacuated the Islands, the Ottomans would find themselves in a *fait accompli* over the Dodecanese as well.¹²⁷

The question of the Aegean Islands further escalated in early 1914 when the British government proposed a naval demonstration against the Ottomans. This was after the Ottomans again refused the Powers' proposals on the transfer of the Aegean islands. However, this idea was dropped when the other powers rejected the British proposals. This incident, however, coincided with the British delaying the delivery of two dreadnoughts that had been ordered by the Ottoman government in 1911. The rumours were that the dreadnoughts could upset the naval balance between Greece and the Ottoman Empire in the Aegean.¹²⁸

Meanwhile, in secret correspondence Grey had with the British Ambassador Henry Elliot in Athens, there was mention of Venizelos' efforts to finalise an entente with the British, but Grey was reluctant for a bilateral agreement with the Greeks due to the likely opposition of the rest of the Great Powers on this issue.¹²⁹

Undoubtedly, there was a further deterioration in Anglo-Ottoman relations from the beginning of the Balkan wars. This situation only worsened with Grey's insistence on placing the Aegean Islands under the Greek authorities.¹³⁰ On questions that did not directly involve the British, like those relating to the Ottoman Empire's eastern borders, Grey often took sides with his ally Russia and expressed indifference.¹³¹ But, even when the British and the Ottomans had had more cordial relations in the past, alliance with the Ottomans had never been on Grey's agenda during his service as Foreign Secretary.¹³²

After the end of the Balkan Wars, with tensions escalating over the Islands and other unresolved issues between the Greeks and the Ottomans, Ottoman officials decided that they should try to come to a bilateral agreement, and this was welcomed by their Greek counterparts. When the Sarajevo assassinations took place on 28 June 1914,

¹²⁶ Kunalp, *The Aegean Islands Issue*, pp. 77-89. At the London Treaty of 30 May 1913, ending the First Balkan War, it was agreed the Aegean Islands and future of Albania were to be settled by the *great powers*.

¹²⁷ Kunalp, *Aegean Islands Issue*, Said Halim to Ambassadors, Constantinople, 21 May 1913, pp.78-90. The Dodecanese were ceded to Greece by the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947 and the other islands, apart from Imbros and Tenados, were given to Greece at the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

¹²⁸ TNA, FO 371/2123, Mallet to Grey, Constantinople, 21 January 1914.

¹²⁹ TNA, FO 800/63 (Grey Papers), Grey to Elliot, London, 21 January 1914, pp. 38-39.

¹³⁰ Şimşir, *Aegean Question*, FO 421/283, Grey to Elliott, FO, 18 October 1912, pp. 265-6.

¹³¹ Thomas Otte, *The Statesman of Europe: A Life of Sir Edward Grey* (London: Allan Lane, 2020), pp. 451-468.

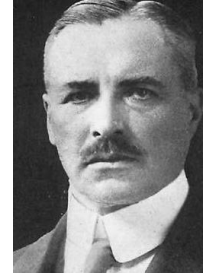
¹³² Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), pp.161-162.

the Ottomans and Greeks were considering the possibility of an agreement, which might have included other states in the region.¹³³

Anglo- Ottoman Relations and the Alliance of 2 August

Ottoman officials underestimated the danger created by the Sarajevo assassinations, thinking it would be eased by Serbian concessions. Furthermore, if a war were to break out between the belligerents, they believed it would remain localised.¹³⁴ However, events proceeded rather rapidly and on 28 July 1914 Austria declared war on Serbia and Germany joined in, declaring war on Russia.

Germany already had influence among leading officials in the Ottoman government. A proposal was sent by Said Halim to the German ambassador Hans von Wangenheim at the end of July. A treaty forming a secret alliance was signed by the Ottomans and Germans on 2 August and Austria joined shortly after.¹³⁵



Britain joined the war on 4 August but maintained neutrality towards the Ottomans as long as the latter allowed the free passage of merchant ships through the Straits and Dardanelles.¹³⁶ However, relations quickly deteriorated between the Ottoman Empire and Britain when the Admiralty decided not to deliver the two dreadnoughts to the Ottoman navy until after the war. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of Admiralty (1911-15), wanted to keep both dreadnoughts for the Royal Navy, which he believed was necessary for British safety. Aware of Germany's naval power, Churchill wanted to prevent the ships being used against them in a possible alliance between the Germans and the Ottomans.¹³⁷

The turning point in Ottoman-British relations, however, was when the Ottomans took possession of the German battle cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* on 10 August. The British asked for their immediate return to Germany. The French and the Russians were also angry, seeing the acquisition of the ships as a violation of Ottoman neutrality.

This was a serious worry for Churchill, who was already informed of the secret treaty of 2 August. Soon after, he approached Venizelos, via the head of the British Naval Mission Admiral Kerr in Greece, to seek a possible alliance.¹³⁸ Despite Venizelos' sympathies for an alliance, and the rumours that the Greek cabinet and the King were ready to place at the disposal of the Entente all their resources, nothing was finalised.¹³⁹ The Greeks were reluctant to abandon their position of neutrality due to the recent experience of the Balkan wars and their historical friendship with the Serbs. The Greeks were concerned that they could provoke an Ottoman-Bulgarian alliance.

¹³³ Gül Tokay, 'Austro-Ottoman Relations and the Origins of World War One, 1912-14: A Reinterpretation',

Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs, Summer-Autumn 2015 Volume XX Number 2, pp. 50-51.

¹³⁴ Sinan Kuneralp, *Ottoman Documents on the Origins of World War One, vol. VIII, From the July Crisis to Turkey's Entry into the War, July- December 1914* (Istanbul: Isis, 2012), p.12.

¹³⁵ Tokay, 'Austro- Ottoman Relations', pp. 48-53.

¹³⁶ Kuneralp, *July Crisis to Turkey's Entry*, Tevfik to Said Halim, London, 18 August 1914, pp.151-2.

¹³⁷ Churchill, *The World Crisis*, vol I, p.118.

¹³⁸ TNA, Adm137/ 881, Churchill to HM Minister, Athens, 3 September 1914.

¹³⁹ TNA, FO 800/63 (Grey Papers), vol. 1, Erskine to Grey, Athens, 19 August 1914.

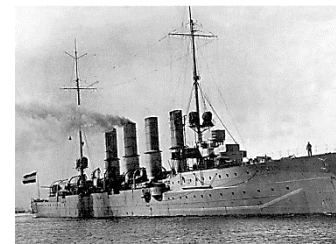
For some time, Churchill believed war with the Ottoman Empire was inevitable. He realised the importance of an Anglo-Greek alliance and wanted British foreign policy to be more sympathetic toward Greece. This was important for Churchill because he had the ambition to seize the Gallipoli peninsula and then reach the sea of Marmara via the Dardanelles with the support of the Greeks. But the Greeks were not ready to join an alliance with any of the powers in the early stages of the war.¹⁴⁰ Grey was also reluctant because an alliance with Greece meant war with the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria. The Foreign Secretary preferred that the Balkan states should remain neutral as long as circumstances permitted.¹⁴¹

In the early stages of the war, given the recent experience of the Balkan wars, the states in the region attempted to avoid involvement. But, for Venizelos, keeping neutral was not easy. Therefore, he left his options open for a possible Anglo- Greek alliance.¹⁴²

Similarly, for many in the Ottoman empire, especially the pro-German wing of Ottoman officialdom, neutrality in the crisis would have negative consequences. More importantly, the Ottoman Empire was neither militarily nor financially strong enough to remain neutral during the war and would face even more serious consequences once the war had ended.¹⁴³

Thus, despite the Ottomans signing an alliance with the Germans and Austrians, it took them another three months to join the war. In the meantime, German influence in the empire grew and the Ottomans' relations with the rest of the Entente further deteriorated.

With the Ottoman-German alliance, the dreadnoughts crisis, and the Ottoman possession of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* just after Britain had declared war on Germany, Ottoman neutrality became impossible.



The Ottomans continued to try to seek an understanding with the Greeks over the question of the Islands in the early stages of the war. The Greeks, on the other hand, despite their neutrality, were primarily worried about a possible combined Ottoman-German attack in the Aegean. They therefore started to explore the possibilities of alliances with other states.

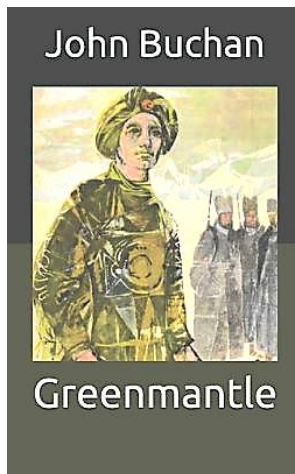
Though it took more than 30 years for all the islands in dispute to be officially transferred to Greece, the Ottomans had already lost all their bargaining power over the future of the Islands with their entry into the Great War.

¹⁴⁰ Otte, *The Statesman of Europe A Life of Sir Edward Grey*, pp.553-54.

¹⁴¹ BBA, HRSYS 2402/37, Mukhtar to Said Halim, Berlin, 24 August , 1914.

¹⁴² TNA, FO 800/63, Elliot to Grey, Athens, 2 September 1914.

¹⁴³ Tokay, 'Austro-Ottoman Relations', pp. 52-54.



EFFORTLESS SUPERIORITY:

JOHN BUCHAN'S *GREENMANTLE* REVISITED

John Moreton
University of Leeds

“Jay-miss Bond. My name is Jay-miss Bond”. That was how the strapping young man from the village introduced himself to me with a big grin as I joined him and others from the village to start work at the dig site at an unconscionably early hour on that first sweaty morning in July 1971. Given that he knew I was a young *İngiliz*, that was a highly commendable attempt at intercultural communication. The rescue archaeology campaign was based near Elaziğ in the erstwhile village of Aşvan, now resting eternally under the waters of the Keban Dam, and I have no idea what later became of that young man and his fellow villagers we employed on the dig.

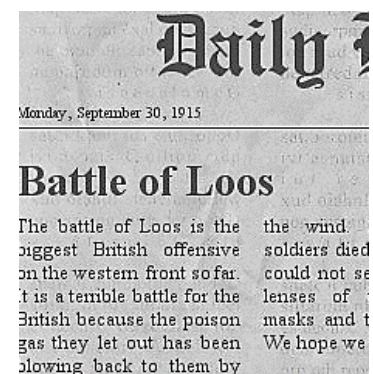
He can surely have had no idea, either, that a fictional James Bond prototype had apparently been on a mission much earlier in the century in a part of eastern Turkey not far away to the north-east. Neither was I aware of that at the time. İstanbul (which will be referred to henceforward as Constantinople, as we cast our minds and imaginations back to a century ago) has of course unsurprisingly been chosen more than once as a location for the familiar Bond offerings. Erzurum, however, has not (as far as I know) attracted the same attention: ‘exotic’ is not a description that readily lends itself to this austere eastern Anatolian city, although the brooding mountain scenery, the ski facilities at nearby Palandöken and the thick columns and gloomy interior of the Ulu Cami (Great Mosque) in the centre could surely be used to provide the setting for plenty of Bond-like intrigue, action and villainy. Indeed, Alfred Hitchcock could really have put Erzurum ‘on the map’, cinematically speaking, had he been able to realize his aim of filming John Buchan’s *Greenmantle*, as he had done with *The 39 Steps*. This ‘classic British spy adventure story’ and ‘huge bestseller when it was published in 1916’, to quote from the blurb of the Hodder paperback edition of 2007, would have made a stirring film climaxing in the demise of the villains and the Russian forces sweeping down from the hills to capture Erzurum in February 1916. But the Buchan estate wanted too much money to give the go-ahead.

Like many, no doubt, I read *Greenmantle* in my teens (along with *The 39 Steps* and *The Island of Sheep*) and gobbled up the adventure without having much idea of the historical and geographical context. As I recall, that final line “*Greenmantle* had appeared at last to an awaiting people” was a mystery that I felt I would have to return to later. As it happened, I did in fact refer in passing in a previous TAS Review piece (Issue 32, Autumn 2018, p 62: *East of Trebizond – A 2016 Update*) to the rough location of the *Greenmantle* grand finale in the hills around Erzurum. The present

article is neither a serious book review nor a scholarly investigation, but simply an attempt to review briefly the Ottoman Turkish angle and context of the story, given that more attention has been paid to Buchan's surprisingly nuanced treatment of his German characters.

The overall historical context – of the First World War in the East - is certainly one that is not generally well known. Readers who wish to be better informed in detail should read the American historian Sean McMeekin's *The Ottoman Endgame* (2015). The main context for *Greenmantle*, however, is the Kaiser's cynical and dastardly scheme to use his alliance with the Young Turk regime to beat the drum for a *jihad*, or 'holy war', that will unite Muslims in the remaining Ottoman territories, Persia and everywhere between Constantinople and India to fight and to bring down the British Empire. There is also the little-known but terrible conflict that develops between the German-backed Ottoman and the imperial Russian forces in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus – by no means unconnected with the reasons for the more familiar Gallipoli campaign, and in full swing at the time of our story as the Russians advance westwards towards the military fortress of Erzurum and beyond.

All this is very much on the mind of Sir Walter Bullivant of the Foreign Office (let's think of him as 'M') in the opening chapter of *Greenmantle*. It's the autumn of 1915, after the Battle of Loos. When he summons our principal hero, Major Richard Hannay, out of his convalescence following that battle for a confidential chat and a proposed secret assignment, he expresses his belief that the masses in the provincial parts of the Ottoman Empire are being prepared by Germany and her agents to expect a revelation or a prophet in human or other form to arise from the West. The secret is believed, Sir Walter says, to be still lurking in Europe – or possibly already in Constantinople or Thrace – and it will be a dangerous mission in enemy territory for Hannay to track it down. There is just one clue: a piece of paper retrieved from the dead body of Sir Walter's own son, who has been on the trail as a secret agent in Mesopotamia and Persia until the enemy agents caught up with him. Mysteriously, the paper contains only the three words 'Kasredin', 'cancer' and 'v.1'.



Hannay accepts the mission and immediately ropes in his best mate and fellow soldier and adventurer Ludovick ('Sandy') Arbuthnot. Bullivant knows him by reputation, at least, as an extraordinary fellow who has been around in 'the East' – in Yemen and elsewhere in the Arab world as well as in Albania and Turkey (where he "used to take a hand in Turkish politics...") and has always had "a more than oriental reticence" (a good quality in espionage). Sandy Arbuthnot (who in the end assumes the role of 'Greenmantle') is believed to be most likely modelled on Buchan's friend of that period Aubrey Herbert, an adventurer who had befriended Young Turk leaders before the war and later served as a Turkish-speaking liaison officer at Gallipoli; T E Lawrence was also seen subsequently as a possible model. Both Sandy Arbuthnot and Dick Hannay are essentially aristocratic adventurers, travellers and capable linguists who address one another as "old man" and exhibit that very British attitude at the time, the 'tranquil consciousness of effortless superiority' that Herbert Asquith associated with Balliol College, Oxford: nothing is too much of a challenge for them, and they fill their pipes just as James Bond orders his well-known refreshment at the bar. Languages? No problem, for Dick (with his South African background and experience) can manage

with Dutch and German, while Sandy knows German fairly well, and “can pass anywhere as a Turk”. Sandy also understands the word ‘Kasredin’ as meaning (vaguely) ‘House of Faith’ in Arabic, but the other words on the piece of paper remain a mystery.

The third member of this band of ‘missionaries’, as Buchan terms them, is the dyspeptic American businessman and accomplished pro-British spy John S Blenkiron, recommended by Bullivant. Though he acknowledges that he “was left out at Pentecost”, Blenkiron turns out to have other strengths. It is now 17 November 1915, and the trio agree that they should rendezvous at a location known to Sandy in Constantinople exactly two months later. Sandy is to approach in his own way and using his contacts via the coast of Asia Minor; interestingly, Dick pays the Turks a rather mysterious compliment by telling Sandy that he’s “the only one of us that knows that engaging people”. Meanwhile, Dick himself will travel perilously through Europe to reach the Bosphorus; and Blenkiron will travel as an American citizen through Germany.

Dick first has to establish an elaborate cover story to deceive German agents. He does this by posing as a Boer named Cornelis Brandt who has arrived in Portugal from Africa and, by an implausible chance, meets his old South African (and anti-German) friend Peter Pienaar. Peter willingly joins the plot, and before long the pair are travelling with German help to Berlin, where they meet their formidable adversary, the bullying villain Colonel von Stumm. He soon questions their credentials, and Dick finds that he has to escape Stumm’s clutches in southern Germany (though only after being introduced to the Kaiser at a railway station). Meanwhile Pienaar is jailed after not keeping a low profile.

It is now Christmastime, and at this point Dick has a first breakthrough. He has heard Stumm mention a lady called Hilda and has also heard the name von Einem on his travels, so deduces that the ‘v.1’ refers to this Hilda von Einem. He also recalls Stumm whispering something like “grüner Mantel” (German for ‘Greenmantle’). To continue his journey to Constantinople, Dick eventually succeeds in posing as an engineer to board one of the Essen barges transporting German munitions down the Danube for delivery to ‘the old Turk’. The clock is ticking towards 17 January 1916, but the escaped Peter Pienaar miraculously re-appears in the story and the barge duly reaches Rustchuk (the Turkish name for the Bulgarian port of Ruse) on the 10th. Here – and later at the Turkish/German artillery depot at Chataldja – Dick falls foul of Rasta Bey, the less than ‘engaging’ Young Turk from the Committee (of Union and Progress) who tries to bribe him; but at least the incident provides the opportunity to demonstrate effortless superiority. Having crossed with the munitions by rail into the Ottoman realm at Mustafa Pasha, Dick and Peter continue from Chataldja to arrive in Constantinople on the 16 January.

The city has probably never looked its best in mid-January, and our two heroes are duly disappointed by the “wet and dirty metropolis” they encounter. They make their way to Sandy’s stated rendezvous location (the intriguingly-named “Garden-House of Suliman the Red” café and dance-hall) somewhere in the back streets of Galata, and after stepping out again into the Stamboul night are attacked by a mob instigated by Rasta Bey and crying the ominous word “*Khafiyeh!*” (Ottoman Turkish for ‘secret intelligence agent’). At this point Dick understandably wishes that he knew some Turkish. The mob is then dispersed by another band of wildly dancing men led by a

tall fellow strangely dressed in animal skins and sandals – Dick hears them described in fear as “*Chinganeb*” (Gypsies). To be brief, the strange series of events of the next day culminates in a remarkable *We’ve-been-expecting-you-Mr-Bond* moment when Dick and Peter are re-united not with villains but with Sandy (who was disguised as the Gypsy leader) and Mr Blenkiron. Sandy has come up from Smyrna and has also identified the new prophet Greenmantle as a figure arising out of *Kasredin*, a kind of Turkish miracle play called *orta oyunu*. In the story the prophet has a female ally, and Blenkiron now reveals that in real life she has turned out to be the “lovely lady” Hilda von Einem whom he has met and who owns the house they are staying in.

Blenkiron also equips Dick Hannay with a fresh identity as an American engineer named Hanau, and the story now moves on into a new phase as events draw the trio towards the denouement at Erzurum. Sandy and Dick meet and are fascinated by Hilda von Einem, and Dick has to deal temporarily with Rasta Bey after being recognised: more effortless superiority. He also attends in his new guise a German-hosted dinner at which he meets and chats with Enver Pasha, the Young Turk Minister of War. Sandy meanwhile solves the second mystery clue by discovering that the man who is to be Greenmantle is actually on his deathbed, stricken by cancer. They are then enlisted by the German *femme fatale* to travel not to Mesopotamia but rather to the ‘great hills’ of eastern Anatolia, where because of the recent Russian victories over the Ottoman forces the need to deploy Greenmantle (or at least a substitute) as a rallying point is greatest. Accompanied by one of Sandy’s men, they travel by rail to Angora, seeing en route the masses of ill-equipped troops being re-deployed eastwards from Gallipoli. Then, with no railway going further, they manage finally to reach Erzurum along the five hundred miles of rough road via Sivas and Erzincan, but only after ‘borrowing’ (in true Bond style) a car that turns out to belong to Rasta Bey.



Once in Erzurum, with the sound of the great guns booming in the nearby hills, they fall once again into the hands of Stumm. But they are rescued in short order by Sandy’s man Hussin, and in what would make a wonderful Bond-like cinematic sequence they escape perilously across the rooftops of Erzurum to find refuge in a cellar, with Dick having stolen from an open room a map and papers that Stumm has been seen working on: yet another instance of (almost) effortless superiority. These documents reveal the German and Turkish staffs’ plan for the defence of Erzurum, highlighting the importance of the fort on Karagöbek to the north-east. Peter Pienaar then volunteers to deliver this information – at great peril – to the Russians, while Sandy re-appears after spending time with the “evil, evil” Madame von Einem, and suitably sporting a green turban, to announce that Greenmantle is now dead and buried (in her garden) and that he, Sandy, has been designated to take his place in rallying the troops. This is in fact what he does shortly afterwards (if we abridge the excitement and complicated twists and turns of Buchan’s wonderfully written finale to the novel): when Dick and Blenkiron have made their way on horseback to a redoubt in the hills, both Hilda von Einem and Stumm are killed there as the Cossack-led friendly Russian forces arrive, ready to ride in triumph down into Erzurum. Peter re-materializes, having accomplished his mission (Sean McMeekin, in his account of the capture of Erzurum, mentions that a Turkish officer had in fact deserted and presented the Russians with a map of the city’s defences and artillery placements), and they then ride furiously alongside the Cossacks, with Sandy in his striking emerald coat and turban leading the way in ironic fulfilment of the ‘prophecy’.

Greenmantle is still eminently worth reading, I believe, not just for the compelling narrative with its heady blend of realism and implausibility, but also for the interesting reminder it offers us of some lesser-known aspects of the First World War. There is overall more emphasis on German than on Turkish characters, but the portraits of the irascible, threatening but ultimately ineffectual Rasta Bey and of his boss Enver Pasha are sharply drawn. Buchan had visited Constantinople, but for a lot of his information and portrayal of Turkey (especially Anatolia) at the time he must have relied on informants such as Aubrey Herbert, on studying maps and books and on his own prodigious imagination and descriptive powers. It's a pity we still lack a film version, but in the meantime I would certainly recommend a (summer) visit to Erzurum and points east. Unlike Dick Hannay and his friends, you could nowadays travel there more comfortably by train from Ankara on the *Doğu Ekspresi* (Eastern Express), read or re-read *Greenmantle* on the way while taking in the dramatic scenery, and allow John Buchan to stimulate your imagination with his depiction of events there more than a century ago.

SALAR: A LITTLE-KNOWN TURKISH DIALECT

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Introduction

Salar (in Salar: *salır gaçı*) is, along with Yoghur and Gïrgïs, one of the three Turkish dialects specific to China. It has two varieties, one spoken in the Ili region in northern Xinjiang and the other in eastern Qinghai, and more particularly in Xunhua Salar Autonomous County. The latter, which has the largest number of speakers, is further divided into two dialects, mainly distinguished from each other by some aspects of their phonology. After having been considered for a long time as a dialect of the Karluk variety currently called Uyghur, there seems to be now a consensus on the Oghuz nature of Salar. However, some of its characteristics can hardly be explained otherwise than as the result of the influence of non-Oghuz Turkish dialects.

The Salars, who speak the language we are dealing with here, are predominantly Sunni Muslims belonging to the Hanafi law school but between the 17th and 19th centuries various Sufi currents spread among them and the beginning of the 20th century saw the arrival of the Ikhwân movement in Xunhua.

Historical sources attest the presence of the Salars from the end of the fourteenth century or, more precisely, 1370, on the upper reaches of the Yellow River, in the east of what is now Qinghai and in the south of Gansu, where most of them still live today.

There is also another tradition, according to which their arrival in the area in question took place earlier, dating back at least to the previous century, during the period of Mongol rule, of which the Salars may have been auxiliaries.

Despite the absence of precise historical data on their migration or their installation, the Salar tradition makes it possible to fill this gap to some extent. The Salars retain an oral memory of their Central Asian origin, the most common version of their “ethnogenetic” account situating the starting point of their ancestors’ journey in the area of Samarkand, from where they would have been guided to their future homeland by two imams: Akhmang and Garamang. The fact that the name of the second character appears in the Oghuz genealogies where it refers to a descendant of the eponymous ancestor of the Oghuz, together with the similarity of the auto-ethnonym *salır* with *salır* ~ *salur*, which is the name of one of the 22 or 24 ancient Oghuz Turkish clans as well as one of the modern Turkmen clans, appear to argue for a connection of the Salars to this branch of the Turks, of which they would be the most eastern representatives. This issue, however, is far from settled and points to another question, namely that of the exact position of Salar within Turkish, which equally remains to be clarified.

According to statistical data from the 2010 Population Census of China (last published), the Salar population is estimated at 130,607, of whom, according to other data, which are for their part unofficial, some 87,000 live in Xunhua. Most of the Salars seem to be Salar speakers.

Although Salar has a traditional writing system known as *türk oğuş*, which is an adaptation of the Arabic alphabet, it is rarely used by the Salars with the exception of a few elderly people. The writing system has been the subject of only very few studies, among them notably two articles: one by the researcher Hán Jiànyè (1989), published under the name of Yībùlā Kèlimù, and another, published recently, by the present author (2020). The description of the language of the texts written in *türk oğuş*, which differs in many respects from the contemporary Salar language, remains to be done.

The first important works on Salar have been carried out by Malov and Tenishev, *Stroj salarskogo jazyka* (Structure of Salar Language), written by the latter in 1976 and remaining to this day the most complete contribution to the grammar of this dialect. The decades following the publication of this *magnum opus* have seen new researchers shedding more light on certain aspects of the Salar language. Regarding grammar, besides the work earlier mentioned, another important contribution is Lín Liányún’s *Sālāyǔ jiǎnzhi* (A Sketch of Salar Language) (1985). Regarding lexicography, we should mention *Sālā hàn hàn sālā cíhuì* (A Salar-Chinese Chinese-Salar Lexicon) (1985), also by Lín Liányún, and *Sāwéihàn cídiǎn* (A Salar-Uyghur-Chinese Dictionary) (2010) by Hán Jiànyè and Mǎ Chéngjùn which constitutes the most comprehensive Salar lexicon published to date. Worth mentioning among the studies published in recent years is Arienne Dwyer’s *Salar: a study in inner Asian language contact processes part 1: phonology* (2007) which, besides providing information on the Salars, highlights the phonological system of Salar and offers various thoughts on the etymology of some signifiers.

Given the framework provided for this outline, I confined myself to the presentation of a few points of morphology. Readers who would like to know more about Salar can look for further information in the bibliography.

1. Derivation

1.1. Suffixes used to form denominative nouns.

-*cl*: *ağaçcı* « woodcutter » < *ağaç* « wood », *satıhcı* « merchant » < *satış* « sale, trade »; -*lıh* ~ -*liş* ~ -*luş* ~ *lüh*, : *otluş* « hayloft » < *ot* « grass », *tütünlüh* « fireplace » < *tütün* « smoke », *yağmurluş* « umbrella » < *yağmur* « rain »; -*cin*: *purnaşcin* « snotty » < *purnaş* « snot », *gaşıcın* « talkative » < *gaşı* « speech ».

1.2. Suffixes used to form denominative verbs.

-*IA*: *derle-* « to sweat » < *der* « sweat », *yırla-* « to sing » < *yır* « song », *yüñle-* « to load » < *yüñ* « load »; -*sA*: *oşusa* « to be sleepy » < *oşu* « sleep », *susa-* « to be thirsty » < *su* « water ».

1.3. Suffixes used to form deverbative nouns.

-*Im* (sometimes -(*U*)*m* after a syllable containing a rounded vowel): *bilim* « knowledge » < *bil-* « to know », *ülim* ~ *ölüm* « death » < *ül-* ~ *öl-* « to die ».

-(*V*)*n*: *tütün* « smoke » < *tüt-* « to smoke (intransitive) », *eşin* « farming » < *eş-* « to plant »; -*mA* (sometimes -*ml*): *yeme* ~ *neme* ~ *nemi* « food » < *ye-* « to eat ».

1.4. Suffixes used to form deverbative verbs

1.4.1. Suffixes of voice

1.4.1.1. Suffix used to convert some verbs into the passive voice

-(*V*)*l* ~ -*il*: *açıl-* « to be opened » < *aç-* ~ *aş-* « to open », *bilil-* « to be known » < *bil-* « to know ».

1.4.1.2. Suffixes used to convert verbs into the factitive voice.

-*D(V)r* ~ -*dlr*: *bildir-* « to inform » < *bil-* « to know », *ettir-* ~ *etdir-* « to make someone/something do » < *et-* « to do », *iştir-* ~ *işdir-* « to make someone/something drink » < *iş-* « to drink », *vahtur* ~ *vahtır* « to show » < *vaht-* « to look ».

-*ar* ~ -*ır*: *çığar-* ~ *çığır-* « to bring out », « to extract » < *çığ-* « to go out ».

-(*V*)*t*: *horğat-* « to scare » < *horğa-* « to be afraid ».

1.4.1.3. Suffix used to convert verbs into the reciprocal voice

-(*V*)*ş*: *uruş-* « to hit each other », « to fight each other » < *ur-* « to hit », « to fight ».

1.4.2. Negation suffix -*mA* ~ -*ma*

This suffix is used to form the negation of most verbal forms.

gelme- ~ *gelma-* « to not come » < *gel-* « to come », *varma-* « to not go » < *var-* « to go ».

2. Noun inflection

Nouns can be inflected for plural, possessive and case. The marks of these grammatical features are attached to the noun in the plural-possessive-case or possessive-plural-case order, with the second being, as far as we have observed, much more frequent than the first.

2.1. Plural

Plural is expressed by means of a suffix in the form -*IAr*: *analar* « daughters » < *ana* « daughter », *kişler* « people » < *kiş* « person ».

2.2. Possessive affixes

They are historically a series of suffixal variants of personal pronouns in the genitive case. Salar has three possessive affixes that constitute the following paradigm:

persons	possessive affixes	English equivalents
1st person	-(<i>V</i>) <i>m</i>	« my » - « our »

2nd person	-(V)ŋ	« your »
3rd person	-(s)ɪ(n)	« his » / « her » - « their »

Examples: *belim* « my waist » ~ « our waist » < *bel* « waist », *anam* « my daughter » ~ « our daughter » < *ana* « daughter », *başırŋ* « your head » ~ « your head » < *baş* « head », *golı* « his arm » ~ « their arm » < *gol* « arm ».

2.3. Case marks

Salar nouns can take seven case suffixes. These are presented in the table below:

case	suffix	ama «mother»	eşgü «goat»	cab «partner»	et «meat»
nominative	-∅	ama	eşgü	cab	et
genitive	-niği	amaniği	eşgüniği	cabniği	etniği
definite accusative	-nı	amanı	eşgünü	cabnı	etnı
dative	-(ğ)A	amağa	eşgüğe	caba	ete
locative	-dA	amada	eşgüde	cabda	etde
ablative	-dAn	amadan	eşgüden	cabdan	etden
instrumental-comitative	-IA	amala	eşgüle	cabla	etle

Transcription

Symbols used in this article / Equivalents in IPA.		Symbols used in this article / Equivalents in IPA.	
a	a	l	l or ɫ
b	b	m	m
c	(dz)	n	n
ç	tç	ŋ	ŋ
d	d	o	o
e	e	ö	ø
f	f	p	p
g	g	r	r
ğ	ɣ or ʁ	s	s
g	g	ş	ʃ
h	h	t	t
h	x or χ	u	u
l	w	ü	y
l	i	v	v
a	j	w	w
b	k	y	j
c	q	z	z

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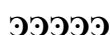
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Part 2

The Wahhabis, concentrated in today's Saudi Arabia, condemn as heretics the Shia whose shrines they destroyed in Iraq, in Medina and wherever they found them. Today



The Sunni-Shia divide: The Roots of Bitterness

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the majority Shia of Saudi Arabia's Eastern, oil-bearing, Hasa province suffer persecution although recent years have seen a carrot and stick approach. The year 2016 saw the execution of the respected Shi'i cleric Shaikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr and in 2018 the army shelled the Shia town of Awamiyah in the Eastern Province. However, in exchange for absolute loyalty the Saudi crown prince and *de facto* ruler Muhammad ibn Salman (known as MBS) is offering to treat his three million Shia subjects much like the Kingdom's 18 million Sunnis. He has curbed the Mutawe'een (religious police) who deride the Shia as *kuffar* (unbelievers) and has appointed a Shi'i to the board of Neom, the planned Saudi mega-city near Aqaba, as well as to the national football team. Anti-Shia vitriol has been removed from school textbooks and television networks.



To return to the historical narrative, under the martial Umayyads leadership was Arab which did not please the Mawalis of Iraq and Persia, the heirs of an ancient and rich culture. Many sought a legitimate succession in the line of the Prophet from an

offspring (Ali and Hussein) already raised in Iraq, rather than slavishly following an Arab aristocracy.

The Umayyad Dynasty was followed by the Abbasids who deeply disappointed the Shia by choosing a different line of the Prophet's family (that of Abbas) and suppressing Shia revolts. The *Wikala* (delegacy) was the secret Shia agency created in Baghdad to escape the Abbasid police. At this time the Shia were claiming that the 11th Imam Hasan al-Askari's mother was the granddaughter of the Byzantine emperor and a descendant of Jesus's disciple Simon. Mary the mother of Jesus and Fatima the wife of Ali appeared in a dream to al-Askari's mother proclaiming that the Mahdi (the 'Chosen One') would return with Jesus one day to rid the world of tyranny. During the early Abbasid period the main line Twelver Shi'is worked secretly from Baghdad – rather as Khomeini worked out of Paris with his own delegates.

The Shia reject the strict Sunni interpretation of *Ijma* or consensus, instead revering the concept of the divinely inspired Imam who was both the leader of the Muslim community and the epitome of religious learning and wisdom. The Imams were impeccable and infallible and could interpret the esoteric (batin) meaning of the Qur'an. On the last day the Mahdi will return to rule the earth in justice and peace.



Until that time his guidance is received through agents or Mujtahids (those who interpret the Qur'an through *Ijtihad* (independent reason)). All Shia believe this but where the Twelvers, Seveners and Fivers differ is who

the Mahdi is. The Twelvers believe that the Twelfth Imam went into occultation (*ghayba*) and once occulted was known as the Hidden Imam. Because they were often persecuted, they resorted to *taqiyya* (hiding their faith when facing persecution). They believe that the Imamate passed from Hussein to his son Ali who was known as Ali Zayn al-Abidin. In turn it then passed to his grandson, Muhammad al-Baqir.

After Muhammad al-Baqir's death the Imamate passed to his son, the greatly respected Ja'far al-Sadiq. These three imams were quietist. A half-brother of Muhammad al-Baqir, Zayd led a revolt against the Umayyads in Kufa in 740 which was quickly suppressed but out of this emerged Zaydism which flourishes in Yemen today and is the closest Shia subject to the Sunnis. The Zaydis reject the doctrine of the Hidden Imam. The Yemeni imamate was overthrown in 1962 and the present Imam lives in England.

The Abbasids at one stage are said to have offered the Imamate to Ja'far al-Sadiq but he declined and remained in Medina, a quiet and thoughtful theologian where he was greatly respected as the teacher of the law-school founders Abu Hanifa and Malik ibn Anas. Jafar designated his son Ismail to succeed but Ismail predeceased him. Scholars see this as Shi'ism's greatest crisis. Jafar's three surviving sons then claimed the Imamate. Many believed that Jafar had not died but entered into occultation and most transferred their allegiance to Jafar's son Musa al-Kazim while others, the Seveners, followed Ismail.



The Abbasids feared the Imams and kept them close. The Abbasid Caliph who represented the great cultural renaissance of Islam and possibly befriended Charlemagne, Harun al-Rashid, kept Musa al-Kazim in prison until he died in 799. Later caliphs married their daughters to the Imams, but the caliph Mutawakil feared the descendants of Ali so much that in 850 he destroyed the tomb of Hussein at

Kerbela as the Wahhabis were later to do. He targeted the 'atabat' (the 'thresholds'), the holy cities of Kerbela, Najaf, al-Kazimiyya and Samarra, which had become the object of passionate Shia pilgrimage. The 11th Imam Hasan al-Askari was a close companion of Ibn Nusayr, the founder of the Alawites who look on Ali virtually as God and flourish in Syria today where they represent some 13 per cent of the population under Bashar al-Assad's tyrannical regime. In 874 Hasan al-Askari died. This was the beginning of the epoch of the Hidden Imam, the last and twelfth imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi.

In 924 a militant Shia group called the Qarmatians pillaged a pilgrimage caravan to Mecca and in 930 removed the sacred black stone from the Kaaba in Mecca which they took to their base in eastern Arabia. The Abbasid centre was crumbling. In the 930's the three sons of Buya mercenaries, Twelver Shia from Daylam to the south of the Caspian Sea, established the Buyid dynasty in Shiraz and Isfahan and in 945 in Baghdad.

In 969 the Isma'ili dynasty the Fatimids, named after Muhammad's daughter Fatima, ruled in Egypt, founding Al-Azhar University which remained Shia until the dynasty was overthrown by the Ayyubid Salah ad-Din in 1171 and returned to Sunnism. It's worth noting that under its rector Shaikh Mahmoud Shaltut in the 1960's, and under its current rector Ahmed El Tayyib, Shia jurisprudence is considered the fifth legal school after those of the Hanbalis, Hanafis, Malikis and Shafi'is.

In the mid-11th century the Buyids lost control to the Turkish Seljuks who had converted to Sunni Islam. The Seljuks defeated the Byzantines at Manzikert north of Lake Van in eastern Turkey in 1071, opening up Anatolia to Turkish tribes. Sunnism was firmly restored but the Shia shrines in Iraq continued to enjoy the visits of thousands of Shia pilgrims. During this period Sunnis and Shia worked together in government without much trouble.

Seljuq Sultan Alp Arslan's defeat of the army of the Byzantine emperor Romanus Diogenes led to the establishment of a sultanate at Konya – known as the Seljuks of Rum. They disintegrated into smaller principalities but out of this soup emerged the Ottomans. At the end of the twelfth century the visionary Abbasid caliph al-Nasir tried to reconcile Sunnis and Shi'is by promoting *futuwwa* – Sufi brotherhoods, associations that were half religious and half professional. However, on the first days of 1258 the Mongol Hulegu sacked Baghdad and had the Caliph al-Mutasim and his family executed. Some say that up to two million people were slaughtered in the following eighteen days in Baghdad.



One of the Turkish tribes was the Sunni Ottomans whose Osman Gazi (d 1326) soon controlled western and central Anatolia and reached the Danube. The dynasty survived a crushing defeat by the Mongol Timur (who was said to have carried the defeated Bayezid about in a cage) but the dynasty survived and flourished and in 1453 Mehmet II finally took the depleted Byzantine capital, Constantinople. They took Syria and Egypt in 1516 and besieged Vienna in 1529 and 1683. In 1517 when the Ottoman sultan Selim I entered Cairo the Abbasid Caliph he captured was a shadow of his past. He was sent to Istanbul from where Süleyman the Magnificent allowed him to return to Egypt where he died in 1543 and with him all traces of the great Abbasid Empire.

The Ottomans' mostly Christian Orthodox subjects preferred 'the turban of the sultan to the tiara of the Pope' with whom they had been at odds since the desecration of Constantinople in 1206 by Crusader hotheads. The Ottoman elite troops were the Janissaries, Christian youths taken in a levy called the *devshirme*. Many achieved high office. The Ottomans became the guardians of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and were pre-eminent among Sunni tribes.

Nevertheless, the Kizilbash (Turkoman White Sheep) tribes were Shia. In fact a Venetian source claimed that as much as 80% of the Anatolian population was Shia at this stage¹⁴⁴. The danger to the Ottomans was that the Shia Kizilbash would be a Safavid fifth column. When Süleyman the Magnificent had taken Baghdad from the Persian Safavids in 1533 he had restored Sunni shrines but also protected the shrines of the Shia imams, winning Shia respect. But later fears of fifth columns led to barbaric revenge. When the Ottomans retook Iraq from the Safavids in 1638 they slaughtered all known persons of Persian descent. The Shia took to *taqiyya*. The Safavid practise of *sabb*, the cursing of the Rashidun (the 'rightly-guided' first three Caliphs), became a capital offense under the Ottomans but on balance the Ottoman *millet* system allowed all religions and Islamic sects to flourish on condition that they were loyal to the Sultan and paid their taxes.



In 1744 a prince-priest alliance between Muhammad ibn Saud, the ruler of Dir'iah north of Riyadh, and a Hanbali cleric, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, created a political fusion of devastating power that flourishes today as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In 1802 Wahhabi armies invaded Karbala and desecrated the shrine of Imam Hussein before seizing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and creating the first Saudi state. Concentrating on *Tawheed* – or Unity of God – the Wahhabis call themselves the Muwahidun. They rejected medieval interpretations of the Qur'an and the Hadith in favour of imitating their Hanbali interpretation of the practices of the Prophet. Their two key influences were Ibn Hanbal (d. 855) and Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328), both of whom condemned the Shia as heretics. Ibn Hanbal was the founder of one of the four legal schools of the Shari'a, the infallible Islamic law based on the Qur'an and the Hadith and the source of Fiqh, a fallible, practical legal framework. The other schools are the Hanafi, the Maliki and the Shafi'i.

Ibn Taymiyyah followed Ibn Hanbal in his literal interpretation of the Qur'an and the Hadith. He condemned saint worship and metaphysical Sufism. He opposed *taqlid* (slavish 'imitation') and favoured *Ijtihad* (independent reasoning). He tied Islam to politics, contrasting Dar al-Islam (Arabic, the 'House of Islam') with Dar al-Harb (the 'House of War'). He was a major influence on Abd al-Wahhab, Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the 20th century Muslim Brotherhood and the Brotherhood's amanuensis Sayyid Qutb as well as more recent Islamist groups. He questioned Ali's claim to the Caliphate on the grounds that Ali had failed to prevail three times. The failure of the Imams to assert their power made them redundant, he argued.

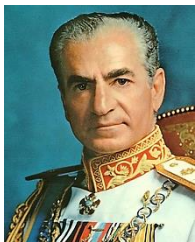
In 1891 the Al Saud family were exiled to Kuwait by the Rashid family of Hail but, in 1902, 'Ibn Saud' (his full name was Abd al-Aziz ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Faisal ibn Turki ibn Abd-Allah ibn Muhammad Al Saud) took control of Riyadh, bringing the Al Saud family back into what would later become Saudi Arabia. In 1912 the Ikhwan

¹⁴⁴ John McHugo, *A Concise History of Sunnis and Shi'is*, Georgetown University Press, 2017, p 170.

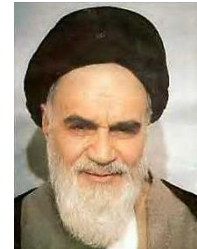
(Brotherhood) was founded, diehard Wahhabi stormtroopers, providing key support for Ibn Saud. In 1913 Hasa was captured from the Ottomans by Ibn Saud and in 1921, after the massacre in Taif, he seized Hejaz from the Sharif Hussein of Mecca whom Britain had supported in the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks, made famous by T E Lawrence. The fundamentalist Wahhabis promptly destroyed the cemetery of Jannat al Baghi in Medina where Fatima and the second, fourth, fifth and sixth Imams were buried. According to Vali Nasr, to this day during the Hajj 'Shi'is pilgrims sneak off to the site of Jannat al-Baghi to pray – that is if they can escape the canes of Saudi Arabia's morality police, the feared Mutaween'¹⁴⁵.

In 1926 in a burst of fury the Wahhabis put large numbers of Shi'is in Hasa to the sword. In 1928-30 the Ikhwan turned against Ibn Saud in their hostility to the modernization of the region and the increasing numbers of non-Muslims such as Capt Shakespear (seconded by Britain to support Ibn Saud during the First World War) and Abdullah Philby (a controversial British adventurer who became a close friend of Ibn Saud). In 1929 the Ikhwan were prevented by British planes from attacking Iraq so turned on tribes from the Nejd Province settled in the Eastern, Hasa Province. This was a fatal error. Ibn Saud finally used cars to defeat the Ikhwan at the Battle of Sibilla in 1929. Their leader Feisal al-Duwish escaped to Kuwait and surrendered to Col. Dickson, the British political agent there, who handed him back to Ibn Saud on condition that he was not executed.

Of Iran's population of 90 million 89 per cent are Shi'i and 10 per cent Sunni. The Safavid Empire was created by Shah Ismail (1502-24) who made Shi'ism the state



religion. Known as Persia until 1935, Iran became an Islamic republic in 1979 after the ruling Shah Reza Pahlavi was forced into exile. The focus of opposition, the Ayatollah Khomeini, returned to Tehran in an atmosphere of unbelievable triumph. However, conservative clerical forces subsequently crushed westernizing liberal elements. Militant Iranian students



seized the US Embassy in Tehran on 4 November 1979 and held it until 20 January 1981. During 1980-88, Iran fought a bloody, indecisive war with Iraq over disputed territory but, on balance, neither the Shi'is of Iraq nor the Arab Sunnis of oil-rich Khuzestan were tempted to betray their nation state in favour of sectarian loyalty. Iran agreed to end the war after Iraq's President Saddam Hussain used chemical weapons against the Iraqi Kurdish village of Halabja and threatened to use them on the battle-front.

However, the Islamic revolution of 1979 brought with it a new form of democracy influenced in part by the French Enlightenment. Revolutionary Iran's first President, Mehdi Bazargan, offered Khomeini a very liberal constitution which the old man accepted. However, Bazargan and his equally Paris-oriented colleague Abolhassan Bani Sadr then made the fatal mistake of trying to improve it by encouraging debate. This opened the gates to a hardline Trojan Horse and the full impact of Khomeini's concept of Velayat-e Faqih, 'The Custodianship of the Jurisconsult', which meant virtual dictatorship by the Supreme Leader, moving sharply away from Sunni thinking.

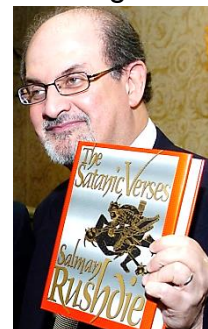
¹⁴⁵ Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival* (New York: Norton, 2006), p 97.

Historically, the Shia have tended to be quietist, but this changed when they achieved genuine power in 1979. Until it was employed in Palestine says Azzam Tamimi in his *Hamas, Unwritten Chapters* the suicide bomb was alien to Sunni thinking and more associated with Shi'ism in Lebanon.¹⁴⁶ In October 1983 Shia suicide bombers had carried out devastating attacks against the US Battalion Landing Team headquarters and the base occupied by the French Paras.

Tired of Palestinian militancy and Israel's harsh response, the Shia of Southern Lebanon had greeted Israel with rice and flowers, but Israel failed to withdraw and when the Shia response began it was popular with most Lebanese and remained so. 'Clerics', writes David Hirst in *Beware of Small States*, 'were close to their flock' and many militants were Khomeinist. Hizbullah leaders dwelt on the passion of Hussein and the Zionists became the contemporary manifestation of Yezid, the slayer of Hussein and his followers at Karbala¹⁴⁷. In October 1983 at the ecstatic and bloody zenith of Ashura and shortly after the marine suicide bombing an Israel convoy took the wrong turn into the crowd. Panic ensued, shots were fired, one Shi'i was killed and several were wounded. Israel's war with the Shia had begun but was soon to be lost and by 1985 Israel was out of Lebanon.

Since then Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab and, above all, Islamic State have emerged, all Sunni, all extremely hostile to Shi'ism and all extremely violent. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 what many have called a 'Shia arc' has emerged, reaching from Iran to Syria in the north and to Yemen in the South but in reality the Twelvers of Iran have little in common with the Turkish Alevis, the Syrian Alawis, the Druze or the Zaydis of Yemen. Khomeini, who forbade the garish blood-letting in their mourning of Hussein at Karbala on Ashura, and similar rituals, hoped that his Revolution would promote Islam widely and on a non-sectarian basis.

Turkey is no exception to experiencing the widening Sunni-Shia differences that have torn Syria and Iraq apart since Saddam Hussein fell in 2003 and the uprising against Bashar al-Assad began in 2011. The Alevis of Turkey have long memories of persecution. As a large Shia minority in the Ottoman Empire they were persecuted and massacred as sympathisers with the Persian Safavids. In 2016 they were bitter over the renaming of the third Bosphorus Bridge as Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge. The 16th century Selim I, known to many as Selim the Grim, is hated by the Alevis whom he slaughtered in their thousands. In recent years the Alevis became the bedrock of opposition movements and made up much of the membership of leftist parties. In 1993 they held a poetry festival in Sivas and were trapped in a hotel by a mob of Sunnis protesting at the presence of the Turkish translator of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. Some 35 mostly Alevi were burnt to death without the police intervening. Since Erdoğan won his first general election in 2002 state violence against the Alevis has diminished but the refugee camps in southern Turkey are bristling with members of hardline Sunni groups who regard the Alevis as heretics aligned with the Alawites of Syria. Syrian Alawite refugees are often afraid to enter the camps and many have been taken in by Alevi charities in Istanbul.

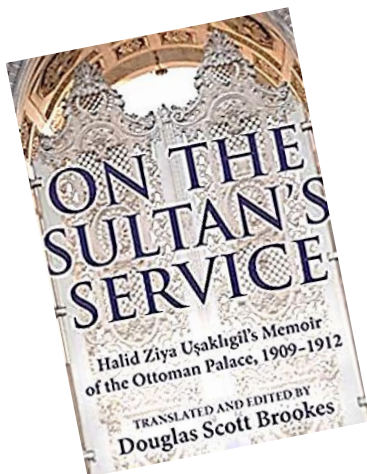


¹⁴⁶ Azzam Tamimi, *Hamas, Unwritten Chapters* (London: Hurst, 2007), p 180.

¹⁴⁷ David Hirst, *Beware of Small States* (London: Faber & Faber, 2010), p 200.

According to a report released in late November 2013 by the Turkish police, based on a sample of 5,513 people detained during the protests, 78% of participants in the demonstrations for Gezi Park were Alevi, says the Italian journal *Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa*¹⁴⁸. It adds that many districts, according to a report¹⁴⁹, such as Gülsuyu, Gazi, Okmeydani, Ümraniye (Istanbul), Dikmen, Tuzluçayır (Ankara), Armutlu (Antakya-Hatay), inhabited mainly by the Alevi left, were the scene of the fiercest protests in the summer of 2013, 'so much so that some wondered about an Alevi rising'. The main demands of Alevis, says the journal, consist in the recognition of *cemevi*, Alevi places of worship, and the exemption of children from religion classes in school, always set according to a Sunni perspective.

Meanwhile, President Erdoğan, moving away from Kemalist secularism, has hinted that Turkey may have a role in challenging Saudi Arabia for a leadership role in Sunni Islam. His fallout with Saudi Arabia's crown prince, MBS, over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in 2018 may have strengthened his moral position in the Sunni world, but at the expense of Turkey's Alevis who are somewhere between 15% and 30% of the Turkish population. Erdoğan was a close ally of Egypt's ousted President Morsi and supports the Brotherhood in Syria. According to the Saudi newspaper *Al-Arabiya*, 'Turkey's defence of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the tears of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan when the Egyptian security forces attempted to storm the sit-in of Rabaa al-Adawiya, proved Erdoğan's ties with the Muslim Brotherhood's international organization and their mutual interest in restoring 'the era of Islamic rule', seen by the Brotherhood as the basis for protecting 'the Islamic nation'.¹⁵⁰



Turkish Literature in Translation: Potentials and Problems

by Başak Bingöl Yüce

World literature scholar, journalist,
and literary translator based in the US

Despite his canonical status in Turkish literature, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's works have not been translated into English until this year in book form. Selections from his memoirs of the Ottoman Palace between 1909–1912 have been translated by Douglas Scott Brookes and published last winter with the title *On the Sultan's Service: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's Memoir of the Ottoman Palace, 1909–1912* in English by Indiana University Press. Although the selected texts are deftly translated, the paratext of the publication

¹⁴⁸ *Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa*, January 8, 2014

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Al Arabiya*, July 20, 2020

reveals some of the problems of Turkish literature in translation related to the expectations and the dynamics of the international literary market.

Translation scholar Sevinç Türkkan rightly argues in her unpublished dissertation 'Orhan Pamuk's Novels and Their Afterlife in English and German Translations' that "there is an expectation of what Turkish literature in translation should be."¹⁵¹ This expectation is mostly shaped by the commercial literary market's tendency to orientalize/exoticize Turkish literature. Editor Müge Sökmen identifies tokenism, cultural insularity, and an appetite for victim-literature with an Orientalist flavor as key factors that militate against the widespread translation of Turkish literature.¹⁵² This tendency is definitely not unique to Turkey but valid for other non-Western literatures as well. Although the text of the translation and the selection of Halid Ziya's memoirs need to be analyzed more in detail in the light of commercial expectations, it can be argued that the cover of the book as well as its title, which is not one of the titles of Halid Ziya's memoirs, fulfill the exotic expectations of its targeted audience. It should also be noted that the foreword of the translation is written and signed by 'HIH Prince Osman Selaheddin Osmanoğlu', accompanied by an Ottoman heraldry symbol.

Halid Ziya's entrance into the international literary market can be regarded as an epitome of both the problems and the potentials of Turkish literature in translation. Let me use this recent example to draw a general picture of Turkish literature's journey in English.

In recent years it can be observed that there has been an increase in the translation of Turkish literature into English. This increase cannot be evaluated separately from the increase of translated literature in the international literary market. Still, the ratio of translated literature published in English is not high compared to other languages and the competition between national literatures to emerge in the international literary scene is fierce. The founder of AnatoliaLit Agency, Amy Spangler, interprets this low percentage as follows: "Now thanks to some independent publishers that has gone up a little bit, but it still lags woefully behind many other languages. It is interesting to see how the world hegemony is expressed in the world of publishing."¹⁵³

Although it is not a considerable increase, the fact that translated literature is more present in the market is promising for Turkish literature as well. There are multifaceted factors that lead to this increase in the international literary market. For instance, some new popular countries in the international literary market such as Brazil have translation support programs just like Turkey's translation and publication grant program TEDA (*Türk Edebiyatı Dışa Açılım Projesi*). International and national literary institutions have created fellowship opportunities for translators and have started to distribute more grants. New literary prizes are established for translations to support and promote translated fiction, recent examples being the International Booker Prize and PEN Translation Award.

¹⁵¹ Sevinç Türkkan. *Orhan Pamuk's Novels and Their 'Afterlife' in English and German Translations*. Unpublished dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012, p.46.

¹⁵² Quoted by Alev Adil in *Western Eyes: Contemporary Turkish Literature in a British Context*. Chapter 7: *Writing Turkey: Explorations in Turkish History, Politics, and Cultural Identity*, 2016. pp 129-144.

¹⁵³ Interview with Amy Spangler. *Bosphorous Review of Books*. July 2019
<https://bosporusreview.com/interview-amy-spangler>

One of the works that was nominated as a finalist for the PEN Translation Award in 2019 was Aslı Erdoğan's short story collection *The Stone Building and Other Places* translated by Sevinç Türkkan. It should be remembered that Aron Aji's translations of Bilge Karasu's novels were also nominated and received prizes: *The Garden of Departed Cats* was awarded the 2004 National Translation Award and *A Long Day's Evening* was short-listed for the 2013 PEN Translation Prize. However, the question lingers: Despite the increase in translated works does Turkish literature in translation enjoy a similar boom in the sales and degree of reception in the Anglo-Saxon world compared to the popular geographies of translated fiction such as Latin America and Scandinavia?

One would certainly presume that Orhan Pamuk's Nobel Prize in 2006 triggered an interest in Turkish literature. Before Pamuk, it is possible to talk about an enthusiasm about Turkish literature primarily thanks to the translation of the works of Yaşar Kemal and Nazım Hikmet. The Nazım Hikmet biography by the poet's translator Mutlu Konuk Blasing, *Nazım Hikmet: The Life and Times of Turkey's World Poet*, was also influential in the promotion of the poet. However, this was a rare example of a biography in Turkish literature being translated into English. In recent years, literary scholars started to publish volumes about Turkish literature which will be influential on the promotion of Turkish literature both in terms of translated and untranslated texts. To cite two examples, a scholarly collection to present Turkish literature as world literature is edited by Burcu Alkan and Çimen Güney-Erkol and will be published in 2021 by Bloomsbury Academic. Literary scholars Hande Gürses and Irmak Ertuna-Howison also edited a volume titled *Animals, Plants and Landscapes: An Ecology of Turkish Literature and Film* that was published in 2019 by Routledge. The increase in the publication of literary criticism on Turkish literature will surely encourage publishers to turn their gaze at literary production in Turkish.



As a literary translator and a teacher of world literature who has been trying to integrate Turkish literature into the curricula, the question about the dynamics of the international literary market has imposed itself on me whenever I am filled with enthusiasm about the publication of a new title from Turkish literature. However, it goes without saying that success in the international literary market can be based on different dynamics related to many areas from economy to politics.

As is well known, Latin American literatures enjoyed a boom in translation in the last decades. Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño's works in English are regarded as the trigger of this boom. Initially, because of the influence of Gabriel García Márquez, many titles of magical realism were also translated into English. Understandably, politics plays a role in the marketing and reception of Latin American literature in the Anglo-Saxon world, especially in the United States. However, a more specific example from Latin America, the increase in the translation of Brazilian literature and its reception, can serve as a good comparison point with Turkish literature. Compared to Latin American literature in Spanish, Brazilian literature does not enjoy equal political interest. When compared to Turkey, it can be argued that although both countries have support programs for translation, Brazilian literature enjoyed a translation boom into English in recent decades and Brazilian writers have been translated more widely than Turkish literature. One of the most important criteria, when we compare the reception of world

literature, is surely book reviews. A comparison between the two countries' literature in terms of the reviews written about the translated works shows that Turkish literature in translation receives fewer reviews in general and is almost absent in the mainstream media and literary magazines, online and print.

Questions such as who translates, publishes, reviews the translations are also determining factors that need to be taken into account when discussing the success of a translated book in the targeted market. It



is well known that publishing translated literature is more costly, and independent presses tend to publish more translated literature. Still, apart from the name of the publishing house, the name of the editor may well



be a significant factor. For instance, Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector and Turkish writer Mario Levi were published from the same publishing house (New Directions) but did not enjoy equal receptions. Besides the works' literary merit, the fact that the Lispector project's editor Benjamin Moser is a well-known literary figure in the literary market played an important role. Europa Editions published Ahmet Altan's essays from prison *I Will Never See the World Again* which was successful in its reception. However, the political significance of this work was possibly the main reason for this market success which I think needs to be classified as a unique case not directly related to literary merit.

A report prepared by Duygu Tekgöl in 2013 focusing on Turkish Literature, titled 'Literary Translation From Turkish into English in the United Kingdom and Ireland, 1990-2012', finds that 51 titles from Turkish literature were translated into English during the 22 years the report focuses on. Tekgöl states that "publishing translations in the United Kingdom and Ireland is a specialist activity catering to a niche readership and is undertaken mainly by small publishers concentrated in England and particularly London."¹⁵⁴ The report cites some events that promoted Turkish literature abroad: Istanbul being the European Cultural Capital in 2010, Turkey being the market focus in the London Book Fair in 2013, and the guest of honour in the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2008 and the initiation of TEDA in 2005.

After 2012, important titles such as *Ahmet Mithat Efendi's Felâtn Bey and Râkim Efendi: An Ottoman Novel* was published with Melih Levi and Monica M. Ringer's translation from Syracuse University Press's Middle East Literature in Translation series. It can be observed that more university presses started to be interested in Turkish literature, one reason being that the translation of Turkish literature is also critical for the development of research in Turkish studies and literary studies. Sevgi Soysal's *Noontime in Yenisehir* was also an important novel translated in the last



decade. It was translated in 2016 by Amy Spangler and published by Milet Publishing. Unfortunately, considering the literary merit and canonical status of Sevgi Soysal in Turkey, the book could not reach a broad audience in English.

Among the works that were translated within the last decade, Sabahattin Ali's *Madonna in a Fur Coat* without doubt has a unique place. It is a rare example of Turkish literature in translation that was reviewed in the literary journals and its reception by the Anglophone

¹⁵⁴ Duygu Tekgöl, "Literary Translation from Turkish into English in the United Kingdom and Ireland, 1990-2012". *Literature Across Frontiers*. April 2013, p 8.

audience was much broader than the titles previously mentioned. The novel is translated into English by Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe. Freely's recognition in the literary circles as a novelist and translator as well as the previous head of PEN UK are important factors alongside the literary merit and timeliness of the novel. *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is the only title that was highly praised in the newspapers from *Washington Post* to *The New York Times* recently. The translation quality is also applauded by reviewers; in *Times Literary Supplement* the translated work is presented as "crisp, capturing Ali's directness and clarity of language."¹⁵⁵

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, some other titles among which were Erendiz Atasü's *The Other Side of the Mountain*, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *A Mind at Peace* and Perihan Mağden's *The Messenger Boy Murders* were translated into English. Among the books that were translated more recently are Emrah Serbes's *The King of Taksim Square* and Barış Bıçakçı's *The Mosquito Bite Author* translated by Matthew Chovanec which will be published by University of Texas Press. In recent years it is also possible to talk about an increasing online presence of Turkish literature in translation. Turkish literature appears in the gradually increasing literary websites around the world such as *Words Without Borders* and *The Iowa Review*. Especially poems and short stories are published with the advent of digital readership.

In light of the above picture that briefly portrayed some of the highlights of the journey of Turkish literature in English, we can safely suggest that there is an increase in the titles that have been translated which brings together an important potential for Turkish literature as world literature. However, this increase comes with a challenge for the cultural intermediaries which is to surmount the expectations barrier and choose, present, promote, and teach examples from Turkish literature that not only have political significance but also have literary merit.

Noteworthy Events

compiled by Ayşe Tuğrul Colebourne et al

Lectures, Talks and Conferences

Online conference, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK
BRISMES Annual Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, including Turkey.

Organiser: British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

Date: 5-9 July 2021

Link: administrator@brismes.org

Online conference, Zurich, Switzerland:
ICTSPCH 2021:15. International Conference on
Turkish Studies, Popular Culture and History



Organiser: World Academy of Science Engineering and Technology

¹⁵⁵ William Armstrong. "Sabahattin Ali's Goodbye to Berlin". *Times Literary Supplement*. June 2016.

Date: 16th - 17th September 2021

Link: <https://waset.org/turkish-studies-popular-culture-and-history-conference-in-september-2021-in-zurich>

3rd NEHT Workshop



**EUROPEAN
SOCIETY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL
HISTORY**

**Environmental Histories of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman
World – The Anthropocene: From Empire to Nation-States**

Venue/Date: University of Vienna 16th-18th September 2021

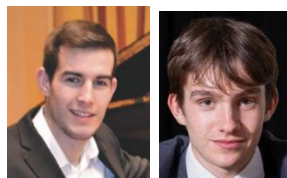
Keynote: John McNeill (Georgetown University)

Building the Anthropocene: A Global Environmental History of Industrialization, 1780-1920

More Information: **Link:** <https://networks.h-net.org/node/11419/discussions/6945933/deadline-reminder-3rd-neht-workshop-environmental-histories>

Concerts

Organiser: Talent Unlimited



Dilyan Todorov, piano (first half)

Matthew McLachlan's Quartet. TU composer playing his own music.
(second half)

Date and time: Thursday, 20 May 2021, 8 pm

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

Contact: canan@talent-unlimited.org.uk
St James's Church, Sussex Gardens, Paddington W2 3UD



Kasparas Mikuzis, piano (first half)

Karolina Pancernaite, piano
TU composer playing her own music.
(second half)



Date and time: Thursday, 29 July 2021, 8 pm

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

Contact: canan@talent-unlimited.org.uk
St James's Church, Sussex Gardens, Paddington W2 3UD

TBA and **Petar Dimov**, playing his own composition.
(first half) (second half)

Date and time: Thursday, 23 September 2021, 8 pm

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

Contact: canan@talent-unlimited.org.uk
St James's Church, Sussex Gardens, Paddington W2 3UD

Talent Unlimited Ensemble

Nicolo Foron, conductor
Emre Sener, piano
Elif Karlidag's composition,
 performed by **Danilo Mascetti**, piano

Date and time: Thursday, 16 December 2021, 8 pm

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

Contact: canan@talent-unlimited.org.uk
 St James's Church, Sussex Gardens, Paddington W2 3UD

Podcasts

Ottoman History Podcast began in March of 2011. It was a modest experiment aimed at finding an alternative form of academic production that explores new and more accessible media and allows for a collaborative approach. Since then we have grown to be one of the largest digital resources for academic discussion concerning the Ottoman Empire and the modern Middle East. Over the years, our project has incorporated contributions big and small from hundreds of colleagues. Our recorded interviews and lectures, while still largely academic in tone, provide scholarly conversation accessible to a wider public audience.



More Information: Links: About Us (ottomanhistorypodcast.com)
 The Making of the Islamic World (ottomanhistorypodcast.com)

Miscellaneous

Yunus Emre Institute

Turkish Courses for A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 & C2

Dates: 28 September 2021 – 23 January 2022

Times: Evening classes (18.00-20.00); Saturday classes (10.30-13.30)

Venue: Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre, 10 Maple Street, London W1T 5HA

For Details: londra@yee.org.tr

These courses will be taught on Zoom.

New museum: dedicated to Mehmed the Conqueror.

Opening: 2021 TBC

Location: Edirne, Turkey

A museum to honour Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, also known as Mehmed the Conqueror. A committee of 19 scientists was formed to establish the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Museum in the Saatli Madrasa, where Sultan Mehmed II was educated.

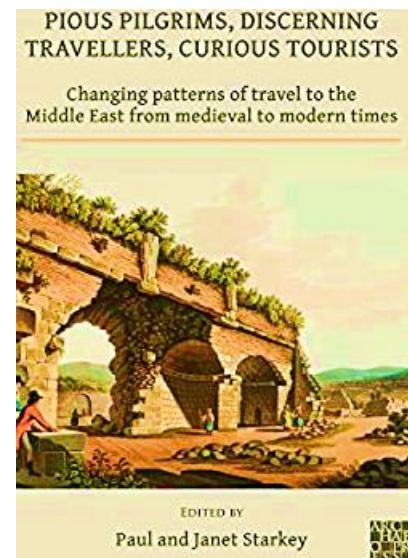


Among the scientists is Zekeriya Kurşun, a history professor and the dean of the Literature Department at Istanbul-based Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University. Speaking to Anadolu Agency, Kurşun said the museum would be a guide for future generations. "For the first time in Turkey, a museum bearing the name of a sultan will be built in Edirne," he said.

Books

Pious Pilgrims, Discerning Travellers, Curious Tourists: Changing patterns of travel to the Middle East from medieval to modern times

Edited by Paul and Janet Starkey
ASTENE & Archaeopress Publishing Ltd,
Oxford, 2020, x+ 408pp.
ISBN 978-1-78969-752-0 (pbk);
ISBN 978-1-78969-753-7 (e-pdf).



ASTENE (The Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East), was established in 1997, to promote education and research in the history of travel and travellers in Egypt and the Near East, “from ancient travellers such as Herodotus to those of the present day, and covers a region from Greece and the Ottoman Balkans eastward to Turkey and the Levant, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula and the Mesopotamian region.” (<http://www.astene.org.uk/about/>). As well as the quarterly ASTENE Bulletin, it publishes selected papers from its biannual conferences. The volume here comprises papers from the 2019 conference and some from earlier meetings, revised and edited. One understands how appropriate is the title of the book. The chapters start in the medieval period and as they move closer to modern times both the aims and patterns of travel change. Wonderful maps, illustrations, photographs and charts in every chapter give life to the texts. The bibliographies of every chapter show the meticulous research undertaken by the contributors.

The ‘Introduction’ by the editors provides an excellent summary of the history of the Middle East and of travel to the area from the early Middle Ages. It creates a much welcome context for the chapters that follow. Early travel accounts from Europe to the Holy Land by Christian and Jewish pilgrims date back to the 4th century AD. Later, in medieval times these pilgrims are joined by Muslims travelling to Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem from Spain, India, the Middle East and North Africa. Accounts of the interaction between peoples of different religions and customs during these journeys are especially interesting.

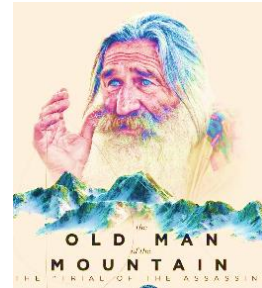
In ‘Pilgrimage as Travel’, Jacke Phillips looks at the archival and archaeological evidence and explores the communication and transmission of ideas between peoples during long periods of travel, with particular reference to travellers from the Indian Ocean area. Maps of travel routes, drawings, tables and a nine-page References section, make interesting reading.

The second chapter is Paul Starkey's 'Ibn Jubayr's Rihla reconsidered'. Ibn Jubayr (1145-1217) of Islamic Spain, made his pilgrimage journey between 1183 and 1185, and his writings provide a perspective on the inter-religious relationships of the time. Starkey evaluates Ibn Jubayr's narrative in the light of developments in the 12th century AD, which help the reader to place him in a political and historical context.

In chapter three, titled 'Gardens of Paradise', Janet Starkey examines "legends of the part-historical, part mythical 'Old Man of the Mountain'", and his Gardens of Paradise in the fourteenth century travel literature. The devotees of the Old Man are known as 'the Assassins' in the West. Suppressing a smile, in the 'Summary' to her chapter, Starkey tells the readers that this chapter is not about "the Assassins, their hallucinatory drugs or death-leap legends, nor on the *Assassin's Creed* video games". This is a long and wonderfully illustrated chapter with five pages of bibliography, and all told in meticulous detail. The works discussed are by Marco Polo (1254-1324) and the Blessed Franciscan Friar Odorico da Pordenone (c.1265 or 1286-1331), and the travels of the fictional character Sir John Mandeville by an anonymous author.



Illustration from *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, c. 1372.



The fourth chapter titled "Wady Ghrásheca": an unknown Christian site in Sir Gardner Wilkinson's unpublished manuscripts from the Eastern Desert' is by Jan Ciglenecki & Blaž Zabel. Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (1797-1875) was a leading authority on Ancient Egypt and the authors give detailed analyses of Wilkinson's unpublished journals, field notes, manuscripts, sketches and maps kept in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. This is a great resource for the study of the Christian monuments in the region.

After the Middle Ages, the book moves on to the 17th-century Ottoman Empire. Jennifer Scarce, a well-known scholar of the material culture of the Ottoman Empire and beyond, is the author of Chapter five, titled 'Exploring the Ottoman Empire: the travels of Petr Mundy (1567- c. 1667) in Turkey 1617-1620'. Scarce introduces Mundy's (a seventeenth-century merchant) personal guidebook to Constantinople and his travels, again accompanied by maps and drawings. The chapter is a great source of information about Ottoman culture.

Chapter six continues with the 17th century: 'With a radius most accurately divided into 10,000 parts: John Greaves and his scientific survey of Egypt in 1683-1639' by Ronald E Zitterkopf. Greaves was a Professor of Geometry at Merton College Oxford, and he performed the first scientific survey of the Giza pyramids in Egypt. But before then, he left England for the Levant in 1637 to acquire learned books for the Chancellor of Oxford and for the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to study weights and measures. Apparently he knew Greek, Persian and Arabic and was well suited for the task. The chapter is an absorbing account of his travels and his book *Pyramidographia*.

Dimitrie Cantemir is a well-known 18th-century intellectual of diverse talents from Moldavia best known for his study and applications of Ottoman music as well as his own compositions. According to an account by his father, Constantin, the Cantemirs originated from a noble Crimean Tatar family. But other sources claim that Constantin was of peasant origin and served in the Polish army. Whatever the case, Constantin

was named governor of Moldova by the Ottomans. Dimitrie was well educated and during his eventful life he spent a lot of time in Constantinople. Christina Erck in Chapter seven, 'Dimitrie Cantemir: the Orpheus of the Turkish Empire (1673-1723)', summarizes the life and works of this fascinating musician and researcher.



Chapter eight, by Brian J Taylor, is titled 'The artist William Page (1704-1872) and his travels in Greece and western Turkey in the first half of the nineteenth century'. William Page (1794-1872) was a relatively unknown English landscape artist who travelled in Europe, Greece and western Turkey in the first half of the 19th century.

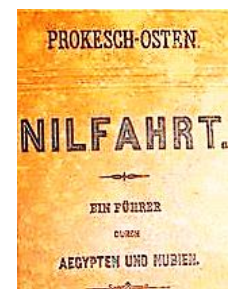
The chapter analyses his sketches and drawings, which were mostly before 1821, as they shed light on the politics and life in the Ottoman lands of the times. Later a lot of Page's works were redrawn by more famous artists such as Turner and Harding.

Chapter nine is titled 'Jacob Röser: a Bavarian physician travelling the Ottoman Empire in 1834-1835' and is by Joachim Gierlichs. Dr Röser travelled extensively in Greece and Anatolia and passed through Beirut, Cyprus, Rhodes to Egypt. He authored several works and a travelogue. The chapter is based on the Part I of this travelogue, which covers his travels until he arrives in Egypt, and therefore it is extensively about Ottoman Anatolia in the 19th century.

Chapter ten, 'Publishing with 'Modern Taste and Spirit': competitiveness and commercialism in a mid-19th century British illustrated travel book on modern Egypt', is by Paulina Banas. In 1848, the British publisher James Madden released a travel account on the manners and customs of modern Egyptians, entitled *Oriental Album: characters, costumes, and modes of life, in the Valley of the Nile*. It was written by British author James Augustus St John, and illustrated by the French artist Émile Prisse d'Avennes. This chapter analyses both the text and the illustrations of the book and discusses the publishing of travel literature in the nineteenth century.

Chapter eleven, 'Mr and Mrs Smith of England: a tour to Petra and east of Jordan in 1865' by David Kennedy gives fascinating details on the travels and life of Mr and Mrs Eustace Smith (aged 33 and 29, and already with seven children at the time), who were prominent London socialites, wealthy patrons of arts and travellers.

Chapter twelve, 'Anton Prokesch-Osten Jr (1837-1919)' by Angela Blaschek is about the young man who published one of the first German travel guides for Egypt. He was the son of diplomat Anton Prokesch von Osten and was born in Athens. He lived abroad, partly in Germany but visited his father in Constantinople several times. He journeyed to Egypt with his father and was even present at the opening of the Suez Canal.



The chapters are not only about Europeans. In chapter thirteen, on 'William Wing Loring, George Brinton McClellan and Ulysses S. Grant: American Civil War generals in Egypt during the 1870s', Mladen Tomorad gives a detailed account of the American generals' travels in Egypt, as well as providing a historical and cultural background about the area while using sections from their travel writings and letters.

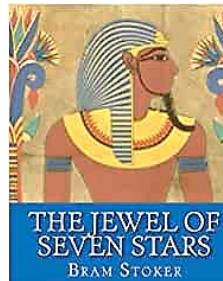
Chapter fourteen, 'Consular agents and foreign travellers in Upper Egypt in the nineteenth century' by Terence Walz, is the story of the local consular agents, a 19th-century institution. They were the officers of foreign powers, who did not speak the

language of the countries they represented and were mostly merchants. Being locals and quite wealthy, they were able to host the travellers and provide special hospitalities such as local dancers and musicians.

Chapter fifteen, 'A Luxor Room with a View at Pagnon's Hotels' by Sylvie Weens, is the story of how Thomas Cook & Son built the first hotel (1875) in Upper Egypt, followed by a chain of hotels. This is about a man with a vision, in this case Albert Ferdinand Pagnon, Thomas Cook's manager in Egypt, who was in charge of the Nile steamers. He convinced his employer of the need for hotels. And the rest is history.

Chapter sixteen, 'Richard A. Bermann, the Desert and the Mahdi: an Austrian writer's fascination with Egypt and the Sudan' is by Ernst Czerny. Bermann was a journalist and writer, who travelled to Egypt, Palestine and the Sudan several times between 1914 and 1933 and was in an expedition to the Libyan desert in 1933. His novels, inspired by his travels, and the many articles about his travels are the subject of this chapter. Narrowly escaping the Nazi invasion of Austria, he moved to the USA where he passed away in 1939.

Chapter seventeen, 'Unlawful acts fictional traveller in Bram Stoker's (1903)' by Rebecca Bruce, travellers [in Egypt], focusing on the consequences of their adventures, fate." The text discusses "the moral and social place in Egypt in tomb excavating and grave robbing." provides the real events behind the popular fiction.



and supernatural curses: the *The Jewel of Seven Stars* examines "Jewel's fictional ethical implications and leading them towards a deadly nineteenth century travellers' the light of their involvement in This interesting chapter

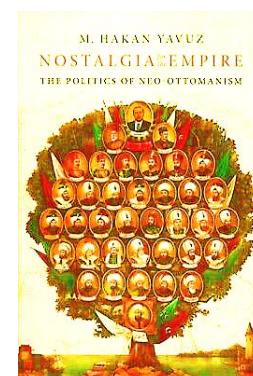
It is not hard to imagine how difficult it must have been to edit a volume like this, with hundreds of references, photographs, illustrations, maps and charts. The editors are to be congratulated for their comprehensive work.

Çiğdem Balım
Indiana University

Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism

by M Hakan Yavuz

Oxford University Press,
XVI + 317pp. 2020,
Print ISBN-13: 9780197512289.



This latest book by M Hakan Yavuz provides a historical examination and socio-political analysis of nostalgia for the Ottoman period and its heritage and culture. The book looks into the origins of Ottomanism, its manifestations in Turkish modern

literature, its impact on Turkish internal and foreign politics, and regional reactions. In order to explain the reasons and ways in which nostalgia for the Ottoman Empire began to unfold, the book traces the development of this nostalgia since the 1850s when the empire introduced the Tanzimat. The book then follows the period of the Young Turks prior to the collapse of the empire in 1920s. After the establishment of the republic, the book examines significant political figures such as Turgut Özal (1927-1993) in the 1980s, Necmettin Erbakan (1926-2011) in the 1990s and then later Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (b.1954) from the 2000s until today. Yavuz argues for the significance of nostalgia and draws on the example of how the Turks failed to accept the 'forced amnesia' that was one of the projects of the Kemalist Republican system. He also notes that this Turkish nostalgia for empirically historical tangible and intangible Ottoman products is still present in all spheres of today's Turkey.

The book comes as part of the author's continued research engagement with the subject of history, Ottomanism and Turkish politics.¹⁵⁶ In terms of methodology, it is based on qualitative analysis and interviews with Turkish officials, academics, historians, and sociologists in the field of nostalgia, Ottoman modern history, and Turkish politics. In addition, it benefits from the use of a wide range of secondary resources in Turkish and English as well as published peer-reviewed articles, and unpublished MA and PhD dissertations from Turkey and elsewhere.

The main questions that the author tries to answer are the following: what is neo-Ottomanism, its significance, its essence, and its different terms? Who coined the term and contributed to its conceptual development? What are the social and political origins of neo-Ottomanism, and its main features? How has neo-Ottomanism differed in various phases of time and with political and historical events from the 19th century to today? And finally, how can Ottomanism, nationalism and Islamism help in understanding neo-Ottomanism? The book begins with an introduction, followed by eight chapters, each covering a different topic from history to contemporary analysis, followed by a concluding chapter. The aims of the book centre on understanding what the author terms 'imagined Ottomanism' from political and social perspectives, highlighting the ideology, identity, and policy of Ottomanism, and the modernization and modernism of Turkey. The book conceptualizes the role of literature as tangible objects or sights – meaning something which touches and influences people - and analyses the impact of imagined Ottomanism on domestic and foreign politics.

In the first chapter, the book focuses on the genealogy of (neo)-Ottomanism and on understanding memory and nostalgia. It looks at Republican Ottomanism during the period of the Young Turks and the nation-building process of the Republic of Turkey. Drawing on Svetlana Boyum's distinction of 'restorative' and 'reflective' nostalgia, where the first means the return to the homeland while the latter expresses loss, Yavuz argues that it is reflective nostalgia that best represents the Turks (p 21). According to him, nostalgia is 'a direct outcome of the revolutionary changes and rapid modernization of Turkish society' (p 24). Yavuz conceptualizes that Ottomanism was 'redefined in varying contexts' (p 34). For example, some figures in the Young Turk movement, including İbrahim Şinasi (1826-1871), Namık Kemal (1840-1888), and Ziya Pasha (1825-1880), supported the Ottoman nation and equated Turks (as a race) to

¹⁵⁶ Yavuz, M. Hakan, and Hakan Erdagöz. "The Tragedy of the Ottomans: Muslims in the Balkans and Armenians in Anatolia." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (2019): 273-281; Yavuz, M. Hakan. "Social and Intellectual Origins of Neo-Ottomanism: Searching for a Post-National Vision." *Die Welt des Islams* 56, no. 3-4 (2016): 438-465; Yavuz, M. Hakan. "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism." *Critique: Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East* 7, no. 12 (1998): 19-41.

Ottomans (citizens). Others provided more nuanced approaches such as Abdullah Cevdet (1869-1932) who stressed legal equality, opportunity for all, and a bond connecting all based on common interests. Prince Sebahattin's (1879-1948) views were shaped by individualism, the free market, and decentralization, while Ahmet Rıza (1858-1930) believed in the role of Islam as a basis for preserving society.

Deconstructing the social origins and causes of nostalgia for the Ottoman empire, the second chapter discusses division among the Turks following the establishment of the Republic and its policy of banning Islamist and Ottoman culture and heritage. This resulted in so-called white Turks, who internalized and adopted the modernization, and black Turks or *irticaci* (backward), who resisted modernization. The author lists seven developments of the reconstruction of nostalgia for Ottoman empire: Turkey's diverse demographic makeup; Westernization and the suppression of Ottoman culture; democratization; the Cold War and the synthesis of Turkish-Islamic narratives against Communism; leftist interpretations of Ottoman history; Özal's neo-liberal economic policies; and the shift from history to memory.

The third chapter analyses the best examples of sites of Ottoman memories, and sheds lights on the nostalgic reflections of traditional, Islamic, and Sufi literature. One group of poets and writers such as Yahya Kemal Beyatlı (1884-1958), Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1962), and Orhan Pamuk (b.1952) wrote about the cultural impacts and social changes of Westernizing reforms. A second group of authors wrote on Ottoman language and culture and criticized the Westernizing reforms. Necip Fazıl Kısakürek (1904-1983), Nurettin Topçu (1909-1975), Seyyid Ahmet Arvâsî (1932-1988), Kemal Tahir (1910-1975), and Erol Güngör (1938-1983) were members of this group. A third group focused on Sufi teachings, Islam, and philosophy, and included Said Nursî (1877-1970) and his follower Fethullah Gülen (b.1938).



The fourth chapter focuses on neo-Ottomanism during Turgut Özal's presidency, Gülen's reimagined Ottomanism, and external factors such as the economy, and media. According to the opening line of this chapter: 'The concept of neo-Ottomanism entered the halls of Turkish power for the first time during Turgut Özal's presidency' (p 107). According to Yavuz, the most important domestic causes for the re-emergence of neo-Ottomanism in the 1990s were social transformation and the critical emergence of the neoliberal economic class, and the most important external factors were the demise of the bipolar system, the Cyprus crisis, and the EU's refusal to admit Turkey.

Moreover, Yavuz believes that the Gülen movement benefited from neoliberalism in Turkey. According to Yavuz, the movement presents a new kind of Sufi, religious-political, Islamist Turkish nationalism that remembers the past while supporting the free market, media, and civil society.

Analysing the Naqshbandi Sufi orders and exploring what Yavuz calls 'political Islam', the fifth chapter focuses on the period of the late 1950s until the late 1970s, in which Turkish politics began to witness Islamist narratives and remember Ottomanism. One of the prominent Sufi leaders of this time was Mehmet Zahid Kotku (1897-1980) who represented an anti-Western narrative that defended Kemalism and Turkish nationalism. Kotku influenced Turkish political figures including Özal, Erbakan, and Erdoğan. With the encouragement of Kotku, politicians, including Erbakan and Erdoğan, established Islamist-leaning political parties. A number of these parties were banned because they were perceived to be opposed to Kemalism and secularism.

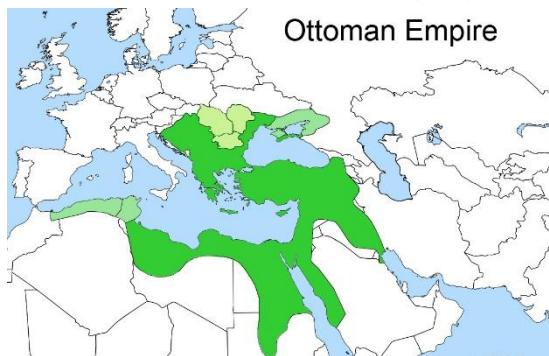
Parties which were closed down included the National Order Party, the National Salvation Party, and the Welfare Party.

The next two chapters focus mainly on two topics: that which Yavuz describes as 'Erdoğan's Neo-Ottomanism' (chapter six) and 'the Neo-Ottoman Foreign Policy of the AKP' (chapter seven). Yavuz concentrates on the role of the Turkish president Erdoğan and how his policies embrace the Ottoman past in order to reinforce his power. The AKP's understanding of Ottomanism has gone through three periods: liberalism (2002-2007); soft Islamization and the coalition of Gülen and AKP (2008-2013); and the weakened state and Erdoğan-ism as an Islamist kleptocracy (2013-present). Some examples of remembering the past and nostalgia for the Ottoman empire are seen in the construction of spaces and the Ottomanization of landscapes by building Ottoman-style home and stores, exhibiting Ottoman cuisine in newly established stylish restaurants, and the support for neo-Ottoman film genres and TV soap operas such as 'Resurrection': 'Ertugul and Payitaht': and 'Abdülhamid'. The seventh chapter argues how neo-Ottomanism has influenced Turkish foreign policy under the AKP. It refers to two important figures, Ahmet Davutoğlu and his concept of strategic depth, and Erdoğan himself. The chapter explores three phases in the development of Turkish foreign policy. The first of these was characterized by Europeanization and a market-led foreign policy (2002-2010), which was dominated by the hope of joining the EU and maintaining peaceful relations with neighbouring countries. Then came the Islamization of foreign policy and the Arab Spring (2010-2013), and Yavuz is keen to stress 'that this new orientation [of neo-Ottomanism] or search for an alternative was more of a response to European rejection than an expression of Erdoğan's Islamic and Ottoman identity' (p. 194). Yavuz designates the last period as the collapse of Turkey's foreign policy and its 'splendid isolation' as a nation (2013-present).

The eighth chapter of the book covers how Balkan and Arab countries reacted to neo-Ottomanism and how Turkey employed Islam differently in its dealings with the Balkan region and the Middle East. It also analyses why Turkish foreign policy turned eastwards, and how the failure of the Arab Spring ended Erdoğan's neo-Ottomanist policies and isolated Turkey both regionally and globally. Yavuz lists four types of nostalgia for the Ottoman past:

- ❖ the reflective nostalgia of Tanpınar;
- ❖ the revengeful nostalgia of Kiskurek;
- ❖ the transformative nostalgia of Özal; and
- ❖ the restorative nostalgia of Erdoğan.

Nostalgia for the Empire highlights deep intellectual arguments about the history,



development, and transformation of neo-Ottomanism and its impacts on Turkey's internal and external politics. It investigates in detail important and complicated subjects in Turkish politics such as the concept of (neo)-Ottomanism and its social origins, Turkish literature and memory, Islamism and Sufism in Turkey. The book also examines Islamist and public figures including Özal, Gülen, and Erdoğan and their different views on how to

internalize the Ottoman past. It also analyses how neo-Ottomanism motivated the AKP and Turkish foreign policy, and how neighbouring states in the Balkans and the Middle

East reacted. This book would have been more critical and informative if it had included more information on Ottoman sites both inside and outside Turkey, and provided further analysis on how and why nation-states with a history of empire, such as Turkey, use, renovate, and convert historical sites such as Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. Overall, the work of Yavuz is a useful academic contribution to the areas of modern and contemporary Turkish studies, Ottoman and Turkish identities and history, and the study of influential political figures. It also provides important insights into the politics of Islamism in Turkey and its probable impact on Turkey's foreign policy.

Mohammed Alrmizan
KFCRIS, Riyadh



RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology Magazine. *Exploring Constantinople's Great Cathedral*. (Archaeology Magazine, July-August 2020). ASIN: B089T6GVT1.

ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

Dinç, Enis. *Atatürk on Screen: Documentary Film and the Making of a Leader*. (I.B. Tauris, 2020). ISBN: 9780755602032.

El-Leithy, Tamer. *The Military Costumes of the Ottoman Empire*. (American University in Cairo, 2021). ISBN: 9775864046.

Gueneli, Berna. *Fatih Akin's Cinema and the New Sound of Europe*. (Indiana University Press, 2019). ISBN:10-0253024455.

Rodini, Elizabeth. *Gentile Bellini's Portrait of Sultan Mehmed II: Lives and Afterlives of an Iconic Image*. (I.B. Tauris, 2020). ISBN: 9781838604813.

HISTORY

Kamouzis, Dimitri. *Greeks in Turkey: Elite Nationalism and Minority Politics in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Istanbul*. (Routledge, 2020). ISBN:10-0367416379.

Mestyan, Adam. *Arab Patriotism: The Ideology and Culture of Power in Late Ottoman Egypt*. (Princeton University Press, 2020). ISBN:10-0691209014.

Ragab, Ahmad. *Medicine and Religion in the Life of an Ottoman Sheikh*. (Routledge, 2020). ISBN:10-0367731649.

Starkey, Paul & Janet. *Pious Pilgrims, Discerning Travellers, curious Tourists: Changing patterns of travel to the Middle East from medieval to modern times* (ASTENE & Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, Oxford, 2020). ISBN: 978-1-78969-752-0

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Doğan, Taner. *Communication Strategies in Turkey: Erdogan, the AKP and Political Messaging*. (I.B. Tauris, 2021). ISBN: 9781838602246.

Ringer, Monica M. and Etienne Charrière. *Ottoman Culture and the Project of Modernity: Reform and Translation in the Tanzimat Novel*. (I.B. Tauris, 2020). ISBN: 9781788314527.

POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

Beit, Amin. *Kemalist Turkey and the Middle East: International Relations in the Interwar Period*. (Cambridge University Press, 2020). ISBN:10-1316647986.

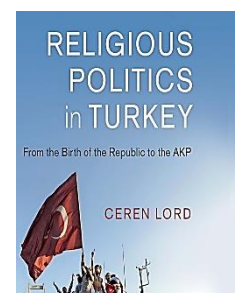
Gourley, William. *The Kurds in Erdoğan's Turkey: Balancing Identity, Resistance and Citizenship*. (Edinburgh University Press, 2020). ISBN:10-1474459196.

Lord, Ceren. *Religious Politics in Turkey: From the Birth of the Republic to the AKP*. (Cambridge University Press, 2020). ISBN: 10-1108458920

Seal, Jeremy. *A Coup in Turkey: A Tale of Democracy, Despotism and Vengeance in a Divided Land*. (Chatto & Windus, 2021). ISBN: 10-1784741752.

Toygar, Sinan Baykan. *The Justice and Development Party in Turkey: Populism, Personalism, Organization*. (Cambridge University Press, 2020). ISBN: 10-1108461654.

Yavuz, M. Hakan. *Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism*. (Oxford University Press, 2020). ISBN:10-0197512283.



SOCIOLOGY AND RELIGION

Alkan, Necati. *Non-Sunni Muslims in the Late Ottoman Empire: State and Missionary Perceptions of the Alawis*. (I.B. Tauris, 2021). ISBN: 10-0755616847.

Çavdar, Gamze and Yavuz Yaşar. *Women in Turkey*. (Routledge, 2020). ISBN:10-0367729229.

Erdoğan, Emine. *Gender and Agriculture in Turkey: Women, Globalization and Food Production*. (I.B. Tauris, 2020). ISBN13: 9781788312219.

Houston, Christopher. *Istanbul, City of the Fearless: Urban Activism, Coup d'Etat, and Memory in Turkey*. (University of California Press, 2020). ISBN: 10-520343204.

Livny, Avital. *Trust and the Islamic Advantage: Religious-Based Movements in Turkey and the Muslim World*. (Cambridge University Press, 2020). ISBN: 10-108485529.

Shively, Kim. *Islam in Modern Turkey* (The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys). (Edinburgh University Press, 2021). ISBN-13: 97474440158.

Silverstein, Brian. *The Social Lives of Numbers: Statistics, Reform and the Remaking of Rural Life in Turkey*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). ISBN: 10-9811591954

Wilson, Mark. *Biblical Turkey: A Guide to the Jewish and Christian Sites of Asia Minor*. (Ege Yayinlari, 2020). ISBN: 10-6057673298.

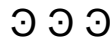
MISCELLANEOUS

Creighton, David. *Letters from Russia and Turkey: In Gurdjieff's Footsteps*. (Baico Publishing, 2021). ISBN:10-1772162124.

Mellaart, Alan & contributors. *James Mellaart: the Journey to Çatalhöyük*. (Istanbul, Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 2020). ISBN 978-605-396-523-7.

Sürmen Aran, Lale and Tankut Aran. *Rick Steves Istanbul: With Ephesus & Cappadocia*. (Avalon Travel Publishing, 2021). ISBN: 978-1-64171-367-2.

Compiled by Arın Bayraktaroğlu



In Memoriam



DAVID BARCHARD

1947 – 2020

David Barchard, who died suddenly on Christmas Day following a fall while walking near his home in North Yorkshire, was a pre-eminent figure among Western experts on Turkey. His prodigious knowledge of Turkish affairs (more often than not referenced to sources in Turkish) and his incisive, open-minded assessments will be well known to readers of the *Turkish Area Studies Review*, because in the last five issues (Autumn 2018 – Autumn 2020) we were honoured to have him providing the six-monthly analyses of political developments in Turkey that have become a key feature of the *Review*. A former co-editor of this publication sums up the special quality of David's writing as follows: "David bridged the divide between professional journalism and

academe better than other Turkey-watchers. And he did this while also being able to write grade A material for the serious general enquirer who reads *Cornucopia* or *TAS Review*.

David was educated as a boarder at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire and remained quietly and unobtrusively devoted to his Catholic faith throughout his life. From Stonyhurst he won a scholarship to St John's College, Oxford, where he read history. His first visit to Turkey took place in 1967, when he and two fellow-students, inspired by Rose Macaulay's *Towers of Trebizond*, made their way to Trabzon. David already had a strong interest in Byzantine archaeology, which was to see its fullest flowering in 2003, when he published a scholarly article about his discovery of the location of the late Roman village of Sykeon in central Anatolia. Another sustained academic interest was nineteenth-century British-Ottoman relations and the history of late Ottoman Crete, on which he published a number of scholarly articles. But of course it was on his deep understanding of contemporary Turkish affairs that his professional reputation was primarily based. BATAS (or rather, its predecessor TASG) drew on this in eliciting from David a chapter on a much-neglected subject, the Turkish bureaucracy and its societal links, in a 2002 collective volume.

After graduating from St John's in 1968, David had his first sustained exposure to Turkish life and society when as a new graduate he accepted a position teaching English at the *lise* (high school) in Zonguldak, a coal-mining town on the Black Sea coast. Returning to Oxford, he embarked on doctoral research in politics at Nuffield College in 1971, working on the early development of left-wing activism in Turkey. The D.Phil. thesis was eventually abandoned in favour of the cut and thrust of journalism, but the results of this early academic research appeared in 1976 in an article that retains its importance today.

One of David's earliest sources of journalistic experience in Turkey was producing summaries of the Turkish daily press for the diplomatic corps in the early 1970s. The mid-1970s found him in London with the BBC, working under Andrew Mango, head of the South European Service, as a talks writer. By 1979 this had led to him taking up residence in the Turkish capital, Ankara, reporting for the BBC on a freelance basis. His fluency in Turkish "soon became proverbial" and he was for four decades "the indispensable guide and companion for any English-speaking journalist, scholar or diplomat who was visiting Turkey for the first time and wanted to get a real understanding of the country – its culture and history as well as its politics". On his unusual fondness for Ankara, John Scott comments: "He remained an Ankara man through and through, much to the bemusement of his friends in Istanbul". The ease and speed with which David wrote attracted admiring notice. After extensive telephone consultation with a wide range of contacts "he could sit down at the telex and file a 3,000-word report, all without notes.

It was after the 1980 coup that he began regularly writing for *The Guardian*, where he outspokenly condemned the human rights abuses that were such a marked feature of the period. In 1983 he transferred to *The Financial Times* as its Turkey correspondent, just when Turgut Özal was starting to revolutionise the Turkish economy by opening it up to foreign competition. David Barchard was one of the few journalists, Turkish or foreign, who welcomed Özal's policies from the start. In the view of John Scott, he was one of only a few commentators who understood the political currents driving this transformation.

Being keen to obtain a full-time post with the *FT*, in 1988 David accepted the paper's condition that he spend an initial period in London covering a core area of finance. By a stroke of fortune this enabled him to put his knowledge of things Turkish at the disposal of the *FT* when the Polly Peck scandal, involving the misdeeds of Turkish Cypriot businessman Asil Nadir, broke in 1990. David obtained a rare interview with Nadir and later published a successful book about the affair.

From 1995 to 2003 he was back in Ankara, this time not as a journalist but employed as senior adviser to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A quotation from David himself in the magazine *Cornucopia*, to which he had been a frequent contributor in recent years, encapsulates the sense of duty that he felt towards his adopted second country: "If one becomes a specialist in a certain field and sees that people are continually mistaken or misinformed, then one must work to set the record straight". He was a consistent advocate of Turkey's admission to the EU and did not hide his anger at those European governments that resolutely opposed it. The appreciative response that this attitude aroused in his Turkish friends finds expression in this tribute from Özdem Sanberk, a former Turkish ambassador to the UK: "He was one Western friend never out of touch with Turkey and its people, always getting the measure of the challenges we have to meet and being fair to the Turkish side of the story when others were not".

As Barchard had never been one of the many in the West who gave credence to the ostensibly democratic aims of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the accession to power of the Justice and Development Party in 2002 brought to an end his consultancy work for the Turkish government. After that date he taught at a number of Turkish universities (notably Bilkent) and worked for some Turkish think-tanks. He began to spend most of his time in Cappadocia, a region that he loved, renowned for its extraordinary landscape and increasingly colonised by intellectuals and artists. He lived in a spacious rock-carved house lent him by a friend, continuing his writing activities during the day and enjoying convivial meals and good conversation in the local hostleries in the evenings. Fascinated by the rock churches built by refugees from Byzantine iconoclasm, he wrote a monograph on them that unfortunately remains unpublished.

In the late 2010s David decided that the time had come to return home. He retired to the village of Nun Monkton in North Yorkshire, where much of his childhood had been spent. This village, with the surrounding countryside where he loved to walk, was another very special place for him, and by way of contributing to its well-being he became active on the parish council as his father had been before him.

The tributes that so many friends and admirers – among them many Turks – have written since David's death are unanimous about his personal qualities: his integrity, kindness and generosity, his gift for forming lifelong friendships and his love of conversation. His loss will be sorely felt by many around the world, especially in Turkey and Britain. Two features of his last years symbolise his embrace of the two homelands: his adoption of dual nationality and his position as Vice-President of the Anglo-Turkish Society. He is irreplaceable, but the world is better for having had him pass through it.

Celia Kerlake

Acknowledgement: This obituary has drawn on previously published material from many people who knew David Barchard well, in particular **David Shankland, John Scott, Edward Mortimer, David Shirreff** and **Roger Norman**. A personal communication from **Gamon McLellan** is also gratefully acknowledged.

Further reading:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/24/david-barchard-obituary> (David Shankland)

<https://www.ft.com/content/66c6fdd8-1b5e-4b1a-ba2f-4aa5bbbccd90> (Edward Mortimer)

Various personal tributes on the funeral site

<https://private.streamingevent.co.uk/davidbarchard12012021/>

References for David Barchard's publications mentioned in the obituary:

- 'Sykeon rediscovered? A site at Kiliseler near Beypazarı.' *Anatolian Studies* 53, December 2003, 175-179.
- Articles on nineteenth-century British-Ottoman relations and the history of late Ottoman Crete: <https://independentscholar.academia.edu/thisisntmyurl/Papers>
- 'Society and Bureaucracy: The Civil Service'. In Brian W. Beeley (ed.), *Turkish Transformation: New Century, New Challenges*. Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire: The Eothen Press, 2002, 198-219.
- 'The intellectual background to radical protest in Turkey in the 1960s'. In William M. Hale (ed.), *Aspects of Modern Turkey*. London: Bowker, 1976, 21-37.
- *Asil Nadir and the Rise and Fall of Polly Peck*. London: Gollancz, 1992.



The David Barchard Memorial Fund

The Anglo-Turkish Society notes with deep regret the untimely death of one of its Vice-Presidents, David Barchard, who did so much to further the cause of amicable relations between the United Kingdom and Turkey.

The Society will be very pleased to accept donations in order to set up a fund in his memory.

The fund will be used for an annual essay prize in David Barchard's name, which will be administered by the Society. We are at present half-way to our target of £8,000; and every little helps us to reach that goal. The capital raised will be placed in the CCLA ethical funds, and the interest gained thereby at 3.6% will fund the prize in perpetuity. The Society is a registered charity, and its accounts prepared professionally annually.

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Any inquiries concerning the David Barchard Memorial Fund may be addressed to David Shankland, Chairman, Anglo-Turkish Society, David.Shankland@therai.org.uk

The web-site of the society may be found here: Anglo Turkish Society: Welcome



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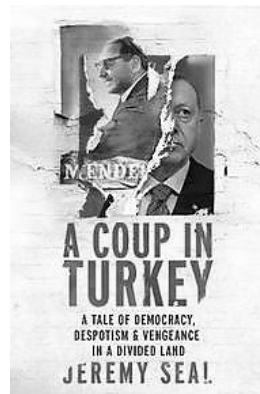
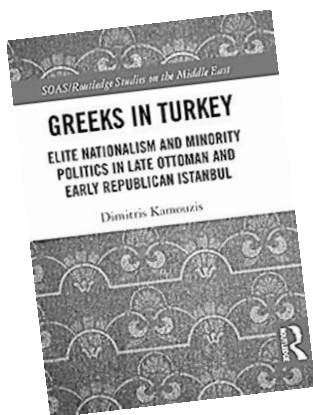
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