

UNCONVENTIONAL HYDROCARBON PRODUCTION DANILA BOCHKAREV

BEYOND BLUE PEACE RIAD AL-KHOURI

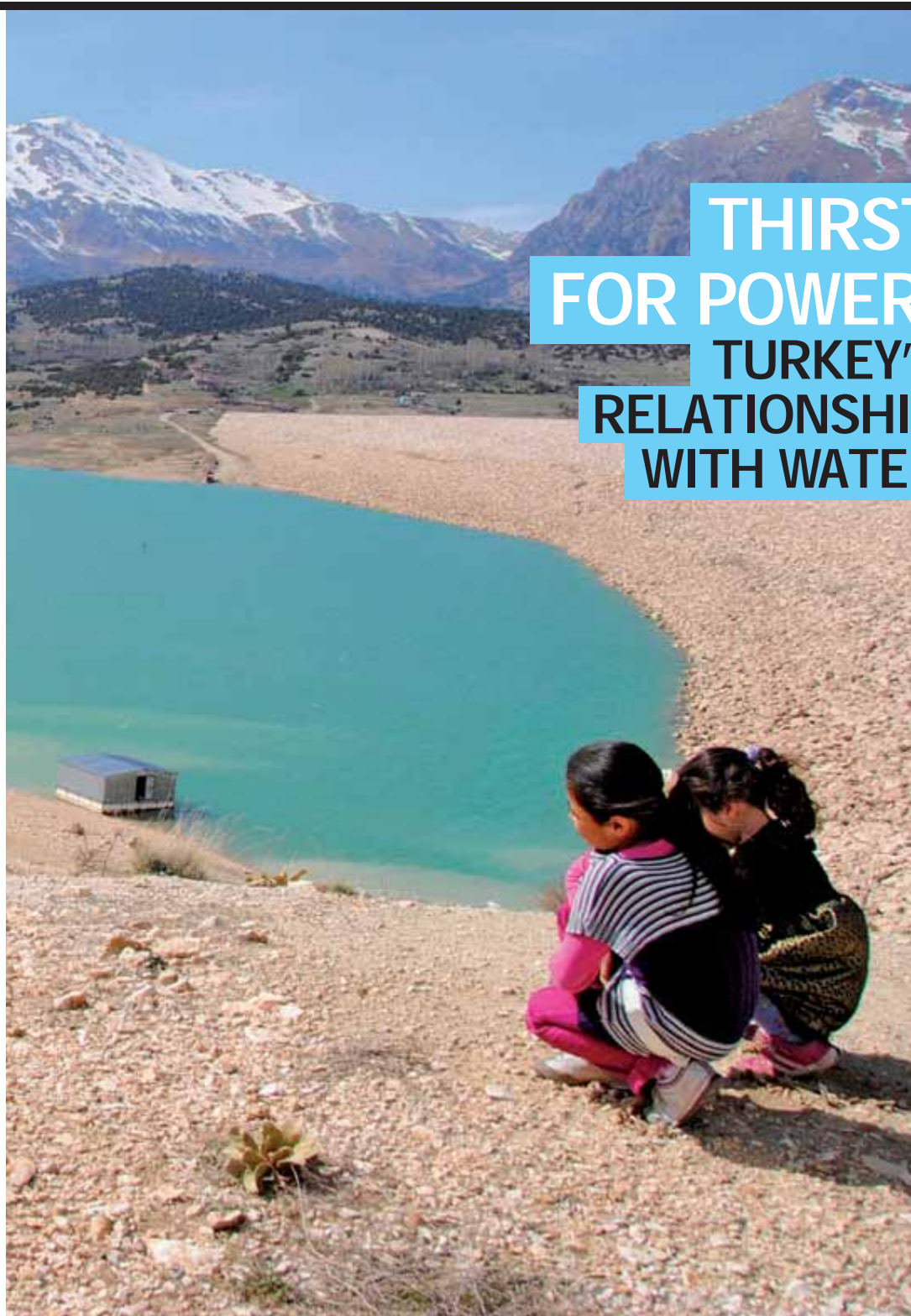
BENEFIT SHARING, WATER AND COOPERATION MAYSOON ZOUBI

DROUGHT IN TURKEY AKGÜN İLHAN

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 3 – MAY - JUNE 2014

TL 20 / \$ 10 / € 8 / £ 7

# TURKISH REVIEW



**THIRST  
FOR POWER:  
TURKEY'S  
RELATIONSHIP  
WITH WATER**



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FOREWORD  
VOL-4/3

# G

## Water, water, everywhere

Geography is taken very seriously in Turkey: By the time they enter secondary school, children are expected to be able to name all the major lakes and river basins of the country, as well as the seas that surround it on three sides. Indeed, Dicle, Fırat and Tuna (Tigris, Euphrates and Danube) are also popular names, as is Deniz (sea). Yet for all its ubiquity, water is growing increasingly scarce in Turkey as demand -- be it for power, irrigation, industry or consumption -- grows and grows.

Volume-4/3 of Turkish Review approaches the issue of water in the country and the region from a variety of perspectives: social, cultural, geopolitical, environmental and economic. Opinion pieces touching on different aspects of water come from novelist Kaya Genç, who explores the role played by perhaps Turkey's most famous body of water, the Bosphorus, in the latest work from Maureen Freely. Dr. Aalia Sohail Khan looks at the importance of water in the major world religions, and speculates on the potential this offers for new approaches to a more sustainable way of life. Meanwhile, Dr. Akgün İlhan of the Right to Water Campaign addresses the socio-cultural aspects of the water shortages currently being experienced in Turkey.

Former Secretary-General of the Jordanian Ministry of Water Resources Maysoon Zoubi examines her own country's experiences in water sharing and cooperation, a theme that is picked up in the report from economist Riad al-Khouri. The latter contribution is a critique of the "Blue Peace" model of cooperation over water as a route to rapprochement between states with otherwise troubled relations. The second report this issue, from the EastWest Institute's Danila Bochkarev, details the role of water in Turkey's energy ambitions, specifically in the potential exploitation of unconventional hydrocarbons -- a hot topic even in countries with more abundant water resources than Turkey's.

Two Views focuses on water and the environment, with an emphasis on dams and hydroelectric projects: Staff Writer Yonca Poyraz Doğan speaks to German ecologist and conservationist Ulrich Eichelmann (River Watch) and former Turkish Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış. NGO Watch continues the ecological theme, providing a guide to the Turkish partner of BirdLife International, Doğa Derneği (Nature Association), an active campaigner on water issues.

Lastly, the photo pullout comes from Hasankeyf, under threat of imminent inundation by the Ilisu Dam on the River Tigris. The dam is itself a controversial project for a variety of reasons: not just the flooding of Hasankeyf, but also the impact the reduced flow of the Tigris will have downstream, in the Mesopotamian marshlands of Iraq in particular.

Other contributions this issue focus on the recent local elections, with an account from the campaign trail from Klaus Jurgens, as well as a summary of results, and on the historic background to and likely repercussions of the corruption allegations that emerged in late 2013 -- explored for us here by Prof. Fatma Müge Göçek of University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

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By "Turkish perspective" we mean adopting a constructive approach, with an inter-disciplinary, inclusive, in-depth and insightful attitude, while maintaining accessibility, originality and objectivity; above all making use of constructive, non-Orientalist, de-colonialist and dialogic language.

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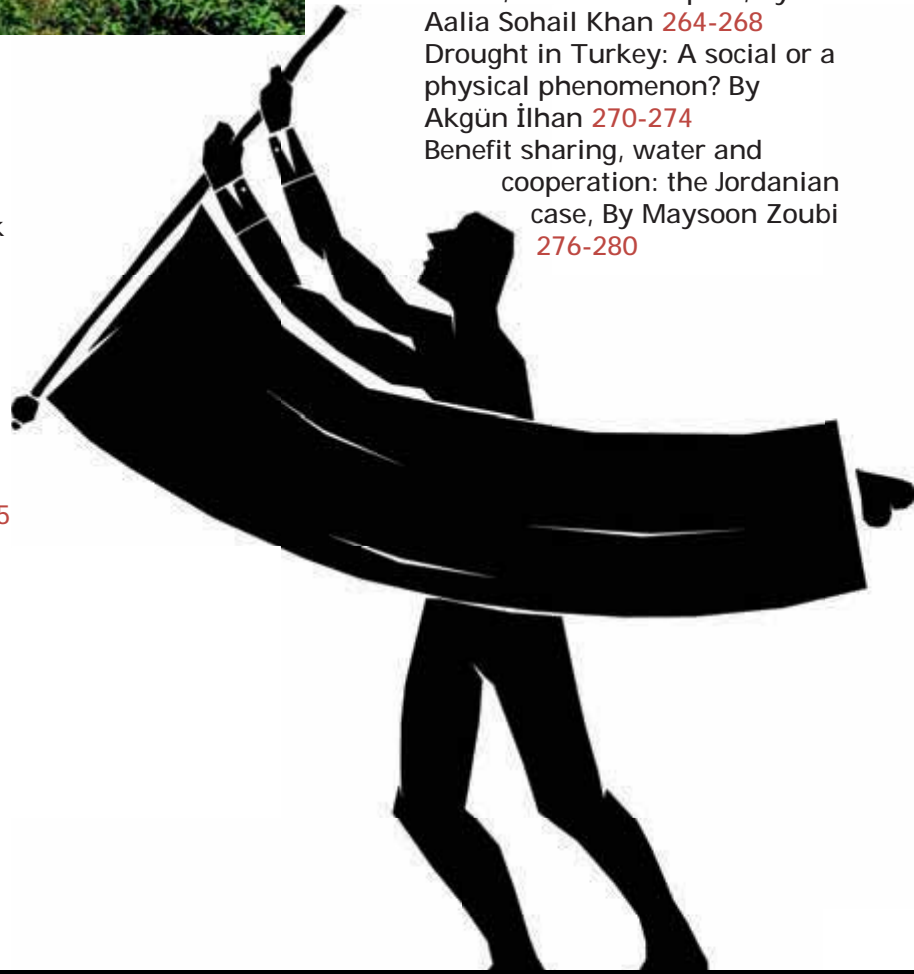
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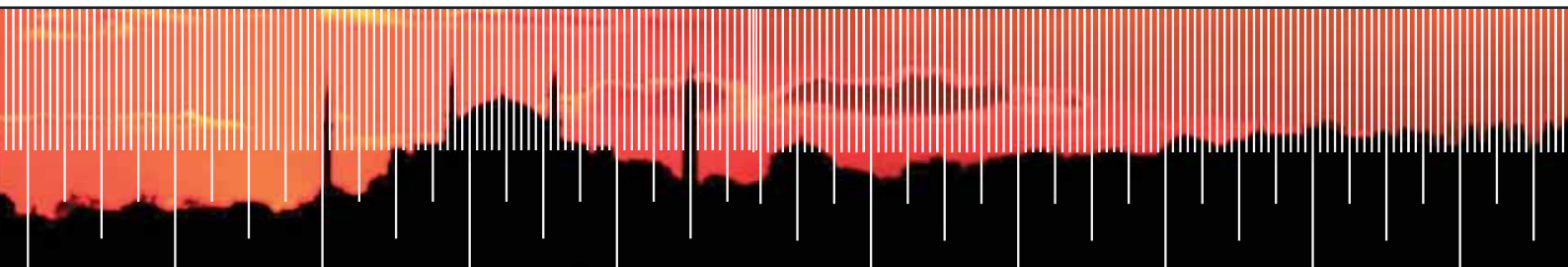
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Jan. 1

### Cairo, Egypt says no current plans to return envoy to Turkey

Egypt, which downgraded its diplomatic relations with Turkey and declared the Turkish ambassador persona non grata in late November 2013, has no plans at present to return its own envoy to Turkey, says Egyptian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bader Abdul-Ati.

Jan. 2

### Istanbul, Libyan prime minister in Turkey for talks

Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan arrives in Turkey for a visit during which he meets with President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Jan. 13

### Brussels, EU Commissioner Füle warns Turkey about legal amendments

European Union Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy Stefan Füle says he has asked Turkish authorities to review planned amendments to the country's laws before adopting them to ensure they are in line with the principles of EU legislation.



Jan. 14-16

### Ankara, Slovenian president visits to enhance developing relations

Slovenian President Borut Pahor pays a two-day official visit to Turkey to boost relations between the two states.

Jan. 23

### Davos, FM Davutoğlu meets Zarif and others in Davos

Foreign Minister Davutoğlu meets with his Iranian counterpart Zarif, in Davos, Switzerland. Davutoğlu also meets with Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) President Massoud Barzani, largely discussing the latest situation in Iraq and Syria as well economic relations between Ankara and Arbil.



Jan. 27-28

### Ankara, France's Hollande calls for talks on new EU chapters

French President Francois Hollande, on the first French presidential visit to Turkey in 22 years, says his country backs the continuation of Turkey's EU membership process.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  
JAN.

Jan. 4

### Ankara, Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif in Turkey

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif pays a one-day visit to Turkey to discuss Turkish-Iranian bilateral relations and regional issues.

Jan. 8

### Berlin, German gov't seeks mandate to extend Patriot deployment in Turkey

The German government proposes in parliament that the term of the Patriot batteries deployed in Turkey be extended for another year.

Jan. 16-19

### Istanbul, Turkey hosts talks between Somalia and Somaliland

Turkey hosts the third round of official talks between Somalia and Somaliland for the improvement of relations and political dialogue between the country and its autonomous zone.



Jan. 28

### Rome, Gül in Italy as part of busy EU agenda

President Abdullah Gül discusses Turkey's EU bid, bilateral relations and regional developments amid a flurry of activity related to Turkey's EU agenda.

Jan. 28-29

### Tehran, PM Erdoğan says Iran is like his 'second home'

Prime Minister Erdoğan has his first meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani during a two-day official visit to Tehran amid accelerated efforts to solve the Syrian crisis.



Jan. 20

### Cilvegözü, Twin bombs at Syria-Turkey border post

Two car bombs hit a rebel-held border post in the northwest Syrian province of Idlib, according to opposition activists and fighters, killing at least 10 people and closing the frontier.



**Feb. 2**  
**Munich, Davutoğlu: Turkey open to alternatives to Chinese missile defense system**  
 Foreign Minister Davutoğlu says Turkey hasn't decided on a missile defense system and is open to alternative offers if joint production is guaranteed.



**Feb. 4**  
**Ankara, Iraqi parliament speaker in Ankara**  
 Iraqi Parliament Speaker Osama al-Nujaifi visits the Turkish capital for talks.

**Feb. 5**  
**Ankara, Turkey, Russia join forces for cooperation in Eurasia**  
 Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Feridun Sinirlioglu and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and State Secretary Grigory Karasin meet in Ankara for talks on Eurasia and possible cooperation in the region.

**Feb. 11**  
**Nicosia, Turkish-Greek Cypriot leaders met for peace talks**  
 Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders meet in Nicosia for peace talks concerning the long-divided island of Cyprus, after a breakthrough agreement was reached over a framework for negotiations the previous week.

**Feb. 11**  
**Ankara, Turkey, Gambia ink cooperation agreements**  
 Turkish and Gambian officials sign a number of cooperation agreements during Gambian President Yahya Jammeh's visit to Ankara.



**Feb. 17**  
**Budapest, Gül: Turkey is Europe's secure energy hub**  
 President Gül, whilst on an official visit to Budapest, says Turkey is an important hub that offers alternatives for European access to secure sources of energy.

**Feb. 17**  
**Nicosia, Greek Cyprus leader touts energy boost for Turkey**  
 Greek Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades says that an agreement to reunify the divided Mediterranean island nation would help ease Turkey's energy needs.



**Feb. 27**  
**Ankara, Turkish-Greek Cypriot officials visits Athens, Ankara**  
 Turkish and Greek Cypriot negotiators visit Athens and Ankara simultaneously as part of peace negotiations to reunify the long-divided island.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31  
 FEB.

**Feb. 5**  
**Washington, US to support energy exploration off Greek Cyprus coast**  
 The US State Department extends its support for Greek Cyprus's right to explore offshore for energy, days after Turkey expelled a Norwegian ship searching for gas in the east Mediterranean.

**Feb. 7**  
**Sochi, Erdoğan, Putin meet on sidelines of Olympics, energy ties on agenda**  
 Prime Minister Erdoğan meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi at the opening ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics, with Turkey's energy needs and desire to further investments between the two countries dominating the meeting's agenda.



**Feb. 12-13**  
**Ankara, Turkey to host 8th trilateral summit with Pakistan, Afghanistan**  
 Turkey's capital hosts the two-day 8th Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Summit, which aims to further develop high-level political dialogue, security cooperation and partnership among the three countries.

**Feb. 12**  
**Sarajevo, Davutoğlu pays critical visit to Bosnia amid turmoil in country**  
 Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu pays a one-day official visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina amid ongoing anti-government demonstrations in the country.

**Feb. 14**  
**Ankara, Qatari emir in Turkey for talks with Gül, Erdoğan**  
 Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani visits Turkey for talks with President Gül and Prime Minister Erdoğan.

**Feb. 27-28**  
**Sophia, Davutoğlu: Bulgaria is a door into Europe for Turkey**  
 Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, in Bulgaria on a two-day visit, thanks the country for its support for Turkey's EU accession process, saying that while Turkey is a door for Bulgaria into Asia, Bulgaria is a door for Turkey into Europe.

**Feb. 28**  
**Kyiv, FM pays unscheduled visit to Ukraine**  
 Foreign Minister Davutoğlu makes an unscheduled visit to Kyiv for talks with Ukrainian officials on the latest developments in the violence-hit country.







# Party strategies and local elections: Didim vs. Nilüfer

KLAUS JURGENS *Academic and correspondent*

**D**uring the lead-up to the 2014 local elections I set out to write about how mayoral candidates carry out their election campaigns; this soon evolved into a look at how much influence Ankara's political party headquarters exerted over their party's local associations. To this end, I visited two smaller constituencies (Nilüfer, Didim) located within different greater metropolitan municipalities (Bursa, Aydın).

In the case of Bursa the Republican People's Party (CHP) had declared a new strategy aimed at winning center and even center-right voters in the March 30 trip to the ballot box. While in Aydın's Didim the nationwide governing Justice and Development Party (AK Party) had been handed a potentially winning ticket to take over the municipality, as some weeks before the elections another party's central office had dismissed the incumbent mayor from running on that party's ticket.

## BURSA'S NILÜFER

In Bursa in 2009 the CHP trailed the AK Party with 25.9 percent. Ultimately, in 2014 the CHP improved their performance by 2.8 percentage points, winning 28.7 percent of the vote, well ahead of the Nationalist Movement Party's (MHP) 15.3 percent, but still far behind the AK Party's winning 49.6 percent. In one of two CHP majority districts the party improved its share of the vote by a greater margin: Nilüfer district saw the CHP make a net gain of 3.5 percentage points from 51.2 percent in 2009 to 54.7 percent this year.

The local CHP candidate had been Necati Şahin with whom I had an opportunity to meet one week before the actual vote took place, again in his hometown of Bursa. Şahin explained to me that his party had adopted a strategic plan not just in his

home city but nationwide, which aimed at attracting more center/center-right leaning voters.

According to the CHP many residents have not been able to fully benefit from the country's economic welfare, and many families find it difficult to make ends meet. By way of solution Şahin, for example, proposed to reduce water tariffs. The next item on the agenda concerned public health. Here the CHP changed tactics and suggested local investment into the health sector rather than remedying the situation by reducing citizen's monthly bills.

However, the third approach could not be

further removed from traditional left-leaning policies: Bursa's CHP came up with its very own city development strategy based on public-private cooperation instead of state-sponsored (and ultimately state-controlled) ventures. The

## SOMETIMES A SMALLER CONSTITUENCY PROVIDES FOR FASCINATING ANALYSIS MATERIAL

"4T-Model" stands for tarım (agriculture), ticaret (commerce), turizm (tourism) and teknoloji (technology). It aimed at totally modernizing both the individual business sector by attracting investment geared at innovation and better product quality, as well as opening up the city to both more foreign direct investment (FDI) and more foreign incoming tourists.

## AYDIN'S DIDİM

Sometimes a smaller constituency provides for fascinating analysis material and Aydın's district of Didim was no exception. In Aydın in 2009, before it had been made a greater metropolitan municipality, the CHP won 35.8 percent, the AK Party 29.7 percent, the MHP 27.8 percent and the Democratic Left Party (DSP) 1.2 percent of the vote. 2014 saw the CHP improve to 43.8 percent, whilst the AK Party stalled at 29.2 percent and the MHP came in third with no more than 21.6 percent.



Prime Minister Erdoğan featured prominently on billboards ahead of the local election in March. MARCH 27, 2014 PHOTO: REUTERS, OSMAN ORSAL

However, in Didim (formerly an independent town, now part of Aydın Municipality) the race had been much closer back in 2009: CHP 25.8 percent, AK Party 24.3 percent, MHP 22.5 percent and DSP 18.4 percent. So when incumbent Mayor Mümin Kamacı declared his intention to run again in 2014 his local CHP duly nominated him. As Didim's inhabitants are perceived as (a) a traditional economically active and retired working class, plus (b) former civil servants (not meant negatively in any way, the Ankara elite of past generations) the odds seemed in favor of Kamacı's winning again in 2014.

And so it came to pass: CHP 24.7 percent, AK Party 24.3 percent, MHP 22.3 percent, DSP 21.9 percent. But something remarkable had occurred in between: the CHP Ankara party headquarters has, in a last-minute decision, dismissed Mayor Kamacı from the list of eligible candidates! Kamacı instead joined the DSP, while Ahmet Deniz Atabey, a tourism sector and local town hall expert, started his CHP campaign as the only official party candidate. The AK Party changed political tactics along the way, too, and originally favorite candidate Hilmi Erbaş lost out to Ufuk Döver, both well known in the local business community. The MHP sent Levent İter into the contest.

Local media both in Turkish and English (due to the

many thousands of British permanent residents in the resort) had long speculated about whether the change from Aydın as one of Turkey's 81 provincial capitals into a full-fledged greater metropolitan municipality could bring the AK Party to power citywide. Then it was argued that new faces would bring success in Didim itself; hence perhaps the AK Party could win at least there? And the moment the CHP declared a new candidate, everyone agreed the race was going to be the closest ever.

Right until election eve, supporters of Kamacı were certain he would take over almost all CHP voters to his new party, but they were proved wrong. Similarly, how did the AK Party fail to benefit from the turmoil between the CHP and DSP?

#### ANKARA'S INPUT

To compare Aydın with Bursa: Two greater metropolitan municipalities, both located in the west of the country, albeit in Turkey's northwest and southwest, respectively. Both famed for natural beauty. Bursa close to İstanbul and Aydın a neighbor of İzmir. Both solidly in the hand of one particular political party -- although from opposing ends of the spectrum.

On the one hand Bursa's AK Party played it safe, relying on keeping its more traditional voter base on



A CHP rally in  
Didim.  
MARCH 28, 2014  
PHOTO: CIHAN,  
OSMAN AKÇAY

board and heavily involving Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in their campaign, including billboards prominently placed all over town. Bursa's CHP tried a new approach by aiming at entering center voter territory, which partly paid off. Their local candidate was featured more prominently during the campaign than was party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu.


Meanwhile Aydın's AK Party (Didim's in particular) operated in the clear knowledge of being within one of Turkey's most staunchly secular CHP constituencies. Thus they relied on local talent much more than Ankara political heavyweights. Similarly to Bursa's CHP trend toward the middle ground, here the AK Party aimed at venturing into the CHP center and center social democrat territory to make up the difference in votes when compared with 2009. It seems that the Didim AK Party preferred to run a campaign on its own merits with few visits by Ankara VIPs.

What about the outcome? Playing the Ankara card

in local Turkish politics may actually work. In Bursa both the AK Party and CHP did so and both "won," so to speak. In Aydın's Didim only the CHP played that card, and just about came out on top -- whilst the AK Party was unable to pull in more voters.

In other words: Turkey's 2014 local elections were much more "national" with regard to central party involvement (or the lack of it) than anyone -- including the author -- would have ever imagined!

#### OUTLOOK

If polarization is ever to end in Turkey, both major political parties (AK Party, CHP) must reconsider their policy-making strategies as well as how they convey their message to the electorate -- and rapidly so. This requires an opening up to voters from the other end of the political spectrum. In other words, both parties should gradually move to the center, while retaining room for consensus "in the real center". 

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# 2014

## TURKEY'S LOCAL ELECTIONS

According to official Supreme Election Board (YSK) results, the March 30 local elections saw the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) receiving the largest share of votes in the metropolitan mayoral race with 45.54 percent -- up from 38.16 percent in the previous local elections of 2009. The main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) trailed with 31.04 percent, up from 24.84 percent in 2009, with the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) coming in third with 13.65 percent, down from 16.64 percent. Smaller parties brought up the rear, led by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), with 3.09 percent, BDP sister party the People's Democracy Party (HDP), 2.34 percent; and the Felicity Party (SP), 1.66 percent.

The AK Party's goal, declared ahead of the polls, was to better its 2009 performance and to win at least 50 provincial municipalities; it succeeded on the first count, and pending reruns of the ballot in two provinces (see below), fell just short on the second. The CHP, meanwhile, aimed to obtain at least 30 percent of the overall vote and was successful in hitting this target. The MHP, meanwhile, which was also expecting a higher percentage of votes overall than it received, gained a lower share of the vote than it did in 2009.

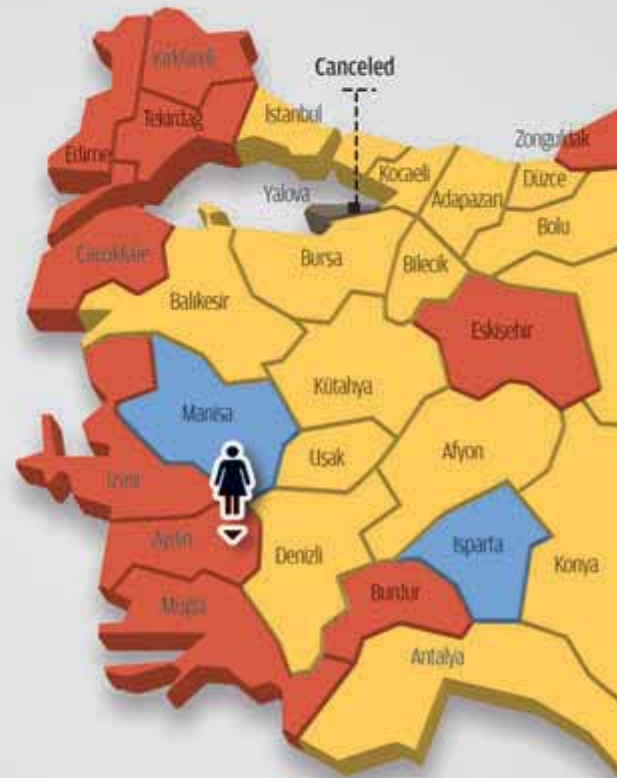
Election day brought with it a number of strange and unprecedented incidents: high levels of appeals for recounts by different parties; power outages in 40 provinces across the country as ballots were being counted; and considerable social activism in the form of oversight of the polls, largely via social media.

According to information from the CHP, a total of 1,418 incident reports were filed against the ruling AK Party during the local elections. Members of the public overseeing the vote shared accounts of apparent procedural irregularities online, using words, photos and videos. Such incidents included voters receiving pre-stamped ballots (with the AK Party candidate already selected) or ballot papers without the required seal on their reverse (rendering them invalid).

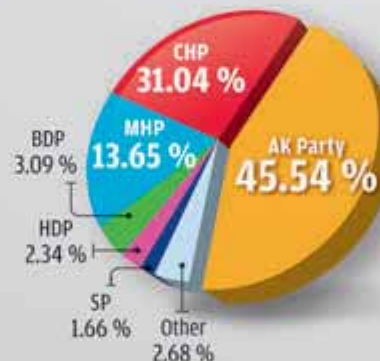
More than a month on from the polls, controversies continued regarding discrepancies in the election results. In the wake of March 30, the opposition parties submitted more than 2,000 appeals to the YSK for recounts. In Ardahan a recount made on the basis of an appeal by the CHP led to the AK Party being announced winners. Meanwhile in Yalova, the AK Party was announced the winner by a single vote; following a recount (the result of an appeal by the CHP) the CHP was announced the winner by a handful of votes. The south-eastern province of Agri was the focus of an appeal by the AK Party after the BDP won by a 10-vote margin; the ensuing recount was also plagued with complaints from both the BDP and AK Party. Subsequently both the Yalova Provincial Election Board and the Agri Provincial Election Board annulled the initial local elections altogether and called for repeat ballots on June 1.

Aside from the above cases, appeals were also made by several parties for vote recounts in districts in the provinces of Adana, Antalya, Ankara, Bartın, Kars, Bitlis, İzmir, İstanbul, Kütahya, Kastamonu, Mus, Niğde, Zonguldak, Manisa, Balıkesir and Afyonkarahisar. Although in some provinces the appeals for recounts were accepted, in others -- for example in the case of the CHP's appeal for a recounts in the capital, Ankara, where the AK Party won by a narrow margin -- they were rejected by the relevant provincial election board.

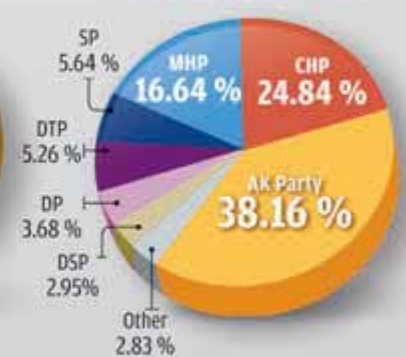
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2009  
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**AK Party** Justice and Development Party  
**BDP** Peace and Democracy Party  
**CHP** Republican People's Party  
**DP** Democratic Party  
**DSP** Democratic Left Party

**DTP** Democratic Society Party  
**HDP** People's Democracy Party  
**MHP** Nationalist Movement Party  
**SP** Felicity Party





# State and government in today's Turkey

T

urkey entered 2014 in a state of political turmoil, thanks to the graft allegations of Dec. 17, 2013.

Tapped phone conversations among high-ranking officials leaked online seemed to indicate that vast amounts of money were changing hands illegally.

What impact did these revelations really have on state or government? This essay looks at the history of state-government ties in Turkey to see what the future likely holds

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**PROF. FATMA MÜGE GÖÇEK**

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In terms of the huge sums of money mentioned in some of the wiretapped phone conversations, one source appears to have been construction. The boom in this sector in Turkey not only generated vast amounts of wealth, often at the expense of environmental concerns and historic preservation, but was also monopolized, it seems, by those close to the government. In return for this monopoly and access to immediate wealth, the new owners apparently funneled millions to a foundation managed by the son of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The other source of funds appears to have been illegal transactions with Iran, with the explicit intent to bypass its international trade embargo. In return for exporting oil and gas from Iran, it appears the Turkish state in general, and high-ranking Justice and Development Party (AK Party) officials in particular, helped Iran convert and receive its revenues in gold. Reportedly, most of the revenues were once again funneled to the same foundation headed by the prime minister's son.

It appears that this foundation aimed at developing educational opportunities for Turkish Muslim youth, an aim that also partially explains the AK Party's falling out with the Hizmet movement associated with Fethullah Gülen. After all, Hizmet had also focused on educating the youth for the last couple of decades, spreading its influence throughout the world in the process. That is why many thought the tapped phone communications had been leaked by Gülen's followers. Such allegations and ensuing upheavals not only undermined the trust of many citizens of Turkey in the AK Party government, but also in the Turkish state as well.

These domestic allegations emerged at a time when Turkey also faced significant international challenges. Among these was stalled progress in the AK Party's 2002 election promise of promoting Turkey's membership in the European Union. The majority of the requisite reforms made subsequently were executed in the immediate aftermath of the AK Party's electoral success, expanding the many rights for citizens that had been systematically curtailed by the state and the military since the inception of the republic in 1923. During the succeeding years, the AK Party government also managed to sever the hold of the military on the



state and government, imprisoning many generals on coup allegations in the process. (It should be noted that during the past few months, many of those imprisoned have been freed.) In recent years, however, Turkey's accession process has ground to a halt.

Also significant in this context was the change in Turkey's foreign policy. Headed by Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey's Foreign Ministry started to practice a "zero-problem" approach to all its neighbors, developing in the process much stronger ties in the East with previously overlooked Muslim neighbors in particular and Muslim countries in general. Yet such ties started to unravel due to the political instability in the Middle East and Turkey's tense relationship with the Kurds of Turkey and the region. It should be noted at this juncture that the Middle East is inherently unstable because of the intense interest of the entire world in its oil-producing capacity -- after all, oil is still the driving engine of the world economy.

Through his interactions with the Middle East as a devout Muslim, Prime Minister Erdogan, who was the

only democratically elected Muslim official in the region at the time, started to portray himself not only as the leader of Turkey, but of all Muslims, a stance with overtones of the role the Ottoman sultan once played as caliph. He developed this portrayal after expanding Turkey's ties with Pakistan, Malaysia and Afghanistan on the one side, and Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Libya and Egypt on the other. With the advent of the Arab Spring, Erdogan successfully supported regime change in Libya, but then faltered in Egypt as the Muslim Brotherhood's elected leader Mohamed Morsi was ousted by a military coup, bolstered by Saudi support. Erdogan then further strained relations with Israel over the rights of Palestinians. Finally, the informal and illegal flows of money into Turkey from Iran, Qatar and the UAE to support various domestic and international causes started to undermine Turkey's democratic traditions due to an inherent lack of accountability. As a consequence, many citizens of Turkey started to lose their respect not only toward Erdogan, but toward the office he held as Turkey's prime minister as well.

**AK Party foreign policy was until recently based on a 'zero problems with neighbors' approach in the Middle East. This file photo shows posters of Prime Minister Erdoğan in the Gaza Strip.**  
 JAN. 30, 2009  
 PHOTO: REUTERS,  
 MOHAMMED SALEM





Internationally, the most significant current challenge Turkish state and government faced was the rapidly souring relations with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, once a good friend of Erdogan. When Syria's Sunni citizens rebelled against Assad's Alawite-dominated rule, Erdogan provided formal and informal political, financial and military support to Syria's Sunni opposition. Yet not only did the Syrian opposition falter, but the terrorist organization al-Qaeda seized the opportunity to move into Syria via Turkey and Jordan. In the meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of refugees flooded from Syria into Turkey and its neighbors. What frustrated Erdogan the most during this process was the West's unwillingness to intervene militarily. And this frustration has recently produced the most serious allegation against Erdogan: that he presumably aided the export to and domestic production in Syria of sarin gas used in biological warfare. The probable intent was to demonstrate to US President Barack Obama that his red line of military intervention, namely the use of biological weapons by the Syrian regime, had been crossed. Once it was documented by Western intelligence sources that it was not Assad, but rather the opposition, that had employed sarin gas with Turkey's help, President Obama not only refused to intervene, but marginalized Turkey even more through his subsequent actions. Once again, such international allegations and ensuing upheavals not only undermined the trust of many citizens of Turkey in the AK Party government, but also in the Turkish state as well.

Still, in spite of such significant domestic and international challenges that quickly undermined Turkey's political stand as a democracy, the AK Party government managed to win the March 2014 local elections. The party's stronghold on the Turkish body politic despite such formidable challenges begs the question: How strong is the contemporary Turkish state and government in 2014? Perhaps clues to respond to this important question can be found in an analysis of state-government relations in Ottoman imperial and Turkish republican history. It should be noted that the total separation of state and government in contemporary Turkey has still not been achieved. As a consequence, the proximity of state to government control still adversely impacts

Turkey's domestic and international standing.

It should be noted at this juncture that while the state symbolically represents the entire sovereignty of a nation over its territory, the government is literally the agent through which the state's functions are formed and executed. As such, governments do not claim to represent the entirety of the citizens, but only the segment that has brought them to political power for a finite amount of time. It is the duty of the political opposition to ensure that the interests of the rest of the citizens are also protected. And while the prime minister represents the government, it is the president that in most systems represents the entire state, not only the government.

In Western European political theory, which provides the analytical framework for democratic regimes, the most significant development -- dramatically spearheaded by the French Revolution -- was the removal of sovereignty from ruler to parliament. Until then, the French kings could boast that they personified the state because their body politic united state and government; their extended household and bureaucracy contained all the elements of their ascribed rule. The citizen's election of a parliament ultimately fragmented absolute

rule, leading political representation of the populace to generate the foundation of democratic regime.

When Turkish republican history is analyzed through this ideal conception of state and its democratic government, several anomalies emerge. Initially, during Ottoman imperial rule preceding the republic, the sultan personified both the state and government. Indeed, the sultan ruled his empire, termed "the state of the exalted Ottoman dynasty" (*devlet-i ali Osman*), through his extended household. With the gradual devolution of resources from the sultan to his household members due to domestic and international forces, the sultan eventually started to lose his absolute sovereignty. Indeed, the 1839, 1856 and 1876 reforms demonstrated the gradual separation of the functions of government from those clustered in the Ottoman state. Even though Sultan Abdülhamid II (reign 1876-1909) was able to retain his sovereignty during most of his rule, he eventually had to share it in the re-establishment of constitutional rule proposed by

### HOW STRONG IS THE CONTEMPORARY TURKISH STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN 2014?



TÜRGEV was the subject of allegations regarding the legality of funds donated to it by businessmen close to the government.  
FEB. 13, 2014  
PHOTO: DHA

the Young Turks in 1908. This is probably why the 1908 second constitutional revolution is often identified as the origin of the Turkish republican rule.

What is more significant and understudied is what happened from 1908 to the present. Even though the Young Turks advocated constitutional rule, not only did they have no idea how this would be put into practice, they also did not know what this would mean in terms of the separation of state and government. The continuing presence of Abdülhamid II persisted as a threat to such a separation. Young Turks used the 1909 counterrevolution to remove Abdülhamid II with the intent to nip this possibility in the bud. The Young Turks then allocated the new sultan Mehmet V with much fewer financial resources. Yet, in order to bolster their legitimacy, they also had to increasingly rely on their informal party organization and the military to prevent a possible shift back to sultanic rule. During the decade of Young Turk rule (1908-1918), the ambivalence in the separation of state sovereignty from constitutional governance enabled the new Ottoman state/government comprising party members, state officials and the military to engage in violence against the empire's own subjects in general and the non-Muslim minorities in particular.

The loss of World War I in 1918 put an end to Young Turk rule. During the ensuing Independence War (1919-1922), there were literally two governments,

in İstanbul and Ankara, vying for control of one state. The success of the struggle led to the 1923 formation of the Turkish Republic with Ankara as its capital. Interestingly, the Kemalist cadres that almost exclusively consisted of former Young Turks kept the sultan only as a figurehead representing the state and Islam through the post of the caliphate for another year, until they secured national and international legitimacy.

With the 1924 removal and exile of the caliph Abdülmecid II, the Turkish state and government were once again unified under republican rule. While Ottoman state practices on the one side and the Young Turk government practices on the other had enabled a smooth transition into the Turkish Republic, the emergence of riots and rebellions throughout the country were used as an excuse to prevent any discussion of the state, government, sovereignty or democracy.

The Turkish Republic survived its first two decades with two successive political leaders, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü; it is noteworthy that both had dual sources of legitimacy in the military as generals and in the state as presidents. And Atatürk not only served as the president of the state, but also as the head of the single political party (the Republican People's Party, hereafter CHP) that governed the republic until his death in 1938. İnönü succeeded him, once again as both the president and the "permanent" (*ebedi*)

## THE TOTAL SEPARATION OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY HAS STILL NOT BEEN ACHIEVED



Sultan Abdülhamid II had to share his sovereignty in the re-establishment of constitutional rule proposed by the Young Turks in 1908.  
PHOTO: CIHAN ARCHIVE

leader of the CHP. As such, until 1950, Turkish state and government were headed by the same leader. The introduction of multi-party rule in the aftermath of World War II brought two civilians to rule the state and government, Celal Bayar (a former Young Turk) as president and Adnan Menderes as prime minister. It appeared as if the state and government had started to be separated, but not for long.


With the 1960 military coup, these two were violently removed and replaced by a general, Cemal Gürsel, as president. It is probably at this juncture that the presidency became defined as the source of power and legitimacy in the republic, with successive governments indirectly controlled and replaced, when deemed necessary, by the Turkish military. The military's political stronghold over Turkey's state and government started to erode in the post-Cold War era, especially when Turkey opened up to world markets economically. The accumulation of Anatolian capital and the ensuing successful transformation of its economic resources into political ones eventually led to the 2002 electoral victory of the AK Party. And this victory occurred at the expense of the military and its

## UNTIL 1950, TURKISH STATE AND GOVERNMENT WERE HEADED BY THE SAME LEADER

state-backed parties, namely the CHP and (to a lesser extent) the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).

The decade plus of AK Party rule witnessed the last attempt of the military to hold on to at least the post of the presidency, which would have enabled them to control the state, especially having lost the control over the government. In 2007 the military tried hard to undermine the presidency of AK Party founder, former prime minister, former minister and civilian Abdullah Gül, but to no avail. Interestingly, even though Gül tried hard to become and act as the president of all citizens of Turkey, the state represented by Gül and the government headed by Erdogan could not, once again, be disconnected as both belonged to the AK Party. Indeed, most recently, when graft allegations surfaced against Erdogan as the head of government, President Gül as the head of state could not act independently. Only the president of Turkey as the head of state has the power to remove the government and dismiss Parliament. But Gül could not, or did not want to, take such a strong stand against Erdogan and his government.

Past performance hints at what the likely future political course of Turkey will be. If and when Erdogan is elected president this August, state and government will still remain united, with one difference: The node of power would this time shift from the government to the state. Given that the AK Party continues to be the governing party, state and government would once again remain united. For true democracy to make any headway in contemporary Turkey, the first political target ought to be the elimination of the unity of state and government. Only the true separation of state and government led by civilians from different political parties and/or intellectual traditions can move Turkey toward true democracy.

In answer to the initial question of whether Turkish state and government will be stronger or weaker in 2011: So far they have been both able to sustain their political strength, but they have done so at the expense of democracy. This author would root for the election of a civilian president who belongs to neither the AK Party or to the opposition parties CHP and MHP. 

# *We Would Like To Thank All Our Participants Who Preferred Us*




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A

## A Bosphorus of her own

river runs through some of the great works of world literature. In Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness' the Thames carries with it 'the dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empire.' Conrad contrasts the Thames with the Congo, where much of his tale takes place. For the reader, the Congo is a site of international commerce and, consequently, imperialism. For the author it literally moves the plot, bringing the two main characters together

### KAYA GENÇ

*Novelist*

In Maureen Freely's brilliant new novel, "Sailing Through Byzantium," the Bosphorus, Marmara and Black seas play a similarly important role. Perhaps strategic, rather than metaphorical, would be a better word to describe the function of the sea in Freely's book. It provides a point of division between the "free world" and the world of socialism. It is the site of international diplomacy; the playground of diplomats whose intrigues and maneuvers during the Cuban missile in 1962 had turned the Black Sea (where Turkey had a maritime border with the Soviet Union) into the background of a Battleship board game.

The protagonist of the book is Mimi, a 10-year-old girl who has an extremely active imagination. To her mind the sight of Turkish seas is not exclusively a signifier of the Cold War. A mature woman in the present time of the narrative, Mimi looks back at the events that took place 50 years ago, and it is her looking that we look at (perhaps even more than the events she recounts). The thing that brings back old memories is an old photograph she sees during a visit to her family's former apartment in İstanbul. Taken

during a curiously titled "End of the World Party" on one of the most critical days of the missile crisis, the photograph is a source of mystery because Mimi, who is told that she is somewhere in the photograph alongside bohemian friends of her parents, has a difficult time locating exactly where she is. This is a clever plot device which introduces us to the journey Mimi is about to take. The photograph thereby become the medium through which Mimi rediscovers herself, as well as the role she had unknowingly played during her childhood: "And there I am, a blur beneath the baby grand. My hands are flailing, as if I've just tried to lean on someone who is no longer there."

A curious, fragile and demanding child, Mimi is susceptible to speculations and theories about secret plots that have the potential to change the world. In a sense she resembles William Wordsworth, but unlike the great Romanticist poet who took his inspiration from the scenery of the Lake District, Mimi is obsessed with the sight of İstanbul's skyline and its reflections on the sea. This is how she describes her initial impressions of İstanbul, a city that is "endlessly unfolding" before her eyes:

*There was the Bosphorus, carrying the waters of the Black Sea into the Marmara, the Mediterranean, and*



*beyond. Its villages were connected by the ferries that darted back and forth between Europe and Asia. There were no bridges. Along each shore ran a single road, which dipped inland at intervals to make way for rows of restaurants on stilts and waterside mansions. Here and there were clusters of new apartment buildings, but most village houses were wooden, and slowly disintegrating. Rising above the villages were private woodlands. In late spring, when the Judas trees bloomed, the hillsides were splashed with magenta.*

Compared to contemporary İstanbul (currently undergoing a massive -- and sad -- period of urban transformation) Freely's fictional city is an innocent place and a source of nostalgia. Those readers acquainted with the biography of the book's author will realize that the portrayal of İstanbul here has a profoundly personal dimension. (Freely came to İstanbul after her father, the US physicist and author John Freely accepted a teaching position at Robert College.) Like her creator, Mimi moves to Turkey after her father, a left-leaning nuclear physicist, accepts a teaching job. Mimi's mother, Grace, is a blues singer who starts raising her three children in the US, where the McCarthy era is in full swing. People in the US warn Mimi about the dangerous consequences of a possible communist invasion: Since Turkey is geographically so close to the Soviet Union, communists can invade their lives and convert them, like in the film "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." But

Mimi's father reassures her that the fear of communism is a childish thing. He pontificates about how communism is an ideology that had "risen out of a noble dream -- to free a working man who'd been put in chains," before adding how it had changed in time and replaced "the old tyranny with a new one."

After Mimi and her family reach İstanbul, the struggle between the Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy administrations reaches new heights. During her first days Mimi shows little interest in world politics, and simply enjoys the atmosphere of the city. They stay in an apartment "perched on a hill between the little coastal town of Bebek and the great castle of Rumeli Hisar." Their apartment has a huge balcony which has a terrific, enviable view. From there Mimi can watch all kinds of *yalıs* (seaside mansions) as well as the fort of Anadolu Hisarı on the opposite shore. But it is the ships -- and Soviet tankers in particular -- cruising from the Marmara to the Black Sea that attract her attention the most. Those tankers help to create, as well as destroy, her illusions. Mimi recalls: "Because we were on the south-facing slope of a promontory, the European and Asian shores to the south of us seemed to blend into a single mass -- until a Soviet tanker sliced through the illusion, coming right at us."

There are many illusions, and dreams, in the minds of the residents of İstanbul's bohemian quarter,

**In Freely's book the Bosphorus provides a point of division between the 'free world' and the world of socialism.**

MAY 18, 2012  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
ISA SIMSEK

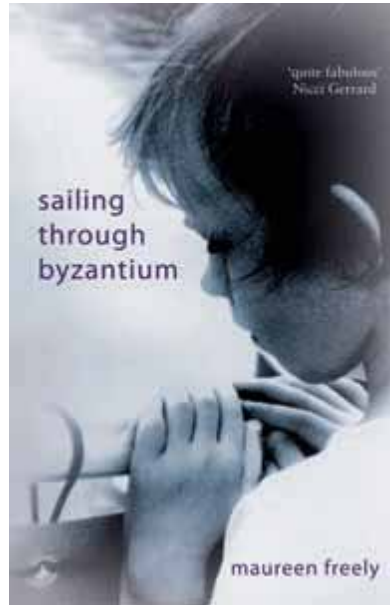


and not all of them are political ones. Mimi's neighbors and family friends include international spies and expatriates, who all regularly frequent their apartment. Freely focuses on the relationships between those colorful characters (the academic Cabot, the secret policeman İsmet and the spy Wakefield, among others), which fuel Mimi's imagination. Throughout the book she struggles to make sense of the things that she sees happening between them (one critic already compared Freely's confused narrator to Maisie, the protagonist of Henry James's "What Maisie Knew"). Once we recognize Mimi's voice to be an unreliable one, we take her account with a pinch of salt.

Mimi's childishness partly explains the weaknesses of her character. But it is through the consciousness of her mature self that we follow her adventures. She portrays İstanbul as a city that had fallen from its status as one of the world's great capitals to "just another disintegrating city, important only for the great waterway that passed through it." This is a view shared by Orhan Pamuk (Freely is the principal English translator of his works) who uses the word *hüzün* (loosely: melancholy) to describe a similar sense of loss. But "Sailing Through Byzantium" is a Jameson book, in that it does not condone the past but takes it as the starting point of an analysis of the mind remembering it. It is Mimi's present state of mind, rather than the *hüzünlü* objects in her recollections, that gives this book its special charm.

Take this example where İstanbul provides a theatre for Mimi, who sits on the balcony of her home to watch the ships:

*Though we could read their names and identify their flags, we never knew where they were headed, or what they were carrying, or why. Some people solved the mystery by imposing on them their worst fears. They would hear the ships passing through the night and slide under their*



## COMPARED TO CONTEMPORARY İSTANBUL, FREELY'S FICTIONAL CITY IS AN INNOCENT PLACE AND A SOURCE OF NOSTALGIA

*blankets. But not my parents, who would rise from their beds the moment their apartments began to tremble and walk out on to the balcony to see the great black hull cutting through the night. Having measured the distance between the tiny green light at the stern and the tiny red light at the prow, they would stare right through it.*

In one of the most interesting parts of the book, Mimi's family takes a trip to Egypt on a Soviet ship, despite the warnings of their neighbors. Mimi is both terrified and fascinated by the experience. We watch her as she starts using a sketchbook in which she writes with an invisible ink, which is a fascinating metaphor for the workings of memory and consciousness.

Mimi's character and her struggle to give meaning to the things that happened around her reminded this author of Ian McEwan's "Atonement," where a similarly clever and fanciful girl's attempts at producing a

coherent narrative ends in catastrophe. Of course, the unmistakable reference is to William Butler Yeats's 1926 poem, "Sailing to Byzantium," to which the title of Freely's book gives a knowing nod. The poem is famous for its opening line, "That is no country for old men" (which became more famous thanks to Cormac McCarthy's novel and its 2007 film adaptation), as well as the mastery with which Yeats creates his speaker, an elderly man, who is nostalgic about his youth and who uses the metaphorical device of a journey to Byzantium to give a sense of loss. In the country of youth the world rings with sensual music, and the elderly are neglected by the young. In order to cultivate her soul, and make sense of her past, Mimi also takes a journey to Byzantium where she studies similar "monuments of its own magnificence". After this author finished Freely's book, it was not the land but the sea with its consciousness-like ebb and flow that lingered in his mind.



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# Water, the sacred capital

his essay explores the symbolic uses of water in various religions in its various forms. Water has been a central feature in the religious thinking and rituals of cultures around the world. It is understood to be sacred, a gift to be shared by all mankind, not just an economic asset that needs only to be administered. Perhaps by exploring the importance of water to different peoples, new perspectives can be found for its administration and economics

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## PROF. AALIA SOHAIL KHAN

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Since time immemorial, water has been among the main literary and religious symbols. The need for and uses of water appear so prevalently in the literature of the ancients that water serves as an archetype. Its beneficial effects in many forms are repeatedly cited not only for the growing of crops and plant life, but also for the routine matters of daily life. By means of different images, the various forms in which water appeared came to be equated with such things as vitality, prosperity and abundance, refreshment, and the good life in general. Water also came to symbolize values and qualities such as wisdom, righteousness, purity and proper conduct, and even spiritual implications such as deliverance, whether nationally or spiritually.

Why is water so central to religious life? Water is a symbol of God and of life, as well as a means of cleansing. It is a powerful purifying element and can destroy evil and enemies, as in the Hindu rites of sprinkling water over the cremated body, stories of the Flood, and the flight of Israel from Egypt. The shared belief is that water is a mystically powerful element that, being connected with God in some way, can cleanse

inner and outer defilement, regenerate the human mind, body, spirit, and ensure the fertility of the land.

By examining scriptural teachings and practices as they pertain to water wastage, pollution and dwindling of freshwater supplies, it may be possible to develop a stronger environmental ethic from religions' wisdom regarding the environment, as well as fresh opportunities for interfaith dialogue.

## NATIVE AMERICAN INDIANS

The spiritual goal of the Native American is to live in harmony with the universe. Native American water symbols are a testament that the larger essence of life imbues all things. As Chief Seattle wrote in a letter to the American colonizers in 1854, "Every part of this earth is sacred to my people [...] We are part of the earth and it is part of us."

As the Native American way is largely a holistic way of life, water symbols are often used to represent inclusion, totality and a broad picture of organic life. Water represents not only the element, but its role in the universe, its impact on the environment, its message to all other living things. Native American tribes live their lives with the notion of cultural or spiritual use of water, that what they do today is to



prepare the Earth for the next seven generations. In this respect, their creation stories and cultural and spiritual relationships to the earth and water serve many important environmental purposes.

#### HINDUISM

Water has a special place in Hinduism because it is believed to have spiritually cleansing powers. To Hindus all water is sacred, especially rivers. Holy places are usually located on the banks of rivers, coasts, seashores and mountains. The Ganges River is the most important of the seven sacred rivers in Hinduism. It is also associated with healing powers. The river is said to flow from the toe of the Hindu god Vishnu to be spread into the world through the hair of the god Shiva.

In the Ganges the pure are made even more pure and the impure have their pollution removed, if only temporarily. It is believed that those who bathe in the Ganges and those who leave some part of themselves (hair, bone, etc.) on the left bank will attain paradise. Although Hindu society is based on a very rigid caste system that forbids interaction between different castes, sacred rivers function as great equalizers. In the sacred water, distinctions of caste are dissolved, as all sins fall away.

The waters of the Ganges are used in worship, and if possible a sip is given to the dying. Funeral grounds are always located near a river. Sometimes at the funeral a

small hole is drilled in an earthen pot, which is then filled with water; as the son of the deceased walks around the burning funeral pyre with the pot, dripping water forms a limiting line to prevent the soul from escaping as a ghost. When the heat of the pyre cracks the skull of the corpse, the mourners bathe in the river and return home. On the third day, after the cremation the ashes are collected and, on or after the 10th day they are cast into a holy river.

#### ZOROASTRIANISM

The significance of water in Zoroastrianism rests on its purifying properties and its importance as a fundamental life element. Zoroastrians believe that pollution is evil and that water, when pure, is sacred.

A belief in Zoroastrianism is that when the world was created, the evil spirit, or Angra Mainyu, attacked the earth and -- among other things -- made fresh water salty. Zoroastrians themselves must avoid pollution of any kind and must perform ritual ablutions before saying their prayers (which

are said five times a day facing a source of light) and before any religious ceremonies such as weddings.

Thus, while water is used in purification rites and rituals, it is sacred itself and so must be kept from being polluted. People must not urinate, spit or wash their hands in a river, or allow anyone else to. In Zoroastrianism the dead are not cremated, buried or immersed in water because fire, earth

**A man performs his ablutions at Sultanahmet Mosque, Istanbul.**

DEC. 8, 2008  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
ISA SIMSEK

**IN THE GANGES THE PURE ARE MADE EVEN MORE PURE AND THE IMPURE HAVE THEIR POLLUTION REMOVED**



## WHILE WATER IS USED IN PURIFICATION RITES AND RITUALS, IT IS SACRED ITSELF AND SO MUST BE KEPT FROM BEING POLLUTED

and water must be kept pure. Therefore, corpses are left to birds of prey for defleshing.

Of the six benevolent divine beings that Zoroastrians believe in, Haurvatat (meaning wholeness, health and integrity) is a feminine being and the creator of water. It is represented by consecrated water used in priestly acts of worship. In everyday life, Haurvatat is observed by keeping water unpolluted and being temperate and self-disciplined.

### SHINTO

Japan's indigenous religion is based on the veneration of the kami -- the innumerable deities believed to inhabit natural phenomenon like mountains, trees, rocks, waterfalls and springs. Waterfalls are held sacred and standing under them is believed to purify. Worship of kamis, whether public or private, always begins with the all-important act of purification with water. Troughs containing water for ritual washing are placed in many sacred shrines.

### JAPANESE BUDDHISM

In 13th century Japanese Buddhism the first water drawn from the well was offered to the Gohonzon, which means any object of worship, veneration or devotion. There are two meanings behind this practice: The function of water is to wash away filth and impurity, and the second meaning is that just as water flows down from a high place to lower ones, Buddha's compassion and mercy flows from the heights of the world of Buddhahood to equally benefit all life in the lower worlds.

### JUDAISM

Respecting nature is a part of Judaism. In Bereishit (Genesis 1:28), the first chapter in the Torah, God wants human beings to both use the natural world for their needs but at the same time to preserve the world and prevent its destruction. From the Tenach on, Judaism envisages humans as lords of creation, yet at the same time they are required to be deeply grateful to God for the sustenance brought by nature and to be responsible for its stewardship.

In Judaism, traditionally water has been used in ceremony and celebrated. Jews are instructed to thank God for the rainbows and thunderstorms they witness. In the Talmudic period "water" was symbolic for the divine teachings. The ancient Festival of the Water-Drawing known as Simchat Beit Hashoeivah illustrates Jewish thanksgiving to God for life-giving water and reverence to water itself. Simchat Beit Hashoeivah was one of the most popular celebrations in the days of the Temple. Symbolic prayers for rain, showing recognition of rain's value and its source,

i.e., God, were probably part of the tradition. The water to be offered to God was drawn from the Pool of Siloam, a rock-cut pool on the southern slope of the City of David, the original site of Jerusalem, located outside the walls of the Old City to the southeast. This pool was used by Jews for ritual immersions and healing rituals from about 50 B.C.E to 70 C.E., when the Romans destroyed the Jewish Temple. It is also cited in the New Testament as the site of a healing miracle of Jesus, when he restored sight to a man blind from birth.

Central to the Jewish perspective on water ethics and its management is the principle of bal tashchit, a Hebrew term explained by the rabbis as an admonition against any kind of waste or willful destruction. This term has wide environmental application as Judaism has a heightened sensitivity to the environment, reflected by the Torah and the rabbis and their later rulings. Judaism created specific laws that are more sophisticated than most of the environmental laws that exist today. Several laws were instituted by the



The site of a pool where some Christians believe Jesus gave sight to a blind man.  
DEC. 23, 2004  
PHOTO: REUTERS,  
GIL COHEN



## CHRIST TURNS WATER INTO WINE AT CANA, SAYING IT IS A MEANS TO A NEW SPIRITUAL BIRTH INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

rabbis to safeguard water from pollution. Emphasis was on the quality of drinking water, protection of water resources and control of water pollution.

Currently, bal tashchit applies to anyone wantonly harming the natural ecosystems that require water to be plentiful and clean. Echoing these ancient laws is modern Israel's prohibition on the transport of hazardous substances in roads adjacent to the Sea of Galilee. The intensive use of drip irrigation technology in Israel that has helped its farmers to reduce their water use on each irrigated hectare by

one-third while increasing crop yields is also an illustration of the application of bal tashchit.

### CHRISTIANITY

In Genesis the pure primordial substance of the created universe is water. Water at times symbolizes life itself and beyond that, God the giver of life. God in Christianity is compared with many forms of water, for example, rain, which brings life and joy. The mention of water in connection with God reminds us of the abundance and riches of God's goodness and grace to mankind. It is He who is a "fountain of life giving water."

In the New Testament the symbol of water assumes special spiritual implications; Christ turns water into wine at Cana, saying it is a means to a new spiritual birth into the kingdom of heaven. As Jesus is identified explicitly with the creator and life-giver, he dispenses the gift of "living water," a symbol for salvation, the source of eternal life and spiritual grace. The scripture says, "From within him will flow rivers of living water"

(John 4: 1- 42) to the spiritually thirsty, who stand in the need of the life-giving water of salvation.

The term "river" in the Bible also serves as a reminder of God's presence and blessing. The link between rivers and the divine presence is further emphasized in that certain religious observances were carried out there. The drying up of rivers and streams is seen as an indication of God's judgment or chastisement. A wicked man can be said to be denied the pleasures associated with rivers (Job 20:17). Water also demonstrated God's power, such as in the Flood or the parting of the Red Sea in the Exodus.

### ISLAM

In Islam water is the origin of all life on earth, the substance from which God created man (Quran 25:54). Water is the primary element that existed even before the heavens and the Earth.

The water of rain, rivers, and fountains flows through the pages of the Quran to symbolize God's benevolence and power: "He sends down saving rain for them when they have lost all hope and spreads abroad His mercy" (Quran 25:48). There is a constant reminder that it is God who gives sweet water to people, and that He can just as easily withhold it: "Consider the water which you drink. Was it you that brought it down from the rain cloud or We? If We had pleased, We could make it bitter" (Quran 56:68-70). In this verse human beings are warned that they must abide by His laws.

In the Quran, the ideas of the Revelation, mercy and water -- in particular rain -- are in a sense inseparable. They are "sent down" by the All-Merciful. Rain and Revelation are both described throughout the Quran as "mercy," and both are spoken of as "life-giving."

Water also represents purity in Islam. In Islam ablution is an obligatory component of the Islamic prayer ritual; prayers carried out in an impure state are not valid. However, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) advised against waste of water and urged moderation and thriftiness in the use of water during ablution. Symbolically, performing ablutions is a process of getting rid of vanity.

Water is a powerful symbol of rebirth and



Hindu prayers at the Sangam, the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati River in Allahabad, India.

MARCH 1, 2013  
PHOTO: AP,  
RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

quicken, God brings life from death, as the Quran says, "And He it is Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His mercy, and we send down pure water from the sky. That with it We may give life to dead land, and slake the thirst of things we have created, cattle and men in great numbers" (Quran 25:48-49).

Water in Islam is considered as a gift belonging to all equally, which has to be managed and distributed with equity among all living beings, humans, animals and plant life. Hence, this precious and scarce resource must be managed with the highest degree of responsibility. The lesson is one of altruism, sharing and giving.

## THE WATER OF RAIN, RIVERS, AND FOUNTAINS FLOWS THROUGH THE PAGES OF THE QURAN TO SYMBOLIZE GOD'S BENEVOLENCE AND POWER

From the numerous Quranic references to cooling rivers, fresh rain, and fountains of flavored drinking water in Paradise, we can deduce that water is the essence of the gardens of Paradise. It flows beneath and through them, bringing coolness and greenery, and quenching thirst. Rivers of sweet water symbolize reward for the piety of the believers. The Quran also equates the waters of Paradise with moral uprightness: "In the garden is no idle talk; there is a gushing fountain" (Quran 88:11-12).

The Zamzam Well has been providing fresh water to pilgrims at Mecca and Medina for the last 4,000 years. The source of Zamzam has remained intact, but to protect it from pollution and facilitate

public, water supply system has been reorganized and reconstructed many times in accordance with the needs and demands of changing times.


### CONCLUSION

Environmental ethics, as a specific area of intellectual inquiry, is the attempt to define a system of values to guide human interaction in the natural world. Global concern for the environment has provided the impetus for Jews, Christians and Muslims to tap into the rich "environmental wisdom" of their traditions, looking at it anew. These religions agree that the whole of creation deserves respect and appropriate care. As humans were created in God's image, so they are duty bound to be creators in the world, not destroyers.

World religions, born anciently into a non-technological environment are nonetheless ecologically sound by today's scientific standards; they espouse beliefs and practices that coincide with those prescribed by the modern environmental viewpoint. What are now called environmental ethics abound in religious sources that contain tens of thousands of allusions to concerns about protection of the natural sources of water, its purity, excessive consumption and avoiding its pollution.

In an industrial society, the spiritual use of water by many people may often be pushed aside or treated as being of little importance. Some may believe that using water in a cultural or spiritual way is not practical. On the one side is the economic principle, and on the other side the religious perspective and respect for Earth. It is practically

impossible to separate the three abstract entities of value, culture and water -- they are inextricably linked, regardless of value systems or cultural heritage.

Solutions to the current environmental crisis may well be found within human religion. After all, it is humans who are the chief cause of the environmental crisis, with their exploitative, abusive and excessive use of and interaction with the natural world, driven by greed. The spiritual and cultural use of water may prove to be a valuable tool in the fight against climate change, in protecting the natural beauty and productivity of rivers and lakes, and in restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical and biological integrity of water. 



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# Drought in Turkey: A social or a physical phenomenon?

**D**rought, if not anticipated and managed properly, has complex impacts on both nature and society. Yet official declarations by the Turkish state regarding drought all relate to increasing water supply -- often at high economic and environmental costs -- rather than effective drought management. Without combating its root causes, especially anthropogenic ones, drought is likely to be among the worst problems Turkey will face in the near future

## **DR. AKGÜN İLHAN**

*Right to Water Campaign*

Turkey is in the middle of the worst drought it has seen in decades. As a semi-arid country, Turkey is already familiar with this concept. It went through extremely dry periods in the years 1928-1930, 1950-1951, 1973-1974, 1988-1989, 1994-1996, 2000-2001 and 2006-2008.<sup>1</sup> The official figures point at a significant increase in not only the frequency, but also the intensity of droughts in the country,<sup>2</sup> and with global climate change affecting the Mediterranean basin in particular, it seems even drier days await Turkey.

### **WHAT IS A DROUGHT?**

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) drought is a decrease in precipitation that adversely affects land resource production systems, and it occurs in stages. The first is "meteorological drought," in which the number of days with precipitation is less than a specified threshold. The second is "agricultural drought," that is, the negative impacts of precipitation shortages on agricultural production. The third is "hydrological drought"; decrease in stream flows and levels of lake, reservoir and groundwater resources. However, the time

lag between decrease in precipitation and water in streams, rivers, lakes and reservoirs makes hydrological drought difficult to spot. Such delay often exacerbates the problem without attracting much public attention.

### **GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: NO JOKE!**

Drought is a result of climate change; a complex social-ecological phenomenon with many aspects. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) -- the leading international body for the assessment of climate change -- concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) have increased, and this has led the world's atmosphere and oceans to be increasingly warmer, while causing a significant amount of snow and ice to melt and a rise in sea level all around the globe. The atmospheric concentrations of GHGs have gone up to levels unprecedented in at least the last 800,000 years. In particular CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations have increased by 40 percent since pre-industrial times, primarily because of fossil fuel emissions. IPCC's 5th Assessment Report "Climate Change 2014: The Physical Science Basis," published on March 31, 2014, indicates that the warming of the global climate system is an unequivocal fact and notes that in the northern hemisphere 1983-2012 was the warmest 30-year period of the last 1,400 years.



## DROUGHT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The world's climate is warming up with GHG emissions, and this increases evapotranspiration; the movement of water into the atmosphere from land and water surfaces and plants due to evaporation and transpiration. This has been particularly pronounced in the Mediterranean basin, where countries such as Turkey have suffered from significantly declining precipitation since 1970. What is worse, drought-affected areas will continue to grow, resulting in a 30 percent decline in water resources available for human use and in the expansion of semi-arid and arid areas.

Turkey's semi-arid climate is rapidly moving towards "arid." 2013 saw drought impact even unexpected places such as Ordu in the Black Sea region, which is usually known for its high precipitation levels. As a result of low precipitation, amongst other factors, within the last couple of years agricultural production in Ordu has shifted from hazelnut to wheat, i.e. a dry agriculture crop that requires no irrigation. Even so, precipitation was so low last year that helpless farmers resorted to rain prayer ceremonies in efforts to save their wheat. In 2014 the situation worsened for urban populations as well as farmers. Water levels in the dams are extremely low. Large cities such as İstanbul

find short-term solutions in water transfers from surrounding cities such as Kırklareli and Düzce.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF DROUGHT

Drought results in decrease in water quality as well as quantity, because lower precipitation means higher concentration of pollutants in remaining water sources. This creates a series of interlinked social and ecological problems. Among some are forest and wetland fires (e.g. the fire around Lake Sapanca in April 2014);

habitat damage affecting wildlife (e.g. habitat loss of 69 native bird species and many more migrating birds due to the same fire); environmental conflicts over natural resources, including both water and food (e.g. two cities, Kocaeli and Sakarya, are under an increasing threat of a possible conflict due to

falling water levels in the Sapanca Lake as both obtain their drinking water from the same lake); dust bowls, storms, erosion and desertification (e.g. the Konya region); diminished crop growth and carrying capacity for livestock, which cause food prices to go up (e.g. tremendous decrease in grape, olive and fig production in the Aegean, as well as in hazelnut, apricot and kiwi -- calculated to be more than 80 percent); famine,

**Drought is likely to be among the worst problems Turkey will face in the near future.**

MARCH 24, 2014  
PHOTO: CIHAN,  
ABDURRAHMAN  
BUYÜKESKİN

## DROUGHT RESULTS IN A DECREASE IN WATER QUALITY AS WELL AS QUANTITY





hunger, malnutrition, dehydration and related epidemic diseases; migration and poverty due to loss of livelihood; reduced electricity production from hydroelectric power (HEP) plants; water and electricity shortages often resulting in rising prices; and falling access to water and electricity for the economically disadvantaged.

#### **WATER AT THE INTERSECTION POINT OF 2023 DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Turkey's emerging economy creates an increasing demand for energy with the highest growth rate of not only Europe but also among Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. As three-quarters of its energy comes from external sources, Turkey is keen to diversify and grow its domestic energy supply, often at the cost of water. National energy policies focus on enlarging the domestic energy supply, while paying little attention to issues such as energy intensity and energy-related environmental problems like climate change and water crises. Energy intensity is energy used to create a unit of gross domestic product (GDP), which should normally be low, but is very high in Turkey when compared with OECD countries. In order to expand its energy supply, Turkey has developed ambitious energy goals that promote the use of all domestic coal and hydropower potential by 2023. This places water right at the intersection point of both energy sources.

The coal industry uses water during the process of both mining and burning (mainly for cooling and washing). This often creates serious and often irreversible negative impacts on the quantity and quality of both surface and groundwater. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) thermal power plants in Turkey drew 4.29 billion m<sup>3</sup> water in 2010; 99 percent of this was used for cooling, of which only 0.4 percent was retreated. As the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) report published in March 2013 indicates, Turkey plans to build more coal power plants (CPP) than are currently in the pipeline in all of Europe; an estimated 50 in total. Bearing in mind that the average lifespan of a CPP is at least 40 years, this commitment to CPP energy means millions of tonnes of water will be contaminated for decades in Turkey. In addition, one-

third of Turkey's rivers are already dammed for HEP product. This number will double by 2023, with even the smallest streams impacted by HEP plants.

Such an aggressive demand for water brings nothing but ecological conflicts in a country that is facing drought. On the one hand, water is essential for life and meeting the needs of living beings and ecosystems. On the other, Turkish water policy and practices seem to view water as raw material for the energy sector. With an intensifying drought the question becomes even more crucial: Is water a source of life or of energy?

#### **THE DROUGHT DISCOURSE IN TURKEY**

The drought has been particularly acute on Turkey's western and southern coastlines; that is, the Marmara, Aegean and Mediterranean regions. Precipitation in February 2014 across the entire country was 67.9 percent lower than figures for 2013, but 80.1 percent lower for the Marmara region. Turkey has already passed the meteorological and hydrological drought phases and reached the phase of agricultural drought. It was the severity of the hydrological drought that

brought the drought discourse growing media coverage and triggered social debates within public circles. The alarming decrease in the water levels of dam reservoirs for Turkey's major cities and in its large natural lakes also made the issue more visible.

Towards the end of 2013

drought-related news was mostly about meteorological drought, focusing on rain prayer ceremonies by concerned farmers. In the first months of 2014, drought news had more urban content; such as the decreasing levels in drinking water dams and the forthcoming water cuts in large cities. The alarming fall in the water levels of İstanbul's dams was regular news. In spring 2014, agricultural and socio-economic drought started to gain greater media coverage. One example was the Agricultural Insurance Pool (TARSIM), from which 1 million farmers in Turkey have filed 73,000 claim notices since the beginning of 2014.

It is not difficult to foresee that news regarding drought will intensify in both quantity and content. However, there is also the issue of government officials' unreliable and often flippant statements and declarations. For example, every time a press member

### **THE DROUGHT HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY ACUTE ON TURKEY'S WESTERN AND SOUTHERN COASTLINES**



**Drought is both a social and physical phenomenon.**

JAN. 18, 2014  
PHOTO: CIHAN, ISA ÇIÇEK

asks about what kind of measures the government has developed so far as regards drought management, Minister of Forestry and Water Works Veysel Eroglu simply claims, smilingly, that drought measures are “professional secrets”<sup>3</sup>. On a number of occasions Eroglu also proposed a rain prayer ceremony as the cheapest solution to the drought<sup>4</sup>. On being asked whether there would be water cuts this summer, he said that he would cut off his moustache in the event of a water cut<sup>5</sup>. The most serious but least effective answer to these questions was the building of three more dams for İstanbul -- as if there would be sufficient precipitation to fill those dams<sup>6</sup>.

On the contrary, saving and conserving water is particularly important during drought periods. The focal strategy should be on water-saving measures to reduce consumption. Combating drought goes way beyond building more hydraulic projects. Studies show that the population of major cities such as İstanbul is growing rapidly but, conversely, the water resources available are limited and insufficient to meet demand. An effective drought management plan is urgently needed.

## **TURKEY NEEDS A NEW EFFECTIVE DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **WHAT KIND OF DROUGHT MANAGEMENT?**

The first plan for combating drought in Turkey was for the 2008-2012 period<sup>7</sup>. This plan aimed to raise public awareness of drought, including all stakeholders’ participation within supply-demand management; planning sustainable agricultural water use during non-drought times; and minimizing the adverse impacts of drought during crisis times. The proposed measures were

collected under five titles: drought risk projection and management; sustainable water supply; agricultural water demand management; facilitating supplementary research and development and enhancing educational materials; and institutional capacity building. However, the plan was postponed as only local-scale droughts were at stake at that time. When drought became nationwide, the very same plan was revised for 2013-2017.

However, Turkey needs a new effective drought management plan, not a copy of the plan for the previous dry period. Broadly speaking, this plan should, first of all, adopt long-term strategies to combat the root causes of drought rather than short-term solutions targeting its end results. Therefore, this plan should

also combat climate change, the main driving force of drought. As water and energy are closely interlinked, the context of drought should also include what is happening within the energy domain as well as water. The crucial strategy is demand management rather than amplifying water and

energy supply to meet an ever-growing hunger for water and energy. This strategy is about conservation of water, rather than its uncontrolled consumption.

Such a plan starts with a number of changes in use of energy (particularly fossil fuels) as well as water. Alternative ways of transportation such as walking, cycling, railway and public transportation should be encouraged and incentivized. Keeping energy efficiency and energy saving as a priority, lighting and heating systems should operate with renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power. Current urban policies that promote migration from rural areas to large cities



A rain prayer  
in Nevşehir,  
Cappadocia.  
MAY 4, 2014  
PHOTO: CIHAN,  
MURAT SISMAN

should be abandoned. Even without a drought, İstanbul cannot escape water shortage, with a population is bigger than that of 122 countries! In short, any measure taken for drought needs to exclude policies that make major cities grow still larger.

Another key measure is abolishing the overall water-saving policy of increasing the price of water. This old strategy does not only fail to save water, but it also creates more ecological injustice for the poor. It really does not matter to economically advantaged individuals and groups how much they pay for water. This segment of society in fact uses many times more water and energy per capita than the poor. And it really does not

matter to the poor how much water costs, because it is an irreplaceable need for everyone, and regardless of its price the poor have to buy it. This only means growing poverty for the poor, as they spend a growing portion of their budget on water, not water conservation.

More ecologically just and effective water-saving methods should be developed, such as the one in Dikili (İzmir)<sup>8</sup>. Dikili Municipality provides its citizens with free water up to a certain monthly quota per household. When one exceeds this quota, then he/she has to pay the entire amount of water consumed from the normal tariff. Since the launch of this method, Dikili has seen a significant reduction in water usage levels.

Another issue is the packaged water industry. In the face of an intensifying drought, Hamidiye Spring Water Inc., a public company of the Greater İstanbul Municipality, exports the city's water to more than 40 countries worldwide, including countries with no water shortage problem, such as the US, Japan and Ireland<sup>9</sup>. In any case, in the face of climate change the environmental footprint of the packaged water industry is anyway too high to pay. When citizens are provided with sufficient clean and drinkable tap water the need for bottled water is eliminated.

Climate change and drought are not simply meteorological phenomena, they are also the result of states' policies. Drought is both a social and physical phenomenon: Without combatting the social aspects of drought, it will not be possible to combat its physical ones. [TR]

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# Benefit sharing, water and cooperation: the Jordanian case

# W

ater scarcity has become acute in much of the Middle East, yet economically feasible water projects remain undeveloped due to the need for the involvement of multiple jurisdictions and for cooperation in a tense geography. A focus on sharing the benefits derived from the use of water rather than the allocation of water itself provides far greater scope for identifying mutually beneficial cooperative actions, as Jordan's case illustrates

## MAYSOON ZOUBI

*Former Secretary General, Ministry of Water Resources, Jordan*

Water is indispensable for human and environmental health, as well as economic development. Almost every sector of human activity depends on water resources, from agriculture to industrial production and power generation. This makes trans-boundary management not only highly political but also categorizes it as an affair of national security. However, water flows do not respect geo-political delineations, and the involvement of multiple states makes the issue highly political, especially if power relations are not equal.

Trans-boundary water resources are often a cause of conflict among riparian entities. Increasing demand for water resources and deterioration of existing sources underscore the need to resolve conflicts over the allocation of consumption and pollution rights among conflicting uses and users. Because economic growth of the entities that share a water resource depends on the sustainability of the resource, water has great potential as a basis for cooperation among political entities. However, enforcement of cooperation, particularly in international settings, is limited. Thus, parties sharing a water resource will form and remain in a cooperating coalition only

when economic incentives for each can be identified.

Water scarcity has become acute in many regions because of economic and population growth and resource degradation. Most economically feasible but yet undeveloped water projects involve multiple jurisdictions, so cooperation is required. A focus on sharing the benefits derived from the use of water rather than the allocation of water itself provides far greater scope for identifying mutually beneficial cooperative actions.

The second best alternative is an international binding legal instrument that sets the duties and responsibilities of riparian countries and establishes guiding principles for coordinating, managing and allocating shared water resources.

## WATER IN JORDAN

Water supply and sanitation in Jordan is characterized by severe water scarcity, exacerbated by population pressure due to forced immigration as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Six-Day War in 1967, the Gulf War of 1990, the Iraq War of 2003 and the Syrian civil war since 2011. Jordan is considered one of the four most water-scarce countries in the world. High population growth, the depletion of groundwater reserves and the impacts of climate change are likely

to aggravate the situation in the future. These problems are further compounded by the shared nature of water resources in the region and the lack of communication and cooperation between concerned nations in light of lingering regional political instability.

Current freshwater demand in Jordan outstrips supply by more than 1,000 million cubic meters (mcm). In order to meet this challenge, the kingdom is actively pursuing innovative solutions such as wastewater treatment, brackish water desalination, tapping new water sources (such as the Disi Water Conveyance Project from the non-renewable Disi aquifer to the capital Amman, opened in July 2013, which increases available resources by about 12 percent), effective demand management, enhancement of water supply, and reduction of non-renewable water. Jordan has also been embarking upon efforts to foster better relations with Saudi Arabia, Israel and Syria, with which it shares common water sources.

#### HISTORY OF COOPERATION

While the idea of developing a water sharing strategy for the whole Jordan basin was recognized as early as 1913, when the Franjeh Plan was proposed, and 1955, when the Johnston Plan was devised, not one single plan has been completely adhered to. The Franjeh Plan was intended for the irrigation of the Jordan Valley, to generate hydropower and to transfer Yarmouk River flow (100 mcm) to Lake Tiberias. The Johnston Plan called for the allocation of 55 percent of available water in the basin to Jordan, 36 percent to Israel, and 9 percent to Syria and Lebanon, but was never signed by the countries involved.

In 1951, Jordan announced its plan to divert part of the Yarmouk River via the East Ghor Canal to irrigate the East Ghor area of the Jordan Valley. In response, Israel began the construction of its National Water Carrier (NWC) in 1953. In 1964, the NWC opened and began diverting water from the Jordan River Valley. This diversion led to the Arab Summit of 1964, where a plan was devised to begin diverting the headwater of the Jordan River to Syria and Jordan. From 1965 to 1967 Israel attacked these construction projects in Syria and, along with other factors, this conflict escalated into the Six Day War in 1967, when Israel completely destroyed the Syrian diversion project and took control of the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This gave Israel control of the Jordan River's headwater and of significant groundwater resources.

Since the start of the peace process in the early



1990s, bilateral agreements and common principles have been signed between Israel and Jordan, and Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), but no multilateral plan or agreement has been negotiated -- and even the bilateral ones have been put under pressure and frequently violated in times of natural or political crisis.

In July 1994, Israel and Jordan signed the Washington Declaration and negotiated the Treaty of Peace, signed in October 1994. The treaty spells out allocations for both the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers and calls for joint efforts to prevent water pollution. This peace treaty established the Israel-Jordan Joint Water Committee (IJJWC), comprised of three members from each country. The committee was tasked to seek experts and advisors as required, and form specialized subcommittees with technical tasks assigned. It also specified the volumes of water to be used, stored, and transferred by and to each country during a "summer" and a "winter" season.

Jordan can also build a dam of 20 mcm capacity on the Jordan River and on its reach south of Lake Tiberias on the border between Jordan and Israel. Because Israel is to provide only 50 mcm/year of additional water to Jordan, insufficient to allow the Jordanians to cover their annual deficit, the two countries have agreed to cooperate in finding sources to supply Jordan with an additional quantity of 50 mcm/year of water of drinkable standards, within one year from the entry into force of the treaty. To protect the shared water of the Jordan and Yarmouk rivers against any pollution or harm, each country is to jointly monitor the quality of water along their boundary, building monitoring stations to be operated under the guidance of the IJJWC.

Interpretation of several terms of the treaty has at times had an uneven history. On the positive side is the June 1995 completion of a pipeline making the physical connection between the Jordan River immediately south of its exit from Lake Tiberias and the King Abdullah

**The Dead Sea  
is drying up at  
a dramatic rate**  
JAN 12, 2010  
PHOTO: REUTERS,  
ALI JAREKJI



Canal in Jordan. Moreover, the provision of the additional 50 mcm/year that Israel promised to Jordan went ahead on schedule. However, the article calling for cooperation so that Jordan acquires 50 mcm more per year led to a “mini crisis” between the two countries in May 1997. At the heart of the dispute was Jordan’s demand for an immediate transfer of 50 mcm, which was to have been obtained by the construction of two internationally financed dams in Jordan. However, neither Jordan nor Israel was successful in obtaining the necessary financing. Finally, Israel agreed to supply Jordan with 25 mcm of water per year for three years as an interim solution, until a desalination plant was erected.

Inter-Arab conflicts have also often arisen, but have only been small-scale low-level conflicts. The terms of the 1987 agreement between Syria and Jordan defined the Syrian share of the Yarmouk and limited Syria to building 25 dams with a holding capacity of 156 mcm. To date, Syria has built 42 dams on the four recharge wadis of the Yarmouk River, in violation of the agreement. Syria’s continuous well drilling in the Yarmouk Basin negatively impacts the base flow in the river, reducing it by approximately 30 percent. The Wahda (Unity) Dam on the Yarmouk River was included in the agreement, with a height of 100 meters and a storage capacity of 225 mcm. Jordan would receive 75 percent of the water stored and Syria would receive all of the hydropower generated. In 2003 the height of the dam was reduced to 87 meters and the storage capacity became 110 mcm. The dam was completed in 2007.

The Jordan River headwaters (Hasbani, Baniyas and Dan) are fed by groundwater and seasonal surface runoff. The Lower Jordan River originally received its main inflow from the outlet of Lake Tiberias and the Yarmouk River, the largest tributary, as well as from several wadis and aquifers. The flow of the Upper Jordan River into Lake Tiberias remains nearly natural, but flow rates in the downstream part of the river have decreased sharply in the last 50 years due to the construction of a series of infrastructure and diversion schemes established in the basin. For instance, the mean annual historic flow of the Yarmouk that was estimated at 450-500 mcm in the 1950s has today decreased to 83-99 mcm. The current annual discharge of the Lower Jordan

River into the Dead Sea is estimated at 20-200 mcm compared to the historic 1,300 mcm. Moreover, water quality in the Lower Jordan River is very low.

Water use in the Jordan River basin is unevenly developed. Palestine and Syria have no access to the Jordan River; hence their use of water resources from the river itself is nil. However, Syria has built several dams in the Yarmouk River sub-basin, which is part of the Jordan River basin. The country uses about 450 mcm/year of surface and groundwater resources in the basin, mainly for agricultural purposes. Annual abstractions in the Hasbani sub-basin in Lebanon are estimated at 9-10 mcm, which are mainly used for domestic water supply. Israel is the largest user of

water from the Jordan River basin, with an annual withdrawal of between 580 and 640 mcm. It is also the only user of water from Lake Tiberias. Jordan uses about 290 mcm/year of water from the Jordan River basin. Water diverted from the Yarmouk River to the King Abdullah Canal is used for

irrigation of crops in the Jordan Valley and for domestic use in Amman. Overall, the Jordan River basin has an estimated total irrigated area of 100,000-150,000 hectares, of which around 30 percent is located in Israel, Jordan and Syria, 5 percent in Palestine and 2 percent in Lebanon.

The quality of water in the Jordan River has severely deteriorated in recent decades. While the headwaters are relatively unaffected, the Lower Jordan River consists primarily of untreated sewage and agricultural return flows, groundwater seepage, as well as brackish water from springs diverted into the river away from the Lake Tiberias area. The Lower Jordan River in particular is extremely polluted. Other environmental concerns include water-level fluctuations in Lake Tiberias and the associated risk of saline water intrusion from below, and, more importantly, the decline of the Dead Sea, which all threaten the stability of the basin ecosystem.

Since the early 20th century, numerous attempts to foster cooperation between basin riparians have been hampered by the regional political conflict, which continues to stand in the way of any basin-wide agreement on water. A number of bilateral agreements encourage cooperation over water between Israel and Jordan, and Israel and Palestine.

## **BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND COMMON PRINCIPLES HAVE BEEN SIGNED BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN**



## TRANS-BOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES ARE OFTEN A CAUSE OF CONFLICT AMONG RIPARIAN ENTITIES

receive all of the generated hydropower. In 1994, the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty stipulated the following water distribution from the Yarmouk River: Israel 25 mcm, Syria 90 mcm and Jordan with the rest of the annual discharge, which averages at around 296 mcm.

In 2004 and 2005 Jordan got only around 119 and 92 mcm/year from the Yarmouk River and from Lake Tiberias respectively. This is only around 10 percent of the total flow of the Upper Jordan and Yarmouk rivers. It is also much less than the water share from these two basins proposed by the Johnston Plan in the 1950s.

In 2007, Jordan and Syria agreed to expedite the implementation of agreements signed between the two countries, especially with regards to shared water in the Yarmouk River Basin. They also agreed to continue a study on the Yarmouk River Basin based on previous studies. The Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee was tasked with discussing how to make use of the Yarmouk River Basin water and how to protect Yarmouk water against depletion. Their remit also includes preparations for winter and storage at the Wahda Dam on the Yarmouk River.

Syria pumps water to Jordan from the Sahm al-Golan dam on the River Yarmouk (file photo).  
AUG. 28, 2002  
PHOTO: AP,  
BASSEM TELLAWI

### THE YARMOUK RIVER BASIN

The Yarmouk River is a tributary of the Jordan River, originating in the southeastern slopes of Mount Hermon and forming a boundary between Syria and Jordan for nearly 40 kilometers before becoming the border between the kingdom and Israel. The Yarmouk River is the biggest feeding tributary to the Jordan River. The Yarmouk River Basin is shared between Syria and Jordan with a total length of 57 kilometers, of which 10 kilometers run within Jordanian territory, while 47 kilometers run upstream within Syrian boundaries. Through the King Abdullah Canal, the Yarmouk River provides Jordan with water for drinking and irrigation purposes.

In the framework of the Johnston Plan of 1955, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt agreed to build a 300 mcm dam at Maqarin on the Yarmouk River and a diversion weir at Addasiya in order to convey water to Jordanian lands. In 1987, Syria and Jordan reaffirmed their mutual commitment to a dam at Maqarin whereby Jordan would receive 75 percent of the water stored in the proposed reservoir and Syria would

### STATUS QUO

Recent dialogue and peace treaties have led to increased cooperation regarding the development of future water resources projects. For instance, the 1994 and 1997 Israel-Jordan agreements led to discussions on the possibility of building a water conveyor from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea to produce desalinated water with hydropower. It should be mentioned, however, that negotiations have not always gone smoothly. For example, in 1999, due to drought Israel decided to reduce the quantity of water piped to Jordan by 60 percent, which caused a sharp response from that country. Disputes of such nature are likely to arise again in the future. However, the peace agreements have had the benefit of restricting such conflicts to political rather than military solutions. The fact that the Joint Water Commission for Israel and the PA has continued to meet to discuss critical issues even during the current period of hostilities illustrates the progress that has already been made.





Members of the international Friends of the Earth group hold Israeli and Jordanian flags in the River Jordan (file photo).

APRIL 20, 2006  
PHOTO: AP,  
BAZ RATNER

### SHARED BENEFITS

As previously mentioned, the cooperation between Jordan and Israel on water has been relatively successful, with both sides working out differences bilaterally without escalation of problems. This type of cooperation should continue to serve as a way for both countries to work together. It can also be expanded to include countries such as Lebanon and Syria, which have similar water concerns and share the same water sources.

An example of a project that can address both water and energy needs is the “peace conveyor” between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea, otherwise known as the “Red to Dead Project.” It is to be a joint venture among the Israelis, Jordanians and the PA and has multiple purposes, one of which is to save the Dead Sea, where water levels are rapidly declining due to decreased water inflows. The Dead Sea is historically very important to the region and serves as a top tourist destination. Currently, its water surface area is down from 950 square kilometers to 637; the sea could dry up in 50 years if no action is taken. The fundamental goal of the project is to create a conduit that pumps water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea and is lined with desalination facilities to produce drinkable water and stations to generate the hydropower required to run most of the process. It would potentially produce 570 mcm per year of water for Jordan and 280 mcm for Israel and the Palestinians. In addition, the project would produce about 550 megawatts of energy. Another project is the Regional

## RECENT DIALOGUE AND PEACE TREATIES HAVE LED TO INCREASED COOPERATION REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS

Water Data Banks Project (RWDBP), which brings together decision-makers from all Israel, Palestine and Jordan to enhance water data availability.

### JORDAN AND SYRIA, JORDAN AND ISRAEL

Cooperation between Jordan and Syria on the Yarmouk River has come to a standstill and not much has been done in the last few years. There is also a lack of cooperation at the academic level, where potential coordination between University of Aleppo in Syria and the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan launched in 2000 has -- perhaps unsurprisingly -- stalled. However, this river basin holds a lot of potential for cooperation in a number of different areas, which can be implemented when the political situation is conducive to cooperation. Some of these include: better public transportation infrastructure between the two countries in order to facilitate tourism; new export window for Syrian products through the Red Sea; new export window for Jordanian products through the Mediterranean Sea; and tradeoff strategies, (e.g. Syria could improve the management of water upstream so Jordan can benefit. In exchange, Jordan could store extra quantities of water in the Wahda Dam, which could also be used to generate electricity for Syria). It seems unlikely that further developments will take place with Syria, however, while its government is occupied by the current conflict within the country's borders.

There are issues in the Jordanian-Israeli relationship that make it completely different from any potential relationship between Israel and other Arab countries. Jordan's demographic makeup and its historical linkages to Israel through Jordanian control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem have forced Jordan to deal with Israel in a pragmatic fashion. Jordan's experiences in working with Israel can also act as a gateway to the rest of the Arab world. However, this will not happen unless there is positive movement on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. 

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# New models of water governance: beyond Blue Peace?

Water issues once downplayed in geopolitics and socio-economic development have become central, as in the Blue Peace initiative launched at the beginning of the decade to look at Middle East water as a potential source of prosperity and peace. However, this regional approach may be overtaken by world developments, as many of the region's water questions acquire continental or global aspects requiring trans-basin or extra-regional approaches

## RIAD AL KHOURI

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The Blue Peace initiative, which advocates that water resources in the Middle East should be considered as a potential source of socio-economic development and peace, brings together international water experts and Middle East stakeholders to help consider and eventually achieve water cooperation aimed at comprehensive regional peace and stability.<sup>1</sup> Yet, a mostly river-basin approach to water problems as exemplified by Blue Peace is being regarded as increasingly insufficient. Without specifically mentioning Blue Peace, Arjen Hoekstra<sup>2</sup> for one has argued that many seemingly local or regional water issues in fact carry a continental or even global dimension, which calls for governance at a level beyond river basins. That in turn requires global approaches complementary to those of the basin. Of course, it is possible to attempt some integration of a regional and/or basin approach with wider ones,<sup>3</sup> as indeed Blue Peace sometimes does. Yet, with continuing failure to achieve a reduction and resolution of conflict in the Middle East -- through no fault of Blue Peace -- isolated basin approaches may prove problematic.

In any case, it is nevertheless true that many of today's water issues cannot be understood separately from such factors as global trade, transcontinental environmental management, world development cooperation and geopolitics, as will be discussed below. These and other issues for external coordination of effective water governance then bring with them the need to work on higher spatial and other levels than that of river basins. Focusing on the latter while neglecting global dimensions carries the risk that developments outside basin water governance could overrule and possibly even nullify the good intentions of worthwhile initiatives such as Blue Peace.

## BEYOND REGIONAL OR BASIN APPROACHES

### *Water as a geopolitical resource*

Countries can be dependent on "virtual water" import, making it a world geopolitical issue due to increasing scarcity of freely available water and its uneven distribution globally. Most water used in production is not as such contained within the product, giving rise to the concept of "virtual water," which is the amount of water needed to produce something, irrespective of actual water content. The physical water in products is generally negligible compared to virtual content: e.g. the global



average virtual water content of wheat is 1,500–1,600 m<sup>3</sup>/ton, while the physical water content is under 1 m<sup>3</sup>/ton. Where moving physical water over long distances is impractical, virtual transfer can efficiently obtain water-intensive products. Where water-abundant areas did not extensively exploit their potential in the past, they now increasingly do so by exporting water virtually or even in real form. The other side of the matter is increasing dependency of water-scarce states on external supplies of water, a factor that can be exploited politically.

From a resource point of view, a positive relationship exists between water scarcity and virtual water import dependency. The extent of scarcity can be defined as the country's "water footprint" (water needed to produce the goods and services consumed there) divided by renewable water resources of the country. Virtual water import dependency is the ratio of the external water footprint of a country to its total water footprint. Middle East states suffering from severe water scarcity e.g. Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia,

## MANY OF TODAY'S WATER ISSUES CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD SEPARATELY FROM SUCH FACTORS AS GLOBAL TRADE

Bahrain, Jordan, Israel and Oman, have high virtual water import dependency (>50 percent); other water-scarce countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)<sup>4</sup> with high virtual water import dependency (25–50 percent) include Algeria, Libya and Yemen.<sup>5</sup> In most water-scarce countries the choice is to increase virtual water imports, but this concept has yet to be embraced with enthusiasm by Blue Peace, which in any case -- having a Middle East focus -- does not take account of crucially related pan-Arab and North African dimensions of water issues.

### *Growing inter-basin water transfer*

Complicating the geopolitics of water, its transport over long distances is growing. The scale of recent proposals in terms of volumes and transfer distance is greater than ever: globally, in 2010 there were 155 inter-basin water transfer projects spanning 26 countries in many regions (though not yet in the Middle East) having a total capacity of transferring 490 billion m<sup>3</sup> (bcm) annually.<sup>6</sup> By

Yemen has a high virtual water import dependency.  
AUG. 29, 2009  
PHOTO: REUTERS,  
KHALED ABDULLAH

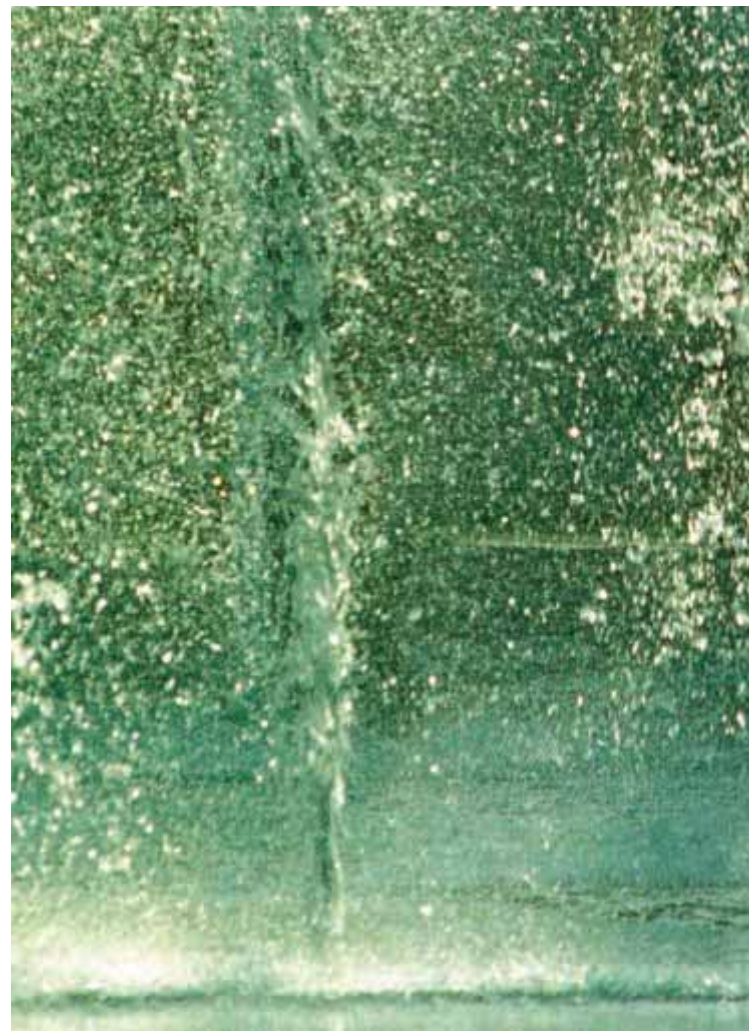


comparison, for example, per capita water availability in Turkey is 1400 m<sup>3</sup> annually<sup>7</sup> -- in other words, transfer mechanisms existing at the beginning of this decade move enough water per annum to supply 350 million people at current Turkish levels. There are also plans for another 60 schemes worldwide (including some between Middle Eastern countries) of 1,150 bcm total annual capacity.<sup>8</sup>

Growing recognition of feasible inter-basin water transfer implies that the scope of water resource planning and management must broaden through larger spatial scales and a widening of problem definition. In the Middle East as elsewhere, it is no longer obvious that water demand and supply have to balance within river basins. As such, plans have been developed (though not implemented) to ship water from Turkey to Israel,<sup>9</sup> and other similar schemes are being contemplated for the region. Yet, though large-scale inter-basin water transfers are increasingly technically possible and economically feasible, their nature has huge impacts on both supplying and receiving regions. As a result, the question is no longer limited to how water shortages in one particular basin can be solved, but to examining cooperation among different basins, or between regions covering more than one basin. Such a trend will no doubt also prevail in the Middle East, necessarily with an impact on Blue Peace's approach to water governance.

#### *Effects of global climate change on local water conditions*

Whatever other aspects of climate change may impinge on world water supplies, the impact of aerosols and greenhouse gases is clearly global. Good governance of local water systems can thus be hampered by these and other factors outside the domain of water managers at the river basin level, who may be unable to influence non-water issues locally, and anyway cannot affect them (or water-use) beyond the basin. Overlooking this external component of water governance could result in global factors nullifying good work by local water managers. In this respect, it is interesting to look for example at water strategies in the Mediterranean littoral or in the Arab world (both of which overlap the Middle East region), where gains in reducing water demand may well be accompanied by lower water availability due to climate change. For example, in a recent discussion of climate change in the northern part of the Arab world (which largely falls within the Mediterranean zone) one estimate is that by the end of the century there will be a 25 percent



reduction in rainfall, along with a 25 percent increase in evaporation, leading to a 50 percent reduction in surface water availability.<sup>10</sup> Such trends should impact Blue Peace's approach by encouraging it to become more trans-regional, or otherwise modifying its regional focus (for example to cover more of the Mediterranean zone).

#### *Global economic aspects of local water use*

More water-short countries, particularly in the Middle East, seek to preserve domestic water resources through importing water virtually in commodities with relatively high water input value of product, while exporting those less water-intensive. For example, Jordan imports about 7 bcm of virtual water annually, compared to 1 bcm withdrawn from domestic water sources per year. Even Egypt, which puts water self-sufficiency high on the political agenda, and with a total water withdrawal in the country of 65 bcm per year, has annual net virtual water import of around 20 bcm.<sup>11</sup>

Further removal of trade barriers, particularly for agricultural commodities, will facilitate increased international commerce in water-intensive products. Water saving due to international trade in agricultural products can be substantial. For example, in most of the Middle East, water availability is below 2,000 m<sup>3</sup> annually per capita; beyond that level net cereal imports



## FURTHER REMOVAL OF TRADE BARRIERS WILL FACILITATE INCREASED INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE IN WATER-INTENSIVE PRODUCTS

Eilat, in exchange for around the same amount of water for central Jordan to be pumped from the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel. The tender for this project includes an alternative for piping the saline discharge to the Dead Sea, which is shared among Jordanians, Israelis and Palestinians. This will have to meet environmental requirements for a pipeline that aims at replenishing the rapidly drying Dead Sea, which may disappear in a few decades, its surface now falling about a meter annually.

The recent agreement is not the same as the Red-Dead Conveyance Project, a much larger Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian initiative, which in its planning, execution, and governance will need considerable input from outside the basin, and indeed the region.<sup>15</sup> Such a project is still unagreed; meanwhile, the current more modest deal continues to ignore riparian rights of Palestinians on the Dead Sea and the Palestinians' fair share of water allocation. At the same time, the present project may not be sufficiently founded on the realities of global climate change, which along with increased upstream consumption has caused the Dead Sea to diminish. Additionally, the current scheme might not be taking effective account of the possibilities for physical or virtual water transfer from outside the Jordan-Araba Basin.

Accounting for Palestinian rights within the context of a more cogent consideration of climate change and an application of ideas related to virtual trade in and physical transfer of water from outside the basin in question could have resulted in a fairer deal.

So why was the present accord made? The answer may have come from Israel's energy and regional development minister who said before the signing ceremony in Washington, D.C. that the deal was due to "strategic cooperation of diplomatic significance between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority," adding that "this is a breakthrough after many years of efforts. It is nothing less than a historic move."<sup>16</sup> In fact, such enthusiasm, which is based at least in part on the minister's political ambitions, is also a form of continuation of Israel's policy of "economic peace," which simply means collaboration on various projects without restoring Palestinian and other Arab rights. As

Jordan imports about 7 bcm of virtual water annually. This file photo shows a Jordanian boy playing in a fountain in the country's capital, Amman. OCT. 21, 1999 PHOTO: REUTERS, ALI JAREKJI

grow exponentially with decreasing water available per person.<sup>12</sup> An increasingly important topic at international fora is whether water should be considered as a commodity under the regulations of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Relative lack of Arab<sup>13</sup> membership in the organization may be a complicating factor in this connection, as 10 out of the 22 members of the League of Arab States (LAS) are not members of the WTO (the greatest proportion of non-representation for any region worldwide). In any case, these issues have yet to appear clearly on the Blue Peace agenda.

### *Political problems in the basin approach*

Apart from the above global factors and trends, regional disputes and diplomatic tensions (such as prevail in the Middle East) may make the pursuit of solutions to water problems within a classic basin framework problematic. In such a context, this approach may offer the false argument that neighbors sharing the same geo-hydraulics have an interest in cooperating while "setting politics aside."<sup>14</sup> A recent example of this came in December 2013 when Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority signed an agreement involving the Jordan River-Wadi Araba Basin, aimed at constructing in the south of Jordan a plant to desalinate water from the Red Sea. The facility will supply the southern Israeli city of




such, basin agreements that weak governments might be pushed into making by Israel subvert rights and act in the longer run to undermine sustainable development. Israeli governments have taken this approach since the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo agreement of 1993 and the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty signed in 1994, both of which include water provisions and call for joint water projects. However, these ideas and plans should be seen in the context of just, lasting, and comprehensive peace between Israel and the Arab countries, and not as a substitute for it. Meanwhile, regional and global water issues have changed dramatically over the past two decades; in such a context the narrow basin approach can unwittingly or otherwise result in false solutions to water problems.

#### CONCLUSION

All the above elements make it imperative to reconsider purely regional or basin approaches to water governance. For the Middle East, injecting global and other wider factors into the Blue Peace model, away from the arguments of Israel and others based on a fake basin approach, will best serve sustainable regional stability and water security. Viewing water as a basin or regional resource, while oil and gas for

example are seen as global ones, is increasingly unjustified. The energy resources of the Middle East are owned by countries in the region to the same extent that water in North America is owned by Americans, Canadians or Mexicans. In that sense, both resources are local. At the same time, Middle East states export oil and natural gas, while Canada, Mexico and the US export water (mostly virtual). Yet, since oil, gas and water are critical for the world economy as a whole, all are global resources.

Taking such a globalized view of water, isolated basin approaches become problematic. As such, though the above agreement made by the Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians in late 2013 might be considered a step toward stability in line with Blue Peace, the accord could also be seen as an example of the unsatisfactory basin approach (in this case being used to continue to deprive Palestinians of water rights). Whatever the answer, rapid change in the region and worldwide make it important to consider new models of water governance.

*I would like to thank Sundeep Waslekar of SFG for many insights into water issues, absolving him and anybody else of this paper's possible shortcomings, which are entirely my own responsibility. *

## REGIONAL AND GLOBAL WATER ISSUES HAVE CHANGED DRAMATICALLY OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES

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2. Arjen Hoekstra, "The Global Dimension of Water Governance," in *Water* (Basel: MDPI AG, 2011), vol. 3 21-46.
3. See for example recent issues of the International Network of Basin Organizations Newsletter, including that on "Better Basin Management to Face the Great Global Challenges" (Paris: International Office of Water, April 2013), 21.
4. The frequent pairing of the Middle East and North Africa as one larger region (which Blue Peace does not do) is because of great resource and other commonalities, including in issues of water.
5. Hoekstra op. cit.
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7. "Blue Peace in the Middle East," *Turkish Review* SUPP-01 (March 2013): 13.
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9. SFG op. cit. includes this case, an example of how the Blue Peace regional approach is not entirely river-basin oriented.
10. Hamed Assaf, "Water Resources and Climate Change," in Muhamad al-Eshri et al eds. *Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED) Annual Report* (Beirut: AFED, 2010), 26 (Arabic).
11. Hoekstra op. cit.
12. Ibid.
13. Most countries of the Middle East are Arab, but the membership of the LAS transcends the region into Africa.
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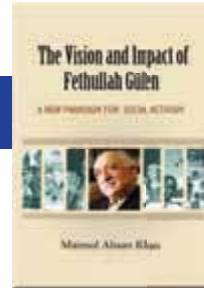
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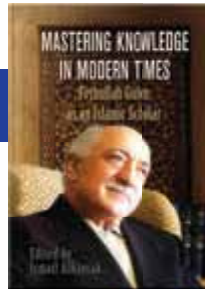
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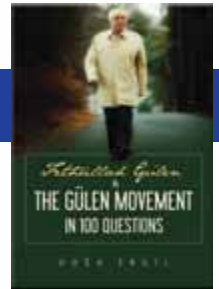
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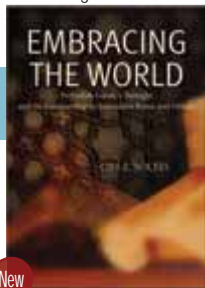


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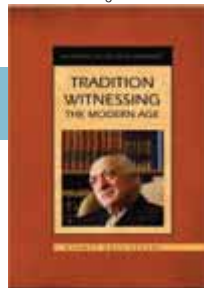
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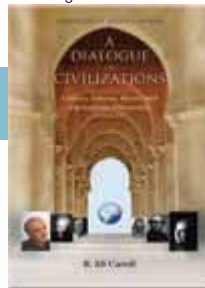
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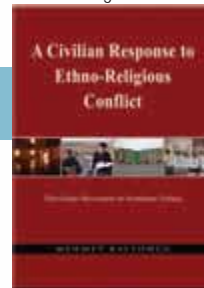
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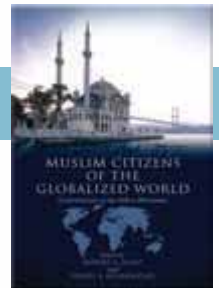
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'HASSAN KEF FROM LEFT BANK'

The old town, caught by explorer-photographer Gertrude Bell at the turn of the last century: today the city's THE GERTRUDE BELL ARCHIVE, NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY (S\_085), MAY 1911.

# POSTCARD FROM HASANKEYF THE LONG GOODBYE

Whichever direction you approach it from, the impact remains the same: Hasankeyf, inhabited continuously for millennia, nestled between golden limestone cliffs and the graciously curving Tigris, seems meant to be. From Midyat, passing through the unreal green of a vernal Tur Abdin plain, you first sight the minaret of the El Rizk Mosque. On the road from Batman, meanwhile, the city is heralded by the Zeynel Bey Türbesi (tomb), iconic and aloof.

The impression of a timeless rock-hewn settlement loses a touch of its gravitas as you enter the modern town -- a little more than 400 homesteads scattered in a loose band between the caves of the lower old city and the waters of the Tigris below. The river is crossed by means of a modern concrete span, not far from the remains of a 12th century bridge. Now only unconnected pylons of the Artukid structure remain, some still bearing elaborately carved decorative figures (by means of further augmentation, on the north bank of the Tigris one pylon is home to a Hasankeyf family, and now sports double glazing).

Aside from the Zeynel Bey Türbesi, the north bank is more subdued: caves do dot the riverside downstream, but the surrounding hills are rolling rather than precipitous. It is here, by the bridge, that coaches park when they roll into town on whistle-stop tours of the Southeast. A high-speed retrace of the lower city's sights (the upper city has been closed to visitors since 2011) and a shopping session, and then they are back on the road. Another item ticked off on the itinerary, but the surface of Hasankeyf scarcely scratched.

Away from the insistent hawkers and milling tour groups of the market avenue, the streets belong to goats and cows, to running children, proud roosters and timid cats. Antiquities are cheek-by-jowl with the concrete of simple single, and sometimes double, storeyed houses.

From the southeastern margins the canyons of Hasankeyf, goat-cropt hot, dry months slowly bake the landscape on the hillside marks the path of the water down from highland springs. Here generations of crag martin nest, swifts and swallows scream and wheel.

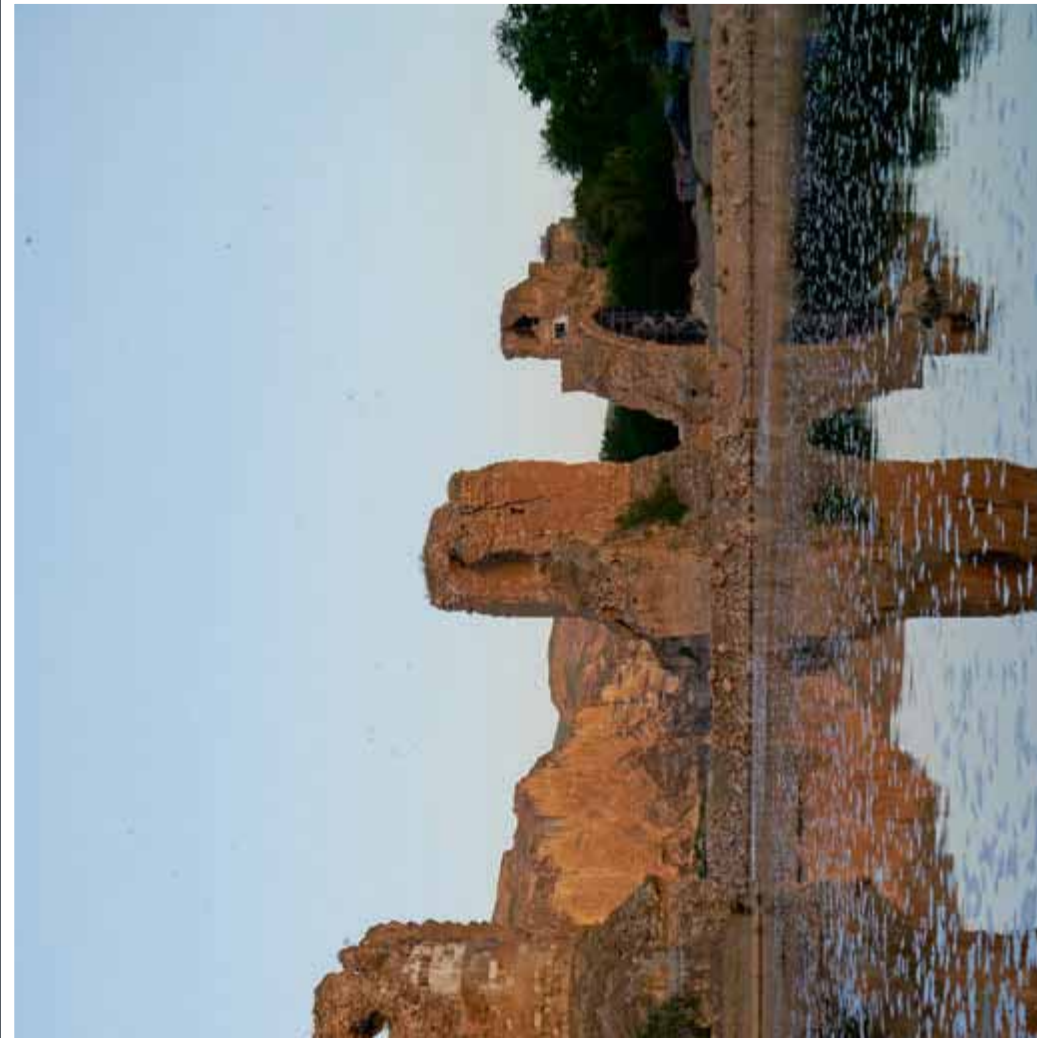
Rising above all Hasankeyf, old and the unreachable Citadel, crowning the

For all of this, flora and fauna, the clock is ticking. The Ilisu Dam on the just months from completion. The Anatolia Project (GAP) -- will include plant and produce a 10.4 million cubic the lower city and rise to about half the city. State Waterworks Authority (DSI) some of Hasankeyf's major "cultural the relocation or protection against been adequately researched, planned

Estimates as to how rapidly the Hasankeyf will need to be evacuated the dam lake likely to begin soon, the known should be measured in years Preparations have already begun:

construction on the highland to the no municipality offices have opened there Hasankeyf now bears a spray-painted a valuation process that will ultimately contains a scant 50 or so model show! When the new properties will become unclear, as is a set date for the sale of

Thus far the only significant sale/purchase gardens, explaining their unintended state former owners from continuing to tend they have been left alone, and, forgotten



self failed, its pylons remain standing in the Tigris.



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# Unconventional hydrocarbon production: energy-water / environment-regulation nexus?

# T

urkey is in dire need of energy supplies to fuel its rapidly growing economy. The country has become increasingly dependent on energy imports, adding ever more to its energy bill. Domestic production, both conventional and unconventional, is therefore becoming crucial for Turkey's energy security. This report

addresses the advantages and the shortcomings of developments in unconventional ways of energy production in Turkey

## DANILA BOCHKAREV

Senior Fellow, EastWest Institute

Turkey has a large unconventional potential -- up to 5.8 trillion cubic meters (tcm) of gas. The steady development of this may become challenging due to environmental issues (particularly as regards water scarcity), lack of readily available equipment/high development costs, and the absence of special "shale-oriented" fiscal and regulatory regimes. In order to proceed with a safe and commercially attractive unconventional development, Turkey will need to develop a specific tailor-made regulatory and fiscal regime, which takes into account projects' economics and responds to environmental concerns.

Turkey is in dire need of energy supplies to fuel its rapidly growing economy and secure sustainable development while preventing social turbulence. Last year Turkey's GDP grew 4.4 percent to \$826 billion, while the current account deficit also increased from \$49 billion in 2012 to \$65 billion. This "financial gap" is mostly driven by the energy bill -- the country's oil and gas imports alone reached \$60 billion in 2012 and \$56 billion in 2013 (see Table 1).

Table 1:  
Energy imports 2011-13

	2011	2012	2013
GDP (billion USD)	722	786	826
Current Account Deficit (billion USD)	77	49	65
Total energy import (billion USD)	54	60	56
Oil & gas import (billion USD)	40	51	n/a
Yearly natural gas consumption (bcm)	39 (98% imported)	46 (98% imported)	44 (98% imported)
Daily oil consumption (thousand bbl/day)	673 (92% imported)	685 (92% imported)	706 (92% imported)

Source: TPAO, Besim Sisman, Acting President of TPAO, presentation on "Turkey's energy view, challenges for investment and TPAO," Turkey Oil & Gas 2014 Summit, Istanbul, Feb. 18-19, 2014.

Turkey meets up to 98 percent of its demand in natural gas and up to 92 percent of its oil consumption with imports. Drastic reduction and even elimination of hydrocarbon imports was set by the Turkish leadership as one the three major energy goals for the decade to come. While it is still not clear whether Turkey can be self-sufficient in its energy needs, it is obvious that new sources of imported and domestically



produced energy supplies are vital for the Turkish economy. While imports may remain unavoidable, they are also subject to domestic and external political and security challenges. Ongoing unrest in eastern Turkey, and often difficult relations between the central government in Baghdad and Iraqi Kurdistan may potentially undermine certain energy import prospects and increase the importance of Turkey's own energy resources.

Domestic production -- both conventional and unconventional -- is therefore crucial for Turkey's energy security. This report's primary focus is the country's unconventional potential and its advantages and eventual shortcomings.

#### **UNCONVENTIONALS: DEFINITION AND PECULIARITIES**

Unconventional reserves, consisting of tight gas, shale gas and coalbed methane (CBM) are normally found in geological formations unusual for "conventional" natural gas; respectively, tight sands, shale formations and

### **TURKEY IS IN DIRE NEED OF ENERGY SUPPLIES TO FUEL ITS RAPIDLY GROWING ECONOMY AND SECURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

coalbeds. At present, shale formations are among the most extensively developed among unconventional gas reserves. Shale gas is extracted by fracturing the rock to release the gas -- a process often called "fracking" or hydraulic fracturing. Fracking creates "artificial pathways" (fractures) by injecting pressurized water plus chemicals

into the rock. It also needs a "much higher number of extraction points" than are required in the extraction of the conventional gas reserves.<sup>1</sup> Though horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing have been already used in conventional petroleum production, it is their application in shale gas production that produced a real technological breakthrough in the natural gas sector.

Every shale reservoir has its unique geological structure determining its production capacity, water consumption and even lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions level. Knowledge of the geological structure is extremely important in order to keep development costs under control and optimize production level over

Exploitation of unconventional hydrocarbons is already well under way in many countries. This photo shows fracking operations in Mead, CO.

MARCH 25, 2014  
PHOTO: AP,  
BRENNAN LINSLEY



Turkey already produces energy from natural gas, much of it imported. This file photo shows the Çakmaktepe power plant.

SEPT. 29, 2010  
PHOTO: CIHAN,  
ALI RIZA KARASU

the lifespan of the well. Conventional gas wells have a relatively stable lifespan, while shale gas wells give their maximum production during the first two years, followed by a steady decline. These wells can have lifecycles of as little as three-five years. In this context, the cost of drilling becomes an essential variable, determining the commercial viability of a particular acreage, sometimes even a specific well. For instance, conventional gas production shows a recoverability rate as high as 90 percent of an exploited field's reserves, while shale gas recovery can be as low as 20 percent because of "low permeability despite high-density horizontal drilling and extensive hydraulic fracturing."<sup>2</sup>

Usage of water is a matter of concern in shale gas production, as fracturing is a relatively water-intensive procedure that raises a number of environmental concerns, especially in water-scarce regions. Carbon footprint, which could eventually be

an important challenge, is also a function of shale gas well productivity. For example, a well with an average gas flow of 283,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day and a 10-year lifetime has preproduction emissions averaging 0.1g CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent/megajoule (MJ), while a smaller well with an average gas flow of 28-29,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day and a similar lifetime produces 5g CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent/MJ of preproduction emissions.<sup>3</sup>

Drilling costs might be high and vary between \$5 million and \$24 million per horizontal well under hydraulic fracturing. At this point, it is difficult to forecast Turkey's shale gas price -- each unconventional well has its "own" geology and economics. Furthermore, the presence of liquid hydrocarbons increases the commercial attractiveness of the well, while it is rarely profitable to frack a "dry gas" well. While shale gas is unlikely to be cheaper than Russian or Azerbaijani imports, it might be less

Figure 1:  
The Southeast Anatolian and Thrace basins



expensive than Iranian gas. Furthermore, the process often requires complicated extraction technology (e.g., dewatering of CBM, massive fracturing programs for shale gas, and different mining activities)<sup>4</sup>

#### TURKEY'S UNCONVENTIONAL RESOURCE BASE

Turkey has at its disposal three known unconventional reservoirs, with a total reserve base potentially reaching 5.8 trillion m<sup>3</sup> (tcm). The Thrace Basin's reserves in shale and dense sand gas are estimated at

### SHALE GAS IS UNLIKELY TO BE CHEAPER THAN RUSSIAN OR AZERBAIJANI IMPORTS, BUT MIGHT BE LESS EXPENSIVE THAN IRANIAN GAS

of 3.5 tcm, the East Anatolian basin has up to 1 tcm of shale gas reserves, while the Diyarbakir basin contains up to 1.3 tcm in shale oil and gas (see Figure 1). At the time of writing, 158 hydraulic fracturing operations have successfully been completed in Turkey.

The available reserves, need for new energy supplies and new cutting-edge technologies sparked increased interest in Turkey's unconventional hydrocarbon potential. Oil and gas production from shale, CBM and other sources, can potentially satisfy a significant portion of Turkey's appetite for energy. One should note that Turkey's legal framework is quite different

from the US or even UK models. The landowners in Turkey -- unlike in the US -- do not own the subsurface mineral resources, and are only compensated for their land. This will, to a certain extent, reduce the interest level of the local population in shale oil and gas production. Turkey also lacks a specific shale gas fiscal regime, with special incentives for companies and local communities, similar to the one proposed in the UK.<sup>5</sup>

Unconventional hydrocarbon exploration can be challenged by high investment/operational costs and technological challenges, and there is already a significant presence of foreign companies in the sector with sufficient know-how. Foreign investors are attracted by growing domestic natural gas prices -- \$10 per million British thermal units (MMBTU) in

Turkey against \$4-5 per MMBTU in the US -- and high energy demand. For example, Texas-based TransAtlantic Petroleum Ltd. has already drilled 31 horizontal and deviated wells (25 in southeastern Turkey and six in northwestern Turkey). Shell announced its plans to restructure its unconventional activities in North America, but the company is still interested in Turkey. Shell's Turkish branch and the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) are drilling into the Dadas shale formation in eastern Turkey. However, environmental and regulatory challenges seem to be, at present, the biggest barrier on the way to Turkey's "unconventional revolution."





## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

This rapid expansion in shale gas production has given rise to concerns around the impact of operations in areas such as water, road, air quality, seismic and GHG emissions. There is already significant skepticism regarding shale gas development, in particular due to the water and emission concerns in many parts of the US and Western Europe, with France and Bulgaria imposing nationwide moratoriums on shale gas production through fracking.

The debate is particularly intense in the EU. Despite the growing importance of shale gas as an indigenous energy source, contributing to domestic employment, economic growth and energy security imperative, there is growing anxiety about the potential negative environmental impact of fracking and existing loopholes in the relevant EU regulations. The European Commission responded on Jan. 22 by adopting the

Recommendation on Environmental Aspects of Unconventional Fossil Fuels.<sup>6</sup> This document covers issues such as “strategic environmental assessments and planning, underground risk assessment, well integrity,

baseline reporting and operational monitoring, capture of methane emissions, and disclosure of chemicals used in each well” and invites European member states to follow minimum principles when applying or adapting their legislation applicable to hydrocarbons exploration or production using high volume hydraulic fracturing.<sup>7</sup>

Even though the regulation does not apply strict and legally binding regulations or take into account the fact that not that many EU countries will follow France’s example, we should expect the tightening of environmental regulation and reassessment of certain, often unintentional privileges, enjoyed by the extraction industry. This initiative by the European Commission shows the growing need for an additional, specific legislation to regulate unconventional hydrocarbon production.

In principle, Turkey has all the necessary legislation to proceed with unconventional hydrocarbon production (see below). However, the existing legislation is missing some important points -- in particular a flexible fiscal regime similar to the fiscal incentives offered in the

UK or the US -- and specific fracking disclosure laws (regulating, among other things, the usage of chemicals during the hydraulic fracturing process).

## THE WATER ISSUE

The issue of water usage and water/aquifer pollution is particularly important for the unconventional gas industry. Hydraulic fracturing is a water-intensive process. The operation of each well requires million of liters of water and generates millions of liters of wastewater. Certain wells require the usage of more than 10 million of liters of water during their lifetime, which rarely extends longer than five years. The amount of water used (and wastewater produced) explains public concerns, especially in water-scare areas.

Contrary to widespread perception, Turkey is not a country with abundant freshwater resources even by (rather modest) regional standards. The country has

only “about one-fifth of the water available per capita in water rich regions such as North America and Western Europe.”<sup>8</sup>

Countries are considered water-rich if their annual per capita water consumption exceeds

10,000 m<sup>3</sup>, while in Turkey this number barely reaches 1,500 m<sup>3</sup> -- the country just cannot afford to deal with polluted aquifers. Furthermore, water is scarce in the Marmara region, home to the Thrace Shale Basin.

Turkey is already facing serious problems caused by a water deficit and high soil salinity. Almost 1.5 million hectares of arable land suffers from yield limitations because of salt problems. Turkey’s lakes’ surface continues to diminish in the face of unregulated irrigation, lack of long-term water management policy and climate change; the Tuz, the Tersakan, Bolluk and Kulu lakes may face complete desiccation in the coming years. Turkey’s agro-alimentary sector is also heavily dependent on constant freshwater supplies, and national agricultural productivity is primarily dependent upon sustainable irrigation. Hence, farming is likely to be affected by shale gas production.

Current debates in the US show that the water usage issue might be a particularly sensitive topic -- both from political and environmental point of view. It can affect political campaigns and change the fate of

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES SEEM TO BE, AT PRESENT, THE BIGGEST BARRIER ON THE WAY TO TURKEY’S ‘UNCONVENTIONAL REVOLUTION’



politicians. US states are divided on fracking and some of them, like New York State, have banned fracking. The heated debate highlighted the issue of the environmental impact and consequent adoption of necessary regulation. Currently, at the request of the US Congress, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting a study to better understand the potential impacts of fracking on drinking water resources. The scope of the research includes the full lifespan of water in hydraulic fracturing. A draft report is expected to be released for public comment and peer review this year.<sup>9</sup>

Several independent studies have also dealt with the issue of (potential) water contamination by fracking activities. A study published by researchers from Duke University has found high levels of leaked methane in well water collected within a kilometer of shale-gas production sites.<sup>10</sup> "At least some of the homeowners who claim that their wells were

## THE ISSUE OF WATER USAGE AND WATER/AQUIFER POLLUTION IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR THE UNCONVENTIONAL GAS INDUSTRY

contaminated by shale-gas extraction appear to be right," said Duke's Prof. Robert B. Jackson.<sup>11</sup> However, Duke's researchers found no evidence of chemical contamination in the wastewater. A more recent study by the Energy Institute at the University of Texas released in February 2012 found no significant evidence of groundwater contamination from hydraulic fracturing.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, the water pollution issue raises some legitimate concerns, "The Future of Natural Gas: An Interdisciplinary MIT Study," released in June 2011, stressed that the situation is "challenging but manageable," nevertheless pointing out problems linked to "natural gas migration into freshwater zones [...] most likely as a result of substandard well completion practices by a few operators" and with "effective disposal of fracture fluids. Concerns with this issue are particularly acute in regions that have not previously experienced large scale oil and natural gas

Turkey does not have ample reserves of fresh water: a potential obstacle to fracking operations in the country. This file photo shows Büyükçekmece Lake, Istanbul.

JUNE 23, 2007  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
IBRAHIM USTA



Domestic hydrocarbon production in Turkey is currently very limited.

APRIL 10, 2013  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
ALI UNAL

development [...] and do not have a well developed subsurface water disposal infrastructure."<sup>13</sup>

The issue of water disposal might as well be relevant for the unconventional hydrocarbon provinces in Turkey, just as it is in the US. For example in the Marcellus shale located in Pennsylvania, US, shale operations in January-June 2010 produced 1,700 million m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater, "65% was recycled for use as frack water, 26% was treated (industrial and municipal) and discharged to rivers and the balance transported to Ohio for deep well injection [...] [the] first time that more than half the water was reused, however surface water discharges increased".<sup>14</sup>

Several experts have rightfully underlined the

## TURKEY HAS TO ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE UNCONVENTIONAL HYDROCARBON INDUSTRY REQUIRES NEW REGULATIONS

need of integrated water management: Where the water is water going to come from (detailed hydrology and allocation) and where is wastewater going to go/how will it be disposed (water value and treatment goals)

are essential questions for the success of any unconventional gas operation.<sup>15</sup>


Technology and regulations, with regulations possibly being more important than purely technological component, are needed to deal with the water issue. A report from Accenture published in 2012 rightfully mentioned that the regulation of shale gas is "an evolving landscape as the industry has developed so rapidly that it has often outpaced the availability of information for regulators to develop specific guidance."<sup>16</sup>

## TURKEY'S REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

In principle, Turkey has the necessary framework and market conditions to attract potential investors to the domestic unconventional hydrocarbons sector. A new version of the dynamic and relevant Turkish Petroleum Law, adopted in June 2013, raised hopes of attracting new investors to the country's energy sector. Indeed, the combination of the Royalty Tax (12.5 percent) and Corporate Tax (20 percent) create an investor-friendly fiscal regime, especially when oil prices oscillate around the level of \$90-110 per barrel (bbl). A 12.5 percent royalty is calculated on the basis of the market price for crude oil and the wholesale price for natural gas, and is based on monthly production (Article 9 of the Petroleum Law), while the total tax (income tax plus corporate tax) rarely exceeds 55 percent of enterprises' income. After the payment of taxes, duties, fees, rentals and royalties, a petroleum exploration and production license holder may transfer their profit abroad. In addition, energy companies may export up to 35 percent of onshore and 45 percent of offshore oil and gas production in the fields discovered after January 1980.

Turkey has to answer the question of whether the unconventional hydrocarbon industry requires new regulations, or is already covered by Turkey's existing

legislation. So far, debates on fracking in Turkey have paid little attention to the development of separate legal framework for shale gas. In these circumstances, Turkey might need a framework document, similar to the European Commission communication, that assesses potential gaps in existing legislation in regards to chemical usage disclosure, used water treatment and EPA, the threshold for unconventional exploration and production environmental impact assessments, etc. This document will help Turkish legislators develop new regulations.

Last but not least: Unconventional gas production (project economics permitting) may be compatible with Turkey's key energy priorities -- security of supply and affordable energy -- but is it compatible with the country's environmental sustainability? All will depend on a proper application of a comprehensive water management and control of methane leakage. Many things will also depend on population's willingness to pay an "environmental premium," the future development of Turkey's national energy mix, the security of supply perceptions and the availability of affordable energy imports. More precise regulation is necessary to establish universally acceptable and mutually beneficial "rules of the game" for the unconventional oil and gas industry. 

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# Two views on... Water

With Yaşar Yakış and Ulrich Eichelmann

# W

Water is vital for all known forms of life, yet observers estimate demand will soon exceed supply and that by 2025 more than half the world's population will face water-based scarcity. Former Turkish Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış, who represented the country at several world water forums, and German ecologist and conservationist

Ulrich Eichelmann, founder of Vienna-based conservation organization River Watch, speak to Yonca Poyraz Doğan for Turkish Review

## YONCA POYRAZ DOĞAN

Staff Writer

**TURKISH REVIEW:** *First of all, Turkey is located in a region generally poor in water resources. What is Turkey's situation, with its unevenly distributed water resources -- is Turkey water rich or water poor?*

**YAŞAR YAKIŞ:** Total precipitation in Turkey is around 501 billion cubic meters (bcm) per year. Around 180 bcm becomes surface water; the rest either evaporates or becomes groundwater. Only 96 bcm becomes utilizable; the rest has to be left in the beds of the watercourses, otherwise flora and fauna cannot be sustained. If we add 12 bcm of utilizable groundwater to this, we obtain 108 bcm total utilizable water in Turkey. When we divide this 108 bcm by Turkey's population of 76 million, the per capita share is around 1,230 m<sup>3</sup> per annum. Among the riparian states on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, this figure is slightly higher in Iraq (1,435 m<sup>3</sup>) and lower in Syria (880 m<sup>3</sup>). But overall the per capita shares of water in these three countries is eight to 12 times lower than those of water-rich countries such as Canada and Norway, where per capita water is around 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year.

As far as Turkey's water resources are concerned,

another important feature is that, as you pointed out in your question, water is unevenly distributed among Turkey's various geographical regions. There is too much water in the eastern Black Sea region (2,500 mm precipitation per m<sup>2</sup> a year) while there is too little water in central Anatolia (250 mm/m<sup>2</sup> per annum). Even if water resources were evenly distributed among the geographical regions, Turkey would still be a country poor in water resources. Uneven distribution makes the water scarcity all the more acute. Surplus in the quantity of water in the eastern Black Sea region raises Turkey's average water potential, but makes no contribution to the solution of the water scarcity problem in central Anatolia, because the transfer of water from one region to another requires huge investment. This aspect of Turkey's overall water potential has to be borne in mind when this subject is discussed.

**TR:** *How does this situation influence water management in Turkey?*

**YY:** Water management is an exercise that involves several parameters, including economic, industrial, social, technical, geographical, diplomatic and political factors. The main parameters that contribute to the shaping of the water management policies of Turkey include the following:



- Turkey is an upstream country in the Euphrates, Tigris and Çoruh (Tchorokhi) rivers.

- It is a downstream country in the Meriç (Maritsa) and Asi (Orontos) rivers.

- It is negotiating European Union membership and therefore has to abide by the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive.

- Its water potential is distributed unevenly among its geographical regions.

- It is adjacent to one of the driest regions of the world.

In light of these parameters, Turkey has to develop a water management policy that protects the rights of both upstream and downstream countries. It has to abide by all criteria contained in the EU Water Framework Directive. It has to use water with the utmost economy.

TR: *Does Turkey have sound water management policies?*

YY: Turkey's water management policies are improving with each passing year. But Turkey was late to start taking water management issues seriously -- as late as the 1950s and 1960s. This delay had a negative impact on raising awareness on this subject.

The Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP), which is a multi-sector integrated regional development project, was planned in 1970 as it is structured today. It evolved slowly because of several bureaucratic, technical and terrorism-related problems. In certain chapters of GAP, more than 80 percent of the funds are already spent, but the physical realization of the project lags behind schedule -- as low as 30-35

percent. When completed it will become one of the best examples of integrated water management in the world.

TR: *Regarding the Euphrates and Tigris, Turkey argues that there is one basin but two rivers, while the other two riparian states -- Iraq and Syria -- argue that there are two different basins formed by the two rivers. Would you tell us about the background of this issue and attempts to solve the problem?*

YY: The answer to this question varies according to whether we are talking about Syria or Iraq. Syria is not a riparian country to the Tigris the way Turkey and Iraq are. Tigris does not cross Syrian territory. It only constitutes a border between Syria and Iraq for a short distance of around 30 kilometers. Syria cannot easily compensate a reduction in water taken

from the Euphrates by taking more water from the Tigris. Therefore there is no sense in asking Syria to consider these two rivers as one basin.

As for Iraq, the question arises in a different manner. While the average flow rate of the Tigris is almost 50 percent higher than that of the Euphrates, the irrigable land in the Tigris basin is smaller than that in the Euphrates basin, both in Turkey and Iraq. As a result of this, Iraq is already transferring water between the

Euphrates and Tigris basins through the Tharthar Canal. Therefore for Iraq these two river basins are already linked to each other.

Another important water-related issue between Turkey and the downstream countries is the criteria to be applied for the allocation of water. Since water is a scarce resource, it has to be used in a rational and equitable

manner. Turkey proposed to Syria and Iraq a framework for the allocation of water on this basis. This framework is called the Three-Stage Plan. The first stage of this plan is to determine the water potential in the Euphrates and Tigris basins in each country. The second is to determine the potential of irrigable lands in the same basin. The third will be to allocate the available water to the available irrigable land in a rational and equitable manner.

The downstream countries did not agree to this proposal. They preferred a political solution and proposed an equal share of water (one-third for each of the countries) irrespective of their need or the size of the irrigable land in their respective countries. If Turkey's proposal were to be accepted, the scarce

## WHEN COMPLETE, GAP WILL BE ONE OF THE BEST EXAMPLES OF INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE WORLD



water resources of the Euphrates-Tigris basin would be utilized where they would yield the biggest advantage.

TR: *Do the Tigris and Euphrates have enough water for Turkey, Iraq and Syria?*

YY: The average annual rate of flow of the Euphrates is 36 bcm per year; 32 bcm (roughly 88.7 percent) comes from Turkey and 4 bcm from Syria. Iraq has no contribution to the flow of the Euphrates. The average annual rate of flow of the Tigris is 49 bcm per year; 25 bcm comes from Turkey and 24 bcm from Iraq. Syria has no contribution to the flow of the Euphrates.

Since these quantities are determined by meteorological factors, human intervention cannot easily change this reality. The figures I mentioned initially show that the riparian countries of the Euphrates and Tigris are eight to 12 times poorer than water-rich countries. In view of this huge difference, the riparian countries must make an effort to approach this question in a realistic and rational manner. The ultimate aim of the cooperation should be how to use the limited quantity of water in the most economical way.

## THERE ARE INITIATIVES IN THE REGION TO TRANSFORM WATER FROM A SUBJECT OF DISPUTE TO A MEANS OF COOPERATION

TR: *Now, one of these countries, Syria is in a civil war, and Turkey-Syria relations are at their lowest modern level; how is the water issue managed between the two countries? Are ties between Turkey and Syria completely severed on this matter?*

YY: A protocol was signed in 1987 that contained provisions regarding the quantity of water Turkey will release from the Euphrates. It was signed immediately before the impounding of the Atatürk Dam. Syria was worried that it would receive too little water during the impounding period. Turkey agreed to the following commitment: "During the impounding period of the Atatürk Dam, Turkey will release 500 m<sup>3</sup> water per second on the basis of the monthly average. If the quantity of water released in one month remains under this average, the difference will be completed during the following month."

The impounding of the Atatürk Dam was completed several years ago. However, in the absence of any other agreement between the two countries, Turkey continues to release this quantity of water to Syria. If the circumstances allow, Turkey releases in certain periods much more water than this quantity.

This commitment by Turkey is not affected by the present strained relations between the two countries.

TR: *What is the situation with Iraq in this regard -- the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in particular?*

YY: Turkey does not have an agreement with Iraq that regulates the quantity of water to be released. The 1987 protocol is between Turkey and Syria. Once water enters Syrian territory, it is up to the two downstream countries to agree how they going to share this water.

The Euphrates, after having crossed Syrian territory, enters Iraq at a point south of the territory of the KRG. Therefore the KRG has nothing to do with the Euphrates. The Tigris enters Iraqi territory but does not run through the KRG area. It only constitutes a border between the KRG area and the Baghdad-controlled area. Turkey has no agreement with the KRG on the subject of the Tigris and would not sign such an agreement, because it would be in contradiction with Turkey's policy that favors the territorial integrity of Iraq.

TR: *Are there any concerns that should be taken into consideration by Turkey regarding other trans-boundary rivers, such as the Danube and Meriç?*

Turkey's interests in the Danube and Meriç (Maritsa) rivers are based on different grounds. Regarding the Maritsa, the two upstream countries -- Greece and Bulgaria -- have contractual obligations to cooperate with Turkey. According to Article 13/3 of the EU Water Directive, Bulgaria and Greece have to "endeavour to produce a single river basin management plan" for the Maritsa. Not only they do not "endeavor," but they do not respond positively to Turkey's requests to cooperate in this field. When the European Parliament, in a resolution that it adopted on Turkey, invited the Turkish authorities to cooperate with the downstream countries in the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, however, the Bulgarian and Greek members of the European Parliament voted in favor of this resolution.

The Danube is important for Turkey not for the quantity of water or for flood control, but for another reason. All the pollution the Danube accumulates throughout the countries it crosses ends up on the coast of the Black Sea or goes to the Mediterranean through the Turkish straits, polluting every point on the Turkish Black Sea, Marmara, Aegean and Mediterranean coasts. However Turkey is not active enough in the Danube River organizations, and does not raise this serious question in these fora.

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TR: *How would you compare the per capita water use in Turkey and its neighbors, considering future forecasts of increasing water scarcity?*

YY: I already mentioned the per capita water potentials of the riparian countries and per capita use of water. We may assume that the two downstream countries of the Euphrates and Tigris will use this water as economically as possible. However, in the absence of comparative data, it is difficult to tell which county uses it more economically.

With the high rate of population increase in the region, water shortage is going to become more acute in the future. The only way to reduce the negative effects of this shortage is to cooperate more closely.

TR: *What type of conflicts do you think Turkey is likely to experience in the region because of water scarcity?*

YY: There are frequent references to “water wars” in the region. If the countries of the region are contemplating war against each other, water may constitute an excellent excuse for it, because countries wage war against each other for reasons much less important than water. However, if the countries want to cooperate among themselves, there cannot be a better area of cooperation than water.

There are initiatives in the region to transform water from a subject of dispute to a means of cooperation. One such initiative is the Blue Peace project. This aims at circumventing the sensitivities of the countries and starting cooperation in uncontroversial areas such as the calibration of water measurement tools, best practices in the field of water management, irrigation techniques, etc. If mutual trust develops through this type of cooperation it can be extended to areas not yet covered by such cooperation. A media group has been established within the framework of Blue Peace. This group has already established a website called [www.bluepeace.me](http://www.bluepeace.me) where information on the initiative is being posted. Mr. Kerim Balçı, editor-in-chief of Turkish Review, is in the core group of this initiative.

TR: *Where does Turkey stand in international cooperation on water issues?*

YY: Turkey is not at the point it should be on water issues, especially regarding their international dimensions. A country of Turkey’s size, occupying such a critical place in important trans-boundary waters, both as an upstream and downstream country, should have dozens of experts

of international repute. There are good experts in the technical fields, but few of them have experience in international relations. Hydro-politics is taught at almost no Turkish universities. As a result, Turkey cannot exercise in the international arena the impact it is expected to.

There should be more programs, chairs, departments in Turkish universities. They should be able to compete with the best universities in the world. We need think tanks operating exclusively in this field. The recently established Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) is one such initiative. It has to be equipped more generously so that it may assume the responsibilities expected from it.

TR: *Turkey did not sign the most important international instrument in the field of trans-boundary watercourses, namely the Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses. Do you have any comment on this subject?*

YY: Turkey did not sign the convention adopted in 1997, because it failed to incorporate its views in the convention, especially the distinction between “international watercourses” and “trans-boundary watercourses.” Whether or not Turkey signs the convention, the international norms in this field will most probably evolve in the direction of the rules

contained in it. Therefore Turkey should not remain outside international efforts in this field. If Turkey engages seriously in this work today, we may also train, in a time span of 10 to 15 years, experts in international law specialized in the field of trans-boundary watercourses and in other areas of the international dimensions of water issues. Only then may Turkey play the role that is expected of a country occupying a strategic position in trans-boundary water issues.

TR: *There are thousands of small and large dams planned on Turkey’s various rivers. There are also many local movements to resist the building of those dams. Does Turkey really need so many dams?*

YY: Dams are constructed for power generation, irrigation and flood-control purposes. Turkey uses a small portion of its hydropower and irrigation potentials, and floods are frequent, causing extensive damage to agriculture and to urban and rural settlements.

Unfortunately the question of the construction of dams has become an over-politicized issue in Turkey. The reliability of civil society initiatives has

## THE QUESTION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS HAS BECOME AN OVER-POLITICIZED ISSUE IN TURKEY



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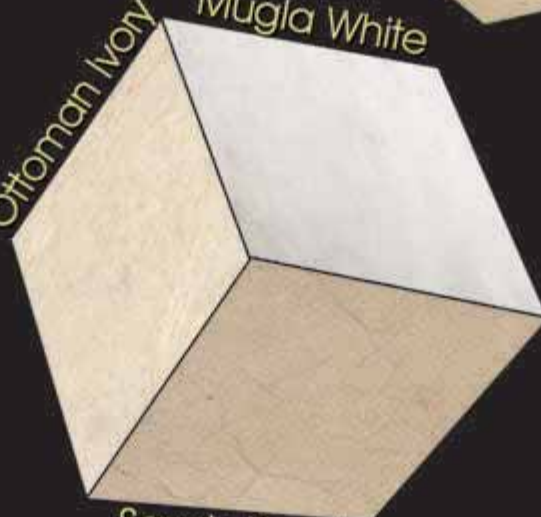
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ULRICH EICHELMANN

been eroded as a result of their opposition to almost all new projects, whether relevant or not. On the other hand, there are imperfections in the environmental impact analyses drawn up by the authorities for many hydropower projects.

Turkey must utilize a much higher portion of its hydro-potential by constructing more dams, but also by carrying out higher quality environmental impact analyses, while civil society initiatives should give up their habit of opposing everything that the government does.

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TR: *You and your team visited the Mesopotamian marshes in Iraq, the rainforests of the Amazon and Indonesia, Turkey's southeast, and more. First of all, would you tell us what you saw and recorded?*

ULRICH EICHELMANN: Well, I saw a lot of beautiful landscapes, many species and people that still live in an intact surrounding. I saw wild nature in the Amazon and I saw the cradle of civilization, the Mesopotamian marshes in southern Iraq -- natural and cultural heritage at its best. But I saw also a lot of damage, projects about to destroy these last remnants of this heritage.

TR: *After your visits came your documentary 'Climate Crimes.' Why did you choose this name?*

UE: It was the other way round. At first I had the idea of making this film and then I visited all those areas. I am

a nature conservationist and I have been working for more than 25 years on the protection of nature, especially on saving rivers from dams.

During this period I realized that more and more nature is destroyed in the name of "climate conservation." So what happens is the misuse of the climate conservation need in order to push for economic projects. Most of these projects don't even help reduce emissions; they are only "normal business" pretending to be "green." So large-scale destruction of nature is sold to all of us as climate conservation -- and almost nobody seems to realize it.

TR: *Has 'Climate Crimes' helped shake things up? How has the film been received? Were you able to reach a large audience?*

UE: The film was shown on German and Austrian television, and "Climate Crimes" is still shown at film festivals, etc. I am still traveling with the film, mainly through Austria and Germany, to discuss the whole issue. And it is on YouTube, where more than 20,000 people have watched it. The effect is hard to tell. The way I see it, it is a starter, a catalyst, to actually start critical thinking.

The film is out in German and English, and there is a Turkish version on the way.

TR: *At a conference on international rivers last year in Istanbul, you said, 'We are facing a dam tsunami.' How many large dams all around the world are being constructed? Would you elaborate on this idea?*

UE: No one knows the exact figures, but according to some information from the hydro lobby there are more than 5,000 dams world-wide under construction, or close to that. Dams are being planned and built everywhere. On

### MOST PEOPLE THINK HYDROPOWER IS 'GREEN' -- THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE

the Balkan peninsular we still have the best rivers on the European continent, but we found 573 dam projects in the pipeline. If you also include small-scale dams, the actual number is much higher. Comparably small countries like Albania or Macedonia have official plans to construct more than 400 hydro power plants. Or look at Turkey; they are also planning thousands of new dams. That's a very, very dangerous development. It means we will lose all the beautiful and important natural and cultural heritage within a short period of time if we don't act. And almost as depressing is the fact that most people think hydropower is "green." The opposite is true: It is a energy resource that affects our planet's lifelines. It is blocking the Earth's arteries, if you like. And if you block them too much, you will end up with a cardiac infarction. In the name of



The ancient city of Hasankeyf in Southeastern Turkey, threatened by the Ilisu Dam.  
AUG. 15, 2007  
PHOTO: ZAMAN ARCHIVE

climate conservation we are destroying the planet's last natural resources at an incredible speed.  
TR: *When it comes to Turkey, your 'dam map' of the world highlights the Ilisu project, which has received great domestic and international attention.*

*The campaign 'Stop Ilisu -- Save Hasankeyf' has been active in Europe and Turkey, and Germany, Austria and Switzerland pulled out of the project in 2009. Nonetheless, Turkey is continuing with the construction on its own. What is the status of the campaign now?*

UE: That's a sad story. Yes, Austria, Germany and Switzerland pulled out in 2009. They did so because this project is not in line with international standards for ecology, cultural aspects and human rights. That was a very tough step. Something like that has never happened before in the international export business. That shows, how "bad" Ilisu is. But Turkey decided to ignore the criticism and go on with the project.

Real campaigning against this dam is not happening any more. People are frustrated, local people from Hasankeyf and from the other affected villages will suffer now. So will the Marsh Arabs 1,000 kilometers downstream in the Mesopotamian marshes, because Ilisu will hold back much needed water, especially in spring. We should make the damage visible to the world. Ilisu is already known almost globally as a "worse-case project."

## ILISU IS ALREADY KNOWN ALMOST GLOBALLY AS A 'WORSE-CASE PROJECT'

TR: *Apart from the Ilisu project, there are, big or small, thousands of dams either under construction or planned in Turkey. Active local initiatives have successfully prevented the building of a small number of dams. What concerns does international civil society have in this*

*regard? Are there collaborations with Turkish civil society?*

UE: Most important would be to create a "Rivers Network"; a network of people and initiatives that fight for their rivers and against dam projects. Because all those initiatives have the feeling that they are alone, that they fight a lonely battle. But that's not true. From a "higher perspective" there are hundreds or even thousands of initiatives that are thinking the same. Politically they only become powerful when they unite. We have to make the problem with the dams and the amount of new projects visible. It is not so much about singular dam projects, it is about the huge amount of projects.

TR: *Do you think civil society is doing enough to tell governments why they resist the destruction of rivers by dams? Would you give us examples from a few successful campaigns or initiatives?*

UE: No, civil society is not doing enough. Many of them are in my eyes also caught in some kind of "green hydro trap." Even many NGOs refuse to take a closer look at hydropower projects. There has been a mental "climate change" in the minds of many. In the 1980s



and 1990s the situation was different. In those years there were many anti-dam movements, especially in central Europe. Almost no dams were built in those years. There were many successful anti-dam campaigns, e.g. 1984 in Austria (Danube), 1989 in Hungary (Danube), 1989-1994 in France (Loire), etc. None of those projected dams were built. On the contrary: The river stretches that were supposed to be dammed in Austria and Hungary are protected as national parks, and in France they tore down four dams instead of constructing seven new ones. Another result of all these protests was that even the World Bank realized that dams are a problem rather than a solution. So they initiated the World Commission on Dams -- a joint venture between the World Bank, governmental institutions and NGOs. In 2000 Nelson Mandela presented the recommendations of the commission: The building of dams should only be permitted if one fulfills 10 criteria.

One of the consequences of all this was that the World Bank stopped all funding for dams. But that changed recently again. In the light of global warming, the World Bank, as well as other financial institutions, is again funding dams; the bigger the better. However, Iisu remains a bad example, even for pro-hydro people.

TR: *How is Save the Blue Heart of Europe, which looks at the Balkan rivers, doing? Is there cooperation with Turkish civil society concerning the Balkan rivers?*

UE: The Balkan peninsula hosts the best rivers of Europe. We assessed 35,000 kilometers: 30 percent are natural, another 50 percent are in a good state. That is amazing and outstanding for the continent. The bad part is that 570 dams are in the pipeline. That is the challenge to stop this dam tsunami. Our campaign has just started. We recently held an opening press conference in Belgrade. The interest was big, especially from local groups that fight dam projects in Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, etc. In this campaign we focus on three key areas: the Vjosa in Albania, the Mavrovo National Park in Macedonia (where two dams are projected, with support of the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, EBRD), and the Sava river between Slovenia and Serbia. Until now there has been no real cooperation between the Balkan initiatives and those in Turkey. But that might change.


## A RIVER IS TO A RESERVOIR AS A NATURAL MIXED FOREST IS TO A FOREST PLANTATION

TR: *How are dams helping to destroy the unique qualities of rivers and the lives around them? Would you tell us about the type of destruction that dams cause in simple terms?*

UE: Hydro power plants destroy rivers directly and indirectly. If you dam a river, you change a flowing, dynamic and diverse ecosystem into a reservoir. A reservoir is an almost standing, stagnant ecosystem inhabited by very few species. In easy words: A river is to a reservoir as like a natural mixed forest is to a forest plantation. Rivers and reservoirs both contain water, just as both woods are made of trees. But the difference is obvious.

The impact of dams is even worse than destroying the actual area of the reservoir. The dam does not only block the water and fish migration, it also blocks sediment transport. It holds back all the gravel and sand that is coming from the upstream parts of the watershed. So downstream of the dam these sediments are missing. This is why we lack more and more sand on beaches. According to the United Nations, about one-third of global sediments no longer reach the sea because they are trapped behind dams. The consequence is erosion at the

margins of the sea/oceans. And that has severe consequences. The best example is New Orleans. Hurricane Katrina was only able to hit the city that hard because the Mississippi delta lost its size and its function as a natural protection for the city. A delta is like a natural protection structure for the back country. From the perspective of an ecosystem, the delta is the end of the river -- in this case, the Mississippi. Since this river is dammed and regulated, less sediment reaches the delta and no new islands can be built. So the delta slowly erodes away, leaving the backcountry with less and less protection, meaning floods can easily reach the city. With an intact delta, New Orleans would have seen less harm.

So, dams destroy the river upstream around the dam site and they send out negative "rays," if you like, bad waves that harm nature and people even far away from the actual dam site. 

## NOTE:

For more info on Save the Blue Heart of Europe visit: [www.balkanrivers.net](http://www.balkanrivers.net)

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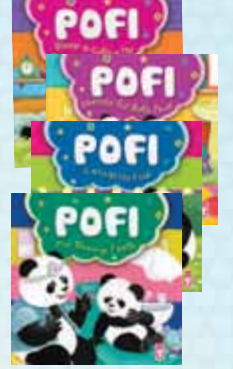
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# Election fever grips Turkey

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urkey's media was overwhelmed by a news agenda that was even more frenzied than usual in the lead up to the local elections. The turf war between Prime Minister Erdoğan's ruling AK Party and the Hizmet movement had ramifications across a range of issues, with the premier's attempts to consolidate control over all state institutions meeting with inevitable resistance. Once more, the news media was a showcase for the polarization engulfing Turkish politics

## WILLIAM ARMSTRONG

*Staff Writer*

### WIRETAPS

In the aftermath of the corruption scandals that hit the agenda in December, recordings of wiretaps implicating government figures in various shady dealings began to leak onto the Internet. The recordings, some legally and some illegally obtained, included damning revelations about Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's relations with the media, apparent attempts to cover up graft evidence after Dec. 17 and other embarrassing conversations.

For a period throughout February and March, the wiretap leaks and social media seemed to have taken the place of the formal opposition, keeping anti-government Turks on a drip feed of leaks, each one evidently seeking to discredit the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government in a different way. Almost everyone interpreted them as a continuation of the corruption probes and the latest front in the power struggle between supporters of Erdoğan and the Hizmet movement of US-based Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen. However, the release of the recordings halted after the local election; not a single wiretap was leaked in the month following

March 30. It remains to be seen whether any incriminating recordings have been held back, ready to be released at a sensitive point in the future.

Writing in the pro-government daily *Yeni Şafak*, Ali Bayramoğlu stressed that while the alleged conversations did not look good, the way that many of the recordings were made through systematic, illegal wiretapping constituted a much bigger threat to the future of Turkish democracy. "There can be no doubt that Tayyip Erdoğan and the AK Party are one day going to be succeeded by others. But if overlooked, the tissue of the 'Cemaat' [Hizmet movement] within the judiciary and the state is going to present itself as a long-term, intractable democratic problem for this country. Whether or not the recordings and allegations that have been put forward against the government are factual or not, it is telling that these have been disclosed not through the normal functioning of the system, but as a result of the 'Cemaat's' usurpation of power and breach of the law."

Meanwhile, Etyen Mahçupyan, writing in the Gülen-aligned daily *Zaman*, stated in the run up to the election that he was confident the wiretaps would not harm the prime minister at the ballot box: "It's important not to overlook the fact that these tape recordings lack legality and legitimacy and hence the

political consequences are bound to be limited [...] These tapes are not of a sort that will produce the kind of political reaction that is hoped for."

On the other hand, Mümtaz'er Türköne wrote in the same paper that the rift between Erdoğan and Gülen spelled "the end of Turkey's half-century old political Islam project." He went on: "The fight that rages is between the Islam of the state and civil Islam ... Only the Gülen 'cemaat' has been able to resist the attempt of the state, through the intermediary of political Islam, to take control of civil Islam. The result is that political Islam's nationalization project is broken apart. What is falling apart as a result of the graft probe is the project of political Islam itself; what is left behind is not a viable legacy, only the wasted efforts of 50 years."

In the short term, it was Mahçupyan who was proven right by the results of the election. One of the most chastening realities for the opposition is that, despite the Erdoğan-Gülen rift, wiretap leaks, corruption revelations and Gezi Park protests last summer, the government's poll ratings (and those for the opposition parties) remain largely unchanged. For all the apparent turbulence in the Turkish political atmosphere over the last year, support for the AK Party remains largely consistent.

## FOR ALL THE TURBULENCE IN THE TURKISH POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE, SUPPORT FOR THE AK PARTY REMAINS LARGELY CONSISTENT

### TWITTER BAN

Prime Minister Erdoğan once again attracted unflattering international headlines in March, after his government blocked access to Twitter in Turkey on March 21. The move from state regulator the Telecommunications Directorate (TİB) came just hours after Erdoğan vowed in a pre-election rally to "wipe out" Twitter, amid the flood of wiretap leaks spilling onto the Internet via social media platforms. He is unlikely to have been perturbed by the negative international reaction to the move, having declared in the same rally that "the international community can say this or that. I don't care. Everyone will see the power of the Turkish Republic."

In fact, the block highlighted the difficulty faced by any state trying to control the Internet. Within minutes of the ban going into force, Turks (now routinely described in the foreign media as "tech-savvy") had found ways to circumvent it by changing VPN and DNS settings. Some



statistics suggested that in the immediate aftermath of the block the number of tweets posted by Turkish users actually rose far above average levels.

Nazlı Ilıcak, a columnist who used to work for Sabah, described the closure as "a civil coup" in an interview on broadcaster CNN Türk. However, the apparent ineffectiveness of the ban made others pause to wonder whether Erdoğan didn't have other aims in mind. In a widely read blog post titled "Everyone is Getting Turkey's Twitter Block Wrong," Princeton academic and social

media researcher Zeynep Tüfekçi suggested that the block was part of the conservative government's broader "culture war." By using election rallies to repeatedly target Twitter for being an international company beholden to foreign courts, and claiming

that it is an anti-Turkey space full of immorality, Erdoğan was playing to his base and seeking to reinforce the impression that everything on there is unreliable, including the wiretap recordings. The aim was not "to block social media as much as taint it":

This [isn't] a simple case of censoring information. The information isn't censorable, and the ruling party in Turkey knows this [...] The unending leaks of alleged wiretaps implicating the prime minister and his inner circle in a massive corruption scandal are certainly the target of the Twitter block, but not in the way most think [...] Erdoğan's strategy is to demonize social media. It is a strategy of placing social media outside the sacred sphere, as a disruption of family, as a threat to unity, as an outside blade tearing at the fabric of society [...] The battle isn't between Internet's ability to distribute corruption tapes and the government's ability to suppress them. The battle is for the hearts and minds of Erdoğan's

**Twitter was blocked ahead of local elections in Turkey.**

MARCH 21, 2014  
PHOTO: REUTERS,  
DADO RUVIC





own supporters, and whether Erdogan can convince them that social media is a dangerous, uncontrolled, filthy place from which nothing good can come.

Such a reading seemed to be justified by Erdogan's repeated playing of the nationalist card when slamming the Constitutional Court's subsequent ruling that the block was unconstitutional. At one point he stated that the government would comply with the ruling but that he personally "did not respect it," saying: "I don't find it right and patriotic that the Constitutional Court has adopted such a decision [...] While they are protecting an American company, our national and moral values are being disregarded."

### TENSION ON SYRIAN BORDER

Tension rose one again on the 900-kilometer border with civil war-torn Syria, after the Turkish military shot down a Syrian jet for violating Turkey's airspace without permission on March 23. Prime Minister Erdogan was the first to announce the incident to the nation, speaking at an election rally. "Our F-16s went up in the air and shot that plane down. Why? Because if you violate my airspace, then from now on, our slap will be hard," he said.

In a media statement on the incident, the Turkish Office of the Chief of General Staff said two Syrian military jets were involved, and that they had been "warned four times that they were approaching Turkish airspace." One then returned, but the other remained in violation of the border, so was shot down by Turkish F-16 jets. Syria accused Turkey of "blatant aggression," saying the plane had been over Syrian territory at the time. There were echoes of a similar incident in 2012, when a Turkish RF-4 reconnaissance plane flying over the Mediterranean was hit by a missile fired from Syria, crashing in Syrian territorial waters and killing both pilots. Turkey claimed that the RF-4 was in international airspace when it was hit, while Syria said the plane was shot down in its airspace.

With this in mind, the front page headline of the pro-government daily Sabah after the downing of the Syrian plane declared: "Our two martyrs are now resting in peace," with a subheading: "The revenge for the killing of our two pilots two years ago has been taken." Today's Zaman, on the other hand, claiming in its headline that the Syrian jet was shot down "ahead of local polls in graft cover-up attempt."

Meanwhile, just days after the incident, a stunning leak emerged of a bugged national security meeting in which Turkey's intelligence chief, foreign minister, deputy chief of General Staff and others discuss possible military operations in Syria. In the conversation, intelligence chief Hakan Fidan is heard raising the possibility of a "false flag" operation to justify the Turkish military expanding operations against the Syrian regime. The fact that the security of such a high-level meeting was breached was as embarrassing for the government as the discussions the leak contained. However, it seems likely that the release of such a recording -- described by Erdogan as "villainous," and soon the subject of a little-observed media blackout order -- helped reinforce the government's narrative that the country faces critical foreign threats, and helped rally support behind it just days before the local election.

Weeks after the leak emerged, it remained unclear who exactly was responsible for the bugging.

## ONE OF THE FEW POSITIVE NEWS ITEMS WAS THE RESTARTING OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS

### REVIVED CYPRUS TALKS

One of the few positive news items was the restarting of peace negotiations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The talks have received little attention amid all the other chaos commanding the Turkish news agenda, but they could mark a

key step to resolving the seemingly intractable four-decade-long problem on the East Mediterranean island.

Contact between the two sides, brokered by US Secretary of State John Kerry, resumed on Feb. 11, almost two years after the last round of high-level negotiations broke down. The latest talks are widely expected to be protracted and possibly fraught. As the Guardian's Cyprus correspondent Helena Smith reported, "On both sides, there are two generations who have little or no memory of co-existence." However, the recent discovery of almost 1 trillion cubic meters of recoverable oil and natural gas in the eastern Mediterranean Levant Basin around Cyprus is seen as a potential game changer. Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades, a moderate, has described the chance of peace as a "win-win situation," adding that the discovery and potential prosperity that the natural gas could bring to countries in the region brought the need for peace into even sharper focus.

EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Füle, a



Fists fly in Parliament as deputies discuss the HSYK Law.  
FEB. 15, 2014  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
MUSTAFA KIRAZLI

familiar name in Turkey, is also involved in the talks. "In Cyprus, both leaders recalled that there is no alternative to fair, comprehensive settlement and reunification. Status quo not viable," he tweeted after visiting the leaders of both sides at the beginning of April.

#### INTERNET, HSYK AND MİT LAWS

A series of controversial laws -- introduced by the government in the midst of the bitter rift between Erdogan and the Gülen movement -- have raised concerns about the future of democratic accountability and the separation of powers in Turkey.

The first was an attempt to restructure Turkey's Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK), to give the government more control over appointments to the key judicial body and grant the justice minister new competences. The move was widely criticized, and passed through Parliament in February only after a fistfight-marred session between government and opposition MPs. However, in April, the Constitutional Court ruled to overturn key parts of the law, including the articles giving new competences to the justice minister. This ruling was interpreted as yet another a push back against the executive by the court (after a separate ruling that unblocked Twitter), and the angry reactions from government figures led to widespread speculation that the AK Party might attempt to restructure the court in order to grant itself more power over the supposedly independent state body. On April 12, the day after the ruling, secularist daily Cumhuriyet carried a front-page headline playing on the name of Constitutional Court head Haşim Kılıç, stating "The swords have been drawn."

Another contentious law related to the Internet and was introduced as damaging wiretap revelations were circulating online. The new measures it

contained allowed TİB to block any website within four hours without a court order, and also obliged Internet service providers to store all data on web users' activities for two years and make it available to the authorities upon request. In an interview with the Hürriyet Daily News, Prof. Yaman Akdeniz, a cyberlaw expert at İstanbul's Bilgi University, described it as "the first step toward a surveillance society."

Writing in Milliyet, Kadri Gürsel suggested that "indiscriminately recording the Internet use of all Internet users for a period of one to two years amounts to a 'big brother' measure. One does not have to be a lawyer to see that this measure of censorship violates Articles 20 and 22 of the constitution, which respectively protect the privacy of individuals and the freedom of information."

In addition, the government moved to boost the power of the National Intelligence Organization (MİT), widely interpreted as another part of Erdogan's bid to tighten his grip on the apparatus of state. The proposals submitted to Parliament included giving MİT more scope for eavesdropping and foreign operations, as well as greater immunity from prosecution for top agents. MİT is run by Fidan, one of Erdogan's closest confidantes, who was himself the subject of an inquiry in February 2012.

CHP deputy Sezgin Tanrıku was among the critics of the law, saying it "equipped MİT with authorities it should not have in a state of law" and claiming that it would "turn Turkey into an intelligence state." Erdogan's aides, however, said such criticism underestimates the level of threat to national security from what they describe as a "parallel state" seeking to sabotage his government.

#### BERKİN ELVAN'S DEATH AND FUNERAL

One of the most dramatic episodes in the run-up to the local elections was the death and funeral of 15-year-old



**The funeral procession of Berkin Elvan in Okmeydanı.**  
MARCH 12, 2014  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
HÜSEYİN SARI

Berkin Elvan. Elvan died on March 11, having spent nine months in a coma after being hit in the head by a tear gas canister fired by police while going out to collect bread during last summer's Gezi Park protests. His death in hospital sparked an outpouring of grief, and his March 12 funeral in İstanbul was accompanied by demonstrations in at least 32 Turkish cities, perhaps the largest opposition street protests since Gezi.

The day after the funeral gave a good demonstration of the level of polarization in the Turkish media. While opposition sympathizing outlets featured large photos of the tens of thousands of mourners in İstanbul, pro-government tabloid *Takvim* declared, "Marauders at work!" referring to Erdoğan's disparaging term for the Gezi Park protesters. Erdoğan, meanwhile, encouraged the crowd at one of his pre-election rallies to boo the name of Elvan's grieving mother.

#### PLANE KIDNAPPING AND LANDING IN İSTANBUL

A Ukrainian plane bound for Turkey was forced to make an emergency landing on Feb. 7, after a drunk passenger yelled there was a bomb on board and tried to divert the flight to Sochi, where the Winter Olympics were kicking off.

The Pegasus Airlines flight carrying 110 passengers landed safely at İstanbul's Sabiha Gökçen Airport and the alleged Ukrainian hijacker was taken into custody. He had reportedly shouted that there was a bomb in the baggage compartment of the

plane departing from Kharkov, Ukraine, according to CNN Türk. The pilots then sent a signal to the airport alerting officials to a hijack attempt after the drunkard failed to enter the locked cockpit, according to Habib Soluk, the Turkish Transport Ministry undersecretary.


The plane landed safely and was parked in a safe zone at the airport, and its 110 passengers were able to alight soon after.

#### PRISON RELEASES

Inmates detained in a number of separate cases were released from prison over the past couple of months. The most high profile and headline-grabbing release was that of Turkey's former Chief of General Staff Gen. İlker Başbuğ, whose release on March 7 came a day after the Constitutional Court overturned his sentence citing a legal technicality.

Başbuğ, who was in charge of the Turkish military from 2008 to 2010, was sentenced to life imprisonment in August 2013, along with a number of other convicts, accused of plotting to overthrow the government in a coup. He has always denied the charges. In February, parliament approved a measure to disband the special courts that convicted most of the military officers in the cases, so it seems likely that more officers will be released soon.

Başbuğ's release was hailed by daily *Aydınlık* -- one of the fiercest critics of the alleged coup plot cases -- with a headline quoting the former chief of General Staff saying: "We will struggle until the last of our friends is released." *Sabah*, on the other hand, previously a staunch supporter of the cases -- like the government itself -- showed how much government's position on the trials has changed, with a headline declaring: "They have no conscience," referring to the "parallel organization" behind the prosecutions.

Meanwhile, passing somewhat under the radar in a busy news period were the releases of the remaining imprisoned suspects on trial in the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK) case throughout March and April. On this year's Newroz, the anniversary of the unilateral cease-fire between the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkish military, the PKK's jailed leader Abdullah Öcalan called for a fresh push to revive the peace talks. However, in a March 16 statement, the KCK announced that it was no longer recognizing the Turkish government as an addressee for Öcalan in the process. 

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# Doğa Derneği: one with nature

**D**oğa Derneği, or Nature Association, the Turkish partner of BirdLife International, was established in 2002 with the goal of 'generating constructive and appropriate solutions' for the natural environment. It is one of the most active associations in Turkey in its field, with around 30 successful national and international projects to its name, as well as several studies across the country, including the largest inventory of key biodiversity areas in the country

## **NESLIHAN ER**

*Staff Writer*

Speaking to Turkish Review, Doğa Derneği (DD) Director-General Engin Yılmaz said the movement's roots lie in bird watching. The Turkish NGO is supported in its endeavors by its international partner BirdLife International, which has one of the largest nature protection networks in the world, active in 126 countries.

The DD began with studies on bird species in Turkey, determining areas that merited special protection. It later launched a study to expand the exercise to include groups like mammals, reptiles and plants. The DD collaborated with major and prominent international organizations in this, such as Conservation International (CI) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The outcome of the project was a pan-species methodology for the determination of protection zones known as key biodiversity areas (KBA).

The association's story from the protection of endangered bird species through to the present day is neatly recapitulated in the DD's mission and vision. As Yılmaz noted: "Actually, our mission was defending the rights of nature, and since the DD has been established, our vision has been to make sure people adopt a

[sustainable] lifestyle that does not necessitate the conservation of nature. Thus, the need for an holistic approach for all nature, not only bird species, emerged."

## **BIODIVERSITY**

According to data provided by Yılmaz on Turkey's biodiversity, while there are nearly 12,000 plant species in Europe as a whole, in Turkey alone this figure is around 10,000, nearly one-third of which are endemic. The first study using a KBA methodology at a national level in Turkey took place in 2006, with the results of the study published as a two-volume book, "Key Biodiversity Areas of Turkey." This study, the product of cooperation between several NGOs including the DD, is the largest inventory to date of areas in Turkey meriting conservation efforts.

## **PROJECTS**

Studies carried out by the DD can be put into four main categories: KBA assessment, species conservation, wetlands analysis and water/human interaction.

Projects relating to Hasankeyf, slated to be flooded by the Ilisu Dam on the Tigris, and Lake Burdur, which is threatened by drought due to unregulated irrigation, are among the most prominent of the DD's current



projects. In addition, the “Urfa Steppes” and “Last 11 Demoiselle Cranes” projects, among others, were carried out as part of the “Target: Zero extinction” campaign launched by the DD in 2005.

In terms of the “human” aspect of the DD’s projects, Yılmaz explains: “Working to help people live alongside nature more harmoniously [...] is one of the most significant principles of our association -- all the while protecting local species and protecting an area. As an actor you can only have a remote effect unless you ensure the participation of people at the local level and vouchsafe adaptation. You cannot ensure real protection [otherwise].”

#### WATER POLICY

Yılmaz stated that threat analysis had been conducted in the 305 KBAs determined during the “Key Biodiversity Areas of Turkey” study and a threat scale concerning those areas formed.

“There are a number of threats in that scale. However, by far the two greatest threats are agricultural practices (threats from drought to the transition to irrigated farming and open drainage canals) and dams. When analyzed, actually both are threats caused by the same policy: water policy.”


Yılmaz underlined that the threat to Turkey’s wetlands is the greatest danger facing the country’s biodiversity and natural protection areas. Talking specifically about hydroelectric dams, Yılmaz

asked whether we truly need enhanced energy generation capacity, and drew attention to the 8-15 percent energy loss on energy transmission lines.

#### NATURE AND HUMANITY

DD supports the Universal Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth, approved by 35,000 people from 241 NGOs across the world during the Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth Conference held in Bolivia in 2010. This declaration states, “The rights of each being are limited by the rights of other beings and any conflict between their rights must be

resolved in a way that maintains the integrity, balance and health of Mother Earth.” In line with this, the DD upholds that crimes against nature are part of injustice as a whole, and that the latter cannot be solved without addressing the former.

Yılmaz said they reject a definition of nature as an “environment” separate from humans and external to them. “We believe that mindset, which distinguishes nature from humanity, not only destroys nature but also destroys humans, a part of nature. We claim that every living being has a right that was attained simply by being born.” He added: “We adopt an understanding that sees humans as part of nature, in which humanity nurtures nature and humanity is a factor nurtured by nature. The concept of the rights of nature lies here.” 

**Lake Burdur is under threat of desiccation.**

SEPT. 19, 2012  
PHOTO: CIHAN, KADIR ÇELİK

## DOĞA DERNEĞİ UPHOLDS THAT CRIMES AGAINST NATURE ARE PART OF INJUSTICE AS A WHOLE

**Doğa**

For more information on DD:  
Web: [dogadernegi.org](http://dogadernegi.org)  
e-mail: [dogad@dogadernegi.org](mailto:dogad@dogadernegi.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DogaDernegi](http://www.facebook.com/DogaDernegi)



# Overview of Turkish economy in 2013 Q4

In the previous issue, Microscope attempted to map the overall performance of the Turkish economy in 2013, minus complete data on the last quarter. This piece includes updated and extended analyses on the same topic, referring exclusively to GDP growth rates alongside public sector expenditures, production and turnover indices in the construction sector, and comprehensive figures on solid fuels. Finally, Microscope also looks at death statistics for the previous year

## TAPTUK EMRE ERKOÇ

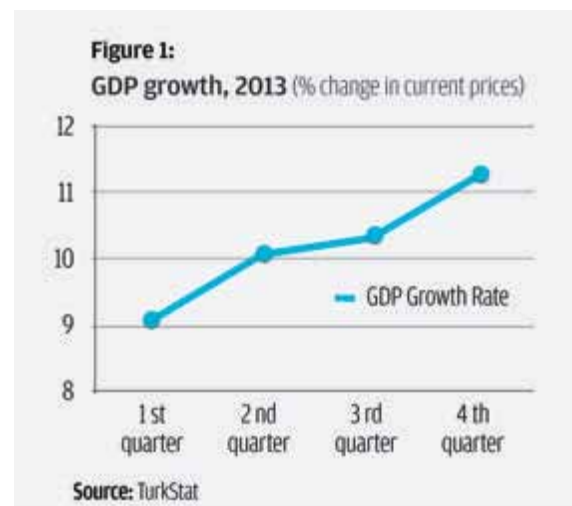
*Staff Writer*

### GDP GROWTH RATES

A rising trend was visible in GDP growth rates over the course of 2013, although there was a smooth decline in the pace of increase from the second quarter to the third (Figure 1). The Turkish economy remains on its progressive track -- albeit with certain structural weaknesses discussed in last issue's article. Figures on the fourth quarter of 2013 also show that, contrary to arguments put forward by the government officials, social unrest as a consequence of the nationwide protests first sparked in Taksim's Gezi Park had a minor impact on the economy as far as the GDP was concerned.

### PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

There is no doubt that the increasing trend in GDP represents a positive economic development. However, the components of this achievement are as significant as the achievement itself. The magnitude of public expenditure and preference in spending are crucial, since these give a rough idea of probable outcomes in the medium term. Investment-friendly



spending by governments is welcomed, in line with the Keynesian multiplier effect; nevertheless, in this particular case, escalating expenditures allocated to construction vis-à-vis machinery-equipment does not send out optimistic signals (see Figure 2). Figures from the private sector, however -- where machinery-equipment corresponds to 20 percent and construction 0.8 percent in the last quarter of 2013 -- are more hopeful.

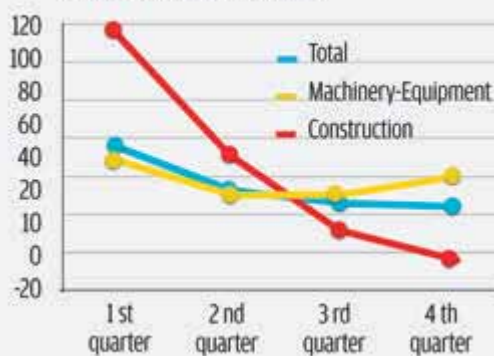


## CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

Figure 3 shows an apparent reduction in total production within the construction sector after the second quarter. In the last quarter, the sector as a whole displays a contraction of -1.2 percent, which raises question marks regarding possible saturation of the Turkish real estate market. However, it would definitely be speculative to state that the construction sector in Turkey has reached its climax solely on the basis of data from 2013 Q3 and Q4. To make a reasoned argument, recent data for 2014 are needed.

In terms of components of the construction sector, there was a decline in construction of buildings but an increase in non-building (that is, civil engineering) production in the last quarter of 2013. That is to say, even though the construction sector saw noteworthy shrinkage in Q4, investments in the sector's non-building elements remained on the rise.

**Figure 2:**  
Public expenditure (2013)



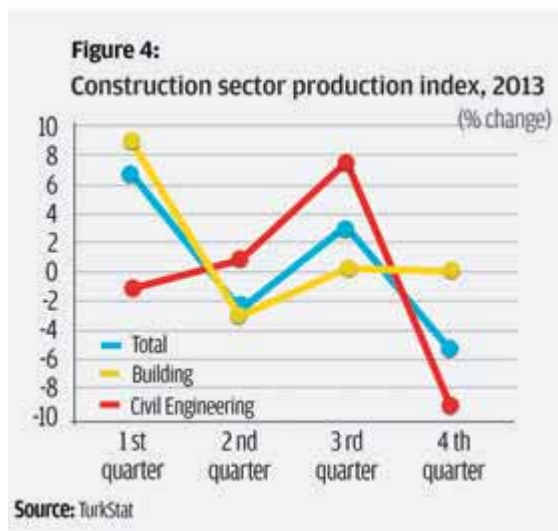
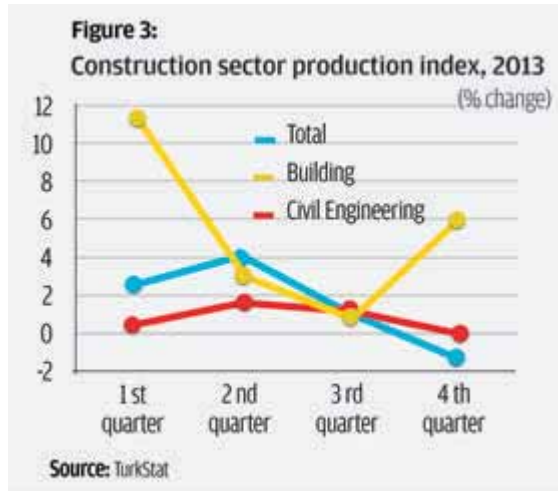
Source: TurkStat

The construction boom that has gripped Turkey in recent years shows signs of slowing.

MAY 21, 2014  
PHOTO: DHA,  
MUSTAFA OGUZ

**THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE INCREASING TREND IN GDP REPRESENTS A POSITIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**





**Table 1:**  
Solid fuel: production, export, import, deliveries and stock changes, January-December 2013 (tonnes)

form/type of solid fuel	hard coal	lignite	asphaltite	coke derived from hard coal
production (run of mine)	2,788,963	60,740,785	630,251	-
production (marketable)	1,923,467	50,546,975	630,251	4,363,131
import	26,375,793	-	-	493,195
export	5,820	13,204	-	7,053
deliveries	28,234,450	51,624,463	630,251	4,745,593

Source: TurkStat

### TURNOVER IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

In addition to the production figures for the construction sector in Turkey, Figure 4 illustrates the turnover index for the sector, showing both building and civil engineering statistics. When compared to production, turnover indices in both the sector as a whole and building in particular experience a dramatic drop, particularly in Q4. The construction sector as a whole saw a -5.4 percent reduction, while turnover in building alone contracted by -9 percent compared to the previous quarter. Civil engineering, meanwhile, saw a drop from a little over 8 percent to zero, where it remained. Future data will be extremely useful in shedding light on the significance of these latest figures.

### SOLID FUELS

Solid fuels are still preserving their significance not only in household heating needs but also for industrial production in Turkey. According to Table 1, lignite has the highest share among solid fuel resource; the combined production of hard coal, asphaltite and coke derived from hard coal corresponds to 15 percent of lignite production. In order to meet demand for hard coal, Turkey imports it in significant quantities, accounting for almost 90 percent of solid fuel imports. With regard to export of solid fuels, the numbers are extremely low, with domestic demand dominating the market.

### SOLID FUEL PRODUCTION

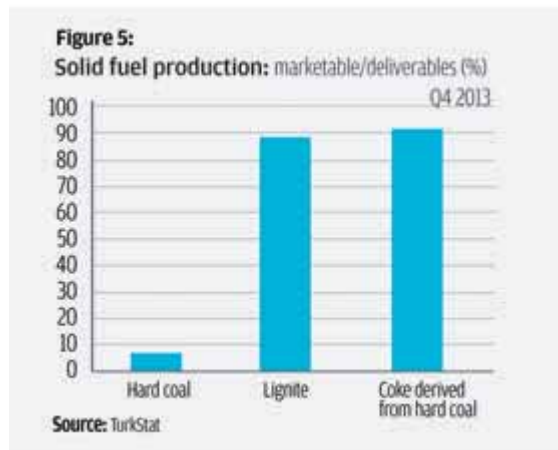
If solid fuels are examined on the basis of delivery point, it can be seen that 35.1 percent of hard coal deliveries are made to thermal power plants, 19.8 percent to coke production plants, and 7.5 percent to the industrial sector outside iron and steel plants; meanwhile, 83.1 percent of lignite deliveries go to thermal power plants, and 7.4 percent to the industrial sector outside of iron and steel plants. As indicated in Figure 5, domestic customers are driving imports of hard coal, since marketable production meets just 6.3 percent of deliveries. For lignite and coke derived from hard coal, domestic production is enough to meet the demands of the domestic market.

### STATISTICS ON CAUSE OF DEATH

The final analysis this issue focuses on figures on cause of death. In 2013 the first six causes were as follows: circulatory system diseases (39.8 percent), tumor-related



cases (21.3 percent), respiratory system ailments (9.8 percent), endocrine, nutrition and metabolic disorders (5.6 percent), poisoning and external injuries (5.55 percent), and finally neural system and sensory organ-related complaints (4.1 percent). When those diseases are segregated by gender, circulatory system ailments are seen to be more common in women, whilst cancers are more common among men. Although it is rather difficult to extrapolate the reasons behind these findings, it could be argued that greater cigarette and alcohol consumption by men might be behind their higher cancer rates, while lower levels of physical activity/sports could be a factor in higher circulatory diseases in women. The overall statistics for deaths in 2013 are in Figure 6.



Turkey's construction sector saw some shrinkage last year.

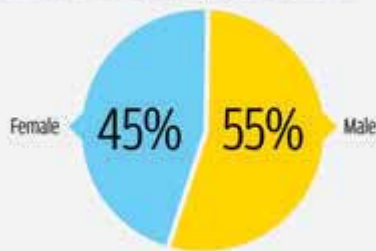
Aug. 29, 2013  
 PHOTO: CIHAN, FERHAT OZER



Turkey has shown an impressive improvement in child mortality rates at the course of the last decade.

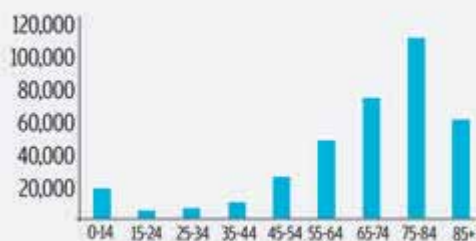
JULY 16, 2012  
PHOTO: ZAMAN,  
ADEM ELITOK

**Figure 6:**  
Distribution of death by gender, 2013



Source: TurkStat


**Figure 7:**  
Distribution of death by age group, 2013



Source: TurkStat

## TURKEY HAS SHOWN AN IMPRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT IN CHILD MORTALITY RATES AT THE COURSE OF THE LAST DECADE

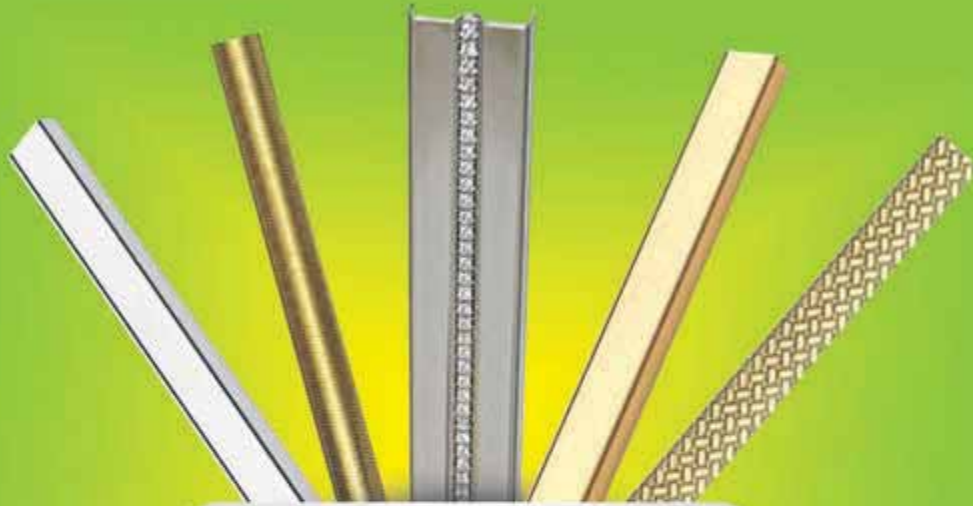
### DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS BY AGE GROUP

Distribution of deaths by age group is a crucial indicator of the developmental level of a country. Higher mortality rates among children are evaluated as a sign of a less-developed health and education infrastructure. Turkey has shown an impressive improvement in child mortality rates over the course of the last decade. However, as seen in Figure 7, the number of deaths among the 0-14 age group is still evidently higher than that of the 15-24, 25-34 and 35-44 age groups, and only slightly lower than that of 45-54. Therefore, further investments in health care services for children, maternal education, and schooling need to be made to further the already considerable progress on this key socio-economic issue. 

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# Why is it taking so long to solve the Cyprus issue?

# C

ypirus is one of those conflicts that have been around long enough to become firmly embedded in international security structures as a stable variable. Its existence has successfully intruded into the domestic politics of world powers, as well as many other states, and with a recent visit by US Vice

President Joe Biden, is again taking on a higher profile -- but what lies ahead for the divided East Mediterranean island?

## **DR. SYLVIA TIRYAKI**

*Istanbul Kültür University*

Whole swarms of scholars and political analysts have become Cyprus conflict experts, with the conflict resolution meetings evolving into a sector all their own. A number of blue-bereted men and women have been involved in peacekeeping operations with consecutive UN secretaries-general sending reports on their missions to the UN Security Council.

In the case of Cyprus, Secretary-General U Thant, Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon have conducted their Missions of Good Offices. At least three peace plans have been penned and submitted by UN teams. And in each case, the more comprehensive the plan, the greater the failure it faced. After the 2004 "Annan Plan" fiasco, it seemed highly unlikely that any secretary-general would undertake a similar endeavor in the name of Cyprus reunification.

## **INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS IN CYPRUS: 1968 TO TODAY**

The Cyprus intercommunal negotiations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots began in 1968.

In those days, the Turkish Cypriots' proposal for a bizonal federation with a weak central government was rejected by Greek Cypriots. Today, a bizonal federation is still being discussed by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, seemingly with no prospect for an early solution on the horizon. Rather than being resolved, the Cyprus conflict has become frozen.

Since the initial talks almost 50 years ago, we have seen all types of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders get involved. We have witnessed various combinations of political parties on both sides, sometimes converging, sometimes diverging in their manifestos. Yet none of the combinations have produced the desired results.

In March 2008, when the Cyprus peace talks resumed -- after a long break of four years -- the UN stepped back from the frontline and left the negotiations in the hands of the two communities. It sponsored two joint declarations -- by then-leaders Dimitris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat -- signed on May 23 and July 1, 2008, respectively.

The text of the declarations contained commitment to an eventual bizonal and bicomunal federation based on political equality. The new state would have a single international personality and would consist of a Turkish Cypriot constituent state and a Greek Cypriot



US Vice President Joe Biden (C) visits Cyprus. MAY 23, 2014 PHOTO: CIHAN

constituent state, both politically equal. The leaders also agreed in principle on the issues of single sovereignty and citizenship (joint declaration, July 1, 2008). The declarations marked the commencement of what is known as home-owned, Cyprus-owned negotiations with marginal involvement of the UN.

At the beginning, the Cyprus-owned talks were conducted by two leaders that shared a leftist political background: Talat, representing the Republican Turkish Party (CTP), and Christofias, representing the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL). After Talat lost the presidential elections on April 18, 2010, to right-wing Dervis Eroglu from the National Unity Party (UBP), the Cyprus-owned talks collapsed, with both leaders blaming one another for the failure. The current combination of leaders was sealed by the Feb. 24, 2013, Republic of Cyprus presidential elections, in which Nicos Anastasiades from the Democratic Rally (DISY) -- a conservative Christian-democratic party -- won. It took another joint declaration outlining the main principles of the future talks, signed this February, to start the negotiations again.

#### YET ANOTHER NEW MOMENTUM?

Although the combination of the two conservative leaders has not yet borne fruit, hopes for a solution in Cyprus have increased internationally. This heightened international interest coincided more or less with Anastasiades' victory, which came about amid a deep Greek Cypriot economic crisis and regional hydrocarbon euphoria.

Among the latest evidence of increased interest, and perhaps the most telling, was US Vice President Joe Biden's visit to Cyprus. The US administration's official visit to both the southern and northern regions of the island, on May 20-22, was the first of its sort since US Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson came to Cyprus in August 1962 -- two years before the Cyprus problem entered the UN Security Council agenda. Hence, Biden's visit can be considered perhaps the only open sign of US interest in solving what is known as the modern Cyprus conflict.

Biden's visit came just about two months after International Crisis Group (ICG) published a report "Divided Cyprus: Coming to Terms on an Imperfect

Reality."<sup>1</sup> In the report the ICG suggests that uncertainty created by the absence of the federal solution is causing more harm than possible acceptance of a two-state solution. The report is crucial; it is unprecedented for a reputable international organization to analyze the Cyprus conflict in such a manner and more or less openly

spell out what has troubled many minds.

Of course, it would be wrong to conclude that these are signs of international support for a two-state solution in Cyprus. Rather, this may imply that many believe conditions are indeed conducive to the peace settlement.

This poses a key question: In the wake of the Middle East development or rather already permanent crisis and Russian neo-expansionism, what the cost of non-solution of the Cyprus problem for the wider region and the international community?

Throughout the past half-century, all aspects of a

### BIDEN'S VISIT CAN BE CONSIDERED AN OPEN SIGN OF US INTEREST IN SOLVING THE MODERN CYPRUS CONFLICT

possible peace agreement have time and time again been discussed by the island's leaders. According to a high-level Turkish Cypriot official, the parties are so well-versed on the negotiable margins that if a Greek Cypriot negotiator was placed in the chair of a Turkish Cypriot one, he would be able to defend the Turkish Cypriot position, and vice versa (personal communication, 2013).

The economic benefits have been highlighted dozens of times by the proponents of the solution. None of the parties involved -- Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Turkey or Greece -- would lose. On the contrary, a cost-benefit analysis prepared by economists Praxoula

induce the peace settlement.

This gives rise to two more questions. What is it that makes the Cyprus problem one of the oldest ongoing issues on the UN Security Council agenda, second only to the Middle East problem? And, why are the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) peacekeepers still stationed in Cyprus -- in numbers reaching more than a thousand UN personnel -- having been mandated with the peacekeeping mission in March 1964 (UN SC Resolution 86 (1964))?

It seems that the answer to these questions is simply a lack of trust. It is the lack of trust between communities, the lack of trust between all possible combinations of political leaders, their respective negotiators; lack of trust between Turkey and Greek Cypriots and even sometimes between Greek Cypriots and Greece and between Turkish Cypriots and Turkey.

Obviously, it is not possible to work on the perceptions and misperceptions among all the parties. Also, confidence-building measures (CBMs) have been in the picture and frequently used since the commencement of the conflict. Therefore, the answer might not be in introducing more CBMs or reintroducing those unilateral ones that have been refused many times before, like opening Varosha (Maras).

Confidence might instead be brought in different ways, for instance by encouraging the actors who did not play very constructive roles in the past to become more involved in the reconciliation process, as was also suggested by Vice President Biden during his recent visit. To this end, Turkey Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan could invite religious leaders of both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to Turkey. That would be a move reminiscent of his invitation to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot journalists back in February 2010, an event that broke many taboos and served as an effective CBM.

It is high time to take a similar step again.



The Homer Ferrington gas drilling rig, operated by Noble Energy and Drilling offshore Cyprus. NOV. 21, 2011 PHOTO: REUTERS

Antoniadou-Kyriacou and Özlem Oguz Çilsal for İstanbul Kültür University's Global Political Trends Center (GPoT), "All players can win," estimates reduced cost and increased benefit for all concerned parties.<sup>2</sup>

One of the main reasons for the Greek Cypriot refusal of the Annan Plan in 2004 was the economic discrepancy between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities.<sup>3</sup> This seems set to change, given the current economic performance in Turkey and the recent economic crisis that hit the Republic of Cyprus. There have also been many bets placed on the existence of hydrocarbons in the Eastern Mediterranean as a possible game-changer and harbinger of the peace deal in Cyprus. The idea of transporting gas that would be jointly owned by Greek and Turkish Cypriots via Turkey's (and Greece's) infrastructure to Europe has been under discussion for some time.

Yet none of the outlined benefits have been able to

1. "Divided Cyprus: Coming to Terms on an Imperfect Reality," ICG (March 14, 2014).
2. Praxoula Antoniadou Kyriacou and Özlem Oguz Çilsal, "When all players can win," GPoT (November 2013).
3. Alexandros Lordos, *Can the Cyprus Problem be Solved? Understanding the Greek Cypriot response to the UN Peace Plan for Cyprus* (Nicosia: Alexandros Lordos, 2004).



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# Ottoman Turkey and international issues

ÜMIT KURT

*Literary Editor*

This issue Reviews and Briefs contains a great variety of contributions, with several focusing on Turkey's Ottoman past, as well as a number on various aspects of international relations. The section begins, however, with a review of Joshua D. Hendrick's "Gülen: The Ambiguous Politics of Market Islam in Turkey and the World" from Jessica Rehman (University of California, Riverside, Religious Studies Department). Rehman provides a detailed critique of Hendrick's assessment of Hizmet's growth and development.

Next comes a review from Defne Kadıoğlu Polat (Bogaziçi University, Political Science and International Relations) of the edited volume "Ocak und Dedelik. Institutionen Religiösen Spezialistentums bei den Aleviten"

(Ocak and Dedelik. Holy Lineages and Religious Specialists as Institutions of Alevi Ritual Knowledge) which -- as she notes -- provides a valuable account of modern Alevism.

Duygu Yıldırım (Sabancı University, History Department) looks at Çiğdem Oğuz's "Negotiating the Terms of Mercy: Petitions and Pardon Cases in the Hamidian Era," which explores the role of imperial pardon as well as the image of Abdülhamit II as a merciful ruler.

Finally in the books section, Shelby Andersen-Holt (University of Nebraska-Omaha) moves from Turkey to the broader Middle East with his insightful assessment of Fawaz. A. Gerges's "Obama and the Middle East: The End of America's Moment?"

The conference section remains in the Middle East with Prof. Berna Turam's (Northeastern University, Boston) review of "Gender of the State and Politics in the Middle East." Turam, amongst the event's organizers, provides details of the presenters' "gendered"

perspective of developments in the Middle East and North Africa region.

A brief focusing on Turkey follows: Vahram Ter-Matevosyan (National Academy of Sciences of Armenia) summarizes the Institute of Oriental Studies of Armenia's conference "90 Years of the Republic of Turkey: From Atatürk to Erdoğan," held in Yerevan at the end of 2013. As well

as a detailed account of the conference, Ter-Matevosyan also provides background on the history of Turkish studies in Armenia.

From Turkey to the Balkans, with a review of the Research Center for Modern History's "Revolutions in the Balkans: Revolts and Uprisings in the Era of Nationalism (1804-1908)," held in Athens in late 2013. Dr. Alexandra Patrikiou (Panteion University) offers a summary of the "the pluralism of ideas, notions and views" in this conference, of which Turkish Review was media sponsor.

Nihat Çelik (Kadir Has University, International Relations) reviews the "Humanizing Security" conference organized by the Citizens' Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security and held at his university in early 2014. Çelik provides a capable précis of the new perspectives on the human security issue presented at this important conference.

The section concludes with Serap Merve Doğan's summary of "Dünyadaki Yahudi Göçleri, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Yahudileri" (Global Migration of the Jewish People: Ottoman Jews, Turkey's Jews) held in late 2013 by the Turkish Center for International Studies (TÜİÇ) Center for Jewish Studies (YAÇAM) -- where Doğan is a coordinator -- in cooperation with Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center. 

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# Irrational altruism vs. rational capital gains

JESSICA REHMAN

*University of California, Riverside*

In "Gülen: The Ambiguous Politics of Market Islam in Turkey and the World" Joshua D. Hendrick, writing as a religious economist, seeks to contextualize the rise of Hizmet (the movement affiliated with Muslim scholar Fethullah Gülen) within the historical economic market expansions and contractions of Turkey. The religious and economic theoretical context of his work claims to diverge from typical approaches that understand the rise of Hizmet as a reaction to neoliberal globalization. Instead, Hendrick sees Hizmet as a successful supplier of a premier and alternate Turkish Muslim identity.

While Hizmet self-identifies as a nonpolitical transnational civil society, Hendrick feels it is appropriate to place it within the Turkish political discourse. Hizmet followers narrowly apply the term political "to connote either political party mobilization or state-directed protest/confrontation," thus reinforcing the movement's nonpolitical identity, claims the author (18). It is precisely this nonpolitical policy that Hendrick describes as a political strategy employed to rouse Turkey's transformation. While Hendrick's overall understanding of Hizmet's organizational arrangement disregards the value of identity and

religious altruism as participant motivators, he does detail the ways in which the movement's activities yield forms of capital. However, his contribution is buttressed against his assertion that Hizmet is not a social movement working for the greater good, but a collective that engages in social action with the aim of passively increasing the "Muslim share" of social power in Turkey.

## HENDRICK SITUATES THE RISE OF HIZMET WITHIN A HISTORICAL SERIES OF EXPANSIONS AND CONTRACTIONS OF FREEDOMS METED OUT BY THE STATE



According to the author's definition of the political, Hizmet's actions are not altruistic, they are in line with global capitalism, politically supporting state policies that expand Turkey's export economy. Thus, Hizmet's rational support of economic expansion developed into an unspoken alliance with the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party). Hendrick chronicles what he terms a Hizmet-AK Party "passive revolution of piety" -- however, his book (published last year) does not reflect the recent animosity between the two.

Indeed, much of the book is dedicated to tightening loose connections between Hizmet and the AK Party, specifically through Hizmet-affiliated media groups Hendrick contends operate as a propaganda machine that upholds the AK Party as the embodiment of secular modernity, reframing Islamic issues as individual human rights issues, a tactic employed to bring global scrutiny to local political quarrels (193). Turkey is not entrenched in a battle between Islam and modernity, according to Hendrick, but simply a battle over shares of social power, "an intra-elite struggle for the hearts and minds of the Turkish nation" (233). The aforementioned passive revolution of piety, according to Hendrick, espouses bourgeois Islamic ethics that preach hard work and privatization as integral

Joshua D. Hendrick  
*Gülen: The Ambiguous Politics of Market Islam in Turkey and the World* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 292 pp. ISBN: 9780814770986



parts of religion (25).

Hendrick's tidy packaging of Hizmet and the AK Party misses the fractures within what he presents as a happy marriage. The initial alliance between Hizmet and AK Party might have been blissful, but this is certainly no longer the case.

Hendrick situates the rise of Hizmet within a historical series of expansions and contractions of freedoms meted out by the state, such as the revised 1982 constitution that tightened the government's grip on volunteer organizations, and expanded liberties of news media, freeing it from state censorship (48). This explains Hizmet's use of media for its social mobility projects.

The author chronicles Hizmet's rise in the private education sector during the 1980s: "Structural shifts in the education system, an increasingly competitive centralized examination requirement, and a newly open market for private sector interests collectively facilitated the GM's [Gülen Movement, Hizmet] shift from a relatively small community of students to one of Turkey's most influential players in youth education" (128). In Hendrick's view, the education sector is where the hearts and minds of Turkey's youth are won. By offering special supplemental education, for a profit, and therefore superior preparedness for government examinations, Hizmet gained access to a primary recruiting pool.

Hendrick's economically positioned history sets the stage for his main revelation: Hizmet's purposeful employment of

strategic ambiguity, a tactic used "to achieve a variety of goals that may complement or contradict one another" (56). The benefits of strategic ambiguity include the following: promotion of a unified diversity, ease of organizational change, autonomy of individual Hizmet followers, organizational flexibility in the face of maladaptive policies that inhibit expansion over time, plausible deniability of institutional connectivity, including financial overlaps and politically motivated self-promotion, and the preservation of positions of privilege, specifically that of Gülen (58).

### HENDRICK SUCCESSFULLY DEBUNKS THE WIDELY APPLIED COMMUNITARIAN MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING AFFILIATION

For Hendrick, strategic ambiguity allows Hizmet members to claim "Gülen is at once the reason, motivator, and instigator" behind Hizmet's transnational efforts "and that he leads no one and manages nothing" (72). The author highlights a controversy amongst Gülen's followers about his birthday: some believe he was born in 1938, others 1941. Hizmet members explain away this discrepancy by citing regional traditions in eastern parts of Turkey that register births later than normal. Hendrick uses this trivial example to demonstrate how Hizmet engages alternation: the practice of reimagining the past for present purposes.

Hendrick views Gülen as an intellectual who escapes the need to prove his authority through rationally verifiable acts as his followers frame him as a charismatic leader whose authority is proved through miracles; Gülen's miracle is Hizmet's expansion and a sign of Gülen's grace (80). Hizmet is thus socially organized as a charismatic aristocracy: a cohort that assumes a promotional role in legitimating their leader (81). With this in mind, the author deconstructs the composition of Hizmet into three strata: the cemaat (community), arkadaşlar (friends) and yandaşlar, which is deciphered as "sympathizers," but is more appropriately translated as "supporters" (89).

Hendrick successfully debunks the widely applied communitarian model for understanding affiliation, which sees participation as a contribution to the collective with no gains for the individual. He demonstrates the considerable individual gains for Hizmet participants, specifically the opportunities for education and employment in Turkey and abroad. These individuals comprise Hizmet networks that continue to grow due to friendship marketing, the practice of depending on social networks for commerce and expansion (160). Based on Hendrick's capitalist framing of Hizmet structures, motivations, and its emergence, Hizmet is not a selfless faith community, it is a for-profit network of products and services.

By focusing on strategic ambiguity, alternation and Gülen's charisma, Hendrick attempts to chip



Hizmet operates a global network of schools, such as the one in Uganda shown in this file photo. AUG. 18, 2013 PHOTO: CIHAN, ATIF ALA

away at the altruistic exterior with which Hizmet collectively identifies, and which Hendrick views as a superficial, non-mitigating factor in Hizmet's growth (87). Instead of offering the scholastically arduous biography of Gülen that Hendrick states is a major gap in the literature, he sketches a dichotomous framework with irrational altruism on one side and rational capital gains on the other. He continuously dwells on the economically measurable gains of affiliates while only casually mentioning that participants also gain identity. Subsequently, Hendrick contradicts his earlier assertions that identity is a valuable commodity, reducing Hizmet participant motivations to solely capital benefits.

Hendrick again looks through this reductionist lens when he emphasizes the financial gains of Hizmet in the private education market. He confirms that Hizmet teachers work longer hours than other private educators, and take extra steps to engage the home lives of students, without direct financial increases, ensuring the quality of Hizmet schools (140). However, these facts do not outweigh

Hizmet's financial profits; for Hendrick there is no such thing as a passionate teacher, just a monolithic social movement preying on opportunistic self-interest in an effort to increase the "Muslim share" of economic power. Such contentions in fact refute his earlier statements that his framework is an alternate lens for understanding Hizmet growth outside of

### FOR HENDRICK THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PASSIONATE TEACHER, JUST A MONOLITHIC SOCIAL MOVEMENT

traditional paradigms about the rise of social movements as reactions to neoliberal globalization.

His ethnographic data reveals that Hizmet is pursuing cultural globalization, "the globalization that makes us all neighbors," who need to get along regardless of differences (163). Hendrick interprets Hizmet's outreach to other countries as a form of "da'wa, an invitation to Islam, proselytization" -- despite the

absence of phrasing to warrant this reading in the data presented (164). Hendricks also dismisses the current scholarship produced by such acclaimed authors as M. Hakan Yavuz, John L. Esposito, Helen Rose Ebaugh, and Sophia Pandya (70).

Hendrick's main contribution to the current scholarly discourse is his specification of the ways in which Hizmet's activities harvest forms of capital. He concludes that Hizmet is an adapting organization of autonomous actors and institutions, ruled by market rationalism that employs ambiguity as a strategy of protection.

The neat packaging of his thesis excludes the elemental humanness of Hizmet, packing a very complex multi-dimensional movement into an inflexible box. He falls short of his goal to offer a more nuanced understanding of Hizmet, instead presenting a reductionist interpretation, dismissing the role that religiosity can play in individual and collective identity formation, leaving his account of a multifaceted movement incomplete. [TR](#)

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# Alevism as a politically contested notion

**DEFNE KADIOĞLU POLAT**

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“Ocak und Dedelik. Institutionen Religiösen Spezialistentums bei den Aleviten” (Ocak and Dedelik. Holy Lineages and Religious Specialists as Institutions of Alevi Ritual Knowledge), edited by Robert Langer, Hüseyin Aguiçenoğlu, Janina Karolewski and Raoul Motika, is a powerful collection of 15 essays engaged with the question of Alevism’s main tenets, history, internal differences, transformation and the challenges it faces under increasing urbanization.

Published in German, but with two English contributions, “Ocak und Dedelik” combines insights on the emergence of Alevism and its historical roots in Ottoman archives with its modern expressions. The book’s general concern is to revive the discussion on Alevism in a time where religious identities have gained novel prominence around the globe.

Alevis are a religious group that make up 10-20 percent of Turkey’s population. Alevism has often been described as the Anatolian expression of Islam in Turkey, but has also been depicted as belief system independent of Islam. Alevis have experienced a long history of stigmatization and discrimination, traceable way back into the Ottoman Empire, continuing with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 up until today. Their religious freedoms are as hotly debated as ever under the current conservative regime of the Justice

and Development Party (AK Party), which derives its votes mainly from the Sunni majority. Offering a proper academic discussion on the roots, practices and the evolution of Alevism and the Alevi community over the last decades is thus a welcome and timely effort.

A major strength of the book is that it is not only concerned with historical specificities or religious interpretations of Alevism but positions Alevism in the context of contemporary debates around Islam, gender, conservatism and socialism, the ethnicization of religion, secularization and rural

migration. The emphasis on Alevism as politically contested notion and as a frequently appropriated or demonized belief system by representatives of different political, religious and ethnic groups is emphasized in almost all of the contributions.

Particularly intriguing is the careful way in which the authors discuss Alevism’s relation to other Islamic sects, primarily Sunnism -- the confession of the majority of Turkey’s Muslims -- but also to Shiism. There have been two conflicting tendencies: On the one hand groups within the Alevi and the Sunni communities have stressed commonalities, with Sunnis sometimes even denying that Alevism can be thought of as another sect within Islam. İsmail Kaygusuz, for example, shows that there have been claims that Hacı Bektaş Veli, one of the principal teachers of Alevism, was actually a pious Sunni. On the other hand, some groups within both belief systems have underlined that Alevism is a sect independent of or at least not clearly affiliated with Islam. Johannes Zimmermann, in his analysis of Ottoman encyclopedia and dictionaries, depicts how early writers were ambivalent about Alevism’s relationship to Islam and Sunnism. This perception of “otherness” is shared or reflected in the attitudes of a great part of the Alevi community towards Sunnism. Aguiçenoğlu, for example, shows how religiosity and self-perceptions of Alevis are shaped

## PARTICULARLY INTRIGUING IS THE CAREFUL WAY IN WHICH THE AUTHORS DISCUSS ALEVISM’S RELATION TO OTHER ISLAMIC SECTS



Robert Langer,  
Hüseyin Aguiçenoğlu,  
Janina Karolewski,  
and Raoul Motika eds,  
*Ocak und Dedelik.  
Institutionen Religiösen  
Spezialistentums bei den  
Aleviten*  
(Frankfurt am Main:  
Peter Lang Verlag,  
2013), 350 pp.  
ISBN: 9783631576762



Alevi are a religious group that makes up 10-20 percent of Turkey's population. DEC. 3, 2006 PHOTO: AP, MURAD SEZER

by their Sunni "other." Ahmet Taşgın, in his analysis of Alevi in the southeastern Anatolian city of Gaziantep, shows how Alevi who have more recently migrated into the city in particular are more confident in openly practicing Alevism and in rejecting any appropriation or imposition by the Sunni majority. Markus Dressler, along similar lines, argues in the introductory chapter that many Alevi have defined themselves in opposition to the majority society, a choice that has at times also been accompanied by a strong tendency for radical and alternative left politics and a merging of religious and secular discourses.

The secularization of Alevism is another aspect "Ocak und Dedelik" takes up. Several contributors focus on the transformed position of the dedes -- the hereditary socio-religious leaders -- in Alevism. Ali Yaman and Dressler, the latter in a second contribution for this volume, for example state that the younger and urbanized generations of Alevi have begun to question the hierarchical nature of the dedelik

### THE AFFILIATION OF KURDISH AND ALEVI IDENTITY HAS OFTEN LED TO THE CHARGE OF ALEVI SEPARATISM

institution and whether the dedes who inherit their positions are aptly educated to lead the religious community properly and progressively into the future. One of the two English contributions to the volume, written by David Shankland and Atila Çetin on Alevi in Europe, shows that a decline in practices of Alevism can be observed in the Anatolian villages as well as in those communities that have migrated to İstanbul or to Germany, the country that has received the vast majority of cross-border Alevi migration. İsmail Kaplan extends this point by arguing that the traditional bond between dede and talip (aspirant) has transformed in Germany and has become weaker.

The debate around the necessity of dedelik clarifies the divisions

among Alevi in regard to the need to adapt religious practices to modern circumstances. This is also an aspect discussed in Beatrice Hendrich's interesting essay on the role of women and gender relations in Alevism. Gender is a highly contentious and politicized issue in Sunnism as well as in Alevism. The relatively more liberal practices of Alevism, such as communal prayer or less emphasis on the veil, often served to present Alevism as a more modern religion vis-à-vis Sunnism, not only among Alevi themselves but also among Kemalist elites, secular Sunnis and even among Christians and other non-Muslim groups and individuals in Western Europe. Hendrich's essay is very helpful in putting this claim into proper perspective by arguing that in many respects, such as religious leadership, women are still not considered equal to men by many members of the community. On the other hand, Dressler also shows how more progressive religious leaders, such as Hasan Kilavuz, who argues for a complete



Alevi rally  
in Ankara  
demanding equal  
religious rights.  
NOV. 9, 2008  
PHOTO: AP,  
BURHAN ÖZBİLİCİ



disassociation of Alevism and Sunnism, have strongly advocated for the eradication of any inequalities between men and women within Alevi rituals.


Alevi communities have a long history of resistance, which also sheds lights on their tendency to affiliate with left politics and the prejudices they often encounter from public authorities. However, the volume illustrates that there are important internal differences within the Alevi community, to some extent also originating from its ethnic makeup. About one-third of Alevi are of Kurdish descent, i.e., Zaza or Kumanchi, frequently leading to a different perspective on the Turkish Republic and Sunnism among Turkish and Kurdish Alevi and among Sunni and Alevi Kurds. Sabır Güler, who provides the second English contribution, in this context debates how the affiliation of Kurdish and Alevi identity and

the perception of both together and separately as oppositional to the Turkish state, has often led to the charge of Alevi separatism. But not all groups within Alevism are to be thrown into one bag, as Yaman underlines. He depicts how many Alevi were and are still supportive of the main tenets of the Turkish Republic and its founding father Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The secular order that the republic theoretically promised, however, has yet not been fulfilled in the manner Alevi had hoped for. As of today Sunnism is still strongly favored and financially supported by institutions of the Turkish state.

These internal differences may have also forestalled the establishment of a united Alevi political organization. Elise Massicard and Benoit Fliche in their account of the Ulusoy family -- descendants of Hacı Bektaş Veli -- show that Alevi politicians

are generally found across different parties rather than forming a common bloc. Ağuışenoglu in a similar context describes how the ethnicization of Alevism has contributed to this division or diversity. Different ethnic groups and political leaders have appropriated Alevism as being essentially "Turkish," "Kurdish" or "Armenian." In particular, the constructed divide between those Alevi who also define themselves as Turkish and those who define themselves as Kurdish may have forestalled the formulation of common goals.

One aspect that seems to be missing from "Ocak und Dedelik" is an evaluation of the relation between the Alevi community and the ruling AK Party. The book does not shy away from providing a political discussion, but does not thoroughly engage with the political developments of the last decade. Only Güler briefly mentions the public discussion around Alevism and the demands that have been raised under AK Party rule. Given that the AK Party is a conservative party with roots in Sunnism, it would have been interesting to see how the authors evaluated the rather tense dialogue between Alevi associations and the current regime.

All in all, however, "Ocak und Dedelik" provides a valuable account of modern Alevism in all of its dimensions, and is a useful asset for everyone interested in the study of religion and politics -- in modern-day Turkey in particular. 

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# 'A merciful and benevolent sultan'

**DUYGU YILDIRIM**

*Sabana University*

Çigdem Oğuz's study, "Negotiating the Terms of Mercy: Petitions and Pardon Cases in the Hamidian Era," explores the bonds between pardon cases and Abdülhamid II's image as a "merciful sultan" from the perspectives of ordinary people. The five main chapters of the book each analyze specific cases and the state policy of pardons.

In the introduction, Oğuz offers a survey of the secondary sources on petition studies. She briefly evaluates Natalie Davis, Andrew Werner, John Chalcraft, Carola Lipp and Lothar Krempel's works, and addresses the dearth of studies based on petitions in Turkish historiography (14-18). In the following two chapters, Oğuz initially summarizes the pardon petitions and delineates the characteristics of Hamidian rule. She begins with the case of Mardiros from Arabgir, who was sentenced to exile in Kastamonu for reason(s) unknown (37-38). Asserting that his family was living in poverty, he requested a daily stipend due to the fact that he could not provide for them. Likewise, another petition depicts the situation of the convicts in Maraş and the miserable lives of their children (39). There are also pardon requests from convicts banished owing to acts of *fezâhat-ı lisanîye* (obscene language) (40). Ammareli Süleyman bin Ali, who was exiled to Diyarbakır on such charges also emphasized the desperate conditions of his children

in Baghdad (42). In Vahan's case the petition was written by his father, Bagros, underlining the situation in which he and Vahan had to live. In his petition, he explained that they lived together in a room in İstanbul in the wake of the events caused by the Armenian rebel Kirva Menruh (43). He also mentioned the problems stemming from his age and disability, as there was no one to take care of him.

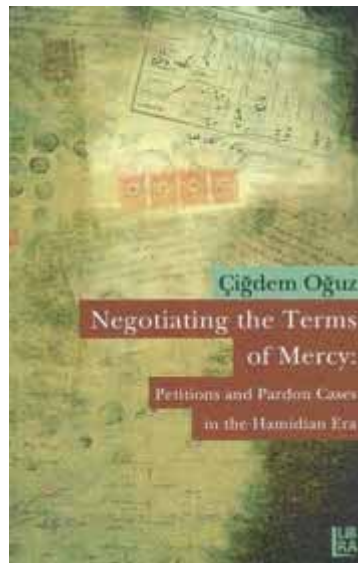
Apart from these petitions, imbued with portraits of desperation and poverty, collective petitions from the prisons are also crucial in discerning the perception of

Abdülhamid II as a merciful and benevolent sultan. Moreover, as Oğuz states, petitions penned after the Armenian events offer copious readings to understand the reactions of the Muslim population to as well as those of the Armenian people. As Oğuz notes, Abdülhamid's image hinged on an Islamic agenda that was consolidated by the symbols of the caliphate. The writers of petitions appear to have been keen to underline this, even when they themselves were not Muslim.

The Hamidian era was also the time that witnessed the Armenian events. Thus, pardon cases -- particularly those related to tribes and brigands -- shed light on the related Abdülhamid II policy. Furthermore, as centralization attempts necessitated reconciliation with tribal leaders, Hamidian policy was not merely based on punishment and force (76). Admittedly, the pardons functioned as mediums to integrate the Arab provinces, which were considered "compensation for the land losses in the Balkans" (79). Nevertheless, Oğuz underlines that the relations between state and banditry were not static, as they had different paradigms in various regions.

Following Karen Barkey's argument, Oğuz explains that in the regions that were close to the center, banditry was obliged to cease, whereas in distant areas it became "a relatively organized phenomenon," to borrow Barkey's phrase (80). In parallel to Barkey's accounts on the panorama of the

## THE LAST CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK ARE DEVOTED TO CRITICISM OF THE 'MERCIFUL' IMAGE OF ABDÜLHAMID II



Çigdem Oğuz,  
*Negotiating the Terms of Mercy: Petitions and Pardon Cases in the Hamidian Era* (İstanbul: Libra Books, 2013), 136 pp. ISBN: 9786054326693





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# REVIEWS

BOOKS & REPORTS



Ottoman gentlemen of state portrayed in a painting by Sultan Abdülmecit II.

IMAGE: ZAMAN ARCHIVE

17th century, Oğuz notes that banditry was still an instrument for the centralization attempts, reinforced by the pardons.

The last chapters of the book are devoted to criticism of the “merciful” image of Abdülhamid II engendered by contemporary popular historians. As Oğuz puts it, granting pardons did not only built a just image for the sultan, but also assisted the consolidation of loyalty. Symbolically then, the pardons on enthronement days and the sultan’s birthday were important, as they were also given under the title of the caliphate: *merhamet-i seniyye* (mercy of grace) (85).

Unlike popular historians who have attempted to challenge the Abdülhamid II’s portrayal as a “red sultan,” Oğuz demonstrated the compromised outcomes of the pardons for death penalties. Granting a pardon brought about

an alliance with the convict. In addition, in some cases related to the Armenian events, the death sentences were commuted to imprisonment (*kal’abend*) (95). The debatable issue on foreign intervention within the pardons for the Armenian people is also mentioned in Oğuz’s study. As she illustrates through the *Gömlüksiz* event, which gets its name from Mehmed bin İsa *Gömlüksiz*, who was murdered by three Armenians, the demand by the French Consulate for the immediate release of the Armenian convicts was not fulfilled (97-98). Bearing in mind similar cases, Oğuz concludes that foreign interventions were rarely successful.

Admittedly, the pardons of Armenian brigands also mirror the reciprocal relation between state and subjects based on negotiation.

On one hand, it provided the bandits’ loyalty to the state, on the other it was posited to gather information about guerilla activities. Therefore, especially in strategically critical regions, the pardons strengthened governmental control. Nonetheless, pardoned people were not totally free; they were kept under the surveillance of the police and they were barred from travel (115).

Oğuz’s study presents an overlooked dimension of the Hamidian era through a wealth of examples. As Oğuz does not delve into one main aspect of the pardon cases, it can be said that her study reduces various socioeconomic and cultural factors to a general approach. Despite this, it offers a useful insight for further enquiries. [\[16\]](#)

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# THE CONQUEROR OF THE FUTURE.



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# A misguided feeling of hegemony

**SHELBY ANDERSEN-HOLT**

*University of Nebraska-Omaha*

Given the current situations in Syria and in Iraq, the time is certainly appropriate to revisit the subject of past and ongoing US involvement in the Middle East. Fawaz Gerges' "Obama and the Middle East: The End of America's Moment?" is a perfect starting point for such a discussion. The jacket of Gerges' work calls it "A hard-hitting assessment of Obama's current foreign policy and a sweeping look at the future of the Middle East." It is that.

With this book, Gerges takes on the giant task of critiquing US President Barack Obama's foreign policy in the Middle East and connecting the president's decisions to former doctrines and the larger US political culture. Not only that, but Gerges discusses these heady issues with incisive, nuanced detail. His basic argument is that Obama's first term in office differed little from the presidential doctrines of yore, and that this continuity is destructive to US interests in the region. However, while this thesis is strongly supported, it is presented in the book in sensationalized terms that detract from the author's usual delicacy and make the work read more like a CNN headline than might be desired.

The cover's claim that the US "moment" is in peril, for example, implies both that the US ever had a "moment" in the Middle East that it would wish to prolong, and that

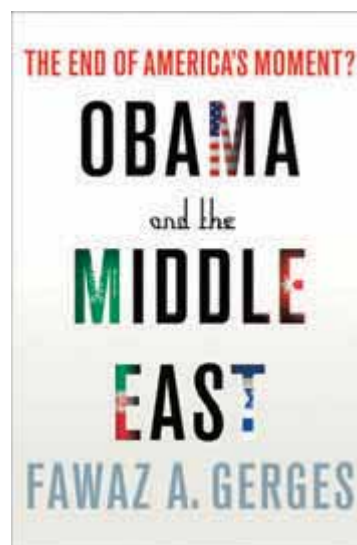
the superpower will somehow be able to "end" its involvement there. The author's own argument undermines both of these dramatic claims, and they are a burden to his otherwise cogent book.

Before delving into the book, it is important to have a grasp on what exactly the author is arguing and how he supports his thesis. "Obama and the Middle East" begins by introducing the topic and laying out Gerges' ideas. The author asserts that while the US will certainly continue to be a major player in the Middle East, its influence has shrunk from what it once was, no longer

constituting a supreme hegemon (16). He then proceeds with a detailed history of the US experience with the Middle East. He begins with the country's first forays into Middle Eastern relations during and immediately after World War II, and continues until the end of the Cold War. The next two chapters detail the doctrines and political cultures of the President George W. Bush years and Obama's first term. He then looks at how the continuation of past policies is negatively affecting current US interests by keeping it tied to certain countries' national interests. He sums up this section of the book by quoting a former US official: "We [the US] resemble more a modern-day Gulliver tied up by tiny tribes and by our own illusions than a smart, tough, and fair superpower" (154). It is clear that Gerges is unimpressed with US foreign policy in general and, in particular, Obama's inability to break away and truly reform the foreign diplomacy system.

While "Obama and the Middle East" is indeed an insightful and well-argued work, Gerges' assertion that the US has fallen from a position of unquestioned power to one of debased disrepute is sensationalized. The US, Gerges argues, has lost any rapport it might have had in the Middle East by staying in line with the hostile desires of Israel (153), the anti-democratic status quo in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain (152), and the destructively ambiguous pursuits of the "war on terror" (217). His own

**IT IS CLEAR THAT  
GERGES IS  
UNIMPRESSED  
WITH US FOREIGN  
POLICY IN GENERAL**



Fawaz A. Gerges,  
*Obama and the  
Middle East: The End  
of America's Moment?*  
(New York:  
Palgrave Macmillan,  
2012), 304 pp.  
ISBN: 978-1-137-  
27839-5



examination of the history of US relations with the region, however, demonstrates what a limited influence the superpower ever had. Between its reputation as an indiscreet upholder of Israel's provocative actions (34), being a hypocrite in terms of having democratic ideals and authoritarian allies, and being a misguided, self-deceived, self-proclaimed "world police force" (232), Gerges makes it clear that the US never had much of a reputation to lose. According to Gerges' own account, the US never truly gained the trust and respect of the Middle Eastern majority. He would therefore be more correct in asserting that what is ending is America's misguided feeling of hegemony in the Middle East.


Not only does Gerges argue that the US had a "moment," his title also puts forth that this is "the end" of it. This part of his thesis is also sensationalized. Yes, US influence will continue to wane in the Middle East in coming years. This is partly to do with the state's inability to come to terms with and competently respond to the real diplomatic situations on the

ground, but it is also due to a range of other factors, including Obama's disinterest in the region relative to other issues. If US policies toward the Middle East have kept it in the region this long, however, those same unchanging policies will keep it in the region long after the end of Obama's term. Gerges admits on page 18 that the US will continue to play a role in the Middle East.

### THE US NEVER TRULY GAINED THE TRUST AND RESPECT OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN MAJORITY

This reviewer would argue that, at best, this role will be a slightly less arrogant one, and that this change will come as a consequence of a reality check rather than a true decrease in power. At worst, US inability to disrupt or maintain the status quo, for better or worse, will simply show that the state's power is and always has been illusory. America's ongoing moments in the Middle East, however

awkward, are not at risk of coming to any kind of abrupt end.

In conclusion, while Gerges does succeed in creating a highly analytical work in "Obama and the Middle East," he goes too far in framing his argument in terms of a dramatic fall from almighty power. The US has played a major role in the Middle East in the past according to its own will, not because it had a right to be involved or because it had proven itself worthy of the position. On the flipside, while Obama's perpetuation of past foreign policy doctrines will continue to lessen US influence and repute in the region, it will not bring an "end" to US involvement there. As the author states, "in for a penny, in for a pound." As the current situation in Syria proves, it will take men and women more numerous and capable than a single president to bring an end to the US involvement in this region -- and the work of a greater power to give the US the influence it once perceived itself to have. 

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Then-Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, US President Barack Obama, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Jordan's King Abdullah II (L-R) in the White House.

SEPT. 1, 2010  
PHOTO: AP,  
CHARLES DHARAPAK



## Gender and sexuality of the state

**PROF. BERNA TURAM**

*Northeastern University, Boston*

As large-scale political transitions are taking place in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Islamic forces have come to center stage yet again. From Turkey to Egypt and Tunisia, they have gained power within different political regimes with little or no competition from other socio-political forces. The debates about whether Muslim-majority states are taking the road to religious authoritarianism or conservative democracies have peaked. Although the increasing success and popularity of religiously oriented parties are not unique to the MENA region, and can be observed even in the staunchly secular European states, the intensity of Middle East politics seems to occupy the center stage of world politics nowadays. Despite this centrality, however, very few works “gender” the diverse and dynamically changing political repertoires in the region. The conference made a contribution to this understudied subject by bringing gender and sexuality of the state and political transformation to the forefront of analysis.

The conference opened up with a rich keynote address focused on comparative analysis by Prof. Valentine Moghadam (director of international affairs, Northeastern University). Prof. Moghadam’s work has played a major role in shaping the field of women and development, gender and work as well as feminist political economy.

Moghadam’s lecture, “Feminism and Democratic Transitions” presented a thorough map of recent uprisings in the Middle East, by gendering the process of democratization.

Two major foci shaped the panels and discussions. Panel 1, “Women’s Political Discontents: Coalitions and Splits,” explored the most recent trends of disagreement and discontent that come from feminist and women’s movements, and women’s groups from within the Islamist forces. The panel as well as the following discussion

examined splits and cooperations between women within and across the devout Muslim versus secularist dichotomy. While Asst. Prof. Sarah Tasnim Shehabuddin (Asian University for Women, Bangladesh) revealed and analyzed the political divides and alliances among women’s movements in Morocco, Asst. Prof. Melinda Negron-Gonzales (University of New Hampshire) carried this debate to women’s activism in Turkey under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government. In the same panel, Assoc. Prof. Jane Tchaicha (Bentley University, Boston) discussed the women-focused NGO’s and democratic governance in Tunisia. The paper by Meryem İlayda Atlas (Bogaziçi University, İstanbul) on the rift between secularist and practicing Muslim women in Turkey, underlined the persistent prejudice and discrimination against headscarved women, even when the headscarf ban is lifted. The discussion by Behice Pehlivan (Northeastern University, Boston) drew our attention to the issue of class as an understudied variable in intersectional analysis of political divides and alliances. The discussion after the panel also drew attention to splits within (not just between) the presumably antagonistic camps of pious Muslim and secularist women. Prof. Berna Turam (Northeastern University, Boston) invited a discussion on which practicing and secularist women clash. Who allies across these ancient divides and over

### VERY FEW WORKS ‘GENDER’ THE DIVERSE AND DYNAMICALLY CHANGING POLITICAL REPERTOIRES IN THE REGION



**WHAT:** Gender of the State and Politics in the Middle East  
**WHO:** College of Social Sciences and Humanities, International Affairs Program Northeastern Humanities Center  
**WHERE:** Northeastern University, Boston  
**WHEN:** Oct. 24-25, 2013

# “As Long As You Can Dream”



Prof. Dr. Ahmet YILDIZ - Science Magazine's "Young Scientist Of The Year"



Promo Film



which issues and agendas? When the AK Party in Turkey made a feeble attempt to ban abortion in May 2012, some young pious Muslim women took their place among the most vocal protesters against the potential ban.

Similarly, in Egypt, women across political divides were dismayed by the lack of attention to women's rights by the Mohamed Morsi government. In the absence of a credible political opposition to the AK Party in Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, some Muslim women have begun standing close to the secular feminists and displaying alternative ways of discontent, protest and critiques from inside these movements.

## WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE PIOUS FEMALE DISCONTENTS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ISLAMIST GOVERNMENTS?

What are the implications of these pious female discontents for the future of the Islamist governments and the feminist movements in respective countries? Does Muslim women's discontent lead to splits within the Islamist political forces? Do these new oppositions from Muslim women against Islamist governments facilitate bridges between practicing religious and secularist women? Does it lead to a transformation, a diversification and inclusivity of feminist movements at the international level?

The second leading theme of the conference was voiced in Panel 2, "Sexuality, Political Power and the State." While Dr. Shahla Haeri's

(Boston University) paper analyzed the historical and Quranic sources of Muslim women's challenge to political authority, Betül Balkan Eksi (Northeastern University) discussed the masculinity of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's power and politics. The panel shed light on how femininities and masculinities of the state (its authority, leaders, branches and discourses) are not fixed entities but are rather the byproducts of constantly contested power dynamics. Sertaç Sehlükoglu's (Cambridge University, Britain) ethnography on women's gyms enhanced our discussions on politics of sexuality, by expanding the debate to women's reflections on sporting bodies and Islam. Feyza

Burak-Adli's (Boston University) paper on the taboo of sexuality and the rural Kurdish women in Turkey added one more imperative layer to the debates, by bringing a remote village in periphery into discussions of urban sexual politics in the center. Prof. Elizabeth Wood (MIT University, Boston), the discussant of the panel, highlighted a common subject that linked the papers -- the performativity of sexual politics.

The roundtable, "Feminism and the Green Movement Today," was presided by Moghadam. The speakers, Dr. Fatemeh Haghghatjoo (former minister of the Iranian parliament, currently UMASS Boston), Assoc. Prof. Monica Ringer (Amherst College)



and Ehsan Moghaddasi (Boston University) discussed various aspects of the Green movement. By using striking visuals, the panelists gendered the motives, agendas and the aftermath of the Green movement. While panelists emphasized the importance of cyber space and technology for mobilization in urban contestation, commentators from the audience added that urban protests should not be reduced to the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and so on.

Prof. Marnia Lazreg (Hunter College, Graduate Center City University of New York) delivered the closing keynote address, entitled "Women and the Middle East Crisis: A New Dawn or the



## THE CONFERENCE DID NOT ONLY FOCUS ON EITHER THE ARAB SPRING OR THE TAKSİM-GEZİ PROTESTS

anthropology, political science, literature and international affairs.

Unlike the most popular trend nowadays, the conference did not only focus on either the Arab Spring or the Taksim-Gezi protests. Rather, we strategically opted a spatially and politically inclusive approach that went beyond the analysis of abrupt protests. As we aimed at combining comparative ethnographic and theoretical perspectives, we focused mainly on the cases of Turkey, Iran, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia. The keynote speeches, the panels and the question and answer sessions were based on cutting-edge

The conference brought gender and sexuality of the state in the Middle East to the forefront of analysis.  
DEC. 4, 2012  
PHOTO: AP, MAYA ALLERUZZO

research and original theoretical and comparative thinking. They stimulated constructive discussion beyond the panels into the breaks, meals and social events. With the support of Dean Uta Poiger and meticulous planning by Assistant Dean Erika Koss (College of Social Sciences and Humanities), we closed by a signature event -- a visit to the exhibition at Museum of Fine Arts, "She Who Tells A Story: Women Photographers from Iran and the Arab World." [TR](#)

*Berna Turam was among the organizers of this conference.*

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Eternal Recurrence?" Lazreg's work on gender and development, women and colonial history, human rights and social class has been a cornerstone not only in the field of sociology and Middle Eastern studies by across many disciplines. Her theoretically sound and empirically rich lecture explored the power and knowledge effects of the events of the "Arab Spring," as they affected women and gender. From the perspective of power dynamics, she examined the limits of the capacity of the Middle Eastern state (whether a monarchy or a republic) in bringing about reforms that would transform gender relations. From the knowledge perspective, her talk

addressed the role played by feminist theories and frameworks in constructing the relation between state, women, and religion.

The conference ended by concluding remarks by Prof. Turam. She highlighted major arguments and accomplishments of the conference for the purpose of publication of conference proceedings. One of the main strengths of the conference was bringing senior and junior scholars together, while interlinking theoretical perspectives and empirical analysis. Another advantage was the interdisciplinarity that enabled us to freely cross the boundaries and exchange questions between sociology, history,





# The rebirth of Turkish studies in Armenia

**DR. VAHRAM TER-MATEVOSYAN**

*National Academy of Sciences of Armenia*

On Nov. 5-6, 2013, the Institute of Oriental Studies of Armenia, part of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, hosted an international conference on Turkish studies. Before going into details of the conference, allow this reviewer to provide a brief recap of the history and current shape of Turkish studies in Armenia, which will serve as a framework for understanding certain features of the conference and why it was an important event.

1950-60s, eminent scholars in those fields have become widely known not only in Armenia and Transcaucasia but also in Moscow, center of Russian academia.

Armenian scholars of Turkish studies in the Soviet era left an impressive legacy, which played an instrumental role in understanding different aspects of Ottoman history, Armenian genocide and Turkey's republican history. The break-up of the Soviet Union had a destructive impact on academia in Armenia, and Turkish studies was no exception. Many scholars left Armenia and undermined the

Turkish studies in Armenia.

It is important to note that the last time a conference on Turkish studies was organized in Armenia was back in the 1980s, thus the importance of a new conference on the republican history of Turkey was a self-evident necessity. In addition to an academic interest in the history of republican Turkey, Armenian society itself keeps a close eye on main events occurring in Turkey, particularly the main developments of recent decades. Armenian experts regularly give interviews and comment on major domestic developments in their neighbor, and for that reason the people in general are familiar with the features of Turkish politics.

The 90th anniversary of the republic was largely seen as an important milestone in Turkish history, coming as it did before the centennial of the Armenian genocide in 1915 and that of the Republic of Turkey in 2023. The time was ripe to combine efforts and resources to organize a conference dealing with different dimensions of Turkish history. Participants were mainly from Russia, Turkey and Armenia. The conference had four panels. The topics discussed during the first panel (ideological projects of contemporary Turkey; Turkish historiography and the Armenian genocide; interrelated aspects of Fascism and Kemalism; language policy of Kemalists; the 1926 trials of Young Turks) were insightful and contained innovative approaches. Some of the papers were based on

## THE TIME WAS RIPE TO COMBINE EFFORTS AND RESOURCES TO ORGANIZE A CONFERENCE DEALING WITH DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF TURKISH HISTORY

There are three main institutions in Armenia involved in Turkish and Ottoman studies: (a) the Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, which has a Department of Turkish Studies; (b) the Department of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University, which has a Chair of Turkic Studies; and (c) the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, with a more narrow focus on genocide studies and the later Ottoman period. These institutions prepare students and scholars dealing with linguistics, philology, literature, and the historical, political and social dimensions of the Ottoman and republican eras of Turkey. Since the

field's hitherto solid foundations. By means of illustration: In the 1990s only one dissertation on Turkey was defended. However, by the end of the 1990s the situation started to gradually improve, and by the mid-2000s Turkish studies had reasserted itself in the academic landscape of Armenia. During the last decade more than 20 dissertations have been defended on different aspects of Turkish and Ottoman studies. Prof. Ruben Safrastyan, director of the Institute of Oriental Studies and the head of the Department of Turkish Studies, and Prof. Alexander Safaryan, chair of Turkic studies at Yerevan State University, should be credited in the rebirth of

WHAT: 90 Years of the Republic of Turkey: From Atatürk to Erdoğan  
WHO: Institute of Oriental Studies of Armenia  
WHERE: National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Yerevan  
WHEN: Nov. 5-6, 2013




Relations between Turkey and Armenia have warmed a little in recent years.  
 SEPT. 6, 2008  
 PHOTO: ZAMAN, SELAHATTIN SEVI

new archival materials and field research. The second panel (Soviet Union's territorial disputes with Turkey in the post-World War II era; Greek exile from İstanbul in 1964; army and politics in Turkey in the 1960-70s; civilians-army relations during the last decade) was no less interesting, as the scholars presented parts of their ongoing research in a new light and from new theoretical perspectives. The third panel dealt with the following topics: the origins of geopolitical thought in Turkey; relations between Israel and Turkey both in the 1940 and today; and the legal status of the Moscow and Kars treaties. The last panel, meanwhile, covered the evolution of the

Kurdish problem in Turkey; the rise and demise of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK); Turkish media coverage of Turkish-Armenian relations between 2011 and 2013; and Armenian printing houses in republican Turkey.

Understandably, lack of diplomatic relations and hence academic cooperation between Turkey and Armenia are important determinants of the quality and state of research conducted in both countries. Although more and more scholars from both countries travel to Armenia and Turkey, and conduct field research, their number remains quite limited and doesn't reflect the actual potential

of the research institutions they present. Academic events of this nature may facilitate contacts and cooperation between research institutions in both countries. The participation of Russian scholars was also an important contribution, providing a sense of the current state of Turkish studies in Russia.

The conference received wide coverage in the local media, and attendance far exceeded expectations. The papers presented will be published as a separate volume by the Institute of Oriental Studies this year. 

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# The ties that bind the Balkan peoples

**DR. ALEXANDRA PATRIKIOU**

*Panteion University*

Organized by Panteion University's Research Centre for Modern History, the conference "Revolutions in the Balkans" included over 50 papers by distinguished academics from most of the Balkan countries (Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Cyprus), as well as from countries such as the US, Britain, France, Austria, Germany, Turkey and Italy. The chronological frame of the conference extended from the first Serbian uprising (1804) to the Young Turk Revolution (1908). During this time, the map of southeastern Europe was reshaped through a series of revolutionary movements, characterized by national and liberal ideals. The European revolutions of 1830 and 1848, as well as the unifications of Italy and of Germany, influenced this part of the world, which was then mainly under Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman rule, in a number of ways. Essentially, the conference tested and confirmed the claim that the "Age of Revolutions" in the Balkans began in the early 19th century and continued until the early 20th century.

It was made clear from the start that the two basic pillars of the conference were "revolution" and "nationalism." Thanks to this clearly defined (albeit quite wide) context, the end result seemed less like a history of the Balkans and more like a common Balkan history. As a matter of fact, the

focus was more on the ties that bind Balkan peoples rather than what separates them. This common thread underlined how important these international conferences are, since through them a more transnational perspective is possible.

By and large the conference proved to be historical in nature, despite the initial intention of conveying a multidisciplinary analysis. Then again, this historical approach did offer a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted perspective of the common Balkan past. As Prof. Hannes Grandits (Humboldt University, Berlin) remarked, the advantage of having so many papers presented was that we had the chance to examine

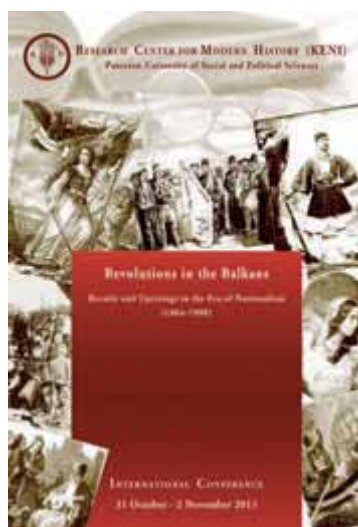
different facets of how global changes were actualized in this part of the world. Prof. Grandits also stated that as the conference was so dense in academic knowledge and historical information (53 papers in two-and-a-half days), it clearly demonstrated that the transition from empire to early 20th century nation-states for the wider Balkan area was neither a linear nor clear-cut procedure.

In Prof. Diana Mishkova's (Centre of Advanced Studies, Sofia) words, the transition to modernity for most countries proved to be a complex path with its share of disruptions and discontinuities. This was mostly evident in the particularly multifaceted, and yet very stimulating, panel entitled "tradition and modernity" that examined several aspects of the process of modernization in the Balkans (e.g. the process of writing a constitution, the issue of citizenship or the role of the press).

For many participants, nationalism proved to be not the starting point, but the end result. Most -- if not all -- avoided defining the term "nation" as an analytical category, probably to avoid squeezing it into smaller interpretational schemes. It was no surprise that nationalism, rather than liberalism, dominated the processes examined.

It seemed quite intriguing that few contributions focused on the Greek War of Independence or any other major national revolt (or revolution), such as the Serbian

## THE TWO BASIC PILLARS OF THE CONFERENCE WERE 'REVOLUTION' AND 'NATIONALISM'



WHAT: Revolutions in the Balkans: Revolts and Uprisings in the Era of Nationalism (1804-1908)  
 WHO: Research Centre for Modern History  
 WHERE: Panteion University, Athens  
 WHEN: Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2013



A ceremony to mark the 205th anniversary of the First Serbian Uprising at Mount Avala, near Belgrade.  
FEB. 15, 2009  
PHOTO: AP, SRDJAN ILIC

uprising. There were however quite a few papers examining aspects of local uprisings, like the Tamrash Rebellion, boycott movements during the Bosnia Crisis (1908-9), Hadži Nešas' Revolt in Piroć 1836, the 1854 uprisings of Epirus and Thessaly, the Ilinden uprising, the Greek revolt of Sept. 3, 1843, and even the "tax revolt" of 1842 in Ayvalık. Given the originality of all these papers, this conference made a very remarkable attempt to answer the everlasting question of what a "revolution" was in the Balkans during the long 19th century.

Prof. Grandits argued that the rural population, while being the main agent of all these transformations either as carrier of these changes or the recipient, was not adequately represented at the conference. Despite this inadequacy, this reviewer felt that there were important and interesting social aspects of the phenomena analyzed, like the role of religion in pre-capitalist societies or the role of intellectuals and violence. For example, the panel that focused on violence (one of the smallest of the conference, yet one of the most innovative and inclusive) revealed how violence has worked as a social force. In particular, Prof. Thomas Gallant

(University of California, San Diego) focused on a group of men "for whom violence was at least a way of life if not an occupation" in the early years of the Kingdom of Greece. He examined their role during and after the Greek War of Independence and stated that behind this "military entrepreneurship", there was a "cultural ethos" nurturing "masculine aggressiveness" and "interpersonal violence." He argued convincingly that since the monopoly of violence did not belong to the Greek state, the relationship between Greek citizens and the state was forever altered.

The panel devoted to microhistories was also a characteristic example of a panel focused on social and indeed semantic aspects of local revolts and uprisings. The conference's originality was also verified by the fact that many papers were based on many kinds of sources, not only archives, but also newspapers, paintings, photographs, songs, literature, etc. The most characteristic example was the panel devoted to the representation of revolutions and revolutionaries. Interesting contributions were also included in the panel of historiography, albeit focused only on the Greek case.

Furthermore, the notion that the Balkans were merely copying "European" ideas seems now to be obsolete. It was widely acknowledged that their processes, including ideologies like nationalism or liberalism rooted in the Balkans, were much more complicated. Dr. Konstantina Zanou's (Queen Mary, University of London) paper, along with the panel dedicated to nationalisms, argued this point quite convincingly. The panel dedicated to the relation of the Balkans and the West also further reinforced this argument.

Very few papers attempted to look at the period as a whole, as most of the papers were focused on case studies. The panel entitled "Comparative and transnational approaches" was in fact a notable exception. As a result, the initial aim to look for a Balkan typology of revolutionary movements during the long 19th century was hard to achieve.

The importance of these conferences lies exactly in the pluralism of ideas, notions and views. Dialogue between academics and pluralism in academic research is of vital importance, in the sense that it reminds us that historical phenomena and processes -- and in this case, "revolutions" -- are much more complex than they may initially seem. And this conference offered just that. 

*Turkish Review was a media sponsor of this event. The reviewer was on the organizing committee for this conference.*

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VOL-4/3

# REVIEWS

CONFERENCE

## Where human rights and human development intersect

**NIHAT ÇELİK**

*Kadir Has University, İstanbul*

Kadir Has University hosted a two-day international conference on the field of human security early in 2014. The conference brought together academics, activists and practitioners from Turkey and the Balkan countries, along with officials from the UN. The diversification of threats that came with the end of the Cold War brought the term “human security” to the fore, which focused on new sources of threats ranging from food security to protection of marginalized groups, rather than conventional threats. This approach also brought a new understanding of security based on the individual rather than the old style state-centric security approach.

The importance of human security as a concept and its current situation in practice were the main themes of the opening plenary sessions. In the opening speech Prof. Mitat Çelikpala (Kadir Has University) underlined the importance of the human security concept and emphasized the need to focus on new sources of threats emerging today. He also mentioned the development of research in this field in Turkey, noting that for the past three years his university has been organizing an international conference on the subject in cooperation with Coventry University in the UK and other universities in Turkey.

WHAT: Humanizing Security  
WHO: Citizens' Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security  
WHERE: Kadir Has University, İstanbul  
WHEN: Jan 31-Feb. 1, 2014

Prof. Ahmet İnel (Galatasaray University and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly) provided detailed information on the Citizens' Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security project, initiated by the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Turkey in close cooperation with partners from the Balkan countries in 2012 with the support of the European Union. The project aimed at establishing a cross-border network on human security and highlighting the sources of insecurity faced by ordinary people in their daily life, while also encouraging research in those areas. Prof. İnel defined human security as the area where the concepts of human rights and human

development intersect. According to him, in Turkey a state-oriented top-down security understanding still plays a very important role, although thanks to the activities of NGOs in recent years it is now possible to talk about public awareness of the issue. Since human security is a broad concept, he noted that in the current project the focus was on three main areas of insecurity: community displacement, workplace safety and youth violence.

Prof. Wolfgang Benedek (University of Graz) presented his views on the development, potentials and challenges of the human security concept, while emphasizing that this year marked the 20th anniversary of the acceptance of the concept by the UN for the first time in 1994. He underlined the importance of human security in “humanizing” the field of international relations. Prof. Benedek also mentioned the role played by the Human Security Network supported by Canada and Norway in bringing the academic community and NGOs together in order to create a worldwide awareness on the concept. After summarizing the status of current research, he described the official recognition of human security as a concept by both the UN and the EU as a success. He pointed to the importance of developing a methodology and interdisciplinary approach for further research, while identifying reactions of the states in



intergovernmental organizations as a source of challenge.

Mehrnaz Mostafavi (chief of Human Security Unit, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) pointed to the important role played by the UN in the development of the concept. She noted that human beings must live free from fear and injury, and in dignity. In this regard, she emphasized the need to accept a broader understanding of security ranging from natural disasters to regional economic differences. She finally underlined the outcomes of the financial crisis in the Balkan countries and its vital consequences, such as increasing poverty thus making life harder for vulnerable groups like the Roma populations.

In another session the focus was on human security in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Moderator Emel Kurma (Helsinki Citizens' Assembly) pointed to the fact that security is understood in a state-oriented way in Turkey. Dr. Vesna Bojicic-Dzellilovic (London School of Economics) painted a picture of the Western Balkans regarding human security. She pointed out the problems emanating from the past ethnic conflicts in the region and noted that this legacy still plays a profound but negative role. She suggested that while there is a democracy deficit in these countries, social exclusion has a different nature. In addition, neo-liberal transition also increases the current problems with rising levels of poverty and decreasing quality of public services.

Prof. Alpaslan Özerdem (Coventry University) delivered a



## WHILE PEACE IS UNDERSTOOD AS BEING FREE FROM EXTERNAL ATTACK, THERE ARE MANY INTERNAL SOURCES OF THREATS

presentation regarding peace in Turkey. He suggested that while peace is understood as being free from external attack, there are many internal sources of threats to peace. He touched upon the "solution process" and its necessity for peace in Turkey. He also mentioned the challenges that will be faced in areas such as demilitarization, integration and rehabilitation of ex-combatants if the process continues. It was then followed with a lively question-and-answer section.

The conference topics were selected on a broad base and included titles such as, "Social Inclusion and Peace," "Conflict

Transformation and Inter-Communal Reconciliation," "Democratic Governance," "Workplace Security," "Vulnerable Communities" and "Researching and Monitoring Human Security." Near 30 presentations were delivered during the conference, which was organized around a three parallel session structure. The conference enabled the audience to assess the development path of the concept human security and its future development while also giving them the opportunity to compare field experience from Turkey and Balkan countries, based on different projects and cases. It also aimed at identifying challenges while setting a future research agenda and developing methodology in the field of human security and ways to foster cooperation between academics and NGO activists. [\[1\]](#)

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Workplace security, amongst the topics discussed at the meeting, requires further development in Turkey. This photo shows a demonstration in the wake of the Soma incident -- modern Turkey's worst-ever mining disaster.  
MAY 25, 2014  
PHOTO: REUTERS,  
CAN EROK



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## REVIEWS

CONFERENCE

# Ottoman Jews, Turkey's Jews

**SERAP MERVE DOĞAN**

YAÇAM

The congress *Dünyadaki Yahudi Göçleri, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Yahudileri* (Global Migration of the Jewish People: Ottoman Jews, Turkey's Jews) was held in late 2013 by the Turkish Center for International Studies (TÜİÇ) Center for Jewish Studies (YAÇAM) in cooperation with Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center.

The first session began under the moderation of Turkish Review Editor-in-Chief Kerim Balcı and looked at conceptual explanations of immigration. Dr. Esther Webman (Tel Aviv University, Moshe Dayan Center) looked at social changes because of immigration, while Assoc. Prof. Ferit Baz (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University) spoke about the historical process associated with the arrival of Jewish people in Anatolia. Alaattin Cem Özdemir (YAÇAM) also participated in the session.

The second session looked at Jews of the Middle East Jews in terms of ethnic origins and cultural life spaces. Prof. Ofra Bengio (Tel Aviv University, Moshe Dayan Center) noted that in modern Iraq the history of Jews can be divided into three important phases: 1920-1932 (the British mandate), 1932-1941 (rise of anti-Zionism mixed with anti-Semitism which ended up with the Farhud or pogrom against the Jews in 1941), and 1941-1951 (deepening trend of Zionism), which culminated in the massive Aliyah (immigration) to Israel.

At the same session, Dr. Liora Hendelman-Baavur (Tel Aviv University, Moshe Dayan Center) talked about the Jews' political landscape and social situations after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, noting that in the mid 1970s the Jewish population of Iran was between 80,000 and 100,000, but that by 2011 this number was just 8,756.

Ş. Ceng Sagnic (Tel Aviv University Moshe Dayan Center) gave details about historical relations between Kurds and Jews, while Ahmet Ataş (YAÇAM) spoke

about the Jews of Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt and Algeria, and the changes in their political, economic and cultural positions.

The first session on day two, under the moderation of Emrah İltar (YAÇAM), was about emigration from Europe and the Ottoman Jews. Aysu Özer (YAÇAM) addressed the Sephardic Jews' situation in Spain and their emigration from Spain to the Ottoman Empire.

Rahmet Tiyekli (CJS Researcher) addressed the political and social status of Ottoman Jews, while at the same session Assoc. Prof. Mesut Aydınar (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University) looked at the correlation between the fate of the Ottoman Empire and that of the Sephardic Jews.

The last session, moderated by Ofra Bengio, focused on Turkey's Jews. Speakers included Hay Eytan C. Yanarocak and İlker Aytürk (Bilkent University). Halit Kakinç (İstanbul University) looked at understanding of the nation-state and minorities in Turkey. The last presentation was from Assoc. Prof. Ahmet Kasım Han (Kadir Has University) and focused on the Jewish nation, its "ideals, dreams and truth."

Such analyses of the immigration of Jews, particularly in the context of Ottoman Turkey, may prove to be of importance in understanding the status of minorities in the modern Middle East today. 

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WHAT: *Dünyadaki Yahudi Göçleri, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Yahudileri*  
WHO: TÜİÇ-YAÇAM, in cooperation with Tel Aviv University Moshe Dayan Center  
WHERE: Kadir Has University, İstanbul  
WHEN: Dec. 2-3, 2013



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# FROM SEVEN HILLS TO SEVEN CONTINENTS



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## TURKISH REVIEW: CALL FOR PAPERS

ISSUE: November 2014 (vol-4/6)

THEME: Army and the defense industry

DEADLINE: Sept. 1, 2014

Turkish Review is a peer-reviewed, English-language bimonthly journal addressing political, economic, cultural and social issues in Turkey. Our November 2014 issue will have a focus on the army and defense industry, and we are issuing a call for papers (articles, analysis and opinion pieces) on this topic.

We are also open to any alternative suggestions you may have regarding topics within the issue's overall theme or indeed about Turkey in general. Please note that pieces may address regional rather than purely Turkey-specific aspects of your chosen subject

The minimum length for submissions is 1,500 words, the maximum 4,000. A generous honorarium will be paid for all published papers. The deadline for submissions is Monday, Sept. 1, 2014 (for pieces not in English this date is Monday, Aug. 25, 2014).

Please contact our editorial team with your suggestions and questions. We strongly recommend discussion with our editors regarding the suitability of your topic prior to commencing work on your paper.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Turkish Review Editorial Team**  
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