

alternatif

Issue 1
November 2015

POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

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Heinrich Böll Stiftung - Turkey Representation

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung, associated with the German Green Party, is a legally autonomous and intellectually open political foundation. Our foremost task is civic education in Germany and abroad with the aim of promoting informed democratic opinion, socio-political commitment and mutual understanding. In addition, the Heinrich Böll Stiftung supports artistic and cultural as well as scholarly projects, and co-operation in the development field. The political values of ecology, democracy, gender democracy, solidarity and nonviolence are our chief points of reference. Heinrich Böll's belief in and promotion of citizen participation in politics is the model for the foundation's work. Editor in chief: Kristian Brakel; editorial team: Bahar Şahin Fırat, Menekşe Kızıldere, Semahat Sevim, Yonca Verdioğlu contributors Banu Yayla, Saynur Gürçay Heinrich Böll Stiftung Turkey Representation, İnönü Cad. Hacı Hanım Sok. No. 10/12, Gümüşsuyu İstanbul; Telephone: +90-212-249 15 54 Fax: +90-212-245 04 30 email: info@tr.boell.org web: www.tr.boell.org Editor: Yücel Gökürk Translation: Barış Yıldırım, Erkal Ünal, Ayet Aram Tekin, Sedat Şenoğlu Proofreading: Jennifer Petzen Print Production: Ender Ergün Date: November 2015

Alternatif – Political analysis and commentary from Turkey will appear quarterly and distributed for free. For subscription please send your request by email to info@tr.boell.org The magazine and each article can be downloaded from our webpage www.tr.boell.org Articles published in Alternatif represent the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Heinrich Böll Stiftung – Turkey Representation

- Democracy
- Foreign Policy
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ANKARA MASSACRE

A bloody game of elections

Kemal Gökteş

Four of the leading trade unions and professional organisations in Turkey organized a mass meeting on October 10, 2015, in order to call for negotiations to stop the war with Kurds, which had been resumed after the resolution process came to an end. The goal of the meeting in the capital Ankara was to show strong support for peace by having 100,000 people come from all quarters of the country. Among the supporters of the meeting were the main opposition party, the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP), as well as the alliance party of socialists and the Kurds, the Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP).

However, when two ISIL-member suicide bombers blew themselves up in front of the Ankara railway station, the gathering area for the attendants of the peace rally, it turned into the deadliest “terror” attack in the history of Turkey, which killed a total of 102 people, including the two suicide bombers themselves, while hundreds were injured.

The blast in Ankara significantly increased tension in Turkey. As the targets of the attack, the Kurds and left wing circles, particularly the HDP, blamed the government as having the primary responsibility for the attack.

The background of Ankara massacre and ISIL organization

The Ankara attack was the deadliest in the history of Turkey but was not the only massive attack in recent history. There had been a series of attacks on the HDP before the June 7 elections in 2015, which had changed the situation where the AKP was the sole party in power. The elections also

destroyed the party’s founding leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s dream about the presidency.

The bomb attack on the HDP offices in Adana and Mersin fortunately did not lead to loss of life. However, the bomb planted at the HDP meeting organized in Diyarbakır only two days before the elections killed four and left hundreds wounded. It turned out that the suspect bomber in Diyarbakır meeting had come from Adıyaman province to Diyarbakır and that he had been detained in his hotel by the police for a short time due to his compulsory military service problem. The police then released the suspect for whom “a warrant of arrest for terror crime” had been issued, and the next day he planted the bomb in the meeting area. Journalists researching the suspect’s contacts found out details about the ISIL organization in Adıyaman province. The ISIL organization in that province was taking place openly, and all the appeals to the police made by the families of the youngsters who joined ISIL, the Prime Minister and the presidency via email were ineffective.

In the elections held in the wake of Diyarbakır attack, the HDP passed the election threshold of 10% and received 13% of the votes, which was far beyond everyone’s expectations. This put an end to the AKP’s dream of coming to power alone. After the elections, the AKP procrastinated negotiations concerning the formation of a coalition government while hardening its attitude towards the HDP and the Kurdish movement.

The Suruç massacre and its aftermath

It was within this context that 33 people were killed in a suicide attack carried out by an ISIL member named Abdurrahman Alagöz on July 20, 2015, during a press conference held by the



Kemal Gökteş

1976’da Malatya’da doğdu. Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi’nden mezun oldu. 1999’da Uğur Mumcu Araştırmacı Gazetecilik Vakfı’ndan araştırmacı gazetecilik bursu kazandı. 2000 yılında Radikal gazetesinde muhabir olarak mesleğe başladı. Sabah, Vatan ve Milliyet gazetelerinden sonra halen Cumhuriyet gazetesinde ağırlıklı olarak insan hakları ve yargı alanlarında haberler yapmaktadır.



young members of the Federation of Socialist Youth Associations (Sosyalist Gençlik Derneği Federasyonu). They had convened in Turkey's Suruç district located on the Syrian border in order to deliver humanitarian aid to Kobani.

Not long after the shock of that suicide attack, two police officers were killed at their homes in Ceylanpınar district. PKK declared it was carried out by their "local units." The AKP government took the advantage of these developments to put its policies into action and therefore put an end to the resolution process: The AKP government hit PKK camps in Kandil and launched operations in Kurdish cities at the same time.

While the PKK usually prefers to employ land mines and bombs in the war, the government focused on larger provincial districts on the grounds that it could not limit its operations to specific neighborhoods due to the presence of drainage ditches being dug in the streets. In many districts—mainly in Varto, Cizre, Nusaybin and Sur—curfews were declared and tens of civilians were killed for defying the curfew.

The CHP report on Adıyaman

The evidence regarding the Suruç attack that retriggered the conflict led the way to Adıyaman. Investigating the ISIL organization in the province, the main opposition party, the CHP, confirmed that the police was turning a blind eye to ISIL and that the militants were able to operate freely, and warned the authorities against future potential massacres.

In its report that it presented to authorities,

the CHP referred ISIL's suicide bombers in Adıyaman and requested the authorities take necessary measures. A list of suicide bombers including Yunus Emre Alagöz, the elder brother of the suicide bombing perpetrator of Suruç attack, Abdurrahman Alagöz, was brought forward in the CHP report as well as in the coverage of the journalists who made investigations in the province. The allegations about negligence became even more serious when it turned out that one of the suicide bombers in Ankara attack was Yunus Emre Alagöz himself.

There have been interpretations that the security forces practically allowed the attack to be carried out after it became known that police had intelligence on September 19, days before the attack, regarding the likelihood of suicide attacks on the meetings. The allegations have yet to be confirmed about whether the measures had not been taken although an confirmed intelligence about the likelihood of an explosion in the Ankara meeting was sent to the police by the intelligence organisations three days before the attack. Nonetheless, the developments reinforce the likelihood that the allegations are true.

The state turning victims into perpetrators

After the incidence, the government strongly expressed the view that the attack had been carried out in cooperation by the ISIL, the PKK, the Syrian State and the PYD. The claim was found to be ridiculous by critics because it was not compatible with any evidence in the

investigation files.

On the other hand, opinion polls indicated that nearly 40 % of the population believed the attack had been carried out by the PKK or the HDP. The government's successful strategy in turning the victims into perpetrators was helped by the coverage repeated for days by the pro-government media, which showed no evidence to back up their claims. When the Prime Minister Ahmet commented on a survey on television, he did not hesitate to add that they "gained votes after the attack."

Ankara massacre and the Turkish policy in Syria

The Ankara attack and prior developments are closely connected with Turkish policy in Syria. Since the beginning, Turkey openly took the side of opposition groups in the Syrian civil war. The main goal was to topple Syrian leader Bashar Assad. In the stormy period called the Arab Spring, the AKP had done its best to support Muslim Brotherhood organizations in Arab countries to help them come to power in those countries as it regards them as partners. In Syria, where the Muslim Brotherhood organization is weak, jihadist forces have become the most significant actors in a short period of time.

It has already become common knowledge that Turkey gives official support to the Free Syrian Army while giving non-official support to jihadist organizations, particularly through Turkish intelligence organization. Both in the fight against the Syrian regime and the one against the PYD that Turkey regards as a branch of the PKK, it has been claimed several times and revealed with significant evidence that Turkish support for the Al-Nusra Front and then ISIL and other organizations was not only in the form of border clearance and allowing them to organize in its territories but also in the form of transporting truckloads of weapons through the Turkish intelligence organization MIT. The revelation of that connection in such a clear fashion has not led to significant reverberations

among the large constituency of the party in power despite a partial erosion in votes.

The policy of polarization and the groundswell

To the extent that the attack in Ankara railway station escalated the polarization in the society, it is possible to argue that it had a solidifying effect among the constituents of the AKP that is the chief builder of the policy of polarization.

The increase in AKP votes once again from 38% to 40% after the attack can be primarily attributed to the context of polarization among other factors. The main target of the AKP was to get nationalist votes after the elections on June 7 where it saw a dramatic decrease and lost its status as the party receiving the most Kurdish votes in Turkey. Its aim after the elections was to take votes from the nationalist party, the MHP. Therefore, there is a significant view in the Turkish public opinion that the war with the PKK was launched in line with that goal in mind.

The government has strong expectations that the attack in the Ankara railway station will give the AKP votes back, for which it paved the way by neglecting to take security measures. However, it is also possible for the AKP to be confronted with a surprise reaction from its constituents due to the AKP's uncompromising attitude towards forming a coalition government after the June 7 elections, as well as the general demand to get out of the war environment.

While the AKP is still at the critical threshold of being able to come to power alone, there is a growing sense of uneasiness among the constituents due to the explicit messages given by the AKP that it will intensify its authoritarian practices once it achieves its goal. What is going to seal the fate of the country this time will be the attitude of the constituency toward a vision of the country getting farther away from democracy, where each day bombs explode, war prevails in half of it, corruption allegations can not be investigated, journalists are arrested and media outlets are confiscated.

Editorial

The dark days of our time

The attack that shook Ankara on 10th October and killed the people who wanted to set a signal for peace and put an end to the violent confrontations that plague Turkey has been a reminder. All that remains from the political changes that were in the cards after June 7 are shattered dreams. Leave aside for a moment the question of culpability; at least the second biggest tragedy lies in how the country responded to the attack and the pain of the victims, their friends and families. If this kind of tragedy does not bring together citizens from different sides of the political divide but only further divides them, it marks a dark and uncertain future for the country. We should ask who created a political atmosphere where people assume the killing of their political enemies was well deserved. It is clear that as long as there is no willingness to admit the pain of the others, there will be no end to the violence.

We at the Heinrich Böll Foundation wish to express our condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the attack. While the tragedy has left us to grapple with the pain over the loss of those killed in this manifestation of hate, we are also looking for answers to what can be done to stand strong and decisively side by side with those who oppose the hate. Despite the difficult times we face, we will continue the dialogue about this topic with all those in Turkey who are willing to work against this hate and violence.

You might have also realised that we have changed the title of our magazine, and that this issue will be the first to be published in digital form only. These changes are the result of discussions within the Heinrich Böll Foundation about what direction to take with our work in the next years. While the name has changed, the content remains the same mix of interviews, features and analyses that we will hope you will find interesting. Our aim is to be able to offer you insights into “alternatifs” in the political, cultural and ecological realm. Of course, we are interested in hearing your feedback regarding the new format.

This issue of Alternatif is dedicated to the topic of climate change. With the G20 summit coming up in November, we know that the heads of the biggest 20 economies will assemble in Antalya to speak about questions of economic development. We know that the meeting will be overshadowed by talks on financial regulations and monetary policies. However, as the date for the summit on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris (COP21) draws closer, there are many in the fields of research and civil society that argue that economic policies must go hand in hand with efforts to protect our climate. According to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) monthly report of July 2015, the average temperature of the land and ocean surfaces was 16.61 C. This temperature, the warmest average ever recorded, can make 2015 the warmest year in history. Discussions on climate change are no longer limited to governments alone. Not only the private sector, but also a very active civil society has emerged that works on the topic. The agendas, however, are quite different. The calls from civil society for concrete action and intergenerational justice to preserve our planet for future generations—have often fallen on deaf ears in areas of the private sector and their respective governments. Results from previous climate summits, such as the ones in Copenhagen and Lima, have been disappointing. Therefore, the expectations regarding the Paris meeting are now even higher, and representatives of international civil society during the pre-summit meetings in Bonn have already stated that they expect global leaders to do more to protect our climate. We hope that this issue of Alternatif can shed a bit of light on the issues on the table and how climate change is already affecting Turkey.

We hope that you will find this first issue of Alternatif as interesting, as you hopefully found the previous issues of Perspectives. We are always happy to listen to your feedback.

On behalf of the Alternatif team
Kristian Brakel

ÖMER MADRA ON THE REASONS, RESULTS, EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

All because of 80 people and 90 companies!

Interview: Menekşe Kızıldere

"This scales cannot carry such weight". Ziya Paşa's famous motto summarizes the climate crisis. "This scale", is this planet. "Such weight" is the burden put on this planet. No serious reduction of that weight, of that poison instilled into the earth on a daily basis means that eventually the scale crumbles, and the life on it perishes. The perpetrators of the fatal poison, the burden which causes the turn on the scale are small in number, yet their crimes are global. Responsible for the destruction of the planet is a "corporate feudalism", consisting of 80 people and 90 companies. We talked to Ömer Madra, founder and manager of Açık Radyo, one of the primary venues of the environmental movement in Turkey, about the cause and perpetrators behind the destruction of the earth, and what can be and has been done against it.



Ömer Madra

After graduating the top of his class in 1968 from the Faculty of Political Science at Ankara University, Ömer Madra completed his PhD entitled "The European Convention of Human Rights and the Right of Individual Application" in 1977 and went on to research human rights in the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. His study "Migrant Workers and International Law" was published in English. In 1982, he resigned from his academic post and started to work as journalist. He currently works at Açık Radyo (Open Radio), a radio station that he co-founded in 1995 and has become one of Turkey's top environmentalist media outlets.

What is climate change, why is it important for Turkey, and what is its impact on the country?

Ömer Madra: Let's start with a general assessment if you wish. Climate change is as important for Turkey as it is for the rest of the world. We are on the brink; the end of the world as we know it is very near. Today is the first day of September. Autumn has yet to arrive, but August 2015 has already gone down in history as the hottest month of August in history. It is also almost certain that the year 2015 is the hottest year ever in history. In other words, it is like in that old gloomy song: *"Oh what misfortune, another year the summer has passed without a hint of spring..."*

This is the hottest year ever in history, yet a tiny elite group has changed the rules to such an extent that the game called growth—or development in the Turkish context—has turned into winner takes all. You know the game

of roulette—one places bets on various numbers and spins the wheel, and may win double, triple, etc., of the initial bet. Then there is the chance that the winner takes all. Just like in that game, a small number of companies are playing winner takes all, but they are doing it in real life. However, they are the only people winning, and everyone else is losing.

The figures are striking. The aid organization Oxfam announced earlier this year that only 80 people's wealth is equal to that of the half of the world population, which is 3.5 billion people. The same report also states that next year the richest one percent will come to possess more than the entire wealth of the rest of humanity!

The Guardian published a well-studied news article. It looks into how much single companies are responsible for climate change since the Industrial Revolution, that is, since the beginning of climate change. The most significant portion of climate change since the 1750's has taken place in the last 40 years, in fact the last 25 years, and only 90 companies account for two-thirds of the all greenhouse gas emissions! Just 90 out of the tens of thousands of companies across the world! They are the largest oil companies. However, there is an interesting omission in the report—that of the agricultural industry and livestock farming.

They are not on the list?

No, they are not. If I am not mistaken, the list includes only oil, coal and cement companies. Industrial agriculture and livestock farming companies pollute the air and cut down forests to grow animal feed. According to World Bank data, the livestock sector is responsible for 51% of the entire greenhouse gas emissions across the world. There are "cattle cities" with hundreds of thousands of cattle. Their transportation to the slaughterhouse, cutting down of trees to grow food for them... Their slaughter, packa-



© Serra Akcan / NarPhotos

ging, delivery to market, and of course the gas they emit... It is horrible: 51% and yet no one talks about it. Less than one hundred companies are responsible for 90% of greenhouse gases; namely, 80 people and 90 companies play the lead role here!

Another article published in The Guardian last month pointed to coal-related activities in Turkey. They are building the world's largest coal-fired power plant in Afşin-Elbistan. Furthermore, there is a similar scale investment in Karapınar, Konya. A report on the Konya Plain written by a commission headed by Prof. İsmail Duman and published by the TEMA Foundation points to the gravity of the situation.¹

As indicated in the said report, even the construction of the coal-fired power plant in Karapınar will be enough to completely destroy the Konya Plain, Turkey's breadbasket. There already is a horrible drought, which leads to the creation of sink-holes, or large craters. However, there are still mega projects in the pipeline in Turkey, such as Kanal İstanbul, the third bridge over the Bosphorus, and the third airport in Istanbul. This is the obsession with grandeur! Growing and developing, whatever the cost. This is the nuisance called neoliberalism. We cannot deal with it. As May Boeve, the director of 350.org, has said recently "There is no development on a dead planet!"

Actually, there is a way to deal with it and I will touch upon it later. In an article² published in 2014, Chris Hedges indicates that neoliber-

alism is being unraveled thread by thread across the world, starting from the USA, which is his focus. There are cases in point in Turkey, too. We can define neoliberalism simply as free market fundamentalism. This is an ideology which took off in the 1980's and has been in action since 35 years. During the era of neoliberalism, we saw arguments such as "the market solves everything," "wealth trickles down to everyone," and "all players are equal" turn out to be mere lies.

They claimed that global wealth as well as rights would be shared across the board equally. However, richness is concentrated in the hands of the oligarchic elite I mentioned before. Most rights were not granted and no one became equal; in fact, there are huge gaps of inequality which increase day after day! Greece is a case in point. The rights and unions of the working poor have been trampled on. Wages are frozen or even falling, people are condemned to chronic poverty and their lives reduced to continual stress. They are living in a stress-ridden emergency, as suggested by Chris Hedges in his 2015 article.³ The middle class is disappearing. Cities are built in places where the manufacturing industry and factories used to be. As such, cities are turning into empty lots closed with wooden fences. Prisons are overcrowded. Companies are hoarding money in tax havens as a result of secret agreements with banks. All of this is true for Turkey to a certain extent; the number of inmates in Turkey has doubled in the last 12 to 13 years. Despite the

Thousands of people and several political organizations gathered upon the call of the Istanbul City- and Northern Forests Defense groups in Kadıköy to protest the environmental and urban transformation policies of the government. (On the banner: Capital exploits, pollutes, exterminates water sources)

promises of democratization, democratic regimes are crumbling. This has turned into corporate monstrosity.

Can you elaborate on the effects of neoliberalism on ecosystems?

Neoliberal powers are destroying ecosystems as well. Eons ago, 90% of all species living on the face of the Earth were wiped off. Books on such mass extinctions on the world suggest that 90% of all species had disappeared in the fifth of such events. Now, we are approaching a similar catastrophe. An article I read today suggests that the ice meltdown in the poles has broken all historical records. The ice sheet is melting especially in the North Pole, while on the other hand, immense conflagrations are wreaking havoc in other regions of the world. In both poles, the ice and glaciers are disappearing rapidly.

Prominent climatologist James Hansen and 16 of his colleagues have published an online study⁴ which sparked heated debate; however, climate change deniers tried to disregard its arguments on the pretext that the journal was not refereed. But the results of their study, which was initiated in early 1980's, is unfortunately very accurate. The study suggests that the world's largest port cities such as Paris, New York, Istanbul and London could be under water in 30 to 35 years.

On the other hand, we observe mega droughts in the Middle East and unstoppable forest fires across America. Their increase is directly related to global warming, and then they further aggravate global warming. Like a snake eating up its tail... If you just take the example of Washington state, 100 hectares of forests are said to have burnt down. "This is an unprecedented event in world history," they say. A study in 2014 focused on the disappearance of historical forest lands. Unfortunately in Turkey, during the construction of the third airport for instance, historical woodland has been cut down and new saplings were planted instead. This is an irrecoverable mistake. The said study from 2014 has proven that new saplings cannot replace historical forests.

Where there is no fire or drought, we have flooding. We witnessed the latest example in Hopa, Artvin. After the event, the Minister of Forestry and Water Management spoke of a "deluge," and said that such an event could happen only once in five hundred years. Well, there is a web site called Floodlist,⁵ which keeps track of flood areas day by day. In the period between August 3-28, 32 floods have occurred on six continents. That makes more than one deluge per day. Well, isn't this a bit too frequent for such a catastrophic event? As for the seventh continent, Antarctica, it is not beset with fire or

drought, but is melting down at an unprecedented tempo.

What do you think of the argument that the war in Syria is triggered by large-scale drought due to climate change?

Famine, drought, scarcity, violence and war force people to abandon their homes. People are fleeing Syria en masse at the moment. The civil war there started with drought. Discontented young women and men had fled to the cities but were discriminated against. They started a rebellion in the town of Daraa, and when Assad repressed the rebellion, civil war broke out. In total, over four million people have had to flee and emigrate.

Migration is not limited to Syria. Over 4.5 million people emigrated from Iraq. People are fleeing from Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia and other African nations towards Europe. The flow has increased by 40% over the prior year. As is known to all, many of these migrants lose their lives while trying to cross the Mediterranean. This is the largest migration to occur in the world since World War II.

What's worse, migration is set to increase further. More drought, flooding, conflagration and disease will trigger further migration. It is predicted that due to the chaos caused by failed states, 50 to 250 million people will flee to Europe in the future. The study by Hansen and colleagues indicates that there are numerous Asian cities at most one meter above sea level and that 30% of Bangladesh's population falls into this category. They have nowhere to run. If they flee to India, they will run into a huge border fence built by that country.

The same study indicates that 33 countries will suffer from severe water shortage in 25 years, including Turkey. However, the Turkish media still describes these people who have nowhere to run to as fugitives or illegal migrants. Since this is generally described as the migration crisis, European countries get together to find solutions. However, this development is related to the climate change, and thus not temporary but bound to continue. This is a historical migration, and it is naïve, indeed stupid, to think that this historical migration or the climate change will end one day.

It is said that migrants will not be able to return to their countries of origin since their livelihood is destroyed. In your opinion, what kind of a transitional period is this and what will the new order including migrants be like?

That argument is right. Even Syrians do not think that they will return home one day. In fact, return has always been a very rare incident in refugee crises in history. We always talk about climate, but there is also another issue: In fact,

we are witnessing an environmental, social and political unraveling. We cannot escape from this by watching screens all day long, like a society of spectacle. This unraveling mentioned by Hedges is heading towards total collapse. This chaotic and anarchical atmosphere is made up of nihilism mixed with anger.

The late Chalmers Johnson, a prominent political scientist, has described this phenomenon as a blowback. For instance, the wars waged by the USA across the world have resulted in the 9/11 blowback. Today, we see people go berserk and start a shooting spree in shopping malls. There is a similar situation in Turkey, where cases of individual violence are also on the rise. In Europe, schools, cinemas, offices, and public transport come under attack. Today I read that Boko Haram has raided a school delivering Western-type education and killed 70 people. ISIS, on the other hand, is in a killing fever: They kill people from all groups—Christians, homosexuals, Muslims—for being different from themselves. The same happens everywhere: Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Israel, Palestine, Iran, Tunisia, Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania, Turkey, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, China, Nigeria, Russia, the UK, India and Pakistan... We have already mentioned the USA.

Fanaticism is in fact a result of despair and lack of hope. As suggested by Antonio Gramsci, the old is dying, the new struggles to be born, and in the interregnum there are many morbid symptoms. Unless we change our relationship with the ecosystem, this morbidity will continue. Hedges describes this new modus as “corporate feudalism”, where a small elite is at the helm and claims that security is their main concern. Indoor and outdoor security mechanisms and surveillance cameras are everywhere, from shopping malls to neighborhoods.

Security is also associated with the energy issue. “Energy security” is almost always brought up in discussions about energy. The energy agenda is pretty much focused on security, so much so that it is impossible to bring climate policy into the debate for instance. Why do you think everyone talks about security?

Language gives us hints about social reality. In fact the entire country is slowly turning into a security state. Laws are being put in place as a part of this trend. All this military and police armament brings to mind the prospect of civil war. In fact, this is the case all over the world. Hedges says that unless we topple the neoliberal order right away, a Hobbesian nightmare will be unleashed. Violence begets more violence. The masses are condemned to such severe poverty that violence is inevitable. In reaction, Hedges



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suggests that the elite will retreat to the palaces, just like in Turkey, much like Versailles or the Forbidden City in China. As long as certain groups keep control over assets not accessible to everyone, hate will become a widespread ideology. Societies are already heavily armed. For instance, we are watching as ISIS grows rapidly. They have occupied a territory the size of Texas, declared Raqqa as their capital and numerous people continue to join them every day. They subject women, homosexuals, believers from other religions to incredible violence. While condemning ISIS, we should also try to understand it.

What is the reason behind this anger?

The neoliberal order. The fact that a handful of people control the world's wealth. We are talking about 80 individuals. As Ziya Paşa once said, “the scales cannot carry such a weight,” and they will eventually break. If we take a look at Donald Trump, who seems to lead the race for the Republican presidential nomination, we can see that his supporters are people who experience similar despair. People work at two jobs and still can't make ends meet. In the USA, 60 million people are on the brink of famine. The neoliberal order has made people disposable. Those who cannot become a worker within the system are viewed as redundant laborers. We could go even further and say that those who do not produce are seen as redundant human beings.

According to Hedges, our only hope is the

Following the press release, the groups marched to the Yoğurtçu Park where they saluted the olive cultivating villagers of Yırca (Manisa, west Turkey), who resisted the thermal plant project which in its initial phase caused the cutting down of thousands of olive trees. (On the banners: With the determination of Yırca, the struggle will continue)

reintegration of the “wretched of the earth” to the society. In the current situation, they have no future. We had touched upon this while discussing the killings at Charlie Hebdo. We saw that people without future resort to violence.

Hedges’ view is based on the argument that unless we overthrow the neoliberal order, and recover the humanistic tradition that rejects the view that humans and the Earth are commodities to exploit, our industrialized and economic barbarity will clash with the barbarity of our opponents. Friedrich Engels used to say that we will either choose socialism or fall back on barbarism; Hedges says that it is now time to make that decision.

What kind of an opposition do climate activists organize against all of this?

Now we are coming to the positive part. There are people who oppose what is going on. It is the tenth anniversary of the hurricane Katrina. Katrina has turned into a pilot case for neoliberalism. One hundred thousand black people could not return to their homes. The schools there were rapidly turned into private schools. However, something else rose from within that group which could not return. Their slogan is “The seas are rising and so are we.” A Shell platform that was on its way to wreaking havoc in the North Pole was blocked by “kayaktivists” in their small canoes, and had to stop working for two days. Germany, which is closing down nuclear plants on the one hand and selling coal technology on the other, sent a gigantic coal mining machine to Afşin-Elbistan just like the one in their company RWE. However 1500 activists blocked its passage and prevented the extraction of tons of coal from the ground. They were able to stop the machine for just one day, yet they prevented a huge amount of pollution.

We can topple the monster only if we push all together. The call came on August 27. A historical declaration was issued, entitled “Freeze Fossil Fuel Extraction to Stop Climate Crimes.” Those who expressed their demands in this text will follow up during and after the Paris Summit (COP 21). Over one hundred scientists, philosophers and activists have signed the declaration. The states, which are controlled by large corporations, do not take any action. Neoliberalism has destroyed their capacity to intervene in the climate crisis.

What should we expect from the COP 21 talks?

As mentioned in the text, we know that global companies and governments will never give up. As such, this declaration is a call to revolution. They say, we are confident in our capacity, just like slavery was destroyed in the past, today climate change will be eradicated through rebellion. We want to rebel and to change abso-

lutely everything. Across the world, indigenous peoples are fighting against large corporations. Small-scale economies secure food autonomy. Our call is clear: Do not extract the 80% of fossil fuel reserves buried deep underground! This is the main decision which must be taken in Paris. The text suggests, if you want to leave a habitable world to the next generations, you have to stop extracting coal. And we will not wait for states to heed this call—basta!

Slavery was abolished not because states granted freedom, but because masses of people mobilized and left states no other option. They enjoyed their big party, but we will not be cleaning the rubbish they left behind.

Companies’ hegemony over politics must be eradicated. We have to change our modes of consumption and production radically. We will change the system, not just the climate. The declaration ends with the words “We will not waste this opportunity, in Paris or elsewhere, today or tomorrow.”

What is the situation in Turkey? Could you talk about the movement İklim İçin (For the Climate)?

The movement İklim İçin set out this February with a manifesto, which basically says that Paris is not our last chance. Even if the necessary decisions are not taken in Paris, we will continue on our way. The climate movement in Turkey gained in strength with İklim İçin. Prior to the G20 summit, the campaign will hold the Climate Forum at Boğaziçi University on November 12-13, and organize a Climate March on November 14 to say to the G20 countries, “you cannot go on like this.” In fact, our objective is to irritate the G20 leaders. In a way it is the second version of “Tek Yol Devrim (Revolution is the only way!) And everyone is invited to join in.

Are we, the ordinary people, the last generation which can save the planet?

Yes, absolutely.

The campaign İklim İçin strives to involve everyone. Not only those already interested in the issue, but ordinary souls like ourselves.

What do you think?

Naturally. Heroic achievements were reached in local struggles in Turkey. For instance, people waged a three-year struggle in Gerze and won twice. This achievement belongs to Gerze’s locals, especially women. The same is true across the world. In Yırca, the local women joined our press conference for İklim İçin with tears in their eyes. There is a rising grassroots struggle against the horrible neoliberal onslaught. Gezi was another such struggle. It started in a park at the heart of Istanbul and expanded to 79 cities. What really moved me was to see the people of Gerze bring their freshly collected tea

and share it with those occupying Gezi Park...

To sum up, the matter is too critical to be left to environmentalists! To change everything, we need everyone. So we invite everybody—to the Climate Forum, Paris, and beyond.

So are you saying, “we are saving the world and you should join us”?

Yes, this is an invitation to all ordinary Supermen and Superwomen...

1. <http://www.tema.org.tr/folders/14966/categorial-1docs/83/TERMIK%20SANTRAL%20RAPOR%20A5%20BASKI.pdf>
2. http://www.truthdig.com/report/print/saving_the_planet_one_meal_at_a_time_20141109
3. http://www.truthdig.com/report/print/the_great_unraveling_20150830
4. <http://www.atmos-chem-phys-discuss.net/15/20059/2015/acpd-15-20059-2015.pdf>
5. <http://floodlist.com/>

CALL FOR TO STOP CLIMATE CRIMES

Freeze fossil fuel extraction to stop climate crimes

We are at a crossroads. We do not want to be compelled to survive in a world that has been made barely livable for us. From South Pacific Islands to the shores of Louisiana, from the Maldives to the Sahel, from Greenland to the Alps, the daily lives of millions of us are already being disrupted by the consequences of climate change. Through ocean acidification, the submersion of South Pacific Islands, forced migration in the Indian Subcontinent and Africa, frequent storms and hurricanes, the current ecocide affects all species and ecosystems, threatening the rights of future generations. And we are not equally impacted by climate change: Indigenous and peasant communities, poor communities in the global South and in the global North are at the frontlines and most affected by these and other impacts of climate disruption.

We are not under any illusions. For more than 20 years, governments have been meeting, yet greenhouse gas emissions have not decreased and the climate keeps changing. The forces of inertia and obstruction prevail, even as scientific warnings become ever more dire.

This comes as no surprise. Decades of liberalization of trade and investments have undermined the capacity of states to confront the climate crisis. At every stage powerful forces – fossil fuel corporations, agro-business companies, financial institutions, dogmatic economists, skeptics and deniers, and governments in the thrall of these interests – stand in the way or promote false solutions. Ninety companies are responsible for two-thirds of recorded greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. Genuine responses to climate change threatens their power and wealth, threatens free market ideology, and threatens the structures and subsidies that support and underwrite them.

We know that global corporations and governments will not give up the profits they reap through the extraction of coal, gas and oil reserves; and through global fossil fuel-based industrial agriculture. Our continuing ability to act, think, love, care, work, create, produce, contemplate, struggle, however,

demands that we force them to. To be able to continue to thrive as communities, individuals and citizens, we all must strive for change. Our common humanity and the Earth demand it.

We are confident in our capacity to stop climate crimes. In the past, determined women and men have resisted and overcome the crimes of slavery, totalitarianism, colonialism or apartheid. They decided to fight for justice and solidarity and knew no one would do it for them. Climate change is a similar challenge, and we are nurturing a similar uprising.

We are working to change everything. We can open the way to a more livable future, and our actions are much more powerful than we think. Around the world, our communities are fighting against the real drivers of the climate crisis, protecting territories, working to reduce their emissions, building their resilience, achieving food autonomy through small scale ecological farming, etc.

On the eve of the UN Climate Conference to be held in Paris-Le Bourget, we declare our determination to keep fossil fuels in the ground. This is the only way forward.

Concretely, governments have to end subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, and to freeze fossil fuel extraction by leaving untouched 80% of all existing fossil fuel reserves.

We know that this implies a great historical shift. We will not wait for states to make it happen. Slavery and apartheid did not end because states decided to abolish them. Mass mobilisations left political leaders no other choice.

The situation today is precarious. We have, however, a unique opportunity to reinvigorate democracy, to dismantle the dominance of corporate political power, to transform radically our modes of production and consumption. Ending the era of fossil fuels is one important step towards the fair and sustainable society we need.

We will not waste this opportunity, in Paris or elsewhere, today or tomorrow.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Schrödinger's Cat and Expectations for G20 and COP21 after the C20 Summit

Menekşe Kızıldere

When Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger designed his famous and paradoxical cat experiment in 1935, he understood that the probability of an event can only be determined through observations through time. That is, we cannot learn the fate of Schrödinger's cat without opening the box in which it is placed.



Menekşe Kızıldere

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Well, what can we expect from the G20 Summit and COP21 Conference, where real intentions are hidden in closed boxes and policy proposals and expectations are to be designed on the basis of closed boxes? At the C20 (Civil20) Summit which took place last September at Boğaziçi University, NGOs identified a number of policy proposals in different categories to be presented to the G20 Summit that will convene in Antalya on November 15-16. Then, in late September, Turkey submitted its INDC (Intended National Determined Contributions) required by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the UNFCCC Secretariat.

The paradoxical relationship between the agenda items which will be and should be discussed at G20 Summit, the resolutions which will be and should be taken at COP21, as well as the proposals and commitments regarding these agenda items and resolutions bring to mind Erwin Schrödinger's famous cat experiment. How valid, efficient and implementable are these proposals and resolutions? Before trying to respond to this question and opening the box, let us discuss what was predicted and which commitments were made in the first place.

Policy proposals regarding sustainability, energy and climate change at the C20 Summit

On September 15-16, a huge C20 "village" was set up at Boğaziçi University's South Campus. The event drew 500 participants from international NGOs as well as representatives of Turkish NGOs from various fields. The top agenda items of this year's C20 were Gender Equality, Sustainability, Energy & Climate, Comprehensive Growth and Governance; and numerous sessions were held to discuss these topics.

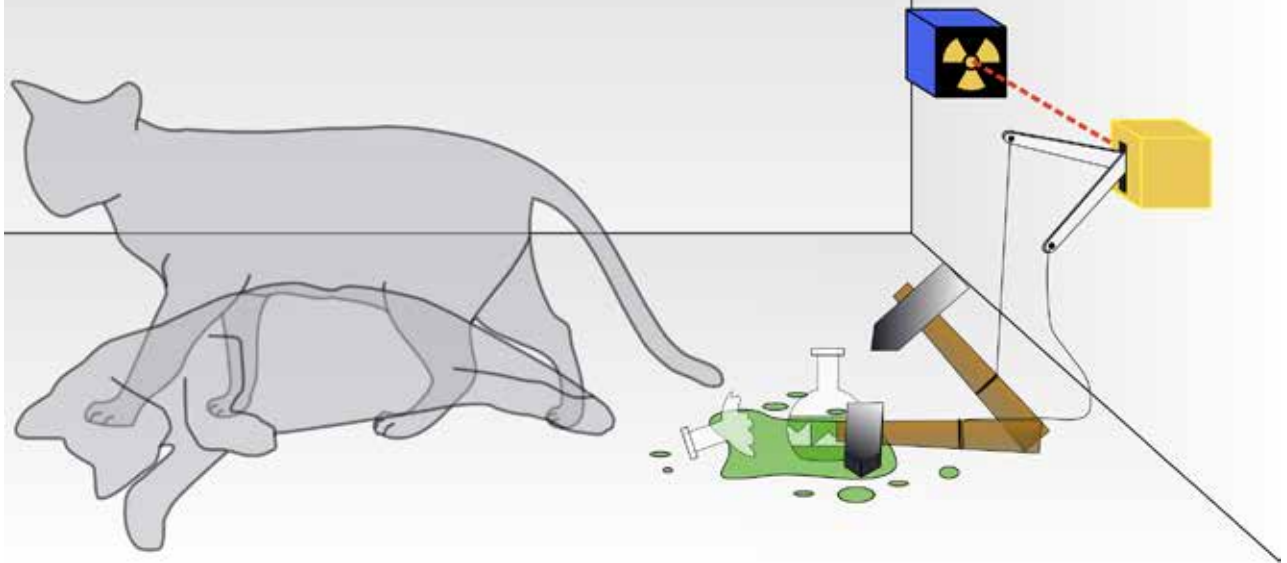
Ten sessions were dedicated to Sustainability and Energy & Climate. Issues such as policy proposals, current events, energy vision, mega projects, carbon-free economy, access to energy, climate finance, approaches to sustainability, effects of climate change, development, and the coal consumption dilemma were taken up. Civil society actors aired very clear demands on the issues of energy vision, mega projects and climate finance.

The energy vision debate yielded important conclusions such as the necessity to integrate energy efficiency plans into state policies, the need to shift energy generation from fossil fuels to more sustainable clean and renewable energies, the fact that fossil fuel based energy generation is not only unsustainable but also in violation of future generations' rights, and that the local character of renewable energies provides immense advantages in terms of access to energy not to mention the reduction of foreign dependence on energy.

The discussion on mega projects mainly centered around the large investments planned for Turkey, such as Istanbul's third airport and third bridge, Kanal İstanbul and nuclear

A representative set-up illustration of Erwin Schrödinger's famous Cat Experiment (1935).

© Dhatfield



power stations. Participants stated that assessing mega projects by only using the criteria of growth and prestige jeopardizes the public interest and destroys the environment, which would be very difficult or even impossible to compensate for. It was noted that mega investments turn into mega losses in the long run and that future generations would unfortunately have to foot the bill.

The climate finance debate, on the other hand, centered on the issue of who utilizes climate finance funds and investments, and to what ends. Very clear conclusions were reached in this debate:

- Climate finance funds should never be allocated by the private sector; these should be exclusively public, and financed through taxation.

- Climate finance should be extended to countries fighting climate change in order to assist them in their adaptation and reduction efforts. Undeveloped countries having difficulty in accessing funding should be prioritized.

- Climate finance funds should be earmarked not only for energy investments but also awareness raising, social initiatives and education.

In fact, the working group on Sustainability, Energy and Climate that was set up in March formulated six policy proposals, encouraged by developed country leaders' commitment at the G7 Summit to gradually abandon fossil fuel sources and to shift to renewable energies that have a relatively lower environmental footprint.

In the aftermath of the C20 Summit, the

conclusions reached in the debates as well as the suggestions posted on the bulletin boards of the so-called "Communiqué Kitchen," where all individuals could share their personal or collective opinions, were synthesized in the final declaration as follows:

1. To move towards a goal of long term emission reduction and decarbonification,

2. To set clean, reliable and safe energy access targets for 2030,

3. To couple investments in energy efficiency with the goal of a complete shift to renewable energies by 2050,

4. To provide incentives not only to ambitious and high-cost mega projects, but also to local and small-scale investments,

5. To set the target of gradually reducing and ending the utilization of fossil fuels by 2020; decreasing carbon incentives and supporting renewable energy investments in order to create a low-carbon economy resistant to the effects of climate change,

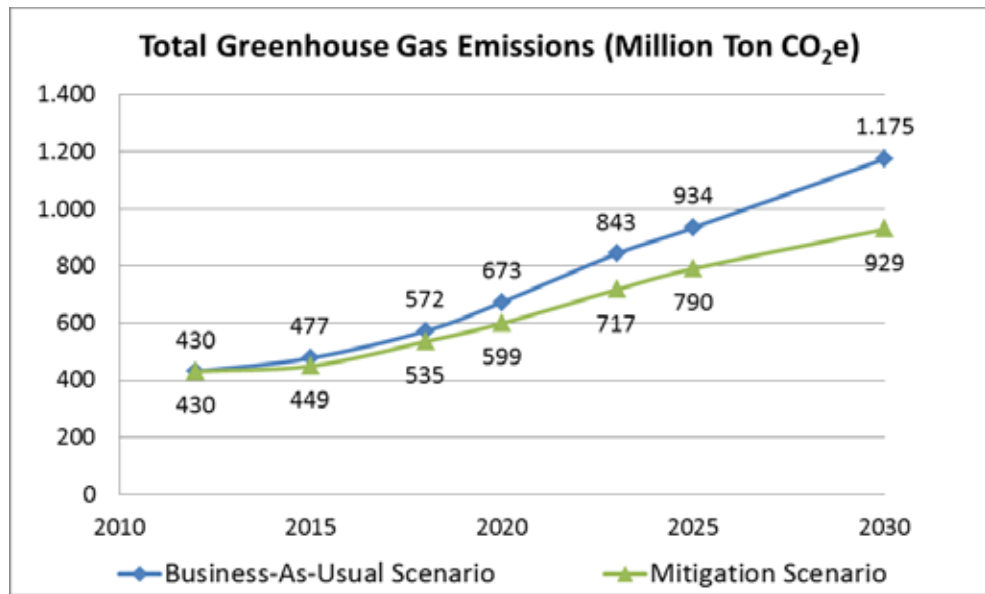
6. To transform polluting investments into clean ones, support impoverished countries in their fight against climate change and promote agricultural methods resistant to the effects of climate change in these countries

7. To demand that G20 countries establish structures for monitoring, reporting and regulating carbon emissions which lead to climate change.

The final declaration also stated that G20 countries had to play a key role in ensuring equal participation in gender terms, as well as in cohabitation, social justice, the fight against poverty, prevention of social and economic problems, and the protection of human rights

The 1935 dated hypothetical Cat Experiment, also known as the Cat Paradox by Erwin Schrödinger, writer of the wave equation of quantum mechanics. In the experiment, a radioactive atom and a geiger counter are put into a box. If there is a beaming, the counter will click, which will move the hammer so that the hammer breaks the bottle filled with poison, and eventually the cat get killed. The only way to know whether the cat is living, is to open the box. Yet, opening the box means an absolute death of the cat.

Chart 1. Turkey's emission mitigation plan for 2021-2030 according to its INDC (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions) report.



and honor.

However, all these suggestions and premises were put forth without any certainty as to what the G20 Summit participants will discuss and prioritize during their negotiations, just like the fate of Schrödinger's cat, which was at risk of death from poisoning if the box's internal monitor detected radioactivity and shattered the poison flask. It will be the resolutions reached at the Antalya summit on November 15-16 which will tell us how long the cat will survive.

Turkey's climate commitments for the period of 2021-2030

An analysis of national contribution commitments presented to the United Nations suggests that the cat's chances of survival are rather slim, because very few countries have made commitments to truly fight against climate change as demanded by the civil society. In Turkey's national contribution commitments, for instance, we come across a significant amount of unclear and non-transparent information, which lack scientific basis and is therefore debatable.

According to the information presented in the above chart, Turkey states that it will reduce carbon emissions by 246Mt from 2021 to 2030—an amount which corresponds to 21%—by undertaking improvements in energy, transport, manufacturing, construction and urban transformation, agriculture, waste management and forestry. However, this commitment is not absolute.

At this point, the following questions have to be posed:

What kind of an economic growth performance is Turkey targeting in order to slash carbon emissions by 929 Mt by 2030? Such a reduction would necessitate the attainment of the frequently stated target of 5.5% growth. Is this figure realistic? At a press conference on October 7, WWF Turkey and the Istanbul Policy Center released the "Report on Low-Carbon Development Itineraries and Priorities for Turkey" by Professor Erinç Yeldan and Assistant Professor Ebru Voyvoda.

According to the models and projections presented in this report, Turkey's annual average growth rate is 3.3%. According to the business-as-usual scenario, this corresponds to a carbon emission of 600 Mt. The above chart clearly demonstrates the huge gap between the official policy scenario and the business-as-usual scenario.

What does this gap tell us? How much of a reduction will Turkey actually attain? In actual fact, this figure corresponds not to a drop of 21%, but to a 111% increase over the year 2012. In other words, the economic growth target has been set at a very high and unrealistic level, and the increase in CO₂ emissions is presented as a reduction.

Furthermore, as clearly indicated in the INDC report, this reduction target is not binding and may come about only after 2021, because Turkey has such ambitious growth objectives. In his book *Seventeen Contradictions and The End of Capitalism*, Professor David Harvey describes this attitude to growth as "the growth obsession."

The improvements required in the fields of energy, transport, manufacturing, construction and urban transformation, agriculture, waste management and forestry to meet this commitment are as follows: planned and low-

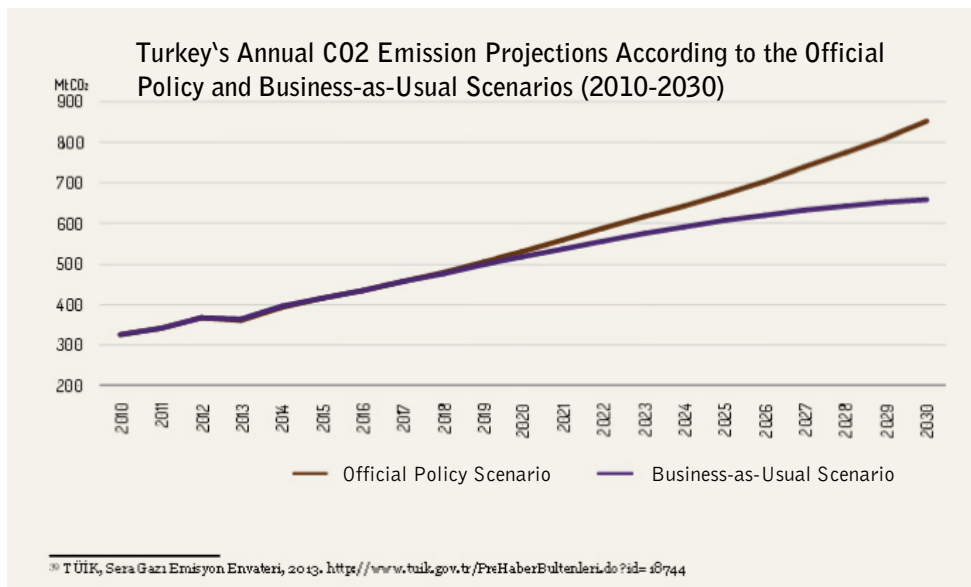


Chart 2. WWF Turkey and Istanbul Policy Center, Report on Low-Carbon Development Itineraries and Priorities for Turkey

carbon transportation, habitable cities, the protection of natural assets and biodiversity, agricultural policies adapted and resistant to climate change and planned, integrated waste management. As such, it is clear that the commitments presented to attain energy efficiency really end up in a Schrödinger's cat paradox according to this projection. The contributions to the fight against climate change of this country, which does not have realistic economic growth forecasts, are bound to result in a paradox since it is not clear how its measures against climate change will affect growth per-

formance.

As such, a revision of Turkey's Intended National Determined Contributions in light of realistic scientific models and projections should be the key demand in our fight against climate change.

1. http://awsassets.wwftr.panda.org/downloads/20151007_turkiye_icin_duuk_karbonlu_kalknma_yollar_ve_onceelikleri_rapor.pdf

FEATURE ARTICLE

Turkey and climate change talks on the eve of the Paris Agreement

Arif Cem Gündoğan, Semra Cerit Mazlum

Once again, the global climate policy is at a critical crossroads. It is expected that when the 21st Conference of the Parties to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) convenes in Paris in December 2015, a new global agreement will be agreed upon in order to help attain the UNFCCC's ultimate goal. This has been defined as stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Key issues here are whether the negotiations begun in 2011 will indeed result in a new agreement, and the nature of the agreement that will be reached at the end of the talks.



Arif Cem Gündoğan

A postgraduate student on Environment & Development at the King's College London. He focuses on climate policy & sustainable development domains particularly by looking at associated issues through the lens of political ecology. Previously, he worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as the Prosperity Fund Turkey Programme Fund Coordinator and over-sighted the FCO's portfolio of climate, energy and open economy projects in Turkey. He is the co-author of Regional Environmental Centre Turkey's latest publication "An Updated Guide to Climate Change: From A to Z".

The main aspects of this new international pact, which will most probably be named the Paris Agreement, were already laid out at the Durban Conference of 2011. In this framework, not a group of countries—as was the case in the Kyoto Protocol—but all parties will commit to the new agreement with measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, this agreement binding all countries will be placed under the umbrella of the UNFCCC and be based on its principles. Accordingly, the Paris Agreement will have to abide by the responsibility sharing system outlined by UNFCCC's basic principles.

Nonetheless, on the eve of the Paris Conference, it is still hard to talk of any real progress as to how the Durban resolution of five years ago will be implemented. Numerous questions have yet to be answered, e.g., what

are the legal aspects of the agreement, how binding are the commitments promised by the parties, how the parties will be grouped by type of commitment, and whether there will be mechanisms in place to facilitate attaining the declared targets.

It can be seen that a reductionist approach whose dominant discourse claims it is correct to measure the success of the Paris Conference and its agreement with the number of participating states is an attempt to cover up the fact that the agreement will not contribute to the protection of the world's climate.

An approach which would reduce the success of the Paris Conference and an agreement on the number of participating states tries to dissimulate the fact that its policy does not contribute to the protection of the world's climate. Although a new agreement is urgently required to fight global climate change and to expand the basis of collective action, rich countries are striving to shift more of the burden of these urgent measures on developing countries. In this respect, it can be said that the Paris Agreement will be designed not to reinforce measures for fighting against and adapting to climate change, but rather to restructure the international climate regime by revising the order established by the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol.

The climate regime from Copenhagen to Paris: back to the drawing board

In this regard, the key events of this shift were the Copenhagen Consensus of 2009, reinforced by the Cancun Agreements of 2010,

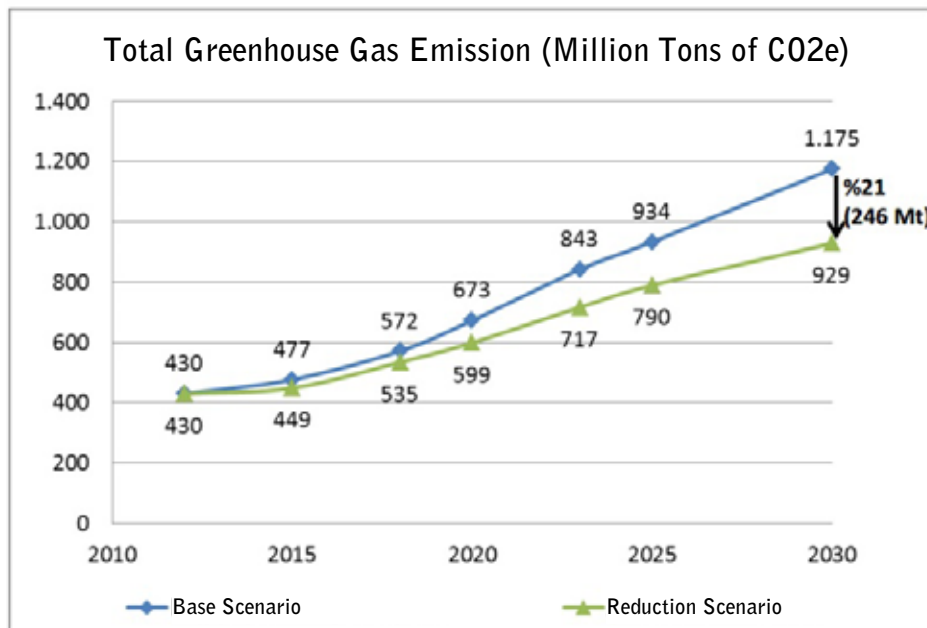


Chart 1. (Source: Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, INDC document, 2015.)

and finally the Durban Resolution of 2011 which overhauled the international climate policy. This led to significant progress being made since Copenhagen in the shift towards a system distinct from the UNFCCC plus the Kyoto system. In addition, some progress was achieved in the transition from the Kyoto regime, which was said to have malfunctioned due to its inability to integrate the countries mainly responsible for emissions into the global action scheme.

A key element expected to be changed by the Paris Agreement is the general perspective that underlies international climate policy. This opinion, which attributes the Kyoto Protocol's inability in limiting emissions to its top-down structure, puts forth the thesis that the new bottom-up commitment system of the new agreement will encourage the participation of states and increase the number of parties fighting climate change. Thus, they propose a shift from a regime that views binding commitments as the norm and flexibility as the exception, to an order where flexibility and volunteering become the norm. However, it is clear that such a flexible order will fail to respond to the planet's climate crisis because it is based on a global agreement outlining the non-binding climate measures that states will determine according to their national conditions.

The Paris Conference can be considered successful only if it yields an agreement introducing ambitious, fair and binding commitments. Such a comprehensive agreement should be based on a mechanism of compliance considered binding by all parties, which sets commitments for limiting or reducing emissions, introduces measures

for global or national adaptation to the effects of climate change, puts in place a mechanism which will cover the losses and damages associated with climate change, and offers financial, technological and capacity-increasing support to poor countries in terms of reduction, adaptation and losses/damages.

Nevertheless, the drafts presented to the last meeting held before the Paris Conference, in mid-October, weaken such expectations. Although the draft agreement sets the global policy target as keeping the temperature increase below 2 °C, it does not include medium- and long-term collective emission reduction goals which would help reach this main target. The 2013-2015 review on the convenience of the 2 °C target and the resulting expert report indicate that the 2 °C target should be taken only as a safety limit, and that the global policy must indeed strive to keep the increase below 1.5 °C. More importantly, the report suggests that the 2 °C target cannot be attained with the measures currently in place and requires a radical overhaul in the medium- and long-term. It states that, by mid-century, global emissions must be slashed by 40-70 % in comparison to their 2010 levels; and that zero or negative emissions must be attained by the end of the century. As such, a fair climate agreement that can stand up to the challenge should target 1.5 °C, as suggested by the expert report, and set medium- and long-term global emission reduction goals accordingly. The intended national contributions presented to lay the basis of national targets in the Paris Agreement will lead to a 2.7 °C or 3.5 °C rise in global temperatures in comparison with pre-industrial levels even by optimistic



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projections, and thus have to be revised in order to reach these medium- and long-term goals. Clearly, developed countries should be the first to revise their contributions upwards, as their current national contributions do not reflect their historical responsibilities. Such a correction is urgent for attaining the ultimate target of the UNFCCC, which lays the basis of the Paris Agreement, and for establishing global climate justice.

While this debate continues on the international arena, let us take a look at Turkey's progress on this front. Where does Turkey stand in the nascent climate regime on the eve of COP21, and are its contributions still limited by "special conditions"? To answer these questions, we need to take a look at Turkey's position in climate talks and its recent declaration of intention.

From "wait and see" to "special conditions": Turkey in climate talks

Scientists generally choose to divide Turkey's journey through the climate talks into periods.¹ The first period spans from the late 1980's when Turkey first joined climate change discussions to 2009, when it became a party to the Kyoto Protocol. In this era, Turkey chose to view the issue as an international environmental problem and opted for a "wait and see" approach instead of taking action. Unwilling to compromise its international interests and keen on siding with the developed countries, Turkey placed its signature under the UNFCCC annexes along with other OECD members. Later, however, Turkey declared that it would be unable to fulfill its commitments. Then Turkey waged a struggle to make the parties accept its "special conditions," and refrained from any reduction commitments. The fact that Turkey's both aggregate and per capita greenhouse gas emissions are below most developed countries and that its economic and social indicators are much different from developed countries can be considered the basis of Turkey's "special conditions" argument.

Having become a party to UNFCCC (2004) and KP (2009) after guaranteeing its freedom of any commitment, Turkey was in a way neither inside nor outside the circle. Therefore, the "wait and see" policy of inaction gradually shifted to the "special conditions" approach. Within that period, we saw Turkey's first attempts at formulating its climate change policies.

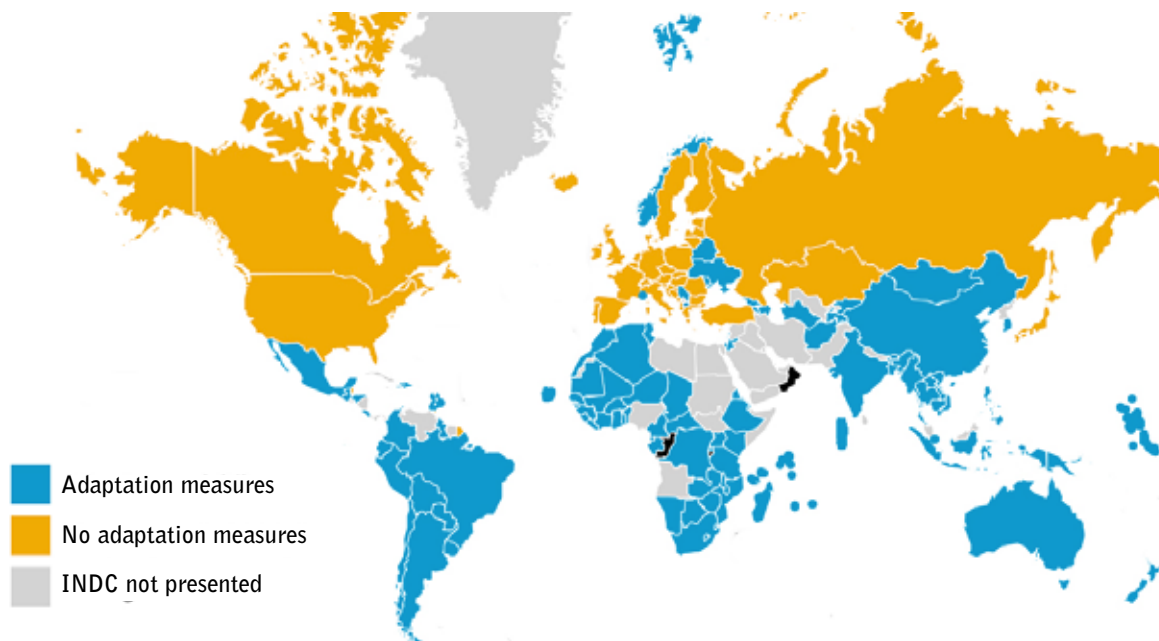
The Law on Renewable Energy, the Energy Efficiency Strategy Document, the National Climate Change Strategy, the National Climate Change Action Plan, the National Notifications submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat, the Regulation on Greenhouse Gas Monitoring and other relevant legislation date from this period. The crucial issue here is that qualitative rather than quantitative targets were set. It would not be erroneous to say that the pressure from the international community and the ongoing global process were the main forces behind these developments.

The slow and ineffective nature of the international talks on climate change and the Copenhagen 2009 summit ending in fiasco led to public criticism around the world. The resulting pressure opened the way to the creation of a new climate regime in Paris in 2015. In a process in which no country can participate without assuming responsibilities, Turkey has started to weigh its options and entered a third period, according to scholars.

On the way to Paris: Turkey's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions

Turkey submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) for Paris to the UNFCCC Secretariat on 30 September 2015, just one day before the deadline. Turkey failed to meet expectations, having set its goal as a 21% reduction over the increase predicted by the base (reference) scenario for 2030.

Turkey's total greenhouse gas emission in 2013 was 459,1 MtCO₂, and the base scenario in the INDC predicts an emission of 1.175 MtCO₂ by 2030; the country claims that it will "reduce" this latter figure to 929 MtCO₂ by adopting certain measures (Chart 1). In actual fact, however, Turkey plans to roughly double its emissions by 2030. Another remarkable issue is the scarcity of quantitative goals in the INDC. The most of the listed measures for various sectors were already presented in the previous official strategy documents. They do not require any additional effort and in fact frequently contradict with previous measures. For instance, 5. National Notification's goal of rising installed capacity in wind energy to 20 GW by 2023 is either in clear contradiction with the INDC's target of bringing this capacity to 16 GW by 2030, or represents a downward revision. Turkey states



that it may benefit from international market mechanisms to attain its targets, suggesting that it may bring about this “reduced increase” by purchasing credit on the market.

74% of the countries which had presented their INDC’s by October 19 put forth an emission reduction target. Half of these represent a reduction over the base scenario, and remarkably, most such countries hail from Africa and Latin America, rather than from the G20—of which Turkey is a member, or the EU, to which Turkey has an accession bid. Only 14% of countries present no climate change adaptation measures in their INDC, and Turkey is unfortunately in this group (Chart 2). Turkey is among the Mediterranean countries which will be severely affected by climate change and therefore demands climate finance; as such, it is a crucial problem for Turkey to ignore the issue of adaptation, as if it were a rich country such as the USA, Canada or EU member states. Let us remember that, the declaration of the Safranbolu Conference of March 25-27, 2015 in Turkey strongly emphasized the need to integrate climate change adaptation to INDCs; however, Turkey’s INDC does not live up to this.

As a member of the OECD and the current president of the G20, Turkey’s responsibilities concerning climate change are increasing. According to a study by the World Resources Institute (WRI), Turkey accounted for 0.97% of global greenhouse gas emissions in 2012. If we look at only energy-related emissions, Turkey’s share stands at 0.72%. In PwC’s annual Low Carbon Economy Index for the years between 2000 and 2014, Turkey posted -0.6% annual average change in carbon

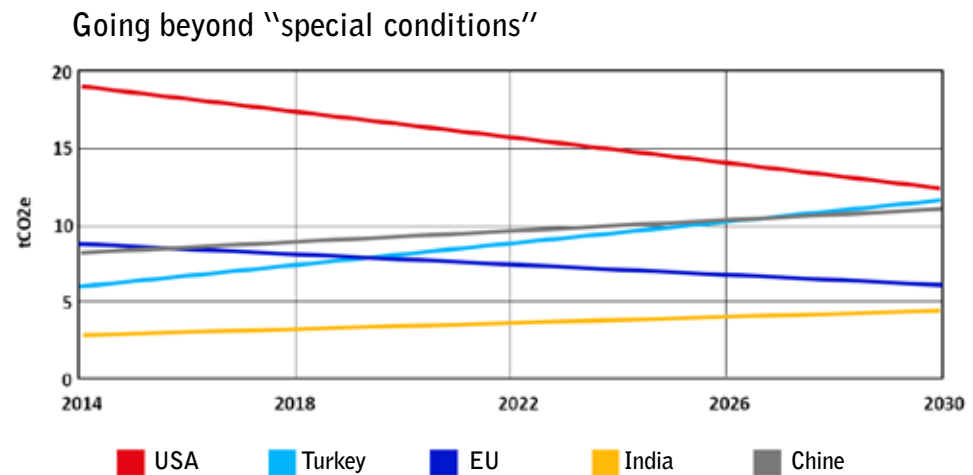
intensity, and is thus part of a group of five countries which made the least progress, including the fossil fuel giant. The change in Turkey’s carbon intensity was only 4.4% between 2013 and 2014. The fact that Turkey’s per capita emissions will surpass most large countries by 2030 suggests that “special conditions” should not really have a place in future talks (Chart 3) and that we need to go “beyond” these special conditions.

Even as conditions and responsibilities change rapidly and the world moves towards a low-carbon future, Turkey’s position has barely changed. In the Bonn meetings held between October 19 and 23 to formulate the draft to be presented at the COP21, Turkey gave signals that it will strive to preserve its position based on “special conditions” and not be a pioneer in the fight against climate change. It proposes that the expression “developing countries” in the draft text be replaced with “developing countries including countries whose special conditions are accepted by the parties.”

Insisting on this position may isolate Turkey and weaken its hand in the Paris negotiations. That is because many developing countries’ INDCs and political messages are much more proactive than those of Turkey. In the new climate regime, where even China plans to lower its greenhouse gas emissions after 2030, Turkey’s refusal to act in this direction represents an irony which will not be lost on anyone. Furthermore, (as of October 1, 2015) 42 of the 65 countries which stated a target of reduction over the base scenario have more ambitious targets than Turkey. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to compare Turkey only

Chart 2. Countries with climate change adaptations measures in their INDC’s (Source: WRI CAIT, 2015.)

Chart 3. Evolution of per capita emissions towards INDC's (Carbon Brief, 2015. Data on Turkey added by the authors).



with developing countries. As a OECD and G20 member and a candidate to the EU, Turkey must assume responsibilities much larger than it currently does.

The principle of "equal, common, yet differentiated responsibilities and relative capabilities in light of different national conditions" frequently mentioned in climate change talks should not be seen as a shield of immunity for countries whose development models are based on fossil fuels. This would not contribute to the fight against climate change nor benefit Turkey in any way. In this respect, Turkey must abandon its aims which cannot be realized in Paris and start to raise the bar for the transition to a low carbon economy, while asking for support from all actors. No progress will be possible unless we realize that we are in a wrong spot on the energy-climate-development triangle, and that this is not the only alternative available to us.

We need a more participatory, inclusive and transparent policy-making process and governance, which may only come about through a radical reform in the structure and functioning of Climate Change and Air

Quality Coordination Committee (İDHKKK). After the general elections are over, Turkey should act quickly to create a transparent structure subject to civilian control, where the central government, private sector, as well as the academy, civil society, local governments and all other climate policy actors are represented equally. A debate on Turkey's development model based on fossil fuels should be initiated in this structure and a number of alternatives should be formulated to revise the INDC. Designing a new INDC document in the light of these measures may offer Turkey a legitimate basis for its transition to a low carbon economy and the new climate regime.

Let us hope that Paris turns out to be a breaking point in this respect and that Turkey becomes a part of the solution rather than the problem.

1 As the chronological analysis of Turkey's climate policies is not the main focus of this article, only a summary of the developments is presented here. Further detail is available in the relevant literature.

DEMOCRACY

AKP's future: The fragmented *Nom-du-père* and the violence of power

Kansu Yıldırım

"As virtue is necessary in a republic, and in a monarchy honor, so fear is necessary in a despotic government"
Montesquieu

After it came to power in 2002, AKP (Justice and Development Party) promised numerous projects and reforms to the electorate. The new government started to create new institutions and pass laws in order to effect a rapid transformation of the public services, bureaucracy, diplomacy, justice system, public finance, defense industry and manufacturing. AKP made frequent use of the word democracy to fill its utopia of reforms with content, and particularly underlined its "human focus." The government dubbed its program the "Silent Revolution", and the book by the same name was published with a preface by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: "With this revolution, we replace the statist approach where the state views its own citizens as a threat with an approach that considers difference as richness, is committed to the citizen and to serving the citizen."¹ Paradoxically today, Erdoğan and AKP are back to defending a monist conception of the state: "We say Rabia, one nation, one flag, one state."²

When we focus on the origins of this paradox, it becomes evident that AKP is going through a cultural and ideological crisis, in economic and political terms and as regards the day-to-day manifestations of politics. The economy of "Great Turkey"³ is dependent on imports, the dollar is on the rise and TL is losing value. International credit rating agencies are lowering Turkey's rating due to political and economic uncertainty, which in turn has an adverse effect on foreign direct investment. The speculative behavior in the banking system

and stock exchange is threading on thin ice.

The future of "Strong Turkey's" domestic and foreign politics is an enigma. On the domestic front, the crisis of legitimacy experienced by AKP since Gezi Park has crystallized into a crisis of representation after the general elections of 7 June. Although it remains a dominant mass party, AKP has lost its single party status, and has been obliged to give a break to its transformation of the regime's building blocks.

As for foreign politics, the Kurdish movement has gained an international prestige by fighting the militarist and fundamentalist ISIS together with the USA and coalition forces, which has led to a review of the plans concerning the Middle East. The Turkish foreign policy vision, loyal as ever to the pattern outlined in Prime Minister Davutoğlu's book *Strategic Depth*, has become disconnected with the reality on the ground. The policy of "zero problems with neighbors" and various diplomatic overtures have become ineffective after the Arab rebellions started to undermine political Islam, and Turkey's position as a role model has become more and more irrelevant.

As AKP runs short of values and principles to offer, it becomes increasingly aware that its only way out is changing the political juncture. The increased difficulty of addressing political subjects through the discourse of political Islam is leading the AKP to create a new juncture. As revealed by an analysis of the political and social developments in the last years, recent Turkish political history is in fact "an age of extremes."

This can be seen in the Gezi Park protests; the corruption probe of December 17-25 involving senior state officials; the new era in capital-state relations as unveiled by leaked conversations; political cleansing across the bureaucracy under the pretext of fighting against the "parallel state;" the direct election of the president of the republic by the populace and the political threshold

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created by this new legal status; media footage showing the state providing logistical support to ISIS; the Kobanê resistance and its domestic repercussions, the elections of June 7 when the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) crossed the 10% electoral threshold for the first time in history; the massacre of 33 youth in Suruç; the return of OHAL rule ("state of emergency") to the Kurdish provinces under the name of "special security zones;" air operations in northern Syria; the attacks on shops belonging to Kurds and on various political parties' offices in the week following September 6; and the ban on access to various media outlets, detentions and arrests.

In this chain of events, the AKP is acting as both the protagonist and spectator, striving to turn political crisis into an opportunity for domination. Here, its main strategy for gaining the upper hand is presidential monarchy.⁴ However, a series of developments, including the direct election of the president by the populace through the general elections of June 7 and beyond, have undermined the political position of AKP and Erdoğan. The regime and its cadres have become stuck, right on the verge of a "New Turkey." The recent military operations and prelude to civil war have proven that AKP is nothing but a copy of the "old Turkey" as far as its security paradigm is concerned.

All these events create the context for the rest of this article. However, we can focus on the AKP's positioning itself as a dominant mass party as a factor which cuts across different chains of events. The gap grows between the dominant ideology defended by the party and the political form it exercises, and AKP tries to close this gap through ideological articulation. Since the "New

Turkey project" has collapsed and the transition to presidential monarchy has failed after the elections of June 7, the regime now tries to reinforce its political line by capitalizing on the leadership cult, nationalism and warmongering. In this article, I will try to examine the AKP's ideological deadlock since the general elections, its difficulty in being the carrier of the ideology that it preaches to social classes, and the changes in the parameters of the regime as AKP's project of hegemony loses steam.

The legal configuration and two perspectives

An administration which relies on de facto rule leads to two kinds of risk.⁵ First, the government can arbitrarily define the political moment as it wishes. Any event or circumstance which threatens the interests of the government can be defined as an element of "state of emergency" or "crisis." Second, a system of administration and sanctions is created according to the character of the juncture thus defined. The state's control and violence is reinforced via security forces and the judiciary system. According to the French jurist Léon Duguit, the creation of exceptions to legality "leads to open-ended results." Under certain circumstances, this may bring about the possibility of despotism.⁶

If we follow Duguit's arguments, we could use the term despotism to define what is going on in Turkey. It is not a coincidence that Erdoğan talked of the presidency of the republic as "the executive presidency of the republic" before being elected, and simply as "presidency" after being

As a souvenir of the Meeting organized by the Federation of Turkey's Fruit Growers, Green Grocers and Bazaar Traders, President Erdoğan, was given a hand-knotted carpet.

elected. After remembering his statement that “The administrative system in Turkey has de facto changed,”⁷ we can point to two cases of de facto rule: First, he has used his presidential right to convene the cabinet, a right which presidents had refrained from after the military coup of September 12, 1980. Within the framework of his powers described in the Article 104 of the Constitution,⁸ Erdoğan called the cabinet meetings three times, and contributed to the regime’s transformation with this phenomenal gesture. This extraordinary situation which is not in line with the state’s traditions can nevertheless be explained by Erdoğan’s de jure powers.

Although these actions go against state traditions, they do fall within his constitutional powers, and Erdoğan concentrates more and more power at the Palace. Prior to the elections in June, Erdoğan tried to transfer his authority to the AKP. Erdoğan, who was expected to remain “impartial” as per the aforementioned laws, participated in the AKP’s electoral rallies, asked for 400 MPs from the population and debated with opposition parties as if he were a party leader - all of which suggested that he broke with his de jure position and moved towards a de facto presidency. By insisting on 400 MPs, Erdoğan took an active political role to safeguard the AKP’s single-party rule and thus suspended legality in the absence of any constitutional amendment.

Erdoğan’s and AKP’s request for 400 MPs in particular and demand for a shift to a new power scheme for “New Turkey” in general are related to their hegemonial project. Since Gezi, the AKP has been faced with a profound dilemma: The “New Turkey” project’s reliance on OHAL practices make it hard to distinguish its security paradigm from those of the past, and paints the image of a government which oscillates between the past and the future. Indeed AKP has chosen to abandon any references to the future, at least in the short term. The only maneuver available to the regime now is structural change with a legal and formal character. As the AKP loses its capacity to absorb class-based reactions, it requires a legal topos⁹ on which it can base its legitimacy and mobilize the state’s power.

The process-based interpretation presented by Duguit remains explanatory until a certain point; however, it does not offer us the methodology required to answer the question “Why does AKP insist on a presidential monocracy?” If we put it in a speculative way, “Has the AKP reached its natural limits?” or “Have a series of simultaneous and consecutive material relations placed a structural limit before the AKP?” The answer can be found through the perspective offered by Gramsci. The “advanced democracy” package put forth by the AKP and the project it formulates as

“New Turkey” constitute a project of hegemony. As such it has a number of internal conflicts and dynamics.

Consent and force exist simultaneously in projects of hegemony. When force comes to play a more prominent role than consent, it is possible to speak of a shift from hegemony to domination.¹⁰ All regimes which are based on force in the final instance have to depend on mechanisms of consent such as popular participation in politics or public services, as well as legal systems. Governments require a canon of laws and administrative authority in order to justify and legitimize their actions and policies. Erdoğan’s insistence on 400 MPs was a harbinger of his ultimate project. If Turkey transitions to a presidential system, then the de facto merger of the legislative, executive and judiciary powers will become legal, and this political sterilization will open the door to further maneuvers. Then, any reaction from within the party or from the opposition will be easily absorbed inside the limits of bourgeois law and parliamentary politics. AKP has described this model as the “Turkish style presidential system,”¹¹ emphasizing its desire to create a new establishment which goes beyond the limits of Western style parliamentarism.

The foreign media’s use of concepts such as authoritarianism or sultanism to describe what is happening in Turkey is a result of this development.¹² The personalization of power by Erdoğan and his clique within the regime reinforce the perception that an aggressive style is more important than meritocracy in public institutions, transparency in economics, and moderation in diplomacy, and that Turkey has abandoned pluralist parliamentary norms. We could refer to concepts such as Oriental despotism as described by Karl Wittfogel, liberal autocracy, or a Weberian definition of authority (*Herrschaft*) to put forth the argument that the AKP has gone beyond the limits of bourgeois parliamentary rule. Although explanatory to a certain extent, such theoretical schemes fail to interpret “authoritarianization” correctly.

There is a difference between authoritarian actions taken by Erdoğan or a single individual within the state apparatus, and the authoritarianization of the state apparatus as a whole. For a holistic reading of authoritarianization, we need to visit Poulantzas. His description of authoritarianization focuses on the relations between the state apparatus, dominant mass party and mid-level bureaucracy. In an authoritarian state apparatus, executive, legislative and judiciary branches de facto merge and the seat of political power shifts from the legislative to the executive. The technical and structural distinction between these branches disappears, and singular and per-



sonalized legal regulations put an end to the rule of law. As rule of law weakens, political power loses its prestige and may resort to antidemocratic and when necessary illegal means. As such the authoritarian state can overcome the crisis of the state and gets a chance to continue the “strong state” tradition which will safeguard the market rationality.¹³

The criticism of authoritarianism to “New Turkey” project is accurate only in a structural context. Otherwise, criticism inspired by humanist politics will single out Erdoğan and present him as the main antagonist, leading attention away from the other dynamics and antagonisms within the system. Underlying Turkish liberals’ frequent calls to normalization is a person-focused interpretation of authoritarianism, which suggests that politics will once again become rational after Erdoğan quits politics. Of course, it is possible to speak of authoritarianism on a personal level, too; however, what brings a person such as Erdoğan to his current position and grants him political clout is concrete relations in the form of the state. If we go back to our argument, Erdoğan’s position is not unimportant; however, this position can only be grasped within the context of party-state relations.

Father’s place in the body politic

In Lacan’s theory of psychoanalysis, the figure of the Father stands out. According to his conceptualization of the name-of-the-father (nom-du-

père), the Father reminds his children that he is the founder of the symbolic order and of the legal order, by saying “no!” and giving commands. Coupled with hierarchy, the name-of-the-father inscribes its name in the symbolic universe and thereby “symbolizes authority.”¹⁴ As such the Father, “regardless of his presence or absence” becomes “the symbolization of law-making and prohibitive authority.” As a cult and phenomenon, he may be likened to the steady leg of the drawing compass. Having had himself elected president of the republic, built the Palace as his fortress, organized rallies to call for the presidential system, and now trying to become a de facto president, Erdoğan holds a position within the regime and AKP corresponding to the name-of-the-father. With the efforts of AKP supporters and various public relations teams, various images and roles have been ascribed to Erdoğan in order to give a collective personality to the Father.

Erdoğan is described with adjectives such as “the founder of the AKP,” “the head of state,” “the man from Kasımpaşa” to show that he is a man of the people, “the tall man” to emphasize his physical predominance vis-à-vis other party leaders, and “commander in chief” as was the case at the latest rallies. This superiority in different areas inevitably imposes Erdoğan’s authority over the party and government. In this attempt to grant omnipotence to the Father, the body politic increasingly merges with Erdoğan’s body and his every sentence becomes like a piece of legislation or an article of law.

The celebrations of the anniversary of Istanbul's Conquest, which were organized by the AKP at the Yenikapı Square, with the participation of President Erdoğan just one week before the elections in June, turned into a de facto AKP election rally.



The 17th day of the Gezi Park resistance. Groups who came together to avoid the destruction of the last piece of green spot in the heart of Istanbul, continued to gather in the Gezi Park despite the police violence starting with the night of May 27, for protesting Prime Minister Erdoğan and AKP policies.

Nevertheless, Erdoğan's body, which is treated like the political and legal embodiment of the "nation's will" is becoming fragmented. Now that the *nom-du-père*, the commanding Father, cannot become the president, he feels increasingly trapped within his palace, so much so that he has asked for help with his status saying "This body no longer fits in this shirt" in various speeches.¹⁵

Although he is capable of exercising his constitutional powers in full, Erdoğan is well aware that as long as the current constitution and system remain intact, the advancement of his party and his career will slow down. In the imagination of the AKP, which plans to compartmentalize power in "New Turkey," there must be a hierarchical, clear-cut chain of command between Erdoğan and the party. However, the HDP has radically changed the distribution of seats in the parliament by passing the electoral threshold, and has thus suspended plans for a presidential monocarcy.

As such, there is no real tension between Erdoğan and AKP, which in fact tries to render the regime more manageable by resolving the crisis of legitimacy and representation with new legal configurations. Erdoğan actively intervened in the coalition talks following the June elections, the selection of the AKP's new Executive Committee and the creation of the new lists for MP candidates, which suggests that he preserves his position as *nom-du-père* albeit with some loss of prestige.

AKP cadres also further their political care-

ers by instrumentalizing the images and symbolism associated with the leadership cult around Erdoğan, in some kind of a symbiosis. However, Erdoğan's being stuck within the Palace hampers this mutually beneficial relation. The party cadres tie their destiny to that of Erdoğan, which creates a structure that can stand only as long as Erdoğan's political presence lasts. This worries those party members who defend a more institutionalized party, as well as Abdullah Gül and others who define the AKP as a movement of the "virtuous."¹⁶

The concept and ideological milestone of political war

Another recent indication that the "New Turkey" project has come to a standstill, is AKP's attempt to overcome its electoral defeat through ideological revision. The decline of the "New Turkey" momentum, brought about by the HDP's electoral victory around the slogan "We will not let Erdoğan become president"¹⁷, led to a new course of policy after the elections. For the Turkish *raison d'état* in general, it is not acceptable for the Kurdish political movement to receive six million votes or 13%, and then get two seats in the caretaker government. However, for the AKP in particular, their project has been blocked after the HDP made it to the parliament as the fourth party. This has prompted the AKP to take certain political and ideological measures, turning pragmatist mane-

uvers from means to ends for the party.

On the political front, the AKP has started to organize domestic politics on the model of low-density warfare, mobilized the security bureaucracy and initiated work on new legislation. The government referred to Law no. 2565 on Military Forbidden Zones and Security Zones to declare “special security zones” to close down and isolate Kurdish provinces.¹⁸ On the ideological front, after realizing that it has lost its Kurdish voters in these provinces to the HDP for good, the AKP moved into the stage of absolute antagonism.¹⁹ To counter the HDP’s political theses, the AKP has tried to portray the HDP as a micro Kurdish party outside of mainstream politics.

Often identifying the HDP with the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) in speeches and debates, the AKP centered its propaganda around the slogan “We do not want PKK in the parliament” as was seen in the “Millions Unite in a Single Voice Against Terrorism” meeting held in Istanbul. Although they state that “There never was a Kurdish question in this country,”²⁰ the AKP attempts to criminalize the HDP, which has become the strongest party in the Kurdish provinces, and thus directly or indirectly lays the groundwork for ethnic polarization.

In the week following September 6, 2015, the members and offices of the HDP and left-wing political parties were subjected to attacks, arson and lynching. Although these were organized attacks, the presence of large masses who heeded this call points to the basis of such a polarization. After the general elections in June, the word “Kurd” was rendered synonymous with “terrorist” in a systematical and regular effort.

The transformation of the word “Kurd” into an object of hatred has a long history. What is specific about the AKP rule is the new threshold crossed by the HDP—the Kurdish political subject—and the regime’s attempt to respond to this through special operations. As the political discourse targeting the HDP and its officials becomes more and more established, it becomes possible to mobilize people on ethnic grounds. Mobs with nationalist and racist motivations entrust their personality to this mass mobilization and start to circulate freely in a search for an object of hatred.

To understand the origins of hatred in terms of mass psychology and political psychology, we could turn to Terry Eagleton. What underlies nationalist and provocative fundamentalism is the attempt to build one’s self in antagonism to one’s opponent. Eagleton suggests that the ugly pleasure taken in destroying the other becomes the only way of proving to ourselves that we are alive. As such, this hollowness in the core identity of aggressive mobs is like a premature taste of death. The way to overcome this trauma is to

liquidate those who live with their own identities. According to Eagleton, the Nazis viewed Jews as a slimy nothingness or surplus, a decadent sign of humanity’s shameful fragility. In order to preserve the integrity of their identity, Nazis had to eradicate this sign.²¹ Likewise, the word and image of “Kurd” delay the aggressors’ coming to terms with their own class positions and conflicts, and every second of this delay helps mask the naked political violence employed by the powers that be.

What is needed to translate the ethnic polarization in the society into votes is a political structure capable of circulating the nationalist discourse skillfully and appealing to subjects through such a discourse. In this climate built on objects of hatred, the AKP strives to reach beyond the boundaries of political Islam to become a center of attraction for the masses with conservative and nationalist tendencies. After the Suroç massacre, the Prime Minister launched an “anti-terror campaign” saying that “From today onwards, this has become a large-scale operation. It is not limited to a single day or region.” However, under the pretext of fighting the terrorism of ISIS, the PKK and the DHKP/C, the government is conducting police operations to intimidate the opposition and the “campaign” is supposed to protect the “motherland.”

This political logic centered around the protection of the motherland after the general elections is shaped not by a discourse rooted in political Islam, but a discourse which can mobilize the masses towards a concrete target and image of the enemy. Erdoğan, who had once criticized the AKP’s ex-MP from the province of Ordu, İdris Naim Şahin, for his nationalistic reflexes while he served as the Minister of the Interior, now reintegrates nationalist codes to the party’s ideology to secure its future.

In debates on nationalism with rival politicians, AKP uses the rhetorical tactic of discursive struggle.²² This discursive struggle, aiming at not presenting rational arguments but discrediting and marginalizing the opponent, is inherent to capitalist democracy. While the previous discursive slogan “One Nation, One Flag, One State” had a more communitarian tone, now the defense of the country’s unity is put forth with emphases on being “national” and “native.” Erdoğan has requested 550 national and native MPs at the rally “Millions Unite in a Single Voice Against Terrorism,” proving that his concept of identity overlaps with the nationalism of the MHP (Nationalist Action Party). In this discursive dedifferentiation with the MHP, the only factor which distinguishes the AKP is its capacity of mobilizing the state apparatus and accelerating the ideological circulation via this apparatus.

Rather than entering a nationalism com-

petition with the MHP in the elections, the AKP turns the nationalist ideology into the dominant ideology. As a “comprehensive and historical” ideology, nationalism describes the ethnic group, nation, village, tribe and denomination to which the subject belongs.²³ The more frequently these descriptions are emphasized, the more polarization and fragmentation are aggravated. This momentum turns into a vicious circle, which may in the short term lead to more votes for AKP. However, it will destroy the basis for cohabitation in the long term. Continuing the political debate with HDP through “comprehensive and historical” codes brings about the possibility of civil war. “Civil war is a highly tumultuous period for the society and state,”²⁴ and the distinction between the war’s initiators and fighters usually disappears as violence begets chaos.

The political position that the AKP assumes due to its ideological stance is the concept of political war, which brings civil war as a possibility into the picture. Erdoğan had taken a defensive position during the days of Gezi, saying “This is a new War of Independence for us.” Thus he had declared that he was at war, and branded everyone who opposed his party’s interest as “traitors” and “lobbyists.” Today, the regime’s strategy prioritizes not defense but offense, and organizes domestic politics along the lives of the war concept, which polarizes opposing sides, radicalizes politics, and aggravates fanaticism.

The shift of hatred towards different individuals and institutions helps the regime gain time to veil the conflicts created by the AKP and Erdoğan. In order not to lose its grip on power, the AKP has

mobilized the police and army, starting a period of hegemony armored with force. It tries to prove the “strength of the state” in the eyes of all social groups and classes, renew its image and take restorative measures to secure the political success required for the presidential system. What AKP overlooks however is the dialectic nature of the war that it has started for political purposes. Hobbes had written the following in *Leviathan*:

“And because all signs of hatred, or contempt, provoke to fight; insomuch as most men choose rather to hazard their life than not to be revenged, we may in the eighth place, for a law of nature, set down this precept: that no man by deed, word, countenance, or gesture, declare hatred or contempt of another. The breach of which law is commonly called contumely.”²⁵

Conclusion without solution

“I call something impossible, if its existence is in contradiction with itself.”²⁶ This aphorism of Spinoza’s can be adapted to current-day Turkey: After setting out with visions of a “New Turkey,” “Strong Turkey” and “Turkey 2023,” the AKP ended its democratic overtures once these came into conflict with its interests. It chose to disregard “the national will”—once an object of fetish—as soon as it manifested itself in another party. All these point to the impossibility of the AKP. The party, which has invested general elections with its desire for the presidential system due to the requirements mentioned above, cannot be reduced to the Palace; nor can it be abstracted from

People carrying flags of DISK (Confederation of Revolutionary Worker's Unions) walking to the Gezi Park on the 9th day of the resistance. (On the sidewalk: Tayyip, this is the beginning of the end)



it. An analysis on the regime must refrain from synthetic distinctions between Erdoğan and the AKP and instead focus on the structural political and ideological atmosphere created in Turkey in the last few months. Even as the AKP's "impossibility" crystallizes day after day, it is in vain to wait for any normalization—which would be like waiting for Godot.

- 1 Sessiz Devrim: Türkiye'nin Demokratik Değişim ve Dönüşüm Envanteri (2002–2014), Kamu Düzeni ve Güvenliği Müsteşarlığı, Ankara, 2014, p. 10
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DEMOCRACY

People-centered refugee policies are possible

Dr. Doğu Şimşek

Millions of people have been obliged to migrate to other countries due to war, oppression and ethnic conflict in their countries of origin. The protection of migrants, asylum policies, and living conditions of those who have been obliged to migrate are becoming some of the most complicated issues in the world in conjunction with international migration.

According to the data reported by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), by the end of 2014, there were approximately 11,699,278 refugees in the world and 42,873,743 people have been forced to migrate because of the oppression and cruelties they suffered in their countries.¹

According to the same report, the most significant reason for the increase in the refugee population, which has reached the highest numbers to date since 1994, is the ongoing wars in Syria, Afghanistan, Somali, Iraq and Sudan as well as the conflicts in Kongo and Mali. The war in Syria is highlighted in the report as “the newest key factor of the global forced migration.”²

International migration, especially forced migration, has become a phenomenon jeopardizing the existence, sustainability and development of migration-receiving nation-states, and therefore required to be controlled. This being the case, international migration policies have been especially based on adaptation of migrants and refugees to the destination country of migration. The migration policies of the nd frontier countries, which have recently been discussed widely once again with the occasion of Syrian refugees struggling to pass into Europe, have proved unsustainable beca-

use they aim to control the flow of migration and regard migrants and refugees as a population that manipulates economic resources. The recent policies implemented by Europe in order to restrict forced migration have also created a profitable field of operation for human trafficking.

Academic studies criticizing national and international refugee and asylum policies agree that the policies do not take the human factor into consideration adequately. Although policies on international migration and refugees vary from one country to another, they commonly concentrate on controlling borders of nation-states, protecting their citizens and national identities, as well as restricting accommodation, education and health services they provide for refugees (Schuster 2003).

As for Turkey, the first regulatory public document on refugees and asylum-seekers is the settlement law (İskân Kanunu) adopted in 1934. The law is concerned with the domestic settlement of prospective refugee and migration influxes into Turkey, and was prepared from a nationalist standpoint in the nation-state building process. In the law Turkey defined migrants as “individuals of Turkish descent and culture.”

Due to the massive increase in individual asylum-seeking cases, asylum regulations were issued in 1994. This regulation requires applicants who qualify to be refugees or asylum-seekers to make an application to official authorities within 10 days after their arrival; they are therefore supposed to know the law of the destination country they are trying to take refuge in. During the accession negotiations to EU, it had been stated that Turkey should enact laws concerning migration and asylum. However, the definition of a migrant in the 1934 law has been preserved in the new law that went into effect in 2006.

In the 1951 Geneva Convention, the term refugee applies to any person who, “owing to wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race,



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religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.”

The countries that signed the Geneva Convention adopted the criteria specified within the scope of this definition. The terms refugee and asylum-seeker in the Turkish refugee law have been defined with respect to geographical restrictions, as opposed to the definitions in the international law, although the constitution of the Republic of Turkey has been based on the 1951 Geneva Convention since 1968. Accordingly, Turkey can recognize the status of refugee only for citizens of the member states of the European Council.

The persons coming from countries other than members of the European Council have not been accepted as refugees; thus, the Syrian asylum-seekers have been legally allowed “to stay in Turkey for a reasonable period of time” and they have been granted “the right to temporary asylum until being accepted as refugees by a third country” according to 1994 Regulation on Asylum and Sanctuary. Until they are accepted as refugees by a third country, they are entitled to “temporary protection” and hence allowed to stay in Turkey.³ That is, the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey have not been able to acquire refugee status due to geographical restric-

tions in the definition. The current situation, therefore, result in impediments regarding rights and security of the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey.

The status of the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey

Pursuing an open door policy for the Syrian asylum seekers, Turkey accepted the Syrians in refugee camps set up near the border crossings. The first group of asylum seekers entered Turkey on April 29, 2011.⁴ This group of 252 people was first defined as “guests.” Then they were declared to be under “temporary protection” by a circular letter issued by the Prime Minister’s Office in April 2012.⁵ Thus, in a sense, they are currently hosted with a “guest” status. The main factor in granting such a status is the high number of asylum seekers.⁶

Within the scope of this legal status, the persons in question are allowed to enter and exit through the border, all their humanitarian requirements are met and they are provided with security. The “temporary protection” referred in the circular letter has been defined in a report by Human Rights Investigation Commission at Grand National Assembly of Turkey within the following specifications:

“Temporary Protection: It is an exceptional procedure employed in a situation where there is a massive influx of people who can not return to their countries of origin or where such a situation is likely to take place immediately, in order to provide

Since April 2011, almost 2 million Syrians escaped to Turkey. According to the Foreign Ministry, in June this year, due to the aerial bombardment targeting ISIS and the related clashes, approximately 13.000 Syrians entered the country within only ten days. While waiting for the Turkish officials to open the gates at the border, many Syrians were forced by ISIS militants to turn back.

Istanbul-Edirne highway. Syrians, who were refused tickets by bus companies are walking to the border city Edirne.



urgent and temporary protection especially for the benefit of the persons in question or other persons in need of protection.”⁷

The above definition neither includes any information concerning rights nor does it specify the scope and limits of “temporary protection.” Although “the Law of Foreigners and International Protection,” enacted on April 4, 2013 and put into effect on April 2014, presents a legal framework to respond the needs and security of the Syrian asylum seekers, it does not prescribe any permanent solution for them to live in conditions with dignity.⁸ Provision 22 of the regulation prescribes to issue identity certificates for foreigners under temporary protection in order for them to be able to conduct their legal and social affairs. It is prescribed in the regulation that the persons with identity certificates are going to have access to health care, education, the labor market, social aid and services.

The Syrian asylum seekers living outside the camps are not provided with housing. Because the asylum seekers have to rely on themselves to access to housing, they are obliged to live under poor conditions with serious financial handicaps. According to a circular letter on foreigners’ access to education, issued in September 2014 by the Ministry of National Education, the foreigners under temporary protection have been granted access to education in schools supervised by the Provincial Directorate for National Education in each province, and in temporary centers of education. An asylum seeker must have a residence permit, a temporary protection identification certificate or Foreigner’s Credentials to be able to register in schools or temporary centers of education. This condition prevents unrecorded asylum seekers from having access to education. The Syrians who want to attend universities in Turkey must

pass the Foreign Students Exam (YÖS) held by the universities.

The asylum seekers have the right to health care but this right is restricted. According to the regulation, the asylum seekers are expected to pay medical fees for organ transplants, prothesis, orthosis, hemodialysis or the long-term treatment of chronic diseases.

Work permits for refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey is subject to the law no 4817, which is the Law on Work Permits of Foreigners. This law states that the work permits of asylum seekers are to be organized by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, yet it has been declared in the Regulation on Temporary Protection issued on November 2014 that those having temporary protection identification certificates, i.e. the registered refugees, can apply to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ÇSGB) in order to obtain a work permit in sectors, lines of work and geographical regions to be decided by the Council of Ministers. The ÇSGB declared in February 2015 that they were planning to make certain arrangements concerning the Syrian refugees; nevertheless, the arrangement in question has yet to take effect.

Even though certain arrangements in relation to refugees’ access to basic rights have been done within the framework of the regulation, still the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey are considered as a temporary crisis/problem rather than being tackled with an approach based on rights and freedoms.

The situation of the Syrian asylum seekers living outside the camps

According to the data released in September 2015 by the Office of the United Nations High Commis-

oner for Refugees (UNHCR), the overall number of the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey is 1,938,999.9 As far as the numbers declared in August by the Ministry of Internal Affairs Migration Department is concerned, 262,134 Syrian and Iraqi asylum seekers live in 25 refugee camps in ten provinces. Because of the crowded camps, limited freedom of movement, and the likelihood of staying in Turkey for a long time, 90% of the Syrian asylum seekers live in urban areas. Most Syrian asylum seekers trying to solve their housing problems with their own resources can hardly afford the rent. Most live with more than one family in poor conditions in small flats. The Syrian asylum seekers I spoke with state that they suffered from the uncertain status they have, not being able to get a job, exploitation of labor, limited access to education, and expensive housing costs. They also make clear that their lives are made difficult in Turkey due to discrimination and racism. They say they would like to go to Europe in order to receive the status and rights they are denied in Turkey, and to make a dignified life for themselves.

The situation of the Syrian asylum seekers who are forced to migrate to neighboring countries due to conflict and war environment in their country was brought to the global agenda after a photo of Alan Kurdi was published on August 2015 as his dead body washed ashore. The discussions of EU member states on the situation of the Syrian asylum seekers, which had been going on for two months, become more about how to protect their borders than being about people-centered discussions. More and more migrants lose their lives in the Mediterranean Sea each passing day.

According to official figures, in the year 2014, 4077 people lost their lives on the way to Europe while the number has exceeded 1500 in the first quarter of 2015. The tragic stories of migrants who strive to arrive in European countries by dangerous means indicate that states must revise their refugee policies, and produce people-centered policies instead of border protection and security-oriented policies. It is necessary to remind states, which consider refugees a problem or try to obtain material benefits from them, of the fact that there are indeed people escaping from war regions. Sharing stories of refugees is one way to do this.

Furthermore, the countries paving the way for the conditions of war must take the responsibility to help people escaping from war and accept these people in their territory. The EU should start to change its the refugee policy by terminating the Dublin II Agreement that confers greater responsibility on the neighboring countries and causes inequality in the EU.

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ECOLOGY

Is there food security in Turkey*

Bülent Şık

Food security is often understood as just being a technical issue. Although this understanding receives wide acceptance, its accuracy is open to question. The word security now has extremely negative connotations. Activities carried out in an effort to render something safe are also considered a way to put every aspect of life under restraint and control, thus integrating them into market processes. And the issue of food security, usually approached as a technical-hygienic problem, is no longer exempt from discussions about security regimes.

It would thus be more correct to start our discussion with a definition expressing the how the issue of food security is generally understood, then to ask why this issue cannot be approached only with a technical perspective and finally to try to understand the situation in our country from this framework.

Food security is an approach dealing with the processing, preparation, transportation, storage and presentation to the end consumer of foods in a way that prevents biological, physical and chemical factors from causing foodborne diseases. The fundamental aim is to ensure the sanitation of food, beginning from the sowing of seeds to the serving of food on the table, and to make sure that foods thus conserve their nutritious qualities. Secure food, on the other hand, is defined as food rendered suitable for consumption after being purified of any tainted and infectious elements. And everything is done in order to ensure these constitute the technical aspects of food security.

This definition, which limits the issue to a technical framework without taking many issues into consideration, each of which constitutes real threats to food security. For example, public poli-

cies that have massively liquidated family farming in the last 15 years are not regarded as a problem. Family farming and peasant agriculture, the backbone of which is carried out by women, however, is crucial for ensuring food security in the face of industrial agriculture undergirded by national and international policies.

There is also no attention paid to the privatization of commonly used water via hydroelectric power plants constructed nearly on all rivers, thus leading to the disruption of food production activities of people living in those places and to the subjection of these activities to corporate interests. Again, liquidation of public institutions regulating agricultural activities, inadequacy of subsidies provided to farmers (for example, even in the context of staples such as cereals and legumes; the focus not on improvements in production but on agricultural policies based on facilitating imports), abandonment of agriculture in the last 15 years by approximately one fourth of the rural population, i.e. 6.6 million people and their migration to cities¹, are not deemed issues of food security.

The actors and conditions of the production of food items, precarious working conditions or subcontracting work in the food sector are not even mentioned.

Causes and factors

The prevalent understanding of food security in our country tends to have a superficial approach that dwells not upon the causes but upon the factors of the issue at hand. It is an approach that is far from dealing with the issue and how it might look in the future. Its grasp of matters is embedded in a "now" defined by the market. This is not just the case with public institutions which are supposed to ensure food security; it is also the case with academic circles and consumer organizations



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Enjoy your meal- but how?

that have authority in this area and should exhibit different perspectives, and also with various non-governmental organizations operating both in the areas of the food sector and food security. For example, despite the fact that the geographical region in which our country lies will be confronted with a very serious drought in the next 30 years due to the current climate crisis, it cannot be said that this issue has even been dealt with in food security congresses with the significant participation.²

The lack of attention to political issues creating difficulties for food security, some of which we have tried to refer above, is not an attitude particular to our country. But there are some issues of food security which have not been studied yet, and it is safe to say that this is something rather particular to our country.

Risky locations and topics for food security studies

In food security studies, there are some locations which are impossible to research. For example, there is no information about the kind of problems experienced in our prisons in terms of food security. To put it concretely, there is no study trying to answer the following questions: How are the qualities of food items obtained by prisons determined in technical specifications? How are these specifications prepared? How is it understood whether the obtained food items contain the qualities stated in the specifications? This is a matter that can only be understood through laboratory analyses. In what kind of laboratories are these analyses carried out? Which food products were analysed last year or in the previous year? What is total number of analyses? What is the fate of non-conforming

products? Tons of food items can be purchased via tenders. These foods are submitted to the prison administration not all at once but in part and at certain time intervals. During the delivery period, how is it controlled that these food items contain the qualities stated in the technical specifications of the tender? How do convicts and prisoners with diseases like celiac disease receive nutrition?

In the face of burning questions like torture, maltreatment and isolation, problems of food security in prisons might seem trivial, but this is not so. The most significant factor influencing a person imprisoned for years is what s/he eats and how s/he eats it. The lack of any study on this issue is in fact a dramatic situation.

The leading risky topic is the Kurdish question

Agriculture is an activity where plant and animal production are simultaneously carried out. It becomes gradually evident that it is a craft rather than a science, not a homogeneous activity that can be executed in the same way everywhere. Comprehension of the relations between plants and animal species living in a certain regions thus gains critical importance. Acquiring products and securing life is possible only by taking care of these relations.

The southeastern region's agriculture-based economy has largely been devastated. Starting from the 1980's when armed conflicts began, forced evacuation of villages and migrations caused more than three million people to leave their land. If one considers the fact that these abandoned areas constitute 16% of the total agricultural area in Turkey, the colossal loss of potential in plant and animal

production would be better understood.³

These people have been dispossessed, having been forced to leave behind their homes, lands, animals, pastures, gardens, trees, i.e., nearly everything they had. Alongside other aspects, this is also an issue of food security. For there is a close relation between the abandoned, (forcibly) evacuated villages and various unhealthy chemical materials contained in foods served up in front of us all. Whatever its original reason(s), the abandonment of villages has decreased self-sufficiency and diversity in food production; agriculture is corporatized and we end up having to feed ourselves with unhealthy food produced with a lot of chemicals in a market controlled by a few companies.

Another risky topic is the destructive foreign policy pursued by the AKP government to support the war in Syria. It goes without saying that the fragmentation of all the productive infrastructure of Syria would cause a problem of food security, just as was the case when the US caused the same problem in Iraq. For instance, particularly in big cities like Basra and Fallujah, there is very serious heavy metal and radioactive material pollution in hundreds of residential areas in Iraq. The food production system in Iraq has been irretrievably devastated and the same disruptive process is now being experienced in Syria. Geography is destiny. The climate crisis, whose violence will gradually increase in the following decades, will make boundaries meaningless. There will be massive population movements. Therefore, it is a profound illusion to suppose that it would be enough to ensure food security only in our own country. But unfortunately, this is what we now have as the prevalent understanding.

Focusing on a concrete example by briefly touching upon the subject of pesticides might shed some light to the larger picture.

Pesticides are hazardous chemicals used in agricultural production. They leave some residues in foods and these residues give rise to various health problems. This is why it is necessary to inquire into whether there are some pesticide residues in food products. In this respect, the primary institution in our country is the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. The Ministry of Health, another competent authority, is in charge of controlling pesticide residues only in water.

An example about the general situation: Pesticides

The country-wide control surveys conducted in the last three years by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock report that the rate of food products exceeding the pesticide residue limits allowed in food legislation is %2.5. It is stated that, for exam-

ple, in Antalya, which is one of the highest-ranking cities in fruit and vegetable production, 12.583 food samples were analysed in 2013 and 11.893 samples in 2014 with the purpose of detecting pesticide residues, and that the rate of food containing pesticide residues were %2.01 and %2.50, respectively.⁴ However, a scholarly research using the same years as base contradicted the statement by the Ministry.⁵

In the scope of this study, (figures in parentheses indicate the number of samples analysed), tomatoes (163), peppers (82), cucumbers (82), marrows (25) and strawberries (39), i.e., 400 food samples in total were analysed in 2013. It is specified that 21% of these samples contained pesticide residues exceeding the limit values stated in the relevant legislation. Similarly, tomatoes (106), peppers (53), cucumbers (37), marrows (22), strawberries (21), aubergines (16) and oranges (54), i.e., 309 food samples in total were analysed in 2014 and it is specified that 25% of these samples contained pesticide residues exceeding the limit values stated in the relevant legislation.

There is no unity of method in the Ministry's laboratories for pesticide analyses; there are hundreds of pesticides that can leave residues in foods, but the number of pesticides whose residues are researched is not the same in every laboratory. In addition, the inclusion of pesticide analyses of export products into the domestic control work understates the residue problem. These are the most salient reasons for the differences between the Ministry's statement and the results obtained from the study.

A more specific example: Glyphosate

Glyphosate is the most commonly used pesticide in the world. However, as is the case in many other pesticides, glyphosate also has the risk of contaminating other products, seeping into the water table or leaving residues in foodstuff. Put up for sale in the form of various formulations, glyphosate is defined as a chemical disrupting hormonal system and causing diverse health problems. Babies and children are more susceptible to such hazardous effects.

According to the data presented by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, 305 tons of glyphosate were used in 2001, and by 2013, this figure multiplied by 15 times, approximately reaching 4500 tons. As long as there is an increase in the use of this chemical, characterized by the International Agency for Research on Cancer as a carcinogenic, the risk of food and water sources to be contaminated with glyphosate will also increase. Glyphosate can retain its poisonous effect in soil for six

months and for three to four months if it contaminates water sources. Nonetheless, the government has not conducted any research about the residues it is leaving in food, soil and water; glyphosate residues are not looked for in routine pesticide analyses. Unfortunately, we have no proper data about this chemical, which is now being heatedly discussed all over the world.

A futile method in ensuring food security: Exposing companies

For several years, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock has been announcing to the public those companies that have been determined to make inappropriate products. However, a comparison of all exposition lists announced by the Ministry between 2011-2015 shows that the names of some firms always appear in different years. In other words, these firms continually commit an act, which constitutes a crime in accordance with legal legislation, or pay the penalty and continue to make inappropriate products. Exposing companies as a punishment technique is only a show and has no real consequences.

Current neoliberal economic understanding is based on speed, which means legal regulations and implementations that slow down the production-consumption process are seen as obstacles. However, ensuring food security requires a slowly operating system. Depending on the characteristics of the food product in question, determining if there are potentially risky components can sometimes last for days. Exported goods are extremely loosely controlled in our country or worse, there is not even any control, as was the case last year in the scandal of exported baby food with genetically modified organisms.

To conclude, the government now does not have any regulative or controlling function with regard to public health and environmental health. By extension, its competence in ensuring food security has also vanished. So, what kind of issues must be taken into consideration and what must be done?

Suggestions

1) For exported and domestically produced food stuffs, monitoring and control programs must be carefully planned. The Ministry must not only announce its general evaluations based on analysis results, but also all data sets that form the basis of analyses. This would enable us to make a proper evaluation of both the general situation and all institutions at work in this area.

2) Family farming must be supported.

3) An independent unit must be formed in order to deal with the relations between climate crisis and food security and to produce situation assessments about this matter.

4) Future-oriented peaceful plans and policies must be arranged for dealing with the inevitable migration that will begin as a consequence of the imminent drought and the prospective destruction caused by the wars in Iraq and Syria.

5) A study must be made in order to reveal the situation of prisons in terms of food security. It is important that the study be carefully planned so as to take into account the health problems of current prisoners and those released from prisons.

6) A peaceful solution must be found to the Kurdish question. This issue is crucial for us to be able to overcome problems of food production and food security that are being caused by the climate crisis. It is crucial not only for our country but also for neighboring countries.

** I would like to thank Demet Şahende Dinler for her review of the article and valuable suggestions.*

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3 People Force to Migrate within the Country: Kurds in Turkey – A Kurdish Human Rights Project Report 2002. http://www.khrp.org/khrp-news/human-rights-documents/doc_download/49-kuert-goecue.html

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ECOLOGY

Mega projects and birds' migration routes

Zeynel Arslangündoğdu

Population growth in Istanbul has led to a vertical and horizontal expansion of the city, giving rise to a significant number of new settlements constructed on open spaces, agricultural areas, water basins and forests.¹ In particular, projects of different magnitude, planned and implemented over the last ten years, have started to manifest their negative effects upon urban nature and identity.

show dramatic results. For example, a large proportion of the wildlife species in Turkey live in Istanbul: 125 of 405 identified butterfly species; 35 of 157 frog and reptile species, 328 of 481 bird species, and 38 of 149 mammalian species live in Istanbul.^{1,4} It is obviously easy to have a glimpse of the richness of Istanbul's biological diversity by looking at all these comparisons. Moreover, eleven of Turkey's Important Natural Areas (TIN) are located within Istanbul.⁵

Birds' migration routes in Istanbul

Istanbul is one of the important bird migration routes within the Western Palearctic region. This route is used by storks, raptors and passeriformes in spring and fall, and by water birds in winter.

According to scientific studies carried out in Istanbul, an approximate number of 400,000 storks and 200,000 raptors migrate in spring and fall; tens of thousands of passeriformes, and thousands of water bird species and charadriiformes migrate in different seasons.^{6,7} Soaring birds migrate between March and May in spring, and between August and October in fall. The spring migration of soaring birds intensifies in northern Istanbul. In fall migrations, storks often pass through the Sea of Marmara over Büyükçekmece, Küçükçekmece, Yeşilköy, Zeytinburnu, Eminönü and the Princes' Islands.

The Effects on Wild Life by Mega Projects Like The Third Bridge, the Third airport and Channel Istanbul

It is clear that urban development in our country has tended to be focused on highway-centered growth.¹ With the construction of the third bridge, the building of the Marmara motorway will pro-

Many factors enrich urban nature and especially its biological diversity in Istanbul, such as its position as a bridge between the European and Anatolian continents, the connection between the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara, and the Bosphorus, and the urban climate and geological structure. One of the most globally important bird migration routes passes through Istanbul. There is a considerable number of migratory birds soaring over the Bosphorus. All this richness in the diversity of living spaces have so far been protected together with all these features, making it possible for many plant and animal species to continue their lives.

There are approximately 2500 flowering plants and ferns in the natural flora of Istanbul. For example, in Netherlands, a country eight times larger than Istanbul with respect to its surface area, there are 1600 plant species, and 1850 plant species in England, a country forty-seven times larger than Istanbul. Again, the number of plant species in Poland, a country approximately sixty times larger than Istanbul, is nearly the same as that of Istanbul.² Seven of Turkey's Important Plant Areas (IPA) are located within the provincial borders of Istanbul.³ Istanbul hosts one fourth of the 10,000 plant species located overall in Turkey.

A look at Istanbul's faunistic diversity will



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more urban development and the population of Istanbul will increase by almost a third. Although it is expected that the third bridge will relieve traffic congestion, it will also bring its own congestion. The location of the third bridge and the Northern Marmara motorway route have been specified purely on political grounds, not according to scientific study. At a time when the bridge construction is nearing completion and there is ongoing the planning of viaducts and green-ecological bridges on the motorway route, no attention is being paid to expert opinions. Many newspapers reported that bird migration was used as an excuse for the change in the route before a comprehensive public statement about the actual motorway route was made. If bird migrations had been taken into consideration, these interrelated projects should not have been planned and carried out in the first place.

Urban population growth and spatial expansion have a significant effect on wild life spaces, especially road construction. These effects on wild life have short and long-term impacts.^{8, 9} Among the short-term effects, one can point out to psychological effects (changes in pulse, stress levels and hormones for wild life species), diseases, displacement, forced migration and unrest. And as for long term effects, one can count a rise in the mortality rate, a decrease in birth rate, decreases in species density, imbalances in species distribution, and changes in species diversity and extinction.

During the construction of the bridge and preparatory work for the motorway on the route

over which link roads are planned to pass, more than one million trees have been cut down. These trees are home to many bird and mammalian species. Approximately 40 local and 30 summer migrant bird species, i.e. 70 bird species in total, and an approximate number of 20 mammalian species living there and breeding in the same region every year have thus lost their living spaces. The motorway space of approximately 260 hectares, extending from the Bosphorous to the D020 highway (D010-01 until 2006) from around the Belgrade Forest, will directly lose their status as wild life areas. A look at the road construction carried out in the motorway area will show that road widths of 100 meters have sometimes expanded to 200 meters. Calculations have been made about the per hectare intensity of birds living in the Belgrade Forest, which is very close to the project area.¹⁰ According to this calculation, four members of the Fringillidae family living here per hectare will not be able to breed in this area now transformed into a road and 780 great tits will not be able to nest here. If one re-configures this calculation for the 70 species of passeriformes living within the project area, it will be understood that ten thousands of passeriformes are going to lose their right to live and nest over the area taken over by the road. Resting and lodging places of migrant birds are also being destroyed. As migrant birds tend to rest in stable areas, they will not be able to use the area taken over and affected by the road. Storks, in particular, rest at night in trees located in forests with a certain density.

Many wild life species are disturbed by the

Despite massive protests, construction work of the Third Bosphorus Bridge started in May 2013. Piers of the bridge are set up in Poyrazköy on the Anatolian, and Garipçe, Sarıyer on the European side of the city.

bridge and road construction work. Some of these species have been displaced. At different times in October of 2013, two families of wild boars reported in the news, a herd of nearly 20 members, swam across the Bosphorous, thus passing from the European side of the city to the Anatolian side. The fate of the remaining families, a herd of nearly 80 members staying in the Rumelifeneri wild life development site, is yet unknown. In 2015, a series of young wild boars swam across the Bosphorous to land in Tarabya and Bebek, reaching the city through the streams flowing into the Bosphorous. The work carried out in these projects also impinges upon breeding periods and numbers of animals bred, and often causes miscarriages.

Bridges and highways disintegrate and decrease the number of wild life habitats. Every space occupied by a wild life species (which means its habitat) has a carrying capacity. A habitat is a limited place, so the number of potential animals is limited with the habitat's carrying capacity. The populations of wild life species are determined by their carrying capacity, which is determined in turn by the size of their habitat. Carrying capacity is directly reduced as habitats are disintegrated and narrowed due to bridges and highways. And this, of course, shrinks the populations of these species.¹

The completion of bridges and highways will pave the way for traffic congestion in this region and the pollutants exuded from vehicles will continue to threaten wild life. Similarly, noise pollution will rise on the sides of the highway, which will again disturb wild animals. Worst of all, territorial wild animals will be prevented from passing through road routes after the completion of highways. In this living space, delimited by the Bosphorous, the city and now with the highway, wild animals will have inadequate supply of food, which will drastically reduce their numbers.¹ In addition, there will be an increase in the relationship between relatives, which will increasingly reduce the number of healthy populations. Genetic pollution and disease factors will have a negative impact on these populations every passing day. Rising traffic congestion on linking roads will not only impact the number of habitats of wild animals but also increase the risk of them being the victims of traffic accidents while passing through the roads. Accidents will surely damage wild animals and lead to the loss of their lives.

As for the Third airport project area, 81% of the area is composed of forests, 9% of lakes, and 4% of pastures, dry farming land and brushwood. 94% of the project area is a suitable living space for birds. Moreover, this area is located on the bird migration route. Among soaring birds, more than three thousand storks and more than one thousand raptors use this area in spring, and approxi-

mately two 200,000 birds in fall.⁶ Additionally, ten thousands of water birds, charadriiformes and gulls, and hundred of thousands passeriformes fly over this area during both their migration and relocation. When the third airport project was first brought to the agenda, it was considered to be the second biggest airport of Europe; however, public statements have been made to state that it is now planned to be the biggest airport in the world. The Atatürk Airport, situated in the south of Istanbul, is open to aviation accidents during the fall migration season; and considering the air traffic and the numerical frequency of soaring birds, it is more than clear that the third airport, situated in the north of Istanbul, will harbor great risks for aviation accidents during the spring migration season. If only our desire to achieve the greatest mega projects could transform into a desire to achieve the greatest protection of nature.

The construction of the third airport has similiary initiated the annihilation process of the living spaces of wild animals. And it is crystal clear that the continuation of this construction will bring about the wholesale destruction of these spaces. Forests, agricultural lands and ponds, all falling under the project area, will be removed and transformed into an airport. The local and migrants birds living in the forest and agricultural lands and water birds living in ponds will thus be deprived of their living spaces. The places where migrants birds feel secure to have a rest or lodge on their route will be cleared away to be made into an airport. These birds will also be forced to migrate to far away areas without having any rest or stopover. Migrant birds will experience nutrition and resting difficulties during their migration. The living spaces of mammalian animals will also disappear. Terkos Lake is a significant living space for water birds. Tens of thousands of duck and goose spend the winter here, and thousands of gulls on the sea shore will not only pose a threat for aviation accidents, but they will also be the victim of accidents. Bird migrations that have been going on for thousands of years will continue unabated after the establishment of the airport. The period when soaring birds fly most frequently during spring and fall will increase the risk of aviation accidents. Approximately speaking, 400,000 storks and 200,000 raptors pass through northern Istanbul during their migration. The body mass of these birds varies between three to five kilograms, so it is obvious that they will pose a great threat to planes as these birds tend to move together. Similarly, water birds change their places more often in winter and thus migrate depending on the weather. The same risk is also valid for these kinds of birds. All birds using this area, soaring migrant birds in particular, are under the protection of the Bern Convention. Those birds with very limited

numberds will face the threat of extinction due to risks such as aviation accidents.

Bird migration can be defined as the population movement regularly repeated between two geographical regions. Currently observed migration movements have been shaped with the retreat of glaciers at the end of the last glacial epoch.¹¹ Birds have, for thousands of years, formed their own routes and their orientation capacity is dependent upon factors such as their own rhythms, their genetic transmission, the use of sun compass and the magnetic field. Hence, it will not be possible for them to change their routes after the establishment of the airport. They will feel uneasy while flying over the airport, trying to pass over here as soon as possible. In short, some of their behaviours will undoubtedly change while flying over the airport.

As for the Channel Istanbul Project, it separates the European side of Istanbul from the Thrace, thus transforming it into a veritable island surrounded by water. Is the implementation of the channel project based on scientific fact? This isolation would pose a threat for all animals living within this territory. From a long-term perspective, territorial biodiversity will thus be confined to a restricted area and the pressure upon this animal diversity will only increase as the city constantly expands. The impact of this pressure will increase incrementally as the area in question decreases. This project will have a detractive effect primarily upon wild life and biological diversity. The population of animals living within this territory will decrease in time. During this process, many species will go extinct over time. Opportunities will rise for those animal species capable of adapting to urban life. The breakdown and reconfiguration of the natural balance will last a long time and there will be no chance of survival for many species. The reduction of biological diversity within a large area means the reduction of all groups of living things.

Istanbul has a high degree of biological diversity. This is so not only for plants but also for animals. One-fourth of all animal species identified in Turkey is located within Istanbul. The importance of this richness is beyond dispute. Istanbul is now encircled by mega projects and there are many other mega projects about which we know nothing. The city's nature is on the brink of dissolution due to these projects. The greatest problem of wild life in Turkey is the disruption of its living spaces. The destruction of nature leaves irrever-

sible effects on developing countries. It is only when nature or natural living creatures are lost that some measures—or the pretenses of measures—are taken. Protection projects, however, are more costly in terms of lost space and lost lives. The only solution for wild life is the complete cessation of these projects. Unfortunately, it seems that we will not be able to appreciate the value of natural riches before destroying them all.

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FOREIGN POLICY

The end of the resolution process or AKP's Middle East Policy

Harun Ercan

One of the most serious problems in understanding and discussing the Kurdish question in Turkey is that it is commonly seen as being confined to the boundaries of the Turkish nation-state. Observing current armed conflicts in the world, it is evident that a considerable proportion of these conflicts are not merely domestic developments; rather, they are mostly regional in character. Therefore, scholarly literature refers to conflicts as “regional conflict complexes,” 16 of which have already existed long before the outbreak of the wave of civil wars in recent years, which are impossible to be handled separately. It is inconceivable to examine armed conflicts within a nation-state; involving primary and secondary actors in a particular region is necessary as direct or indirect parties (Wallerstein, 2002).



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The Kurdish/Kurdistan conflict in the Middle East is classified within this framework in the literature on conflict analysis and resolution. That is because any approach to understanding the Kurdish question in Turkey that can't see beyond the Turkish nation-state boundaries recognised by the international system is bound to fail to provide a complete picture of the question.

It can be argued that some of the factors giving rise to the non-conflict period between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkish Republic (TR), which started in March 2013 and continued until July 2015, are regional in character. It was only by initiating a non-conflict period with Turkey that the Kurdish movement could shift its political-military power to Rojava (Western Kurdistan) and therefore use its capacity in an effective way. Likewise, it was only thro-

ugh engaging in a non-conflict period with the PKK that Turkey could have an opportunity—in a scenario in which it was thought Assad would fall from power—to fight a proxy war in Syria in which it could become an actor while being able to avoid the risk of middle-easternisation.

On the other hand, the reasons behind the starting and ending of a two-year non-conflict period can not be reduced only to regional-political factors. Once it was initiated, four main interrelated dynamics can be argued to have sustained the negotiation and non-conflict period.

Although the power of each factor to change the state of affairs had proved to be dependent on the political conjuncture, four major factors determined whether the two parties would resume the conflict:

- 1) whether the parties avoided maneuvers leading to a “security dilemma,”
- 2) whether the process was carried out based on legal grounds and mechanisms rather than de facto practices,
- 3) whether methods ensuring socialisation of peace and reconciliation with the past were used, and
- 4) whether measures were taken to prevent regional and external developments from increasing uncertainties which might bring the resolution process to a halt.

It leaves no room for doubt that, except for the first year, the non-conflict period became totally subordinate to developments in Rojava.

AKP's Kurdish policy from 2013 to 2015

Considering steps taken by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) during the non-conflict period, it is apparent that it tried to put into practice many of the principles in the literature called



“Terrorism Studies.” One of the major principles in the field prescribes: “Wise governments approach negotiation processes as instruments of managing terrorist violence in the long run” (Cronin, 2009: 36). In other words, through negotiation, state leaves no choice for the organization using effective political violence but a race against time. The main goal is to weaken the organization and progressively integrate it to the political regime, and thus eliminate any threat of counter-violence through military methods or negotiation.

An analysis of the two-year non-conflict period will be relevant to demonstrate that the AKP has fallen short of that bookish goal due to failing to read the dynamics in the Middle East.

In the first quarter of 2013, when the non-conflict period started, the major issue was the disarmament of the PKK. When the Kurdish movement carried out the initial withdrawal from Turkey, it demanded that legal regulations be enacted in order to proceed with the process. However, the demand was not met and therefore the withdrawal stopped in the upcoming months. In the meantime, the Turkish state continued building new military stations to improve its security infrastructure, and proceeded to construct dams/hydroelectric power plants to limit room for the maneuvering of guerrillas. The obligation of the conflicting parties to avoid the threat of a security dilemma on the basis of the principle of mutual trust, which is the first requirement for resolution of armed conflicts,¹

had indeed never been fulfilled.

Apart from that, legislation for protection of the resolution, which is a criterion existing in most of universal models for resolution, was operated by the AKP government to bring protection for those who carry out the process on behalf of the government rather than to protect the dialog/resolution process itself.²

Besides, despite constituting the Wise People Council paying visits to all the seven administrative regions of Turkey, no remarkable step was taken in favor of reconciliation with the past and socialization of peace. Among the seven reports that committees prepared, only the Southeastern Anatolian Report was made public; therefore, the principle of transparency had not been put into effect. Later on, the Gezi uprising and the AKP’s power struggle against the Gülen Movement were regarded by the AKP as justifications for delaying substantial steps towards the resolution.

Examples illustrating why and how the two-year resolution process had been mishandled are plenty. Nevertheless, it is also a well-known fact that on February 28, 2015, the Dolmabahçe Accord was shared with the public; in other words, it has been proved that an agreement on a road map for a resolution within the scope of a democratization process in Turkey was possible. So why has the process failed although an agreement was made on the guidelines of the negotiation process?

After YPG/YPJ forces which fought against ISIS have managed to drive out ISIS militants out of Kobanê, they have entered the wracked areas in the eastern part of the city.

Two turning points

Bringing together historical and contemporary references made by Abdullah Öcalan in his letter, which was read in Diyarbakir on the Newroz celebrations of March 21, 2013, it becomes clear that the Kurdish Movement called on the AKP to form an alliance not only in Turkey but in the wider context of Middle East. The primary reason for the failure of the process has been the AKP policy in the Middle East. Two turning points—one in 2014 and the other in 2015—can be said to constitute the grounds for this argument.

First, due to its policy of extending the process over an indefinite period of time, the AKP missed the junctures where the process could have made a progress. Although objective conditions for taking substantial steps were present both after local elections on March 30, 2014, and also after the presidential election on August 10, 2014, the AKP preferred not to take any further steps.

When scrutinized chronologically, it seems obvious that the Dolmabahçe Accord was not agreed upon on February 2015, but rather on September 3, 2014, in the meeting between Hakan Fidan and Abdullah Öcalan in Imralı. A public declaration of the road map, forwarded to and acknowledged by Kandil in the same week, was postponed for weeks and then for months. The main reason was the outbreak of ISIS siege of Kobani on September 15, 2014, and hence the AKP's expectation that the Kurdish movement, having lost Kobani, would sit at the negotiating table in a weakened position.

In line with this expectation, on October 5, 2014, Erdoğan enunciated that: "Kobani is just about to fall!" At that momentous turning point, the Kobani resistance gave international legitimacy to the PKK while it constituted a loss for the AKP, and hence for the resolution process. The AKP had gambled and lost the game and the resolution process received the first fatal injury. Thus, the AKP lost credibility among a major part of the Kurdish population as demonstrated by the Kobani uprising of October 6-7.

The second turning point which had culminated in severing all ties between the two parties was when the YPG/J forces expelled ISIS from Tel Abyad and took control of that region in June, 2015, thanks to the support of air strikes by the anti-ISIS coalition. It must be noted that Tel Abyad had a double significance, both in terms of the policy the AKP has been pursuing in Syria for years, and in terms of the security crisis in Rojava.

Holding Tel Abyad was a significant strategic advantage for ISIS with regard to ensuring the transfer of militants, meeting logistic needs and gaining economic benefits. For Turkey, it was a

safeguard against establishing an autonomous Kurdistan in the south. As for Rojava, taking hold of this city implied a possibility of uniting the cantons of Kobani and Cizir, a convenience for military activity in a wide region stretching from Shengal up to the frontiers of Euphrates river, and an opportunity to free Kobani from being dependent on the Turkish border. In other words, the fall of Tel Abyad has almost made clear that the Kurds in Syria were going to be part of the project of an prospective autonomous democratic Kurdistan.

The new period of conflict and Rojava

The primary reason why the AKP has resumed the conflict is the fact that the party that ended up benefiting from the two-year non-conflict period was the Kurdish movement, not the AKP. In that period, the Kurdish movement established democratic autonomous regions ready for recognition by international powers, and it won a historic victory through the agency of The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) by passing the election threshold by taking Kurdish votes from the AKP electorate.

Resuming the fight against the Kurdish movement has been possible only through a negotiation process with the US. Opening Incirlik Air Base for US air strikes on ISIS allowed the AKP to buy extra time for a few months in order to prevent losing any more power in the Syrian equation. Therefore, it becomes possible to argue that this negotiation has slowed down YPG/J progress against ISIS.

As seen in the case of Tel Abyad, requirements for winning a decisive victory over ISIS are not complicated: the existence of a land force fighting at least as organized and determined as the ISIS, and effective air strikes by the anti-ISIS Coalition.

The absence of the latter means a long-lasting combat engagement and suffering heavy losses on the part of YPG/J. Since July 22, 2015, when the AKP signed the Incirlik Agreement with the US, YPG/J forces have confined themselves to gaining a series of achievements on the existing fronts without attempting to open new fronts, while there were strategic cities like Cerablus which could have been taken with US support.

Since the very beginning, there has been a likelihood that must have caused the AKP to feel anxious, inasmuch as it has become entangled in the Syrian civil war in all aspects, including the ones which are not known to us. This is the possibility of turning Turkey into any Middle Eastern country suffering a crisis of permanent unmanageability.

There are two reasons behind the fact that the AKP has not targeted ISIS with any remarkable air



According to the report prepared by the Diyarbakır Bar Association, during the 9 day long curfew which ended on September 12, 15 civilians were killed by gunshots and shrapnel pieces, and 6 people died because they could not be brought to hospital. 8 of them were 18 years and younger, including a 35 days-old baby.

strike although it signed a final agreement on air strikes on ISIS, on August 24, 2015. The first reason is the collusion between the AKP and ISIS based on Islamic fraternity as it was clarified during solving the hostage crisis. The other reason is that AKP refrains from attacking ISIS because it can potentially carry out violent activities in Turkey.

The AKP has sufficient reason to fear ISIS that has allegedly carried out the attacks in Diyarbakır on June 5, in Suruç on July 20, and in Ankara on October 10, but has never claimed responsibility for the attacks. The last of these attacks, which so far invariably helped to protect the political line the AKP upholds, has had a different impact. This time the attack has proved that the AKP policy in Syria poses a serious threat to all citizens of Turkey. The most important consequence of the present political process is opening up the process for an increasing middle-easternization of Turkey.

More and more people want this civil war to come to an end, which is going on since 2011. Russia's direct military intervention to the war has reinforced the possibility for realization of the project in which Assad remains in power; a unified Rojava is recognized by the international powers; and ISIS and other jihadist groups are weakened and dissolved in the long run.

The Obama administration needs an alliance with the YPG/J forces more than ever in order to strengthen its hand in domestic politics with new victories against ISIS, and also to regain its political reputation in the international community, which it has lost after Russian intervention. US support to possible operations on Cerablus or Raqqa will demonstrate that Turkey has run out of time it has bought by signing the Incirlik Agreement. Also, it's no secret that Putin does not take a stand against unifying cantons of Kobani and

Cizir, inviting democratic autonomous Rojava cantons to open a diplomatic mission in Russia.

Considering the domestic political dynamics in Turkey, almost all surveys by reliable polling companies indicate that elections to be held in November 1, will not present a different picture compared to elections held in June 7. If Erdoğan will not attempt a final gamble, and if elections will be held as free and fair, then it will not be very possible for the AKP to continue the current war moves against Kurdish movement with the same speed.

Although returning to the negotiating table will probably not be done very quickly in the case of a coalition government, what is known is that the situation in the Middle East is once again going to be the decisive factor. The AKP policy in Syria has very little chance of success now. Therefore, the question must be: To get out of the quicksand, what are the ways to minimize humanitarian and political cost that the AKP is going to bring to Turkish and Kurdish peoples?

- 1 It must be noted, however, that this generalization refers to an ideal resolution process. There are current counter examples to this requirement where a peace agreement was signed. For instance, it was possible to proceed to the final stage in the Colombian peace process without having fulfilled the requirement mentioned above.
- 2 Two legal regulations regarding the resolution process have been made throughout the non-conflict period. The first one was the law enacted on April 25, 2014, protecting MIT officials who carried out negotiations with PKK. The second regulation was the law enacted on July 10, 2015, called The Law on the Termination of Terrorism and Reinforcement of Social Integration, which provided legal immunity for AKP government officials against any possibility of legal prosecution in the future.

CULTURE

THE ROLE OF GERMANY IN THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Overt alliance, covert responsibility

Interview: Merve Erol

In the centenary of the Armenian genocide, the debate has naturally extended to the role of Germany which was in an alliance with the Ottoman Empire during World War I. Aside from the question of how the German state will define the genocide officially, the responsibility of German officers serving in the Ottoman army was brought to the table -at least to some extent. Jürgen Gottschlich, a journalist living in Turkey for many years, has penned the book "Völkermord: Deutschlands Rolle bei der Vernichtung der Armenier" (Genocide: Germany's Role in the Extermination of Armenians), which has sparked heated debates after its release this year.

**Jürgen Gottschlich**

Born in Germany in 1954. He studied Philosophy and Journalism in Berlin. In 1979 he was one of the founders of the leftist daily "die tageszeitung" taz. After 3 years as vice-chief editor in the first half of the 90's he came to Turkey in 1998. Since then he is the correspondent of "tageszeitung" and some other German, Austrian and Swiss publications.

First let's take a look at the relations prior to 1915. At that point, the Armenian Question had already been discussed for at least 50 years, in connection with the Oriental Question widely debated during the 19th century. In the 1890s, the mass killings under the reign of sultan Abdülhamid II had provoked public outrage across the world. How did the German state and public react to these events back then?

Jürgen Gottschlich: The public did not know much about it. However, Kaiser Wilhelm was a close friend of Abdülhamid's and did not show very much interest in what was being done to the Armenians. The two states were in an official alliance and planning on jointly constructing the Baghdad Railway. Germany was sending weapons to the Ottoman army. The first German military mission to the Ottoman

Empire arrived in 1881, under the command of von der Goltz. They knew that the Ottoman Empire was growing weak and needed help. They knew of Abdülhamid's and later of Young Turks' fears that the Ottoman Empire would be divided up among the British, French and Russians. The Germans told the Ottomans, "We are your friends, are committed to your territorial integrity, do not want a piece of your land, and would like to collaborate." They did not view the Ottoman Empire as a colony, yet they were planning on dominating the country in order to fight more effectively against the British in the Middle East, and even in India. Thus, they had found a strategic ally here. During the reign of Abdülhamid and later of the Young Turks, only a handful of Germans—most of them clergymen—had campaigned in favor of the Armenians. They were led by Johannes Lepsius, who had penned a book on the Armenian massacres of 1895-96. His writings did gain some popularity among German intellectuals, but did not really reach the wider masses. This did not change much in the following decades: The debate in Germany prior to World War I was whether the Ottomans would make a good ally in the wake of their defeat in the Balkans. It was thought that the Ottoman army was in very bad shape and that Germany would have to send large amounts of money and weapons. **So if the Germans had ignored the Ottomans, just like the Allied Powers had done, would the empire have stayed out of the war?**

I doubt it. Under the rule of the Young Turks, some Ottomans debated remaining neutral or joining forces with France; however, there were close ties between the German and Ottoman armies. Enver and other officers argued that Ottomans had to side with the Germans. The Germans changed their minds after their defeat on the French front. They had first inva-



Kaiser Wilhelm II with Sultan Mehmed Reşad V and Enver Paşa in his second visit to the Ottoman Empire (top); Wilhelm Souchon, the commander of Goeben and Breslau, during an inspection in the Ottoman army where he served as a vice admiral (below).



ded Belgium and were planning on swiftly conquering France, especially Paris; later they would pile up all their weapons and ammunition on the Russian front. Yet when they failed to occupy Paris and were defeated for the first time, they realized that they would need the Turks. Germans started to put immense pressure on Turks to convince them to join the war on their side.

Until 1915, the Armenian struggle was centered not on independence, but rather living together with equal rights. Wasn't there an agreement prior to the war, which included the Germans among its signatories?

Yes, the last agreement was signed with the Armenians in 1913. It was Ambassador Wangenheim's first contact with the Armenian question. They thought that Armenians, if left to themselves, would become closer to the Russians. So they decided that a proposal had to be made to the Armenians, and as a result of the agreement, two Christian governors from abroad were appointed to two provinces.

That is, they accepted that the path to terri-

torial integrity passed through partial autonomy and equality...

The idea of equal citizenship had previously started to gain acceptance in the Ottoman Empire. However, this idea became a thing of the past after the Balkan Wars. The wars of independence in Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia were waged under the banner of Christianity, with the support of Russia. From that point onwards, Young Turks grew concerned about the Christian populations within the empire.

However the Armenian politicians were not only Christians but also revolutionaries, and had collaborated with the Young Turks during the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era in 1908. They rejected the Committee of Union and Progress' (CUP) proposal to fight the Russians together; not because they sided with the Russians, but because they were against the war.

There were some in favor of siding with the Russians to gain independence, yet the majority wanted to remain within the Ottoman

The general staff of the German army: Marshall Paul von Hindenburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II and Eric Ludendorff, the deputy chief of staff of the Second Army.



state—with more rights of course. Even the Dashnaks did not feel close to the reactionary regime in Russia. That was the general feeling at the Armenian congress which convened in 1914 in Erzurum, where the Young Turks proposed to fight with the Armenians against the Russians.

So there were some who wanted to join forces with the Russians, but their activities were very exaggerated by the Ottoman state, is that right?

Certainly, especially after the tragic end of the Sarikamış campaign. Enver Pasha and Bronsart von Schellendorf, who had planned the campaign, needed a scapegoat to lay blame on. They claimed “The Armenians stabbed us in the back.” The propaganda that Armenians were supporting the Russians was escalated as a result.

Germans gained influence especially under the reign of Abdülhamid. Didn't they have a hard time in relating to the CUP government?

Upon the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era, Germans became frustrated since they were very close to Abdülhamid. In the beginning, they did not like the CUP at all; however, improved relations within six months. Enver was sent to Berlin as military attaché, and remained there for three years, building close ties with military officers, politicians and even the Kaiser himself. The Kaiser was very pleased to see him get married to a woman from the Ottoman dynasty. Upon his return to Istanbul, Enver saw that the majority of the top brass was pro-German, had been educated in the academy set up by von der Goltz, had received lessons from German

officers, and had gone on trips to Germany. Among the Young Turks, maybe not the Paris group, but the army group was very close to the Germans. When fighting against the counter-revolution of 1909, the troops arriving from the Balkans to Istanbul were significantly supported by the Germans.

What was the position of German officers within the Ottoman army at the beginning of the war?

German officers occupied some of the highest ranks in the Ottoman top brass. Liman von Sanders, Bronsart von Schellendorf, Humann, von der Goltz and others were either field commanders or at the headquarters. The army commander would be Ottoman but would report to a German officer at the headquarters. That was the case in all six Ottoman armies. Germans held posts with huge authority and responsibility. Even Enver shared his decisions and authority with a German general. As you know, the Ottomans entered the war in late October after the German warships Goben and Breslau bombarded Russia's Black Sea coastline. At the time, the German army was in dire straits in France and the Austrian army in Galicia. The German officers had started to put pressure on Ottomans, urging them to take action. They wanted the Ottoman army to invade Egypt and the Suez Canal; however, it was not possible as the army did not have enough soldiers and logistic supplies to cross the desert. The Austrians told them to occupy Odessa then; however, the navy wasn't ready, either. It was finally decided that the Ottomans would march directly on Russia via Sarikamış. It was of course stupid to start such a campaign

in December, at minus 30 degrees Celsius, and the Turkish soldiers were not well-prepared. The Germans may have insisted a lot, but Enver was very keen, too. In fact, they ought to have waited three to four months, but were forced to start the operation in winter.

Some were opposed to the operation, it seems.

Yes, Liman von Sanders for instance. He hated Enver Pasha, whom he considered to be ignorant. So Enver sent him to the Aegean. (laughs) The second top German commander in the Ottoman army, Bronsart von Schellendorf, laid out the campaign plans for Enver.

Von Schellendorf was in charge during the genocide, right?

Bronsart led the German officers who claimed that Armenians posed a real threat. He demanded the deportation of Armenians, and even when he learned that the deportation turned into massacre, he said "It is better this way; do not interfere." Bronsart and other influential German officers thought that "If the Turks have decided on this method, all the better for us." Bronsart was also a true racist who likened Ottoman Armenians to German Jews. Later he would become a prominent fascist. In letters written in the 1930s, he suggested that Armenians were even worse than the Jews. The military attaché Hans Humann was like minded. Souchon, at the head of the navy, had said, "For Turks, it is best to exterminate the Armenians".

So, already at that point, senior German officers had a clear-cut perspective on the Armenian society.

They viewed them as traitors collaborating with Russia. In social terms, they likened Armenians to Jews, and talked of them as hoarders and usurers detrimental to the Turkish society.

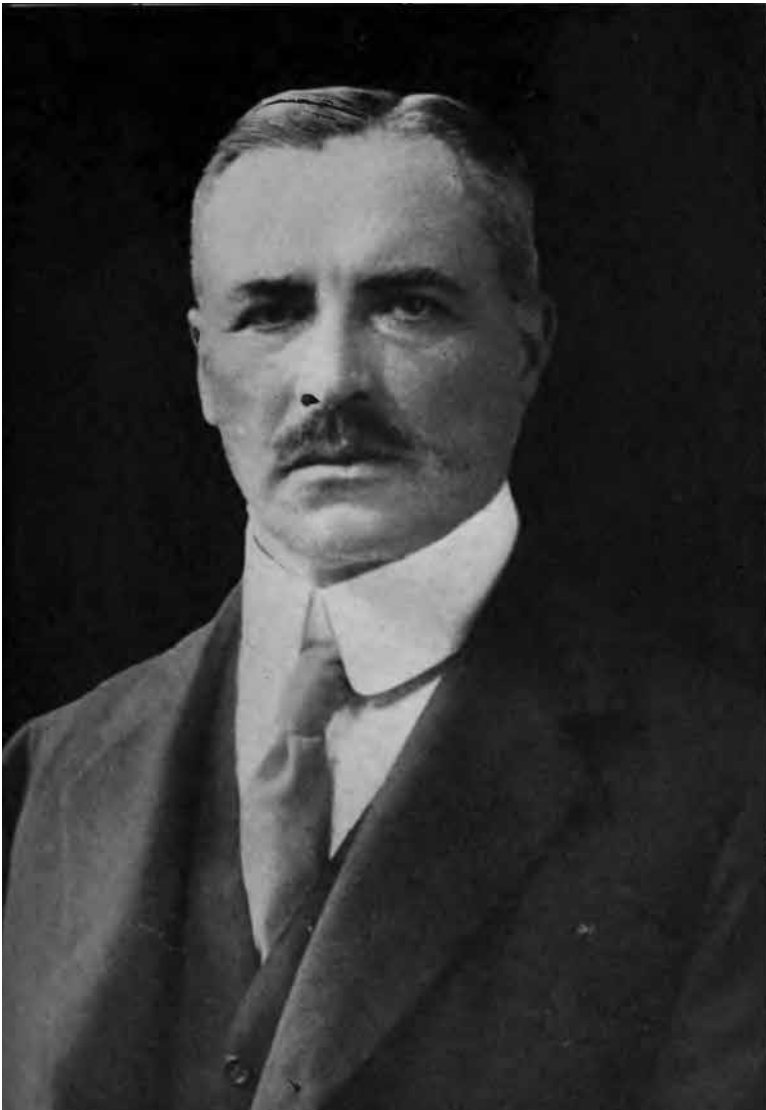
Were there any German officers who opposed this idea and its corollaries, deportation and genocide?

Such a polarization seemed to appear later on, upon the arrival of Metternich. Before that there were those who said, "We agree with the Turks" and those who said, "We don't agree, but can't do anything about it." The initial plan was deportation. This was a well-accepted method previously tried in other countries. For instance, Russians had deported Jews, and the British had applied it in South America. At first, the German officers had not understood that the Armenian people faced genocide. When deportations started in April and May 1915, it took them a couple of weeks to understand what was happening in the East, that people were forced to march to the mountains and killed in Erzurum and Erzincan. The consuls of



Erzurum, Aleppo and Mosul had understood, though. Dead bodies were carried downstream by the Euphrates. They wrote letters to Ambassador Wangenheim and the Berlin government explaining what was happening. Wangenheim sent an official writing to Berlin in the first week of July, and stated that the Armenians of Anatolia were being exterminated. So, the German government knew about it. The diplomats were only trying to evade responsibility. They said "We will officially condemn Enver and Talât, so that we can later document our criticism." However, that's not what they really wanted to do either, because the Battle of Gallipoli was at a critical point and everyone feared defeat. Before the war broke off, Wangenheim had told Enver that the Germans would deliver heavy weapons and ammunition; but this had failed to materialize once Serbia cut off access to the roads. Since they were worried about the situation in Gallipoli, they could not tell Enver to stop the massacres. In October 1915, after the first big wave of deportation, Wangenheim died. The ambassador who replaced him, Metternich, had served in London before and genuinely wanted to stop the massacre. He knew how the Anglo-American side saw the matter. He thought that this support would be terrible for Germany's prestige, but the top brass sided with Enver and Talât. He wrote a letter to the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg and asked him to write Enver a letter saying, "We will cut military assistance if you do not stop the massacre." The chancellor refused, saying that they needed the Turks. This was the response of the highest political authority, and

Mustafa Kemal Paşa and Liman von Sanders. Sanders had a great success at Gallipoli but opposed the deportation.



Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim was the German ambassador in the Ottoman Empire from 1912 to 1915.

Metternich's hands were tied. Consequently Metternich was dismissed, called back to Berlin, and retired soon thereafter.

And so, the war effort continued as a full alliance, with a consensus about the solution of the Armenian question.

In 1917, after the Armenian question was off the table, German troops started to arrive in Ottoman lands at the Palestinian front. Before that the assistance had consisted mainly of officers; from late 1916 onwards, however, German troops arrived at the Ottoman fronts. At the end of the war, there were around 60-70,000 German soldiers on Ottoman land. That is, the support to the Ottoman Empire was much bigger than before the genocide. Germans did not criticize the Ottomans or discuss the genocide; they turned a blind eye to it.

Did the German civilians in the Ottoman Empire such as merchants and clergymen react? In fact, the German society was better placed to receive information about the genocide, than say the British or French...

Certain influential civilians raised their voice

against the genocide, but it was not enough of course. Take for example Franz J. Günther, the Deutsche Bank official in charge of railroad construction. The railroad was not complete when the war broke off; on the way from Konya to Aleppo it had run into the mountains. Many Cilician Armenians were working in its construction. The government wanted to deport them, too. Günther opposed this, and stated that they needed these workers, as well as other Armenians occupying administrative positions. He wanted to protect them. "If they don't work, the job will not finish, we cannot transport supplies to the front, and even Gallipoli will be affected." In the first months, Armenian workers in the Baghdad railway construction were not deported; however, their families were. So the workers started to desert one by one to find them. The officer in charge of Ottoman army's logistics and the military aspects of the Baghdad railway, Lieutenant Colonel Böttrich, was in favor of deportation and declared "I received orders from Enver himself and will deport them." Deutsche Bank officials contacted Berlin to stop Böttrich, yet to no avail. This example shows that there was civilian resistance to deportation. It is certain that the German army was in favor of deportation.

How about the German population? Did they react?

Lepsius and other clergymen communicated some information, although limited, to Germany and contacted left-wing members of parliament. However, their attempts to raise the issue in parliament were hindered by the government. The problem with Lepsius and the like was that they were not against the war. They, too, were German nationalists and did not oppose war. They thought that it would be better to use rather than kill Armenians for victory. Due to this, the resistance in Germany was very weak. On the one hand there was the church, which was in favor of the war, and on the other hand, a few socialists, who were eventually imprisoned. Lepsius wanted to write articles for prominent German newspapers; however, he could not express himself freely and was censored. So he went to the Netherlands and published his book there on the plight of the Armenians. He stayed there until the end of the war and after his return he was asked by the German Foreign Office to pen a report on Armenians. As such, he became the first civilian to enter the huge archive of the Foreign Office. He wrote his report, but did not mention Germany's responsibility in a single sentence. The government tried to make use of this report during the Versailles Peace Treaty talks, claiming "We were in alliance with the

Ottomans, but not in a position to avoid the mass killing of Armenians.”

Was the responsibility of German officers ever mentioned at the court set up in Istanbul to investigate the genocide?

No, never. The British had imprisoned some officers of the Ottoman army in Malta. There was only a single German among them: Liman von Sanders! (laughs) They wanted to lay the entire blame on him, but he was actually opposed to deportation from the start. He was the only person who tried to save the Armenians of Izmir. The Ottoman officers were soon let go any way in exchange for the liberation of British soldiers captured by Kuvayı Milliye forces. So there never was a proper trial. The Versailles Treaty had terrible results for Germany, but the Armenian question was never brought to the table. When the peace talks started in 1919, the Armenians insisted on a country of their own, but since the independence movement was gaining ground in Turkey they could not achieve anything. The Armenians were not even mentioned at the Lausanne talks. There was a brief debate around the issue after Talât was shot dead, since the court let the assassin Soghomon Tehlirian walk away for being mentally unstable. Germany did not want to get involved in the issue. Although they knew that the connection was horrible for Germany's reputation, they did not feel the least bit responsible for it.

Hitler is claimed to have said “Who talks about the Armenians any more?”

Yes, but it is not certain. He purportedly said that in a meeting with his top generals right before the assault on Soviet Russia. That was of course a secret meeting. It could be made up, but I would not be surprised to learn that he actually said it.

Did anyone from the German army bring up the matter later on?

For instance Felix Guse, the commander of the Caucasian Army, wrote a series of articles on the Armenian question which was later published in book format by the army's publishing house. He argued how the extermination of the Armenians was necessary, but without linking it to the Jewish question which was then on the agenda.

Are there any officers who, after serving in the Ottoman army, joined the Nazis?

Hans Humann had not really joined the Nazis, but became a prominent figure of the German right. Ludendorff can be said to have joined the Nazis. There is an ironic story: A handful of German officers, for example, the consul of Erzurum Max von Scheubner-Richter, protested against the order of deportation from Istanbul,



saying “There are only the elderly, women and children here; deportation is not necessary on military grounds.” Scheubner-Richter showed much interest in the issue and provided food to the Armenians. Indeed Bronsart became angry with him, saying “Give the bread to Turkish soldiers instead.” Scheubner-Richter would later join the Nazis and became very close with Hitler. In 1923, he was shot dead during Hitler's beer hall putsch and collapsed on Hitler's shoulder. He was definitely a German nationalist, but did not view Armenians' deportation as a military necessity.

Germany managed to come to terms with the Holocaust, but Turkey has not assumed the slightest responsibility for the Armenian genocide. What is the reason in your view?

I think there are significant differences. Germany lost the war and when the USA laid out the principles of the new republic, accepting the Holocaust was part of the picture. Turkey lost World War I, but won the war of independence; Turks considered themselves as victors. No one forced them to discuss the Armenian

Enver Paşa was very close to German diplomats and officers when he worked in Berlin as a military attaché and he played a big role in Ottoman State's decision to join the war near Germany.

genocide. Today it is still unknown what Mustafa Kemal thought about the matter. Some of his statements suggest that he disapproved, but we cannot be sure.

The fact that he did not play a role in the Armenian genocide may have helped him in leading the struggle for independence.

Maybe. He said that he disapproved deportation, but did not act on it and do what was necessary. He knew that Armenian property was confiscated, but did not do anything about it.

After coming to terms with the Holocaust over the decades, how did Germans' perspective on the Armenian genocide change?

Many Germans say "All right, we are responsible for the Holocaust, but how can we be blamed for the Armenian genocide, or the massacre of Hereros in Namibia? One is fine, but three is too much!" (laughs)

In the last hundred years, did the Armenian diaspora make efforts to emphasize the role of the German state in the genocide?

Very few Armenians live in Germany, especially when compared to France or the USA. However, the Armenians living there refrain from underscoring the responsibility of the Germans because this might benefit the Turks. In the mid-1990s, Vahakn Dadrian wrote a book on the Germans' role in the genocide, and I met him in Armenia. The book was fine, but it was not translated to German and few people knew about it. It did not spark a debate in the USA, either. Later on, a journalist working with Der Spiegel, Wolfgang Gust, published a very important book on the matter (The Armenian Genocide: Evidence from the German Foreign Office Archives) based on German Foreign Office documents between 1914 and 1918. As these were political documents, the book laid the groundwork for debate. Gust did a great job, but could not access the documents of the German army—that's where I came in. A large part of the military archive was bombed and burnt during World War II. The archive of the land army was entirely destroyed, yet some of the navy archive remained. In my book, I focused on those documents and focused on German officers who had served in the Ottoman army. It is possible to track what they did and where they were in these documents. Gust's book on diplomats and my book on the soldiers complement each other for understanding the German side.

What was the reaction of the German public to your book?

It sparked one of the largest debates ever on the issue. Since it was issued on April 24, it played an important role on debates about what the German state should say on the centenary.

What is your view of the German state's reaction in the centenary of the genocide?

The matter was discussed in 2005 at the parliament. They had said that the events were tragic and that the Germans did not help the Armenians, but refrained from defining it as genocide. In the following decade, it was not really discussed at length. This last time, members of the opposition and indeed some social democrats, who are part of the governing coalition, sparked a new discussion at the parliament and demanded that the genocide be recognized as such. The government, especially the Foreign Office, did not want to come at loggerheads with Turkey, and said "The matter should be left to historians." (laughs) However the German president Gauck took the initiative and organized a large mass at Berlin's second biggest cathedral, together with Armenians and Orthodox Greeks. In his speech there, Gauck said that Germans were not spectators but indeed active perpetrators of this crime, and described the events as genocide. The debate continued in the parliament the next day, with speakers of all parties recognizing the genocide. However, we are still waiting for the parliament's final say on the matter. The text will be finalized in autumn. I was optimistic at first, but too much time has passed and the decision has been delayed a number of times. Well, we shall see, but they cannot avoid Gauck's position.

The Turkish Republic now wages a similar struggle against the Kurds, who demand equality and citizenship rights just like the Armenians once did. What does the average German think about the issue? What do you think of this continuity?

You know that Erdoğan thinks that Germans support the PKK, right? (laughs) Throughout the years, the German people have reached a certain awareness about minority rights. The problem in Turkey is, as always, whether groups with different ethnic backgrounds can enjoy equal rights. There still are many people who claim that this is not acceptable. I have lived in Turkey since 1998, and had frequently visited the country before that. After all these years, I am not so pessimistic. There has been some progress on the matter. Before Erdoğan's latest war, there were constructive and positive talks and the Kurdish movement had also shown significant progress. What Kurds said back in the 1990s or even early 2000s was much different than what HDP says today. In my opinion, what Turkey is going through today is the last struggle of those who are unwilling to compromise; a solution will definitely happen.

NEWS FROM hbs

Hrant Dink Foundation

2015 International Hrant Dink Awards

Saudi Arabian women rights defender Samar Badawi and the LGBT rights and freedoms defender Kaos GL Association were awarded the 2015 International Hrant Dink Award on September 15.

Samar Badawi has been a human rights defender since a very early age when she took her father, who had abused her for 15 years, to court. After that she dealt with several other issues in court, such as a faulty guardian system, the refusal of voter registration offices to register women, and defending prosecuted women who attempted to drive. She continues to struggle for human rights freedoms in her country even though she faces many different prohibitions, including travelling abroad. Elsa Saade, who accepted the prize on behalf of Badawi, mentioned in her speech that Badawi risked her own life for human rights and went after her own dreams; that is why she became an inspiration for Saudi Arabian women. Saade also highlighted that we need people who can put our concerns on the map. Additionally, she said prizes based on solidarity are signs of hope for people who live in fear and with the sense of being forgotten in the most difficult places in the world.

Ali Erol, who accepted the award on behalf of Kaos GL (established in 1994), works with the principle of “the liberation of homosexuals will liberate heterosexuals.” In his speech, he noted that the “uneasiness” that had cost Hrant Dink his life was also something that homosexuals had to live with in all phases of their life. He said that the salvation of homosexuals is a precondition for the liberation of the society. He also pointed out the importance of establishing connections between different kinds of discrimination, explaining that racist and nationalist state policies which have created institutionalized discourses of “national enemies” and “national integrity” could be overcome by establishing bridges between the struggles for freedom.

The film entitled 1915 Lights were screened at the ceremony marking the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian

Genocide. Author Taner Akçam also attended, making a speech about crimes against humanity and the concepts of justice, conscience, responsibility and human rights. The film noted some of those who witnessed the genocide in Anatolia, including Celal Bey, the Governor of Aleppo, Izzet Bey, the Gendarme Commander of Kastamonu, and US ambassador Henry Morgenthau. They tried to prevent the carnage, and to announce and document the brutality to the world. They paid with their lives because they let their voices be heard.

Light was another film shown in which people and organizations around the world and in Turkey in 2015 increase our hope for the future. In the film, many different activists were portrayed: Afghan artist Kubra Khademi; the Renault factory workers in Bursa protesting for higher wages; the Robin Hood Army, which distributes leftover food from restaurants and weddings to orphans, homeless people and others in need in India; the couple Fetullah Üzümcüoğlu and Esra Polat, who distributed their wedding dinner to refugees; Muslim student Faatimah Knight, who collected donations for the maintenance of eight black churches in Charleston; the people of Cerattepe marching with the slogan “The mine in Artvin is murder;” the White Helmets group in Syria that saves trapped people in places destroyed and burned in the war; Viyan Daxil, the first politician who mentioned the Yazidi Massacre in the Iraqi Parliament; the “Electric Yerevan” movement where people protested the increase in electricity charges at Yerevan; Mother Havva and the people of Rize protesting the road that was supposed to pass through a Natural Protected Area; people coming together under the slogan of “You Stink,” protesting uncollected garbage and the closure of one of the main landfills; Pepe Julian Onziema, who worked to have the law for the execution of homosexuals at Uganda withdrawn; the Camp Armen Resistance that demanded the unconditional return of the Camp Armen to the Armenian People; the Black Lives Matter Movement that aims to rebuild the movement of the black freedom movement again in the US; young people taking the road to the Kobane in order to deliver toys to and to build a library in Suruç and who lost their lives in a suicide bomber attack.

The awards ceremony was broadcasted live on www.hrantdink.org and www.hrantdinkodulu.org websites. Full details of the awards were published simultaneously during the awards ceremony on the Facebook and Twitter accounts (in three languages: English, Turkish and Armenian).



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Grandchildren-New Geographies of Belonging

The Grandchildren: New Geographies of Belonging is an exhibition conceptually designed and coordinated by Silvina Der-Meguerditchian and is on display at the DEPO as part of the 14th Istanbul Biennial.

This exhibition brings together the works of 13 artists from different geographies and disciplines who have been cooperating together since 2016: Achot Achot, Maria Bedoian, Talin Büyükkürkciyan, Hera Büyüктаşçıyan, Silvina Der-Meguerditchian, Linda Ganjian, Archi Galentz, Karine Matsakyan, Mikayel Ohanjanyan, Ani Setyan, Arman Tadevosyan, Scout Tufankjian and Marie Zolamian. They focus on the personal and common connections in the Armenian transnational community, strengthening and nourishing the mechanisms of diaspora identities,

and opening a debate about the idea of a nation defined genetically and geographically.

The pieces of The Grandchildren reflect both the paradox in the current reality resulting from the process of displacement that started in the twentieth century and this reality's creation of potential identities beyond national borders, traditions and languages.

The exhibition was organized with the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the German Foreign Ministry, the Goethe Institute Istanbul, Anatolia Culture, Tarabya Cultural Academy and the Heinrich Böll Foundation Representative in Turkey. It opened on September 3 and will be open until November 1.





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