perspectives

POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

TURKEY

FEATURE ARTICLES

The children of the "New Turkey"

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Editorial

The whole of Turkey has been recently debating the "new" versus "old" Turkey ever since Prime Minister Davutoglu and the President Erdoğan have been repeatedly proclaiming a "vision of New Turkey." Whatever the society and politics of Turkey in future will be, it will be shaped by future generations or more precisely by the current children in Turkey.

In a letter directed to the young electorate during the campaign for presidential elections, Tayyip Erdoğan very clearly stressed the important future role of the youth. He also presented his vision of the young generation: "On the path to achieving the goals of 2023 we imagine a youth that is bound to the national and ideal values, morally, active, entreprene-urial and well equipped, a youth that mixes global values with the values originating from his own history. We strongly wish our youth to stay away from violence, the exploitation of politics, from ideologies of others that are not in accordance with our way of thinking and of life, who are bound to the national and ideal values and walk as free individuals into the future. We especially emphasize that our youth should stay far away from those networks that betray their own country and nation by exploiting moral values. Our youth should not fall into these traps. I believe that the youth of Turkey will realize the darkness behind the masks. With their hearts full of faith and patriotism they will render ineffective initiatives directed against the independence of Turkey, the respect for our flag, the unity of our homeland and the harmony of our nation" (op. cit. Yeni Şafak, 6.8.2014).

Accordingly, we wanted to draw a picture of the current conditions for youth in Turkey. A government whose candidate for presidency is writing a letter to the youth, allows us expect a policy for the benefit of the youth. It allows you to believe that the conditions for the youth in this country must be extraordinarily good.

But when drafting the concept of this special issue, long imprisonment of the publicly so-called "stone throwing children", sexual abuse and children and human rights violations in prisons came to our mind. We remember the parliamentary question of MP Sezgin Tanrıkulu (CHP) concerning six thousand lost children in public childcare centers in the last ten year . We also remember the parliamentary question of MP Tanrıkulu concerning the incredible increase of lawsuits based on sexual abuse of children. According to this parliamentary question the number of lawsuits increased from 2,414 in 2006 up to 16,827 in 2011 (TBMM, 2.5.2014, No 24406). We therefore were eager to read the answers of the government to these parliamentary questions. But unfortunately, as many other parliamentary questions, the government did not fulfill its legal obligations. It simply did not answer these questions (http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/yazili_sozlu_soru_sd.onerge_bilgileri?kanunlar_sira_no=155085). We assume this information are correct, otherwise governmental bodies would have given other figures.

The scientific articles you will find in this Perspectives issue will shed some light on the situation of one third of the population of Turkey – youth below the age of 18. You will learn that around 20% of children are sexually abused – every third girl and every fifth boy. One in every three marriages in Turkey involves a child bride, and still more than one third of girls married off are not the first wives of their husbands. About 6% of children below the age of 18 years are working 11 hours a day and more. The future of these youngsters seems to be shaped or conditioned by traumatic experiences and severe living conditions. We yet do not know what the consequences for the political future will be. But there seems to be an incredible gap between political statements and social reality. Youth seems to be considered a strategic tool for elections, ideology production and populism. But what should we think about the motto of "New Turkey" if one of the basic pillars of this motto is grounded on a myth?

On behalf of the Perspectives team
Ulrike Dufner

THE CHILDREN OF THE "NEW TURKEY"
Being a child in Turkey

Nazan Maksudyan

''I don't treat children like children. If I have a friendship, a relationship with a child, then he or she is my friend not a child. I don't see them as kids, I don't treat them like a different human species. Why? I never believed that it is right to treat children as kids: They are fully fledged human beings.''[1]

Nazan Maksudyan
is a faculty member at the Department of Sociology, İstanbul Kemerburgaz University. Her research focuses on the history of children and youth during the 19th and 20th centuries, and her prominent publications include Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire (Syracuse University Press, 2014), ''Orphans, Cities, and the State: Vocational Orphanages (Islahhanes) and 'Reform' in the Late Ottoman Urban Space'', IJMES , 43 (2011) and ''Foster-Daughter or Servant, Charity or Abuse: Beslemes in the Late Ottoman Empire,'' Journal of Historical Sociology, 21 (2008).

The historical and cultural perspective towards children in a society is one of the most important pillars of the discrimination against children. In the 18th century, the Romantic movement upheld the prevalent claim that children are vulnerable, innocent and ignorant and idealized them as singular beings, as if they were irrelevant in society. Since childhood is viewed as a period of dependence in both legal and biological terms, it becomes easy to disregard children as social actors. Children are thus seen mainly as passive and their cultural presence is rarely recognized.

The Turkish novelist Yaşar Kemal's words above are important in this respect. The idea that children are immature and thus cannot be considered to be fully fledged human beings is widespread not only in Turkey but in all societies based on the modern bourgeois norm of nuclear family. The nuclear family structure considers children as "apple of its eye" yet also reduces them to dolls deprived of will and action.

Accordingly, childhood is a transitional period in human life and it needs to be overcome as soon as possible to reach the happy end, that is, adulthood. Ageism, shaped by adultism, claims that a child is somehow less than an adult by nature. A deep-rooted power relationship determines the social roles of human beings such as children and youth. Children are in a state of becoming; as such, they cannot be seen as complete and definable individuals until they become adults. Accordingly, children are in a sense deficient humans. Both academic studies and widespread public opinion reject the idea that children can have a rational viewpoint – considered to be the most important characteristic of the human identity. Childhood delineates the limits of the person and poses barriers to their rights.

Who is a child?

According to Article 6 of the Turkish Commercial Code, children are individuals under the age of 18. Article 3 of the Law on the Protection of Children (No. 5395) also stipulates that those aged below 18 are to be considered children in the application of the said law. Article 11 of the Civil Code stipulates that people older than 18 are legal adults. However, individuals over 15 can also be considered to be adults upon the consent of their parents and the approval of the courts. Likewise, a person over 16 can get married if authorized by a judge, and a person over 17 can marry with the consent of their parents. However, even with marriage or judiciary approval, these individuals continue to be considered as children. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by Turkey in 1994, anyone younger than 18 is a child and is under the protection of the convention.

As for criminal responsibility, the ages 12 and 15 are important. Children's criminal liability starts at the age of 12; younger children are not considered to have such liability. Children 15 and older have criminal liability; however, they

are considered to be less culpable than adults due to their age and are thus given reduced sentences. There is no clear-cut judiciary decision as to whether children between the ages of 12 and 15 have full criminal liability or not.

As such, we see that in defining childhood, the judiciary system takes 18 as an important age limit, but also lowers the age of criminal liability to as low as 12. This is significantly lower than the children's rights standards put forth in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As per the convention, even if an act committed by a child is considered to be a crime according to legislation, the principles of the juvenile justice system should come into action. The focus thus becomes not the acts committed by the child, but the reasons underlying this act, and rights-based solutions are formulated. Most importantly, the emphasis should always be the benefit of the child.

Unfortunately, numerous examples suggest that this is far from the case in Turkey. Cases in point include the execution of Erdal Eren over thirty years ago.[2] Prime Minister Erdoğan's words during the Diyarbakır protests of March 2006 that "the state will do whatever is necessary, regardless of whether they are children or women,"[3] or his declaration that "child or not, he will pay the price" in the context of the Lice event.[4]

According to official statistics, 9,931 children aged below 18 were tried in political court cases from 2002 through 2011. These court cases took place at the State Security Courts (DGM) in the

first two years of the said period and then at Specially Authorized Courts (ÖYM).[5] According to a report by the children's rights association Gündem Çocuk Derneği Çocuk Hakları Merkezi (Agenda: Child Association - Center for Children's Rights) 633 children lost their lives in Turkey in 2013 due to preventable causes. This figure stood at 609 in 2012 and at 815 in 2011.

The nuclear family structure praises children as the "apple of the eye" on the one hand, but reduces them to dolls deprived of will and action on the other.

Child population

According to 2014 data by the Turkish Statistical Institute, children aged between 0-17 account for 29.7% of the overall Turkish population. This ratio is higher than that in any European Union member state. The corresponding figure is 22.2% in France, 21.2% in the UK, 20.2% in Sweden, 17.6% in Greece and 16.8 in Italy. Germany has the lowest ratio with 16%.

Children constitute one third of the Turkish population, and 53.2% of all households include a child between birth and 17. In other words, there is a child in every other household. As such, legislation on children, policies on children (such as the so-called 4+4+4 school system), and political decisions that affect children's

Kite festival in Kirklar Mountain during the 9th Diyarbakir Culture and Art Festival.

lives (e.g., the closing down of test preparatory schools or dershane) have a direct effect on more than half of the population. On the other hand, due to the fact that this huge population of children cannot vote, children are not given much importance by electoral candidates and become invisible in representative democracy.

The judiciary system takes 18 as an important age limit in its definition of a child, but also lowers the age of criminal liability to as low as 12. This is significantly lower than the children's rights standards put forth in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child as object of sympathy

Not only are children not viewed as subjects in political mechanisms and public administration, but they are also easily turned into objects. Children are instrumentalized as a means of raising sympathy and are frequently used in political campaigns and commercials, on TV and cinema. The police force likes being portrayed as saving children from danger in its ads, and ad agencies seem to need children to market anything from washing machines to cars, credit cards to feta cheese. Likewise local blockbusters (such as the movie Babam ve Oğlum, 2005), and popular TV series (for instance Küçük Ağa, 2014) depend heavily on the innocence, charm and talent of child actors.

Children once again take center stage when it comes to emotional abuse. People from all ages suffer all over the world; however, we pay attention when it is children who suffer. We can rapidly turn over the page when headlines read "Bombing by Israel," "Conflict in Syria," or "Two terrorists captured" without concern for the woes mentioned. However, as is well-known by ad, cinema and media professionals, it is totally different when a child enters the picture.

Barriers before the political participation of children

Studies in public administration in Turkey suggest that children are not seen as subjects with the right to participate or citizens who should take part in governance processes.[6] Although they account for a large part of the population, children are deemed to be half citizens or citizen candidates. In cases of rights abuse, they have a hard time accessing the judiciary system and children's rights associations; as such, they are helpless in influencing decision makers.

Children's views are rarely taken into account, they lack the right to vote, and they can't play a role in determining government's stance on human rights, which in turn makes them even more helpless.

Although children constitute over one third of the population, they are not a subject in the political process and can rarely make use of social resources. An analysis of the agenda and programs of political parties and government policies shows that children are not seen as active and visible individuals in the public arena, but rather as individuals awaiting services or victims whose rights are abused. In the program of the 61st government, the word child is used only in the contexts of education, social assistance and children in need of protection. Children are thus portrayed as deficient individuals who need protection. It must be added that this viewpoint is shared not only by the state and politicians. Parents as well as professionals in public administration, NGOs or children's rights advocacy seldom deem children's social roles and power to be important; they do not view children as agents of democracy.

However, children are individuals who are active agents of human rights and have independent thoughts and sentiments. As such, the logic of charity and patriarchal perspectives should be rejected. It is important to establish participatory channels to enable children to embrace democracy and the principle of living together. Ensuring children's participation means allowing children to express their opinions and to take these opinions into account during decision-making processes. As per Article 12 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children should be able to take part in issues, decisions, activities and processes which concern them.

Children and dissident politics

According to the discourse by mainstream media, politicians and jurists, children have no place in politics. In line with the nuclear family structure and middle class values, children are supposed go to school, play in public parks, read children's books and watch cartoons. Although they are clichés, these ideas reflect the current situation. Children are expected to stay away from streets, squares, or the public space in general. Children on the street are always seen as bad examples: children who sniff glue, children who collect waste, peddle handkerchiefs or wipe windshields to make money. It is generally accepted that these children are driven to the streets by their ignorant or poor parents and

community, and need to be saved. The empathy demonstrated by Yaşar Kemal in his interviews with street children thirty years ago is nowhere to be seen now.

Being on the streets is a harshly criticized act. What is criticized even more harshly is engaging in politics, as seen in the context of children throwing stones. Although children are imagined as being outside the realm of politics, whenever they participate in dissident actions against the state they are indeed seen as political subjects and concerns about their protection are put aside. On May Day 2013, the 17-year-old D.A. was hit on the head by the police with a gas canister and her skull was fractured. The then İstanbul governor Hüseyin Avni Mutlu said "Dilan is a member of an illegal, marginal group. She is a radical militant. We haven't done anything wrong." D.A. had ceased being a child as soon as she was deemed to be "member of an illegal organization." According to the prevalent conservative perspective, children get involved in political action only because they are beguiled, manipulated and abused by adults. These children are immediately branded as terrorists, militants, anarchists, or "çapulcu", etc.

The two opposing images about Berkin Elvan after his killing[7] were also generalizations. He was portrayed either as a terrorist "with a scarf across his face and a slingshot in his hand" (a political subject) or an innocent kid who went out to buy bread (a non-political victim). The first argument disregards that Berkin was still a child, and the second overshadows his right to resist as a political subject. Due to the assumptions of the government and the media, hundreds of children such as Berkin are labelled, instrumentalized in politics and put in danger.

A striking case in point was the court case concerning a group of youngsters in the province of Manisa. In Manisa, sixteen children aged between 14 and 18 were taken under police custody on December 26, 1995 for allegedly writing graffiti on the walls, distributing leaflets, throwing molotov cocktails, and being members of an illegal organization. Most of them were high school students, and they were held in the Manisa Anti-Terror Unit. Based on their declarations under custody, they were put on trial for being members of an illegal organization at İzmir State Security Court (DGM). At the same time, a lawsuit was filed against ten police officers of the Anti-Terror Unit on torture allegations. The officers were accused of stripping the youngsters naked, harassing them sexually in different ways, beating them up, threatening them and cursing at them, covering their eyes, and tying them naked onto 45-degree declined benches for hours. Although forensic evidence revealed the torture in full detail, the lawsuit lasted many years.

One specific scene during the judicial process went down in history. As the prison bus took away the youth away from the courthouse, one mother held on to the vehicle door, shouting "Don't take away my daughter, she is just a kid!" What the mother was saying is that her daughter was too young to be involved in politics. This is a typical assumption which summarized the social and political roles attributed (or not attributed) to children. A child is innocent, ignorant and vulnerable. According to this romantic viewpoint, children can only be victims, and never the subjects of an event.

In that case, how can we expect children and youth to reclaim their neighborhood, city, environment and world tomorrow or ten years later and become indispensable and active members of a democratic society, within an order and among politicians and parents who do not take them seriously?

1   Yaşar Kemal'in Kemal Özer'e verdiği söyleşi, 13 Eylül 1975, "Çocuklar İnsandır", s. 17, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2013, İstanbul.
2   Erdal Eren, 12 Eylül askeri darbesi döneminde, 17 yaşında olmasına rağmen, yaşını ispatlamak için kemik ölçümü yapılması talebi reddedilmiş, yaşı büyütülerek 13 Aralık 1980'de idam edilmişti.
3   24 Mart 2006'da Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin bir operasyonunda öldürülen on iki PKK gerillasının cenaze töreninde ve sonrasında çıkan olaylara dair Başbakan Tayyip Erdoğan'ın sözleri.
4   8 Haziran 2014'te, Lice'de kışla içindeki bayrağı direkten indirenin TSK tarafından çocuk olduğunun açıklanması üzerine Başbakan Erdoğan "Çocuk da olsa gereği yapılacaktır, bedeli ödetilecektir" demişti.
5   Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) Kırklareli Milletvekili Turgut Dibek'in soru önergesine Adalet Bakanlığı'ndan verilen cevap. http://bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/140604-9-yilda-10-bin-cocuk-dgm-ve-oym-lerde-yargilandi.
6   Serdar Değirmencioğlu, "Demokraside Çocuk ve Gençlere Yer Açmak", Sosyal Hizmet, ss. 23-33, Ocak 2008.
7   1999 doğumlu Berkin Elvan Gezi protestoları sırasında polis tarafından atılan göz yaşartıcı gaz kapsülünün başına isabet etmesi üzerine 269 gün komada kaldıktan sonra 11 Mart 2014'te hayatını kaybetti.

THE CHILDREN OF THE "NEW TURKEY"
Seasonal child workers in agriculture

Ertan Karabıyık

In Turkey, the first program to address child labor was the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in 1992. In 1994, 1999, 2006 and 2012, statistics were released on child labor in Turkey. According to the latest data, 5.9% of children aged 6 to 17, that is 893,000[1] children, are employed in "economic activities."[2] Of this total, around 400,000 work in agriculture, 217,000 in manufacturing, and 277,000 in the services sector.

a limited duration with a view to earn income. For instance, individuals or families who travel to Muğla or Tekirdağ to work in construction, to collect sea mussels in İzmir, leave Niğde to collect scrap metal in Bursa, leave Adıyaman or Şanlıurfa to harvest apricots in Malatya or cumin in Konya are such seasonal migrant workers. While seasonal labor migration takes place in almost all regions and industries, migration for agriculture has the biggest effect on children and is much more visible.

Children in seasonal labor migration

Children participate in seasonal labor migration in almost all sectors. Usually their entire household is engaged in agriculture and children's work model is determined by the method of payment to the household. In agriculture, three payment methods are prevalent:

a. Daily wage: The starting and ending hours of the day's work is set, and payment is on a daily basis. Children aged 12 and are above usually employed in this way.

b. Payment per unit area: On the basis of an agreement between the landowners and workers, payment is made according to the size of the unit area. For instance, they decide on a certain sum for hoeing and harvesting one decare of a vegetable field. In this system, all members of the household work in the field, there is no age limit and even six-year-old kids help their parents.

c. Payment per unit volume: In this payment method usually applied in harvest work, workers are paid according to the total volume of goods they harvest. This practice is widespread in cotton harvesting. Households put to work their youngest children capable of harvesting.

Ertan Karabıyık
Since 1992, Ertan Karabıyık has been active in programs and projects on children working in agriculture. In 2011, he became the manager of the Intervention Program for Children Aged 6-14 in Seasonal Labor Migration, supported by the Embassy of Netherlands in Turkey. He has worked as consultant to the National Child Labor Survey on Turkey. From 2013-14, he served as the coordinator of the project Development of Local Capacity in Seasonal Itinerary Agricultural Work.

Since this data is based on surveys carried out in the first weeks of October, November and December, it does not fully reflect the situation of itinerant child workers in agriculture. Nevertheless, even these deficient data show that hundreds of thousands of children have paid work. There are few in-depth studies on how this work affects the physical and cognitive development, education and health of these children.

Of itinerant child workers employed in agriculture, those who engage in activities like hoeing, planting and harvesting are frequently featured in mass media. However, those active in animal husbandry, especially shepherding, cutting trees, trimming and skidding, erosion control, planting and caring for saplings, fishing etc. are rarely in the news, and not even in academic studies for that matter.

Seasonal labor migration

In seasonal labor migration, an individual or family abandons their permanent residence for another location to make a living, to work in someone else's or their own enterprise for

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In addition, there are various employment methods specific to local areas. For instance under a sharecropping scheme dubbed "kürekçilik" in Şanlıurfa, the households employed to carry out the entire cotton production take 30% of the overall harvest in return. In case the agricultural input is provided equally by the two parties, the household may also get half of the harvest. Here, too, all working age individuals join in. In brief, in all payment methods except the daily wage scheme, children start to work at very young ages; however, they are not counted in statistical data.

Children's working conditions in seasonal agricultural labor[3]

The main findings of a study on the conditions of seasonal child workers in agriculture in four provinces are as follows:

At 76.6%, "working in the field" is the main task carried out by kids. Girls fulfill duties such as carrying water (68.4%), taking care of siblings (63.7%), watching over belongings (66.6%), washing the dishes (45.6%), cooking (30%), cleaning (49.1), etc.

In seasonal farm work, children work a daily average of ten hours. Children harvesting cotton in Şanlıurfa work the longest hours with 11.35 hours per day. Children work for 9. 97 hours per day to harvest beets in Yozgat, 9.61 hours for vegetables in Adana and Mersin, and 9.19 hours for hazelnuts in Ordu.

Children work 6.17 days on average per week. The longest work week is also found in the Şanlıurfa cotton harvest (6.75 days/week). In this province, children work seven days of the week, for a daily average of 11.35 hours. Children have

declared that they work for 75.89 days each year, that is, around 2.5 months.

Seasonal child workers' education

342 of the children participating in the study (97%) are enrolled at school, and the rest cite the following reasons for their lack of enrollment: the family's objection, participation in seasonal farm work, financial hardship, not speaking Turkish, and distance to the school.

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The study showed that 94% of the participating children did not attend school regularly in the academic year 2010-11, and were absent for 58.6 days out of a total 180. The highest rate of absenteeism was seen among kids working in the beet harvest (66.91 days on average). 82.8% of the children point to seasonal agricultural work as their reason for absence. Other reasons cited are the family's objection, caring for siblings, health problems, academic failure, and financial hardship. Most of the children who don't attend school due to work go back to their classes after they return home.

Children cite mathematics (28.2%) and Turkish (16.2%) as the most challenging subjects in which they usually fail.

A large part of children do not attend school, although the families do want their children to go to school. 89.5% of children have stated that their parents want them to attend.

In response to the question "What would allow you to attend school?" most children responded "employment for my family in our home town." Financial hardship thus creates a huge barrier to accessing education.

Who does what about child labor?

The Association Hayata Destek Derneği (Support for Life Association) carries out social support activities for children working in the hazelnut harvest, with the contribution of the private sector, and runs projects to ensure that children are not put to work and that their living conditions are improved.

Seasonal itinerary agricultural labor has a worrisome effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and constitutes an important issue. The duration of obligatory education has been raised to 12 years; however, this form of labor prevents numerous children from accessing education.

The Mevsimlik Tarım İşçilerinin Haklarının Korunması ve Geliştirilmesi Derneği (Association for the Protection and Advancement of Seasonal Agricultural Workers) provides ambulatory health services to women workers and their children as part of a project to uphold their right to health services.

Since 2011 the **Bursa Chamber of Medicine** has been carrying out field visits, issuing reports, drawing attention to the problems of itinerant farm workers, and formulating solution proposals.

In 2013, the public sector **teacher's union Eğitim-Sen and Education International** jointly organized a meeting to raise the awareness of Eğitim-Sen's local branches about itinerant child workers. Eğitim-Sen continually studies the issue and tries to keep it on the public agenda with its own means.

Ankara University's Research Center on Children's Cultures completed its Seasonal Farm Worker Migration Mapping Project in November 2013.

İstanbul Bilgi University hosts the Mevsimlik İşçi Göçü İletişim Ağı (Seasonal Worker Migration Communication Network, or MİGA) with the support of Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Harran University, the United Nations Population Fund and the private sector jointly carry out research and support projects to improve the living conditions of seasonal farm laborers, especially with regards to reproductive health.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security's Department on Child Work establishes local monitoring systems. The Ministry of Family and Social Policy and the Ministry of National Education issue communiqués and mobilize their local branches to fight against children's employment.

In order to prevent child labour, **International Labour Organization** gives support to projects for developing institutional capacity and repeatable models.

Since 2002, the **Kalkınma Atölyesi (Development Workshop)** has been carrying out basic research on children's seasonal work in agriculture, and carries out programs and projects.

Suggestions[4]

Seasonal itinerary agricultural labor has a worrisome effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and constitutes an important issue. The duration of obligatory education has been raised to 12 years; however, this form of labor prevents numerous children from accessing education. The deadline set by the government for eradicating the worst forms of child labor including itinerary and temporary farm work is already upon us: 2015.

In this context, we would like to make the following suggestions for filling the gaps in legislation and make the necessary amendments:

• The legislation on working conditions in agricultural should be extended to cover small and medium enterprises,

• Middlemen who employ workers for agricultural work should face serious sanctions in case of non-compliance with laws,

• Regulations on concerning children and youth in heavy and hazardous work should explicitly ban children's employment as seasonal agricultural workers,

• Since the duration of obligatory education has been extended to 12 years, the labor and education legislation should be amended to ensure that children can continue their education.

• The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ÇSGB) should communicate to its rural offices, employment bureaus, and province and district committees about the need for monitoring seasonal farm work and preventing children's work through inspections.

• Local decision- and policy-making mechanisms should present a consistent and united front against children's seasonal agricultural

employment.

- Landowners, employers, middlemen and working families should be informed about regulations on children's agricultural work and the sanctions that apply in case of non-compliance.

- The Regulation on the Intermediation in Agricultural Labor should be more efficiently applied in order to monitor seasonal agricultural work; the ÇSGB and the Turkish Statistical Institute should join forces to extend the agricultural enterprise registry system so as to keep track of seasonal farm laborers, including itinerant ones.

- It must be ensured that the net daily wage of seasonal agricultural workers does not fall below the legal minimum wage.

- Legislation must be amended to ensure that at least two trade union representatives should sit on province and district committees for monitoring seasonal agricultural work.

- The Law on Social Security and General Health Insurance should be revised so that the seasonal agricultural workers' insurance premiums are paid by the employer during their work, and the state should also contribute to the premium.

- The necessary interventions should be planned to improve the traveling and living conditions of seasonal farm workers and to provide them with social assistance.

- Allocation of the necessary funds to these activities.

- Ministry of National Education should extend the scope of its relevant communiqué to ensure that each child can attend pre-school education and twelve years of obligatory school education.

- Ministry of National Education and ÇSGB should make use of the e-Okul (e-School) system to carry out systemic monitoring on children.

- Since early childhood is the most critical period for children's development, in order to prevent the adverse effects of seasonal labor migration on the physical, cognitive and emotional development of young children, the Ministry

> Seasonal farm labor of children has multiple adverse effects on large swathes of society. This huge problem cannot be bandaged with short-term projects and temporary solutions.

of National Education and the Ministry of Family and Social Policy should jointly carry out the necessary interventions via their rural offices as soon as possible.

- Early childhood development programs should be run in areas where itinerant agricultural workers live.

- Free child care service should be provided to local and itinerant agricultural workers during their work hours.

Strong political and bureaucratic resolve and a civilian monitoring system are required to ensure that these suggestions and interventions yield results. Seasonal farm labor of children has multiple adverse effects on large swathes of society. This huge problem cannot be bandaged with short-term projects and temporary solutions. Remarkable and permanent progress requires the formulation and implementation of a well-financed national policy which enjoys full support, which in turn necessitates the mobilization of the state, civil society, professional associations, private sector and international organizations.

1   Çalışan Çocuklar İşgücü, 2012, TÜİK.
2   Individuals employed in economic activities (during the first week starting on Monday and ending on Sunday of the months of October, November and December) include those who have worked at least for an hour in return for wages, profits or family income or without payment in a family-owned enterprise, as well as those who were not at work for various reasons but continued to be employed.
3   Kalkınma Atölyesi (2013), Mevsimlik Tarım Göçünden Etkilenen 6-14 Yaş Grubu Çocuklar İçin Temel Araştırma, Ankara.
4   Inspired form Özsel Beleli (2012), Mevsimlik Tarım İşçiliği ve Çocuklar, Sorun Analizi ve Politika Önerileri.

THE CHILDREN OF THE "NEW TURKEY"
Violence, neglect, abuse

Damla Gürkan - Evrem Tilki

Especially with the impact of the women's movement post-1980s, work done with women victims of domestic violence rendered the neglect, abuse and violence experienced by children a lot more visible, recognizable and subject to intervention. The physical, emotional, economic and sexual violence experienced by children is an urgent matter that should become a focus area of its own.

Damla Gürkan
Graduate of Hacettepe University's Department of Psychology. She conducts therapy with psychodynamic emphasis, group therapy and psychodrama and individual and group therapy through art. She continues to work with the Purple Room Women's Shelter Foundation and predominantly provides counseling to children and adolescents.

Evrem Tilki
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We should begin by saying that in households with domestic violence, 70 percent of children are exposed to direct or indirect violence. Contrary to popular belief, even if they do not directly experience it, children witness, see or hear the effects of or feel the tension created by the violence, thereby living in and with an awareness of it. They feel the threat of an unpredictable attack that will target them, and are left alone with intense anxiety. The difficulty of explaining to others the violence that is targeting them or their relatives results in significant embarrassment, and the non-articulated anger, resentment and helplessness might be reflected in their bodies and behavior.

Violence, neglect and abuse towards children, which has been placed back on the public agenda with new legal arrangements, requires careful thinking, especially on the issue of sexual abuse, which leads to the wounds that are most difficult to heal.

Sexual abuse is the use of children by an adult of sexual arousal and satisfaction and results in physical and emotional wounds that are difficult to heal. When it comes from a relative that is expected to engage in a rela-

tionship of love, trust and loyalty, and when it is repeated, with increased chances of lasting for years and remaining secret, the damage to the child is much heavier. The experience is very surprising and difficult to articulate for the child. Unable to render it meaningful, in order to be able to survive emotionally and physically, the child experiences separated states of the mind and body. S/he might go down the path of removing this horrible experience from his/her memories, and of denial. When the abuse comes from a caregiver, the child might direct the anger and helplessness to his/herself rather than the adult. This might push the child to describe him/herself as bad and worthless and think of what happened as his/her fault.

Sexual abuse does not only take the form of physical assault and rape, but includes emotional and verbal forms and expressions (looks, insinuations, forced witnessing of intercourse with someone else, etc.). Contrary to popular belief, it is not a rare incident. It does not only take place in families with low socioeconomic standing, it is not a figment of children's imagination and in fact it is often hidden by children out of shame. The danger of abuse usually comes from very close people, and not strangers. An intervention that listens to, understands and foregrounds the security and needs of a child, and the existence of a protective/preventative system is of vital importance.

According to the Research on Domestic Violence Toward 0-8-Year-Old Children in Turkey, 74 percent of parents resort to emotional violence (forbidding something the child likes, cutting off of basic needs, locking them in a room, shouting, threatening, etc.) and 23 percent to physical violence (slapping, pushing, shaking, pulling hair/ear, etc.) in the case of angering behavior by their children.

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Berivan(18), whose father got 10.000 TL as a bride price.

The study also indicates that in cases where there is emotional or physical violence in the household, 70 percent of the children between ages 0-8 witness the violence.

While the research in this field is relatively sparse, it tells us that at least 20 percent of children experience sexual abuse before they reach the age of 18. It is estimated that one in three girls, and one in five boys experience sexual abuse, which is a very high rate. Very few of these, where the child receives treatment, enters the purview of the justice system. With the increased usage of the concept of child abuse after 1994-95 and the singing of the Convention Concerning the Rights of Children, one can see an increased momentum on work in this area. However, taking into account the problems in the implementation of laws, the effectiveness of public institutions and the recent legislative developments, there remains a long way to go.

Deep scars: Child brides

The marrying off of girls who have not yet turned 19 is another form of child abuse caused by the individual marrying off the child bride, the family, the society and state institutions. The patriarchal system nourishes these marriages, the systematic violence under which the child spends the rest of her life, and the confiscation of her right to life.

The actual number of girls married off as children is not known. According to police data, one in every three marriages in Turkey involves a child bride, and more than one third of girls married off are not the first wives of their husbands. The marriage age for girls goes as low as 12, and Turkey is in the top 10 for child marriages worldwide.

These numbers are clearly insufficient to

One in every three marriages in Turkey involves a child bride, and more than one third of girls married off are not the first wives of their husbands. The marriage age for girls goes as low as 12, and Turkey is in the top 10 for child marriages worldwide.

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map the child marriages in the country. There is an urgent need for contemporary and comprehensive research to be undertaken with the participation of universities and civil society organizations. By signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Republic of Turkey has accepted and guaranteed that it will hold the universal rights of the child above all law and legislation. In 2007, certain civil society organizations observed with concern that Turkish politics did not put the goals and principles of the Convention on the agenda and that there were no developments with regards to child-

ren. Therefore, they initiated a campaign before the July 22 general elections to encourage the government and political parties to give importance and priority to children's policies in their programs, implementations and election campaigns. The campaign called out for the establishment of a national children's policy in line with the fundamental principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We can see the gravity of the situation when we look at the state that Turkey is in 2014 with regards to child policies and implementation: In 2012, at least 609 children suffered a violation of their right to life, and in 2013, 633 children died. On the one hand, with the increase in civil society organizations and initiatives that focus on children, there is an intensified focus on preventive and protective work. On the other hand, instead of drawing lessons and taking urgent structural measures, each incident is portrayed as a one-off, and the lack of child policies at the national level with strategic planning continues to violate the right of life of children.

With the recent legal amendments, it appears that increased punishments are the case for the protection of children. However, the definition of abuse has become more vague and the distinction between sexual abuse and sexuality has become unclear. For instance, we have arrived at an interpretation whereby the intimacy established by the mutual desire of two 17-18 year old teenagers and the forced intercourse of a 50-year-old with a 13-year-old child is rendered the same thing.

As soon as the Gender Equality Commission was established by the Parliament, a sub-commission was set up to investigate early marriages. The report of the sub-commission was sent to all ministries, women ministers, women's organizations and relevant units of universities. Despite the years that have passed since then, no steps have been taken to implement the solution proposals put forth in the report. The conclusion of the report stated the following: "Early marriages are a problem that prevent the enjoyment of human rights, that decrease the status of women, and take away children's fundamental rights, primarily that of education. These marriages are an area that definitely requires intervention in a Turkey that aims towards gender equality."

The Ministry of Justice was called on to ameliorate the inconsistencies between the

Civil Code, the Penal Code and the Law on Protecting Children, and to define children in accordance with the international legislation, which has superior legal status as stipulated in Article 90 of the Constitution. It has still not tended to the matter. The other institutions, whose responsibility is brought to attention in the report, do not have an action plan to prevent child marriages. The Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Health, the State Ministry which comprised the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the Interior Ministry, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of National Security and local governments are not fulfilling their duties and responsibilities on the issue. The Prevention of Early Marriages Unit, set up two years ago by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy – the ministry that should be expected to run ahead of all others, developing effective policies and mobilizing the government for a solution – does not have a known roadmap.

However, the Penal Code Women Platform, established with the coming together of numerous women's organizations, conducted a lengthy campaign voicing the demands of the women. This campaign resulted in the amendment of around 30 articles of the Penal Code. On the other hand, the amendments were presented by the government as part of a bundle of laws and together with relevant and irrelevant other legislative arrangements. Furthermore, there was no discussion with stakeholders. All this brings the situation with regards to the investigation, prosecution and persecution of sexual crimes against women and children to a much more problematic state. The government has not taken the steps that would prevent sexual crimes. It has shown that it has no intention to change implementation benefiting the patriarchal state and law, and disseminated the illusion that the problem can be solved through an increase or decrease in punishment.

With the recent legal amendments, it appears that increased punishments are the methods to protect of children. However, the definition of abuse has become vaguer and the distinction between sexual abuse and sexuality has become unclear. For instance, we have arrived at an interpretation whereby the intimacy established by the mutual desire of two 17-18 year old teenagers and the forced intercourse of a 50-year-old with a 13-year-old child is rendered the same thing. While presented as a step towards prevention and increased punishment, the dismissal of forensic reports is very worrying as it would mean the disappearance of the factor that would be the most important

preventive, sanctioning element.

Some of the other children-centered, rights-based preventive and protective works are the following:

In 13 provinces Children Monitoring Centers that provide support to children that have suffered neglect and abuse have been established. While the model is very good, there are significant problems in implementation. For instance, there is the danger of centers turning into units that only serve the office of the prosecutor, the inability to reach districts (the continuation of child abuse through forensics and police offices), the lack of national action plans by the government, and the lack of action undertaken by all institutions, etc.

The Children's Agenda Foundation is a civil society organization that insistently advocates for the wholesome transformation on behalf of children, so that each child can live as a right-bearing, equal, free and dignified individual in peace. Established in 2005 by the coming together of experts who work on the issue, the organization works on news, press releases, calls, activities to strengthen NGOs that work with children, and efforts to develop networks. It struggles against violations of children's rights, discrimination and for justice, protective, preventive and supportive works. It takes part in the Cooperation Network to Prevent Violence Against Children, where it actively works towards children's policies, equality, strategic network and action plans.

The cooperation set up to strengthen the monitoring role of civil society in preventing violence against children was named the Cooperation Network to Prevent Violence Against Children. This cooperation includes 67 civil society organizations. Their activities include compiling monitoring charts, creating communication networks between NGOs that will participate in monitoring work, creating reports and setting up a databank. These platforms have a very important role in ensuring the establishment of children's rights based policies in Turkey and forming public opinion.

Alongside this, the Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation, Turkey Human Rights Foundation, the Women's Center, the Social Po-

> The inconsistencies in the initiatives of the government and discriminatory policies, the disconnect between different state institutions, difficulties in the implementation of laws, insufficient awareness in society, the legitimation of violence against children by the patriarchal system, the lack of cooperation and solidarity between law-makers and the subjects of law, and the traditions that enslave children result in the continuation of child neglect, abuse, violence and rape.

licies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Foundation, the Flying Broom Women's Communication and Research Foundation, among others, work with women, children, lgbti individuals, and disadvantaged groups, providing preventative and mental, legal, and social support work, workshops and campaigns.

Turkey has signed international conventions on children's rights and provided a protective and supportive framework on paper with laws on protecting children. However, the inconsistencies in the initiatives of the government and discriminatory policies, the disconnect between different state institutions, difficulties in the implementation of laws, insufficient awareness in society, the legitimation of violence against children by the patriarchal system, the lack of cooperation and solidarity between law-makers and the subjects of law, and the traditions that enslave children result in the continuation of child neglect, and abuse, violence and rape. For that reason, it is necessary to form children's policies within the scope of state policy and put them to work together with platforms that are engaged with the issue.

1 Çocuk ve Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması (Research on Violence Against Children and Domestic Violence) (2013) Boğaziçi University, Hümanist Institute, Frekans collaborative research.
2 Prof. Dr. Resmiye Oral (2013) Çocuk istismarı nedir nasıl önlenir? (What is Child Abuse, How can it be Prevented?), İzmir.
3 Flying Broom No To Child Bride Campaign data (2014) .
4 Children's Agenda Foundation Reports (2014).

THE CHILDREN OF THE "NEW TURKEY"
The Dignity of the child and justice in Turkey

Adem Arkadaş-Thibert

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Article 40(1): States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.

Adem Arkadaş-Thibert
He continued his studies on economic and social demography at Hacettepe University and on the theory and practice of human rights at University of Essex. In the meantime, he worked with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations' Refugee Agency in Turkey, the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, and the Children's Legal Centre in the UK. Since November 2004, He has been serving at the ICC as Child Rights Policy and Advocacy Officer running child rights advocacy initiatives. He is a member of the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and the International Society for Child Indicators, and also a member of the Governing Board of the South East Europe Child Rights Action Network (SEECRAN).

Children differ from adults in their development. Their needs are different—more critical as childhood is a short period which includes rapid and fragile cognitive, physical, psychological and social developmental stages. One of the most important developmental peaks happens in adolescence, from between the ages of ten and nineteen. If developmental stages are not supported and nurtured, the window of opportunity for the personal development of the child and the human development to which the child contributes as a member of the human collective can be negatively affected. Harm done to a child may be irreversible or it may take years of resources to remedy, and seriously hampers his/her reintegration in society. One can be a child only once! That's why children differ from adults.

This developmental scientific knowledge constitutes a "basis for lesser culpability of children in conflict with the law" and therefore "for a separate juvenile justice system and requires a different treatment for children." (UNCRC, 2007)

This is also why punishment as one of the objectives of criminal justice system cannot be applied to children. Children are not in conflict with the law in a vacuum; cultural, social, economic, political, legal conditions that harm/do injustice to the child and its support system are the main causes for children to be in conflict with the law. Hence, a juvenile justice system is a separate justice system; it cannot be a part of the criminal justice system that is designed by adults for adults.

The juvenile justice system must be a part of a child-friendly justice and a holistic child protection system of a country as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Avoiding the deprivation of liberty, fast and fair judicial procedures, rehabilitation and restorative justice are some of the objectives in this system.

The Council of Europe, of which Turkey has been a member since 1949, defines child friendly justice as a system that "gives due consideration to the child's level of maturity and understanding and the circumstances of in which s/he is in. It means justice that is accessible to the child herself/himself, age appropriate, speedy, diligent, adapted to and focused on the needs and rights of the child, respecting the rights of the child including the rights to due process, to participate in and to understand the proceedings, to respect for private and family life and to integrity and dignity" (Council of Europe, 2010).

It basically underlines the fact that the rights of the child do not end if a child is in conflict with the law; s/he has all the rights legally guaranteed under the CRC, such as right to education, health, participation, protection from violence, play, development, and treatment with inherent dignity of the child.

Approximately 31.2 percent of Turkey's population (76.4 million) is under 18, i.e. children according the Turkish Statistics Office in 2013. The sheer number of children requires a robust

child protection system for children. In contrast to this need, 245,080 children were taken to security units, most of them due to an offence and misdemeanour as well as being victims of a crime (please see the chart below for reasons and numbers). At least 117,367 children were in conflict with the law with cases before a court in 2013.[1] Most of them were first time offenders and there were at least 44,352 convictions.[2] The average number of days of trials were 258 days in juvenile courts and 252 days in heavy penalty juvenile courts as opposed to 251 and 257 days respectively in adult courts in 2013.[3] During this period most children were in custody because children and their legal representatives have to prove they are not guilty, a principle that is in conflict with many human rights treaties to which Turkey is party, such as the European Convention for Human Rights where the principle of "presumption of innocence/innocent until proven guilty" is guaranteed and burden of proof is on the adults, not on children.

The juvenile justice system is in development in Turkey. For more than twenty years, Turkish authorities have been working to improve the laws, policies, programmes related to juvenile justice with technical assistance of organisations such as UNICEF. A small number of NGOs has emerged to provide limited legal and psychosocial assistance to children in justice systems and to advocate for their rights to be respected, protected and fulfilled.

In spite of all these efforts, the justice system in Turkey has a long way to go in creating a juvenile justice system that is in line with rights enshrined in CRC and other human rights instruments such

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as procedural rights to be observed in trials and in appeals, the development and implementation of measures for dealing with children in conflict with the law without resorting to judicial proceedings, and the use of deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort.

Neither government agencies nor NGOs working with/for children in justice systems share a working definition of what the principles of juvenile justice system should entail. The numbers provided above clearly show a fact that Turkey's justice system is not fair for children and it needs a major overhaul. The main shortcomings of the current system may be summarised as follows:

Juveniles received into security unit by reason for reception

Boys ▪   Girls ▪

Reason	Boys	Girls
Other	2744	930
Escape from the institution	632	624
Not sent to school	218	309
Witness	4601	2474
Illegal work	8	5
Living at street	10	7
Working at street	1950	263
Drug use	225	20
Victim	59880	51977
Lost	4885	7589
Found	973	688
Escape from home	928	1496
Abandoned	17	26
Misdemeanour	688	82
Offence	89667	11164

• Legal and policy framework is highly di-saggregated and thus does not provide a juvenile justice system with a holistic view of the child as a rights holder;

• There is no rights-based monitoring mecha-nism that would provide independently derived data regarding children in justice systems;

• The CRC has not been transposed into the na-tional law and national law has not been harmo-nised with the CRC. Although in 2009 the Ministry of Justice revealed a judicial reform strategy and an action plan to implement the strategy (http://www.sgb.adalet.gov.tr/yrs.html), neither the stra-tegy nor the action plan was approved in or endor-sed by the Parliament. The juvenile justice section is limited to the judicial reform strategy and action plan, yet there is an increase in the number of ju-venile courts and correction centres. This does not account for the preventive and protective aspects of child protection;

• The accumulated knowledge around juvenile justice issues are not visible, existing information is highly dispersed and cannot easily be made available to experts and NGOs that seek to develop programmes and projects with necessary informa-tion. Therefore, without properly knowing the root causes of the problem, sustainable solutions can-not be produced. Information and knowledge is essential to address the root causes of the problem and foster a child-friendly justice system;

• Different aspects of administration of juvenile justice are dealt with by different government mi-

nistries and agencies without a holistic considera-tion of children's developmental needs and rights. There is no clear legal division of responsibilities, services are scattered and service providers may avoid liability and refer children in need to other agencies leaving children's needs in limbo and rights infringed;

• There are no complaint and effective remedy mechanisms accessible to children in justice system.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, the monitoring body of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), recommended that Turkish authorities harmonise its laws and reform the social services, justice, education and health systems to better protect children and their rights in 2001 and in 2012. The following are main points for a reform to overcome the shortcomings listed above:

Research

• Comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research is needed in partnership with the non-governmental organizations and the state depart-ments.

• A gap analysis (mapping) through a small-scale desk review and literature survey is required.

• Supporting research projects that have the views of children and young people considered

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along with those of caregivers and the wider community, with a special focus on the experiences of vulnerable children. Research projects have to make visible the scale and scope of the experiences of children of different ages related to justice system, their situations, and to make their risk and protective factors more evident.

Policy (laws and policies)

• The biggest challenge is the lack of a holistic system protecting all children. Many of the implementations are far from being child-friendly or respectful of child rights. New legislation protecting the interests of children is needed, including the repeal/amendment of laws that define certain acts offences for children.
Programmes (country-wide or scalable programmes, projects)
• Impact evaluations and analysis is required to understand what works and what does not. Organisational and system-wise child rights impact evaluations and analysis need to be supported.
• Help in setting up comprehensive and nation-wide response system designed to provide, where appropriate, support and assistance to both child victims and child offenders, rather than only punishment.
• Support peace and human rights education to be strengthened and scaled through system-wise programmes.
• Support work in the slum areas of Turkey, as broken social ties and social support are one of the main causes in contributing children's getting in conflict with the law.
• Work with media in reporting correct and relevant information on children in conflict with the law should be supported.

Source

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1 Justice Statistics 2013 http://www.adlisicil.adalet.gov.tr/istatistik_2013/39.pdf
2 Justice Statistics 2013 http://www.adlisicil.adalet.gov.tr/istatistik_2013/45.pdf
3 Justice Statistics 2013 http://www.adlisicil.adalet.gov.tr/istatistik_2013/47.pdf

THE CHILDREN OF THE "NEW TURKEY"

University and society join forces for street children

H. Özden Bademci

The phenomenon of street children is an important social issue with diverse socio-economic, psychological and political repercussions. As such, theoretical and/or practical studies on the issue need to be undertaken by professional teams with an interdisciplinary perspective.

H. Özden Bademci
Bademci graduated from Ege University in the Department of Psychology. She went on to complete a four-year Psychoanalytic Observational Studies master's program at Tavistock Clinic in London. In 2010, she received her PhD from University of Kent with a thesis on services for street children and later joined Maltepe University, where she set up SOYAÇ, an application and research center for children living and working on the street. She is currently the director of the center and a faculty member at Maltepe University, Department of Psychology.

In academic literature, the phenomenon is usually analyzed through a socio-economic and cultural lens. Often, emphasis is placed solely on structural factors such as migration, poverty and deficient social policies. This tendency to limit academic research to the sociological background is one key factor why activities to integrate street children into the society fail.[1] The phenomenon is reduced to an abstract concept and children cannot become active agents vested with rights.

In turn, this failure strengthens the tendency to view these children simplisticly. Another key factor underlying the negative approach to these children is psychology's general inclination to reduce and pathologize human behavior. Although each of these children deserve to be viewed as independent individuals, conceptual discussions reduce them to simple "objects" of research rather than "subjects" who have a voice.[2]

Since the reality of street children and their families is not well known, it becomes impossible to implement complementary legislation and efficient service models to integrate children living on the streets into society. Well-meaning initiatives are not only unsustainable but also inflict a additional trauma onto these children. Furthermore, since the practitioners who work with children lack the required professional training and support, they themselves are under the risk of being traumatized. One indication of this trauma is the fact that professionals employed in institutions serving street children frequently change jobs and these institutions are not coveted workplaces.

How does a child start working on the streets?

Research on street children suggest that they start to live on the street as a final resort against the domestic abuse they have suffered since early childhood. Some of these children hailing from dysfunctional families are pushed to the streets or to child protection agencies by their very own parents. Numerous children, on the other hand, first stay in child protection agencies' dormitories but later opt for the streets due to the problematic behavior of agency personnel.

The nature of the relationship with the main caretaker, usually the mother, and early childhood experiences play a critical role in the development of one's personality and behavior.[3] Individuals are most vulnerable to trauma and the effects of trauma are the greatest during early childhood.[4] For emotional, cognitive and social development, children from birth need to establish intimate and sensitive relationships with adults mindful of their needs. Children living on the street have usually grown up without such relations and a safe family environment, which are the most important needs of any child.

In order to cope with traumatic experiences and to survive, children resort to a num-

ber of defensive mechanisms. Although these provide momentary solutions, they have an adverse effect on the long-term development of children on emotional, social and cognitive levels. For instance, to cope with cold weather or the feeling of shame, or to muster courage against the tough life on the streets, they may sniff glue or resort to violence. As a result, they discontinue their education and get caught up in violence and crime.

The project "Together With Children"

Methods such as a one-hour therapy once a week are insufficient in helping street children get integrated into society.[5] Innovative and creative approaches need to be developed to support street children who suffer from profound traumas. To steer them away from anti-social behavior, these children should be in surroundings where their need for love and attention is met, and where they can establish healthy relationships.[6] Since adolescents living on the streets have usually been subjected to repressive behavior from the adults they meet, they feel most comfortable with young people close to their age group.[7]

In Turkey, services oriented towards street children focus on their physical rather than emotional requirements, which are almost completely disregarded. A specially designed therapeutic approach which includes family studies is needed for children to be supported on emotional and social levels. Professionals who offer services to children need to be well-educated in the field, and regularly supported with supervision and training. Unless the employees truly believe in and embrace the service they provide, it is not possible for the said service to be successful.

It is very important for children to have a say during both the development and provision of the service.[8] Street children are individuals who have refused to passively succumb to domestic abuse, have either opted to abandon home or were forced to do so by their parents, and are now struggling to survive in the face of very tough conditions on the street. Viewing the child as an independent agent is especially important in the case of street children.

Using these observations as a starting point, Maltepe Üniversity set up SOYAÇ (Application and Research Center for Children Living and Working on the Streets) in 2010. SOYAÇ is the only center with a focus on street children at a Turkish university. SOYAÇ is also the unique Turkish institution repre-

sented at Safe Families Safe Children (SFSC), created by 14 prestigious agencies from ten countries, and carries out its activities with state support.

The faculty members of the Psychology Department and other relevant departments of Maltepe University support the project; students participate actively in various applied and research projects in cooperation with national and international experts in the field. The findings of these efforts are shared not only in academic circles but with all those concerned via conferences. The university boasts a rich academic diversity which paves the groundwork for interdisciplinary studies.

SOYAÇ carries out its activities with university students, helping them improve their professional development.[9] SOYAÇ also runs various applied and research projects aimed at children in prison and the families of children under risk.

SOYAÇ has run the project "Together with Children" since 2010 in cooperation with

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Street children are individuals who have refused to passively succumb to domestic abuse, have either opted to abandon home with immense courage or were forced to do so by their parents, and are now struggling to survive in the face of very tough conditions on the street.

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public agencies that provide services to street children. The project aims to establish a trust-based relationship and deploys a peer-based approach[10] to bolster the individual and social development of children. In the first year of the project, the activities were carried out at the agencies where children receive services. It is key to initiate such activities in the places where the children and youth are.[11]

Psychology undergraduates have taken an active part in the project "Together with Children" before and during which they received regular training.

The assessments by the children and agency personnel who participated in the first year of the project attest to its positive impact.

Children's views on the program

"We used to sniff paint thinner bul they told us it wasn't wise. They encouraged us not to do so. Their advice was more effective than that of others. We always sniff thinner when on the streets; we're stoned. Everyone tells us not to it, but it is much more effective when someone

explains it to you like an elder sister or brother."
(17-year- old male)

"Everyone used to see us as street children. But now I no longer feel dejected. The students treat us like their friends. I feel much more confident."(14-year-old male)

"We would all be excited on Thursday evenings, because university students would visit us the next day. They would come for us. They would be there on time, showing that they cared for us. They would remember what we had done the week before, and always smile. (16-year-old male)

SOYAÇ is also the unique Turkish institution represented at Safe Families Safe Children (SFSC) created by 14 prestigious agencies from ten countries, and carries out its activities with state support.

"They all go to the university, which impresses me. I joined then, and saw that their atmosphere is very friendly. I dropped out in the eighth grade. Now I want to graduate, at least from junior high. Then I can get my driver's license. I want to be like them." (15 years old, male)

"Previously, the kids were isolated and would not get together for a chat. After the elder sisters and brothers started to visit us, we also started to get together among ourselves and talk. The solitary ones also joined in." (14-year-old male)

Agency personnel's view on the activities

"The kids kept asking 'Will they visit every Friday?' and no longer wanted to go the street. They waited for their arrival. They would have a chat with them and only then go to the street." (Agency personnel)

"They were looking forward to each Friday. It is so rare for these children to be excited about something. This was the first time ever I saw them excited. Even the name Maltepe University makes them happy. They constantly chatter about Maltepe University. I have been working here for five years, and it is the first time I see them so excited. Seeing them happy makes us happy, too." (Agency personnel)

"At first they saw female university students only as the opposite sex, almost like potential girlfriends, because they are not used to establishing normal relations with or spending time

with girls. I was really worried that the kids would physically molest the girls and put us all to shame. But the students managed to change the kids' perception by visiting them on Fridays on a regular basis. For the first time in their lives, they established a normal relation with the opposite sex, which made a positive contribution to their perception of women." (Agency personnel)

Within the scope of the project "Together with Children", project volunteers establish strong relations with the kids and orient them towards various activities at the university, such as drama, arts, philosophy, literacy, radio, photography, music and dance workshops, which in turn channels them towards positive goals. The workshops are designed according to the children's interests and needs, and each child decides on which workshop to participate in. The children expressed their opinions about these activities in the following statements:

''We wouldn't have achieved this without your support, you know? You stood by us. I really like you, elder sister". (14-year-old)

"Normally we don't even want to wake up in the morning, but we get up early and get ready when we are going to come here. I feel happy and calm here. The elder sisters would confirm this, I do as they say. I am not like this at the dorm; I lose control whenever I am angry. "(16-year-old)

"I wish I could participate in these activities every single day, it would be so great… I worked at a carpenter's once. Skilled workers would do welding on furniture, but not a single one taught me how to do it. I always used to wonder how it was done. At the arts workshop, I finally learned it. It is so great to learn new things."(17-year-old)

"Before coming here we take a morning shower. Everyone borrows nice clothes from a friend. We don't swear once we are here. At first, I was really stressed during lunch at the university cafeteria, hoping they wouldn't serve something difficult to eat. But now I am getting the hang of it." (15-year-old)

Children really look forward to coming to the university and once there, they pay attention to their behavior and hygiene and keep their anxiety and stress under control. The atmosphere at the university helps them make progress, feel self-confident and be hopeful about the future.

Children establish bonds based on trust with older students who support them in discovering their interests and talentsö this urges them to think about themselves and make assessments. In time, children express their

feelings openly and set goals:

"I have plans about the future, but I am illiterate. I would like to become a hairdresser for ladies. Well, maybe I can learn to read and write here." (14 years old)

"I want to become a dance or swimming instructor. I started to think about things like this after starting to come here." (13 years old)

The fact that SOYAÇ cooperates with public agencies serving street children as well as local governments and NGOs renders its activities more sustainable. For instance, following a civil defense training program carried out jointly with Kartal Municipality, two children older than 18 joined the municipal Civil Defense Department as interns, and seven others participated in another major SOYAÇ project as peer consultants. SOYAÇ receives numerous internship applications from various social science students across Europe. The participation of European students in the activities has a positive effect on the children.

SOYAÇ managed to prevent 80% of the children in its programs from returning to the streets. SOYAÇ's success is largely due to the psychodynamic approach based on the healthy relationship between the children and psychology students, who are supported with regular supervision and training. SOYAÇ opts for reeducation rather than a medical perspective. In order to integrate these children into society, it is key to give support to and enhance the professional know-how of service providers. Various ministries should also give their support and activities should include the children's families. The results of the SOYAÇ project is a clear indication that consistent relationships and clear rules and limits inspire hope in children and motivate them to hold on to life.

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DEMOCRACY
Turkey's last ten years: From European democracy to autocracy

Serap Yazıcı

In the beginning of the first decade of the new millennium, Turkey made significant democratic progress through constitutional and legal reforms implemented under the influence of various internal and external dynamics. These reforms partially mitigated deep-rooted autocratic practices and created a climate of relative freedom, while also providing impetus to Turkey's bid for European Union membership. Turkey thus regained the trust of EU organs thanks to these democratic reforms. As a result, the 2004 progress report on Turkey suggested that the country met the Copenhagen political criteria and that negotiations could start.

Serap Yazıcı
Between 1997 and 2012, Serap Yazıcı served as faculty member at Bilgi University, Faculty of Law. She became a professor at Bilgi University's Faculty of Law in recognition of her studies "Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Türkiye" (Democratic Transition in Turkey) and "Yeni Bir Anayasa Hazırlığı ve Türkiye: Seçkincilikten Toplum Sözleşmesine" ("Penning A New Constitution for Turkey: From Elitism to the Social Contract"). Since August 2012 she a faculty at İstanbul Şehir University, Faculty of Law. On September 21, 2012, she was selected by the President of the Republic to the membership of Turkish Human Rights Council.

A summit held on December 17, 2004 in Brussels decided that talks with Turkey would start in October 2005. The official negotiation process began on October 3, 2005 at an intergovernmental conference in Luxembourg.

Although the membership talks did not proceed as fast as the Turkish side would have liked, reforms to align the legal system with EU standards continued. In this regard, the September 12, 2010 amendments to the Constitution and following legal changes brought Turkey one step closer to EU standards. Indeed, the progress report for 2011 praised various aspects of the 2010 constitutional amendment. It can be said that the amendment expanded freedoms in general, strengthened the rule of law and gave momentum to demilitarization policies. Nevertheless, the most important aspect of the amendment was changes made to the structure and functioning of the Constitutional Court (AYM) and Supreme Board of Judges and

Prosecutors (HSYK), which are the guarantors of the rule of law.

The 2010 turn: AYM and HSYK

According to the previous constitutional text, AYM consisted of 11 full members and four substitutes, and all members were appointed directly or indirectly by the President of the Republic. The 2010 amendment increased the number of its members to 17 and discontinued the substitute membership status. Plus, it gave the Turkish National Grand Assembly (TBMM) the right to select three of the 17 members, thus granting some democratic legitimacy to AYM. Furthermore, the amendment gave AYM the right to process individual petitions, and the court came to consist of two chambers and a general assembly.

The 2010 amendment had a much bigger effect on HSYK. The reform radically changed the HSYK's number of members, membership composition and the methods to appoint those members, while decreasing the influence of the Minister of Justice on HSYK resolutions. In the previous constitutional text, the HSYK was made up of the Minister of Justice and their Undersecretary, as well as five full members and five substitutes, all of whom were appointed by the President of the Republic from among candidates presented by the Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay) and Council of State (Danıştay).

After the amendment, HSYK came to comprise 22 full and 12 substitute members. The Minister of Justice and the Undersecretary remain natural members of HSYK. Four other members of HSYK are directly appointed by the President of the Republic, while the Supreme Court, the Council of State, the Justice Academy, and judicial and administrative judges

and prosecutors play a role in the appointment of the remaining members. The number of members is more congruous with the importance of the HSYK, which has also become more representative of various echelons of the judiciary branch.

The independence of the judiciary vis-à-vis the government

Furthermore, it was decided that the HSYK would comprise three chambers and a general assembly, creating a mechanism for objecting to HSYK resolutions. The full judicial immunity granted by the previous constitutional text to HSYK resolutions was partially relaxed, and it became possible to object to HSYK resolutions regarding dismissals from the profession. On the other hand, this amendment has shifted the power to inspect members of the judiciary from inspectors of the Ministry of Justice to HSYK inspectors, and the former now only have the authority to inspect judiciary services. As such, the independence of the members of the judiciary vis-à-vis the government has been strengthened considerably.

The amendment of 2010 kept the Minister of Justice as the chairman of HSYK, but decreased their influence over its resolutions. According to the new Article 159 Paragraph 7, the Minister of Justice cannot participate in the activities of the chambers. The same paragraph also grants the power to select the presidents of these chambers to the HSYK General Assembly, and gives no say to the Minister of Justice in this respect. Paragraph 9 of the said article indicates that members of the judiciary can be inspected by HSYK inspectors, upon the proposition of the relevant chamber and the approval of the Minister of Justice. Thus, the authority to initiate the inspection process has been given not to the Minister of Justice, but rather to the relevant chamber. Paragraph 11 states that a general secretariat is to be established under the umbrella of the HSYK, and that the general secretary will be appointed by the HSYK President from among the three candidates presented by the HSYK.

Following this constitutional amendment, Law no. 6087 was passed on December 11, 2010, decreasing the influence of the Minister of Justice over HSYK decisions. Indeed, according to Article 6, the Minister of Justice will not participate in General Assembly meetings where disciplinary issues are to be discussed or in the activities of the chambers. This amounts to a significant limitation of the authorities of the Minister of Justice. Article 8 states that the Un-

dersecretary to the Minister of Justice is a member of the first chamber but cannot become its president. Articles 29 and 30 of the Law no. 6087 list the cases where the Minister cannot participate in the General Assembly and the Undersecretary cannot participate in the meetings of the first chamber, which prevent them from hampering the functioning of HSYK.

According to Article 29, the Minister of Justice presides over the General Assembly. When the simple majority of the General Assembly members sign a petition to convene the General Assembly to discuss a specific issue, the Minister is obliged to invite the Assembly to its meeting. The quota to convene the General Assembly is 15 and the quota for decision-making is the simple majority of participants. This provision shows that the Minister does not have the luxury of not convening the Assembly if he does not feel like it. The quota to convene the General Assembly is 15, and the 22-member Assembly includes

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The 2010 amendment to the Constitution has remarkably weakened the influence of government on the judiciary system. Indeed, the Venice Commission has expressed its favorable opinion to the government regarding the 2010 amendment and the law on HSYK.

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15 members who are judges. Accordingly, the member judges always have the force to convene the General Assembly.

Article 30 concerns similar quotas for the chambers. Chambers with seven members can convene with five members and take a decision with the simple majority of participants. On the other hand, the demand of the simple majority of the total number of members is sufficient for the Chamber President to convene the concerned chamber to an extraordinary meeting. Accordingly, neither the Minister of Justice can impede the General Assembly from convening, nor can the Undersecretary stop the First Chamber from doing so.

This suggests that the 2010 amendment and the subsequent Law no. 6087 have considerably strengthened the independence of judges and prosecutors compared with the previous period, and have remarkably weakened the influence of government on the judiciary system. Indeed, the Venice Commission has expressed its favorable opinion to the government regarding the 2010 amendment and the above-mentioned law. According to the Commission, these changes serve to strengthen the independence of judiciary in Turkey.

Pluralistic democracy or majoritarian democracy?

The 2010 amendment partially summarized above has aligned the institutions of judiciary oversight such as AYM and HSYK—both legacies of the 1980 military coup—with their equivalents in the democratic world. Naturally, domestic and international public opinion has interpreted this as a step towards pluralistic democracy. However, the government's policies during and following protests which broke out in Gezi Park and spread across the country

> On December 17, 2013, a hitherto unseen graft probe was initiated. When faced with accusations of corruption, the government did not choose to support an independent judiciary probe that would either have either prosecuted or acquitted the accused, as should be the case in a democratic society. Instead, the government passed legislative changes to bring the judiciary under its control.

in May and June 2013, suggest that the shift in Turkey is not toward a pluralistic but rather a majoritarian democracy. During the events eleven protesters were killed; while according to the Chamber of Medicine 8,163 were wounded, eleven lost an eye and countless people were arrested.

This data shows that the security forces used excessive force towards citizens exercising their constitutional right to assembly and protest, in violation of the Constitution's Article 13 on the Limitation of Basic Rights and Freedoms, Article 26 on the Freedom of Expression and Article 3 on the Freedom of Assembly. Furthermore, these practices are also in breach of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights cosigned by Turkey, and the resolutions of the European Court of Human Rights, considered to be binding by Turkey since 1989. As such, the government's stance toward the Gezi protests has in a way reversed the wave of democratization in the early 2000s, and rapidly steered the country away from European norms.

The Corruption probe of December 17-25, 2013 and rupture with the rule of law

On December 17, 2013, a hitherto unseen corruption probe was initiated. The operation was directed at four ministers at the time (Egemen Bağış, Zafer Çağlayan, Erdoğan Bayraktar and Muammer Güler) as well as their children, and the Azeri businessman Rıza Sarraf. They were accused of large scale embezzlement and corruption.

When faced with accusations of corruption, the government did not choose to support an independent judiciary probe that would either have either prosecuted or acquitted the accused, as should be the case in a democratic society. Instead, the government passed legislative changes to bring the judiciary under its control. To this end, Law no. 6524 was passed on February 15, 2014, which included provisions that increased government's powers over the judicial system.

Law no. 6524 made amendments to the Law on Judges and Prosecutors dated February 24, 1983 and numbered 2802; the Law on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Justice dated March 29, 1984 and numbered 2992; the Law on Turkish Justice Academy dated March 27, 2003 and numbered 4954; the Law on Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) dated December 11, 2010 and numbered 6087; and the Law on Structure and Judiciary Processes of the Constitutional Court (AYM) dated March 30, 2011 and numbered 6216. Law no. 6524 has introduced the following changes to the legislation, some of which are hardly legible for even experienced jurists:

a. The power to send judges and prosecutors abroad for professional training, which previously belonged to HSYK and the Minister of Justice, was granted exclusively to the Minister. As such the government has come to have direct discretion on the professional development of the members of the judiciary.

b. Previously, successful judges and prosecutors were appointed to overseas representative offices and international courts upon the permission of HSYK and the approval of the Ministry. Law no. 6524 has eliminated the requirement of HSYK's permission.

c. Law no. 6524 has also weakened HSYK's influence on on-the-job training of judges and prosecutors.

d. Law no. 6524 has given the Minister of Justice full authority to appoint the President and Vice Presidents of the Turkish Justice Academy which organizes the above mentioned on-the-job training programs. Previously, the Minister of Justice could only make a choice from among candidates nominated by the Academy's Board of Directors.

e. Law no. 6524 has also revised the composition of the Academy's Board of Directors. While representatives of Supreme Court and Council of State used to form a majority,

after the new law, representatives of the Ministry have come to enjoy a majority.

f. Law no. 6524 has introduced important revisions to Law on HSYK no. 6087. A case in point is Article 8 of Law no. 6087. In the old text of the article, General Assembly had the authority to appoint the full and substitute members of various HSYK chambers, and the members had the chance to elect the chamber presidents. Law on 6524 granted the Minister of Justice the authority to choose the members of chambers, and stipulated that the chambers' presidents are to be elected by HSYK General Assembly from among two candidates suggested by the chambers. This amendment to Law no. 6087 was rightly deemed to be unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court and struck down.

g. Law no. 6524 revised Articles 6 and 7 of Law no. 6087, and shifted the right to appoint the HSYK Chief Inspector from the HSYK General Assembly to the HSYK President, that is, Minister of Justice. This revision was similarly struck down by the Constitutional Court for being unconstitutional.

h. Law no. 6524 amended Article 15 of Law no. 6087 to give to the General Assembly the power to appoint Assembly Inspectors from among two candidates to be nominated by First Chamber for each vacant seat. This power, previously granted exclusively to HSYK General Assembly by the Constitution's Article 159 and the previous law, was limited to First Chamber. The Constitutional Court overruled this amendment, too.

i. Law no. 6524 amended Article 29 Paragraph 2 of Law no. 6087, to grant the Minister of Justice vast powers for convening HSYK to extraordinary meetings. This amendment was likewise struck down by the Constitutional Court.

j. Law no. 6524 revised Article 36 of Law no. 6087 to shift the authority to start an inspection regarding HSYK members, which previously belonged to the General Assembly, to the Minister of Justice. Likewise, the power to appoint the inspection commission was also granted to the Minister. These revisions were also overruled by the AYM.

k. Law no. 6524 revised Article 19 of Law no. 6087 to change the electoral procedure for determining HSYK members coming from the Supreme Court, the Council of State, the Justice Academy and from the areas of judicial and administrative law. While the general assemblies of the Supreme Court, the Council of State and the Justice Academy will have one vote in determining these members, judicial and administrative jud-

> The objective of the omnibus laws frequently passed in recent times, especially after the corruption probe, is to shape the legal structure according to the preferences of the AKP leadership, and to ensure the control of the majority party over the administrative system and judiciary bureaucracy. Such a tendency is clearly at odds with pluralism and rule of law, which form the pillars of European democracy.

ges will vote in proportion with the number of their members. This revision gave the impression that the government was keen on shaping the HSYK in line with its own tendencies. Nevertheless, the Constitutional Court struck it down for breach of the principle of equality.

Law no. 6524 introduced the above mentioned revisions (and others) to various laws, with the aim of increasing government control over the judiciary. Such an attempt is clearly at odds with the principle of judiciary independence, the sine qua non of the rule of law. Accordingly, after steering towards constitutional and legal reforms to strengthen the rule of law in line with the Copenhagen political criteria in early 2000s, it seems Turkey has shifted toward rule by laws—a sign of authoritarianism.

Rule by "omnibus laws"

The government's tendency to pass omnibus laws deserves discussion here. This tendency is not new, and has been a dominant aspect of legislation since early the 2000s. However back then, omnibus laws—which amend numerous laws at one time—served to revise the authoritarian and antidemocratic norms which then dominated the judiciary system in favor of harmonization with EU standards.

The objective of the omnibus laws frequently passed in recent times, especially after the corruption probe, is to shape the legal order according to the preferences of the AKP leadership, and to ensure the control of the majority party over the administrative system and judiciary bureaucracy. Such a tendency is clearly at odds with pluralism and rule of law, which form the pillars of European democracy.

The results of the upcoming presidential elections and the following general elections will show whether the Turkish democracy is set to evolve towards pluralistic European democracies or towards authoritarianism based on polarization, exclusion and majoritarianism.

DEMOCRACY
Presidential elections:
Debates on regime and constitution

Yüksel Taşkın

The presidential system is not a new topic in Turkey. After becoming president, Turgut Özal (1989-1993) had also made remarks in support of this system. The leaders of the Yeni Parti (New Party) founded by conservative politicians close to Özal also claimed that after fulfilling his term of office at the presidential palace in Çankaya, he would once again become party leader and continue his political struggle. Accordingly, this time, Özal would strive for a transition to the presidential system. This debate was cut short with Özal's unexpected death.

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Although some names in the Justice and Development Party (AKP) were always for the presidential system, this issue was brought up more systematically after the constitutional referendum of 2007. At the referendum, the electorate voted in favor of the direct election of the president by ballot, which in turn rekindled the debate around the presidential system. After the 2011 elections, all parties represented at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) sent an equal number of MPs to form a Constitutional Commission in charge of penning a new constitution. Later, AKP presented a proposition to the commission on transitioning to the presidential system. Until that point, the commission had made considerable headway towards drafting the new constitution; however, AKP's said proposition blocked the progress at the Commission which soon became defunct and was eventually disbanded.

In Turkish political history, the center right has occasionally brought up the presidential system, since it favors a strong executive. According to the center right, the fact that the legislative branch fails to form a strong executive is not only related to the handicaps of the legislative. The real handicap is the opposition from non-elected elites, namely the judiciary and the military. During the Cold War, Demirel used to argue that as a prime minister he needed to be vested with more powers so as to establish "democratic authority."

The Constitution of 1982 disbanded the Senate; however, it increased the judiciary and military oversight of the political arena. According to unwritten rules presidents came from the ranks of the military, which restricted the political space (of the center right). However, signs of discontent about this issue abated after Özal became president. His presidency gave self-confidence to the center right, which stopped criticizing the president's vast powers and even demanded that these be expanded. With the exception of the presidency of Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who was well-known for his secular-minded approach (2000-2007), center right parties as a whole were confident that they now held the power to choose the country's president due to the shift in the political landscape. From that point onwards, "civilian presidents" were seen as an equilibrant force against interventions by the military and the judiciary.

What does the AKP's demands for a presidential system signify within the context of this short historical summary? Since the referendum of 2010 has largely eradicated the possibility of an intervention by the military or the judiciary, there is no more need for a civilian president from the center right to create an equilibrant force against them. Put another way, the siege laid by non-elected elites around the legislative and executive branches has become history since the 2010 referendum.

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In this case, we need to remind ourselves what the AKP's said demand is based upon. An AKP report dubbed "Vision for 2023" justifies such a transformation of the political system with the following: "Since the referendum has allowed for the election of the President by popular vote, it has become necessary to overhaul the political system in Turkey... the Presidential system, the semi-presidential system and partisan presidency need to be discussed in this respect... In order to prevent Turkey from losing its stability in the hands of weak governments open to outside interventions, Turkey must transition to a system where the people's will is better reflected in the government, the legislative and executive are totally separate and independent, the executive is efficiently held accountable by the legislative branch; the executive is stable, efficient, strong and unitary, where radical decisions can be taken swiftly to resolve crises and problems, and the executive is more transparently accountable to the populace."

The passage refers to three alternatives: The presidential system, semi-presidential system and partisan presidency. Let me briefly take up the criticisms towards these voiced by those who defend the parliamentary system. Since the transition to multi-party politics in Turkey seventy years ago, a considerable amount of experience has accumulated within the parliamentary system. Even when the system ran into crisis, various solutions

were produced through its internal dynamics.

For instance, although the Constitution of 1982 grants vast powers to the president, which may even be described as a potential semi-presidential system, most presidents have chosen not to execute these powers and thus set a precedent for their successors. Even Kenan Evren

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The AKP's 2023 vision includes the demand for a "unitary executive." Nonetheless, the 2014 presidential elections might potentially create a dualistic or two-headed model vacillating between the parliamentary and presidential systems. This possibility would quickly become reality under the presidency of a leader such as Erdoğan.

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did not make use of his constitutional powers such as "Demanding the renewal of the elections for the Turkish Grand National Assembly" or "the right to preside over the Council of Ministers whenever deemed necessary." Powers which could have transformed the potential semi-presidential system into reality were not deployed, and the result was a parliamentary system in which prime ministers play a much more significant and central role.

However, Erdoğan's aides suggest that he could very well utilize these powers once elected president. Another issue not to be overlooked is the fact that presidents, although they had certain powers reminiscent of a semi-

presidential system until 2007, were selected from within TBMM, which relegated them to a secondary position vis-a-vis prime ministers. Since presidents were not elected by direct popular vote, they did not enjoy the legitimacy to expand their authority. However, a president elected directly by the populace in 2014 can claim to have this legitimacy.

AKP's 2023 vision includes the demand for a "unitary executive." Nonetheless, the 2014 presidential elections might potentially create a dualistic or two-headed model vacillating between the parliamentary and presidential systems. This potential would quickly become reality under the presidency of a leader such as Erdoğan.

In case the opposition parties create a coalition government as a result of the 2015 general elections, the executive could well run into serious internal strife and instability. In that case, Erdoğan could experience the sense of impotence and loss of legitimacy experienced by Özal during the DYP-SHP coalition.

In case the general elections yield results similar to those of the 2014 local elections, the AKP will not enjoy the qualified majority required to revise the constitution single-handedly. In that case, it will be forced to ask for support from Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). However, it is rather improbable for HDP to approve of a presidential system which would further reinforce Turkey's centralized structure.

It can be presumed that in view of these possibilities, Erdoğan might try to amend the Constitution in favor of the presidential or semi-presidential system after the 2015 general elections. However, it will not be easy for him to to do so. In case the general elections yield results similar to those of the 2014 local elections, AKP will not enjoy the qualified majority required to revise the Constitution single-handedly. In that case, it will be forced to ask for support from Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). However, it is rather improbable for HDP to approve of a presidential system based on further reinforcing Turkey's centralized structure.

Here the critical issue becomes whether the AKP is ready to carry out a radical reform toward democratic decentralization. Could the AKP draft a constitutional amendment and delegate some of its immense central power? It is not realistic to expect such a move from AKP, and this is the real issue at stake here.

Rather than sharing its powers with other political actors by revising the Constitution— and thus resolving the biggest problem in Turkish politics—the AKP is keen on further expanding its already immense political authority. However, this pursuit for maximum power inevitably creates instability.

The main reasons which the AKP presents to justify its demand for an overhaul of the system are "ensuring that the people's will is better reflected in government, that the executive and legislative are fully independent and separate, and that the executive is efficiently held accountable by the legislative branch". The claim that these objectives cannot be attained within the current parliamentary system is not credible. Have we really exhausted all options inside the parliamentary system to ensure that the popular will is better reflected in government? Would not the abrogation of the present 10% electoral threshold be a step forward in this respect? Likewise, various revisions to the Law on Political Parties could stop MPs from becoming the henchmen of their party leader.

The objective: a more centralized structure

In other words, the legislative and its control over the executive can be significantly strengthened within the parliamentary system. If the electoral threshold had been 5% at the 2002 general elections, AKP would have won 266 seats. However, the AKP won 363 seats instead and became capable of revising the Constitution single-handedly. The simple fact that the 10% threshold will remain in the upcoming general elections gives us an idea as to whether or not AKP really wants a stronger legislative branch.

How can we be sure that the executive will be held accountable by the legislative branch in the presidential system if this is not the case in the parliamentary system? If a president who can run the country by decree also brings the prime minister's office and his party's MPs under control, that situation will be worse than the present one. Making the legislative stronger vis-a-vis the executive and at the same time rendering the executive more efficient are targets which can be attained inside the parliamentary system. One does not need to be a political scientist to see that the real goal here is a more centralized political structure.

Both our current parliamentary system, and the presidential system proposed by the AKP are incapable of deepening Turkey's democracy. Turkey cannot resolve its prob-

lems by preserving and reinforcing its current centralized model. The real issue is transforming the monolithic and centralized structure which monopolizes all legal and informal power. For that purpose, one must accept that politics involves multiple actors and pass reforms which allow for the separation of powers between different actors.

Such reforms can be achieved within both the parliamentary and presidential systems. In my opinion, it will be much easier to carry out such reforms within the parliamentary system since we have been gaining experience with it for the last 70 years. For instance, if we truly believe that it is wrong for the president to appoint university presidents—as is the case now—we should defend such powers to be delegated to the real actors in the field, that is the universities themselves. How much a say should the president have in electing members of the judiciary? If the TBMM is to play a role in the choice of judiciary cadres, should not this pass through appointment methods based on a "qualified majority" that oblige parties to collaborate? Clearly, the real problem is not choosing between the presidential and parliamentary systems, but rather upholding the democratic spirit and institutions.

Decentralization reform

A transition to the presidential system by keeping intact Turkey's current system of local government would lead to unsurmountable problems. The present legislation on local government is based on the model of "strong mayor, weak assembly." In other words, the presidential system is already in place on the local level. If the central government also transitions to the presidential system, the legislative branch will be even more ineffective on both local and central levels.

> A transition to the presidential system by keeping intact Turkey's current system of local government would lead to unsurmountable problems. The presidential system is already in place on the local level. If the central government also transitions to the presidential system, the legislative branch will be even more ineffective on both local and central levels.

What is needed is a change in the opposite direction: Establishing the "strong assembly, efficient mayor" model on the local level can only be possible if the legislative branch is likewise strengthened in Ankara. Put another way, we need to revise our parliamentary system so that local government is stronger. Enacting such decentralization reform must be our main systemic concern in the 21st century. Centering the entire debate on the presidential system amounts to intentionally diverting attention from the real issue.

It is not possible to govern Kurds this way and also the country as a whole. Think of it: even a tender for procurement of milk to schools is carried out by the central government. This kind of issue is not even delegated to local governments or parent-teacher associations. The presidential system is tantamount to a wrong diagnosis and wrong medication, to say the least. The decentralization reform or revolution remains the key issue which will determine whether Turkey becomes a democratic republic in the 21st century or not.

1 AK Parti 2023 Siyasi Vizyon, Siyasal Sistem. http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/akparti/2023-siyasi-vizyon#bolum_

ECOLOGY
Tourism as an industry of destruction

Hatice Kurşuncu

Among the middle classes, it has become a habit, indeed almost a social obligation, to go for a vacation by the sea. After World War II, the domestic tourism industry expanded parallel to the rising welfare of the middle class in developed countries. From the 1980s onward, tourism became a huge industry on a global scale.

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According to a 2014 report by United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), from 1950 through 2013, the number of international tourists exploded from 25 million to 1,087 million and that of domestic tourists reached 6 billion (The number of tourists is calculated as the total number of travels in a year). The number of international tourists is expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. According to UNWTO, in 2013, tourism accounted for 9% of global GDP and 9% of global employment. In 2012, 260 million people worked in the sector worldwide.

The tourism industry is based on sales: It sells services and "beautiful landscapes." To put otherwise, it exploits labor and industry. To this end, it has an impact in two sectors: construction and transport. Accordingly, it requires the production of various goods such as textiles, gifts, cement and energy. On top of the huge scale of this production, the total number of domestic and international tourists (or rather the total number of travels) has reached a whopping 7 billion in 2013! Let us give a single example for the ecological destruction that tourism entails: In international tourism, air travel accounts for 53% (371 million) and land travel (except railways) accounts for 40% (280 million) of all travel: The resulting carbon emission is huge.

The International Labor Organization depicts tourism as an industry where employment is illicit, temporary or short (frequently seasonal), irregular; work hours are long and tiresome, and pay is low. In addition, living conditions change so dramatically in touristic cities that sometimes locals can no longer sustain their livelihood. This situation is also dubbed the Venice syndrome, since that city is the main case in point. Due to the urban rent created by tourism, house prices have skyrocketed in the city, and as all services became oriented towards foreign tourists, many locals can no longer make ends meet. The local population of Venice has fallen from 200 to 50 thousand in two decades, and some expect it to fall to zero by 2030.

In reaction to this ecological and social destruction, we have seen the appearance of "ecotourism" which focuses on agricultural tourism, outdoor sports, etc. The prefix "eco-" makes this sector look innocent, however, let us remember that the island Mallorca is visited annually by 10 million Europeans for cycling. One cannot but ask "What is eco- about it at all?"

Tourism in Turkey from 1970s to date

It was in the 1970s that the Turkish tourism industry started to develop. Back then, the sector was mostly based on small, family-owned B&Bs. From 1970s onwards, however, summer houses (also called second residences) constructed by housing coops started to wreak havoc in coastal areas. This development can be attributed on the one hand to the new demand by the middle class which enjoyed higher incomes and started to go on vacation more frequently; and on the other, to the construction sector which shifted its focus to coastal areas after its growth in large city centers slowed down. Plus, many Turkish workers who had emigrated to Germany for employment invested their remittances in summer houses back in Turkey. According to data by the official statistical

Planning Decisions about Marine
Spaces from the Environmental
Plan (1/25,000) for
Datça-Bozburun Natural
Reserve Region.
www.muglakulturturizm.gov.tr

agency TÜİK, as of 2000, summer houses (or second residences) account for 8% (464 thousand) of the 5.8 million housing units constructed each year in Turkey. A study carried out by Kunter Manisa and Tülin Görgülü in the Mediterranean and Aegean regions suggests that, in these areas, 85% of summer houses are used only once a year, and 62% are used for two months or less.

In the second half of the 1980s, many large firms based in various sectors stepped into tourism and construction. The Law for Supporting Tourism passed in 1982 played an important role in this shift. The said law introduced advantageous loan conditions and other measures to speed up the growth of tourism which up until then could not make much progress due to natural protection laws and the slow pace of state planning. The legislation defined three types of touristic space, namely touristic regions, touristic areas and touristic centers. (An amendment in 2003 added the "cultural and touristic regions for protection and development"). The said categories are determined and announced by the Council of Ministers. This allows governments to overcome the limits imposed on construction by laws to protect forests and agricultural areas.

"From 1982 when the Law for Supporting Tourism came into effect until 2006, the touristic regions, areas and centers, as well as the cultural and touristic regions for protection and development spanning along the coastline from Çanakkale until Mersin reached a total bed capacity of over one million through various environmental reorganization plans, and certificates were issued for an additional bed capacity of 500,000. In the said period, one out of three of these beds fell on allocated plots."   In brief, the Law for Supporting Tourism is among the main culprits behind the invasion of coasts and forests by five-star hotels

from the 1980s onwards.

According to the Tourism Strategy Action Plan (2007-2013) issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Turkish tourism industry grew by an annual 15% versus a worldwide average of 6.8% from 1985 to 2005. The plan sets targets such as a bed capacity of 1.5 million, over 40 million tourists and an income of 50 billion dollars from foreign tourists. In addition, the plan mentions nine more culture and tourism development areas, seven tourism development corridors, ten touristic cities, eleven cruiser ports, nine yacht ports, twenty seven fishing ports, a new airport, and new railways and highways. As such, the plan boils down to more and more ecological destruction.

The tourism industry is based on sales: It sells services and "beautiful landscapes"; put otherwise, it exploits labor and industry. The total number of domestic and international tourists (or rather travels) has reached a whopping 7 billion in 2013! Let us give a single example for the ecological destruction that tourism entails: In international tourism, air travel accounts for 53% (371 million) and land travel (except railways) accounts for 40% (280 million) of all travel: The resulting carbon emission is huge.

Construction along the coastline

Coastal areas are especially important for the development of tourism. On the one hand, legislation is issued to protect these areas, and on the other, such protective limitations are relaxed or even eradicated in order to realize their "tourism potential". Due to this contradiction, 26 amendments were made to the legislation about the

coastline from 1926 until 2007.

The Constitution's Article 43 states that the coasts are under the control of the state, and that the shores of seas, lakes and rivers must be used for the public good. The Civil Code of 1926 also states that the coasts are open to the public and are public property.

In 1972, a special legislation issued on coastal areas stated that a certain zone from the coastline inwards was to be dedicated for public use. However the exact distance concerned and the activities allowed inside that zone were revised many times. Some of these revisions were protective of the coasts, whereas others opened the door to construction and private use.

The Law for Supporting Tourism is among the main culprits behind the invasion of coasts and forests by five-star hotels from 1980s onwards. The Turkish tourism industry grew by an annual 15% versus a worldwide average of 6.8% from 1985 to 2005. The plan sets targets such as a bed capacity of 1.5 million, over 40 million tourists and an income of 50 billion dollars from foreign tourists.

Datça as an example of touristic destruction

Located in the southern Anatolian province of Muğla, Datça is a district with an economy based on agriculture and tourism, and harbors natural and historical reserve areas. In 2012, Muğla was declared a metropolitan municipality. As a result, Datça came under the umbrella of Muğla Metropolitan Municipality and the Datça Municipality came to control the entire district, not only the town center. According to 2013 data, Datça town center had a population of 11,651 and the villages had a population of 6,332, totaling 17,983. Although some locals emigrate from the district, its overall population has continued to rise because of tourism and reverse migration from the large cities since the 1990s.

Due to difficulty of access, Datça remained isolated for long years. It was only after the construction of a highway in the 1970s that a number of services became available. That is one reason why Datça has been better preserved than Marmaris or Bodrum. It became more popular from the mid-1990s onwards, and tourism intensified in the 2000s. One can speak of planned development within the area controlled by the municipality. However, this planning effort could not prevent the town's sprawl toward the mountains and agricultural land, since the coastal zone is fairly narrow. The town center harbors numerous summer houses divided into projects. According to the Datça-Bozburun Environmental Plan Research Report, there are around 6,500 such secondary houses within the boundaries of the plan. Many of these summer houses are now also used during winter as their inhabitants settle down in Datça after retirement.

One key criticism aimed at the Datça-Bozburun Environmental Plan is that it allows for development in the bays around Datça. There are 52 such bays in the area, small and large. There is no development, let alone roads around a majority of these. The plan has allowed for the construction of accommodation facilities as well as restaurants, cafes and outdoor sports areas in some the bays classified as natural reserves. Furthermore, individual landholders were given the right to construct buildings on their plots in forests, groves and other important natural sites. Since these areas constitute 80% of the plan area, most of the natural reserves will not be protected since they include plots held by private individuals.

In the relatively developed bays of Palamutbükü and Mesudiye, the plan requires touristic facilities to obtain tourism certificates and defines minimum development zones which are larger than the current areas, which suggest that the plots will soon change hands and the small B&Bs will be replaced by large hotels. As such, the locals who engage in agriculture during winter and touristic activities in summer will turn into employees of the tourism sector.

Just as in large cities, gentrification is also visible in touristic cities. Today the number of migrants to Datça has surpassed the population of locals. In a study on another gentrified town, Alaçatı, it is indicated that "the locals had to migrate from the city center to new developments on the outskirts of the city and saw their coast of living rise not only in economic but also social terms."

The Datça-Bozburun plan also touches upon agro-tourism, and defines it as follows: "Meant to provide additional income to small farmers, agricultural tourism is based on activities such as visits to agricultural production areas including vineyards, orchards, fields, stalls, coops etc. and traditional food processing facilities, participation in farm work, overnight stays in farmhouses, entertainment, shopping and workshops." Villages and environs are designated as the areas where agro-tourism is to develop and recently there has been rampant development in such places.

One of the most controversial aspects of the plan is a marina to be built in Bağlarözü. Bağlarözü is a bay without any development, since it is very close to the ruins of the ancient city of Knidos and thus falls within a first category archeological reserve. There is a pier inside the Knidos ancient city; however, it is argued that it no longer meets the demand and that a new port should be built.

The elimination of the pier would be beneficial for the protection of the site, however the construction of a port in Bağlarözü is set to trigger more development. According to the plan, piers are to be built in many bays around Datça, which could pave the ground to more yacht tourism and the subsequent destruction of nature.

What do locals want?

For years there were no plans covering Datça, because of the inability of governments to establish a well functioning planing system and the ineffciency of the institutions meant to draw the plans. The main concern which haunts the locals in Datça is the fate of their B&Bs, restaurants and other small commercial business which have had no legal status in the last twenty years due to the lack of a proper plan. They want to protect their forests, sea, and historical legacy, but also their homes and businesses.

It seems that the tourism industry will continue to be centered on small B&Bs, aparthotels and boutique hotels in Datça. While some of the locals are against the advent of large hotel chains, some are in favor of the development of more intensive and lucrative tourism. Datça harbors a large young population who can find no agricultural work or lack land, and the youth unemployment rate is high. As such they demand new employment opportunities. Most locals still have a connection to agriculture, as they engage in tourism during summer and go back to agriculture to produce almonds, olives and honey during winter. Consequently, they demand support for agriculture, too.

The locals want to make ends meet. However, most do not favor rampant development. They are cognizant that their tourism income depends on the natural beauty of the landscape and so demand protection for the sea and forests. They want water treatment systems, drinkable water and fire-fighting infrastructure.

It seems that tourism will increasingly replace agriculture in Datça. If tourism grows rapidly, this will result in more tourists, more businesses, more pollution and destruction. Furthermore, this development will not make the locals richer. Labor exploitation is intensive in tourism, and as the scale increases the number of workers and their wages go down. Once agriculture substitutes tourism, even in its agro- or eco-tourism variants, capitalist relations of production become the norm. As a result, coasts and forests are protected only on paper, archeological reserves are preserved only as a tourist attraction, and rural and agricultural culture is turned into its own caricature for marketing purposes. Can this problem be overcome by reviving agriculture, deploying natural agricul-

tural methods, and organizing small farmers? It will take a drawn-out struggle to resolve the tense conflict between tourism and ecology.

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ECOLOGY
The devastating effects of energy privatization

Oğuz Türkyılmaz

The ongoing privatization of the energy sector since the 1980s have always harmed public interest and served a handful of private companies. Privatization policies have turned into a legal mechanism for transferring financial resources from consumers to the said companies. The key developments related to this privatization drive have been summarized below:[1]

1984: The statutory decree no. 233 defined the state economic enterprises (K T). The law no. 3096 abrogated the monopoly status held by Turkish Electricity Corporation (TEK).
1993: Council of Ministers' resolution no. 93/4789 divided TEK into two separate entities.

1994: The law no. 3996 introduced the Build-Operate-Transfer model.
1997: The law no. 4283 introduced the Build-Operate model.
1999: The law no. 4446 revised the Constitution's articles 47, 125 and 155. The Law on the Council of State was amended. The generation, transmission and trade of electricity were brought under the scope of the law no. 3996.
2000: The law no. 4501 introduced arbitration.
2001: The Law on the Electricity Market (law no. 4628) came into effect.
2013: The law no. 4628 was largely revised by the law no. 6446 on the electricity market.

These legal changes scaled down the public sector's presence in the electricity sector and resulted in the institutional change depicted in Graphic 1.

Oğuz Türkyılmaz
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Energy Liberalization and Privatization

Graphic 1: Institutions in the Electricity Market

Private sector is allowed to step into the electricity market (Law no 3096 of 1984)

TEK
(Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Retail)

TEK is divided, and distribution is separated from generation and transmission

TEAŞ
(Generation and transmission)

TEDAŞ
(Distribution and retail)

Law no. 4628 on Electricity Market and the division of TEAŞ (2001)

EÜAŞ
(Generation)

TEİAŞ
(Transmission)

TETAŞ
(Wholesales)

Establishment of regional distribution companies (2004-2006)
The beginning of privatization in distribution (2008)

20 regions
(Distribution)

+

1 region
(Kayseri Elk. A.Ş.)

Energy Liberalization and Privatization

DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES	DATE OF PRIVATIZATION	PURCHASING COMPANY	TOTAL PAYMENT (Million $)
Aydem EDAŞ - (3 province)	15/08/2008	Aydem Güneybatı And. Ener.AŞ	110,00
Başkent EDAŞ - (7province)	28/01/2009	HÖSabancı +Verbund+Enerjisa OGG	1.225,00
Sakarya EDAŞ - (4 province)	11/02/2009	Akcez OGG (Akenerji+CEZ)	600,00
Kayseri ve Civ. Elektrik TAŞ	15/07/2009	Kayseri ve Civarı Elk.TAŞ	0,00
Meram EDAŞ - (6 province)	30/10/2009	Alsim Alarko AŞ. (Alarko+Cengiz)	440,00
Osmangazi EDAŞ - (5 province)	02/06/2010	Eti Gümüş AŞ.	485,00
Uludağ EDAŞ - (4 province)	03/09/2010	Limak İnş.AŞ. (Limak+Kolin+Cengiz)	940,00
Çamlıbel EDAŞ - (3 province)	03/09/2010	Kolin İnş.AŞ (Kolin+Limak+Cengiz)	258,50
Çoruh EDAŞ - (5 province)	01/10/2010	Aksa Elk.Perakende Satış AŞ	227,00
Yeşilırmak EDAŞ - (5 province)	30/12/2010	Çalık Enerji San.Tic.A.Ş.	441,50
Göksu EDAŞ - (2 province)	30/12/2010	AKEDAŞ Elk.Dağ.AŞ	60,00
Fırat EDAŞ - (4 province)	06/01/2011	Aksa Elk.Perakende Satış AŞ	230,25
Trakya EDAŞ - (3 province)	03/01/2012	IC İçtaş İnş.San.Tic. A.Ş.	575,00
Boğaziçi EDAŞ - (İst. Eur. side)	28/05/2013	Cengiz-Kolin-Limak OGG	1.960,00
Akdeniz EDAŞ - (3 province)	28/05/2013	Cengiz-Kolin-Limak OGG	546,00
Gediz EDAŞ - (2 province)	29/05/2013	Elsan-Tümaş-Karaçay OGG	1.231,00
Dicle EDAŞ - (6 province)	28/06/2013	İşkaya Doğu OGG	387,00
Aras EDAŞ - (7 province)	28/06/2013	Kiler Alış Veriş Hizmet. Gıda AŞ	128,50
Vangölü EDAŞ - (4 province)	26/07/2013	Türkerler İnş.Tur. Maden.Enj. Üret. Tic.ve San.A.Ş.	118,00
AYEDAŞ (İst. Asia side)	31/07/2013	Enerjisa Elektrik Dağıtım A.Ş.	1.227,00
Toroslar EDAŞ - (6 province)	30/09/2013	Enerjisa Elektrik Dağıtım A.Ş.	1.725,00
SUM			12.914,75

Table 1: Date and Worth of Regional Distribution Company Privatizations

Privatization of TEDAŞ

All the regional electricity distribution companies listed below have been privatized. Table 1 also includes the date and worth of the privatization deals, as well as the buyer companies.

Private monopolies take over the industry!

Since the year 2012 when privatization gained speed, the share of the public sector has shrunk while that of the private sector has rapidly grown in terms of both installed capacity and generation, as seen in Graphic 2.

While the public sector prevails in electricity generation, wholesales and distribution is destroyed through privatizations under the pretext of upholding competition. The fact that a single private company currently controls 30% of the distribution sector is considered to be compatible with competition law. Through numerous subsidiaries in electricity generation, distribution and supply, a handful of corporations aim to dominate the sector by means of horizontal and vertical integration. The public monopoly rapidly cedes ground to a private monopoly. At present, two private groups control more than 50% of electricity distribution. Many transnational energy companies have started operations in Turkey and are planning mergers and acquisitions with local private companies. This prospect is defined by sector experts, including Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EPDK) officials, as "consolidation in the energy sector."

Private Sector Takes the Lead

TOTAL INSTALLED CAPACITY

TOTAL ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Public   Private

Source: ETKB

Graphic 2: Shares of the Private and Public Sector in Installed Capacity and Electricity Generation

Table 2: Data on Privatized Thermal Power Plants

Power Plant	Hamitabat	Seyitömer	Kangal
Type of Fuel	Natural gas	Brown Coal	Brown Coal
Number of Units	12	4	3
Installed Capacity (MW)	1,156	600	457
Final Bidder	Umak Doğalgaz Elektrik Üretim A.Ş.	Çelikler Taahüt İnşaat ve Sanayi A.Ş.	Konya Şeker/Siyah Kalem İnş San ve Tic A.Ş. OG
Final Bid (millon US $)	105	2,248	985

Table 3: Data on Thermal Power Plants to be Privatized

Power Plant	KEMERKÖYMuğla)	YENİKÖY (Muğla)	ÇATALAĞZI (Zonguldak)	YATAĞAN (Muğla)
Type of Fuel	Brown Coal	Brown Coal	Hard Coal	Brown Coal
Installed Capacity (MW)	630	420	300	630
Final Bidder	İçtaş Enerji Üretim ve Tic A.Ş.		Demir Maden Petrol Ürün. Enerji İnş. Liman Gemi-Yat Yapım Turizm Nakliyat San. Ve Tic. A.ş	Elsan Elektrik Gereçleri İnş San ve Tic. A.Ş.

Privatization of plants

The government plans to privatize two thirds of the installed capacity of Elektrik Üretim A. . (Electricity Generation Company – EÜA), that is 14,147 MW out of a total of 23,712, by selling power plants either separately or in groups. Once that capacity is privatized, all state-owned power plants will be transferred to the private sector complete with their coal fields and the installed capacity remaining under public control will drop to 9,574 MW, which is generated by a number of hydroelectric power plants. The Seyitömer, Kangal and Hamitabat coal-fired power plants have already been privatized. Çatala zı, Kemerköy, Yeniköy and the Yata an coal-fired power plants were brought under the scope of privatization and bids were collected from private companies. The data on the privatized Seyitömer, Kangal and Hamitabat plants is presented in Table 2, and the data on the Çatala zı, Kemerköy, Yeniköy and Yata an plants regarding the privatization process are presented in Table 3.

At the coal-fired power plants handed over to the private sector, no significant improvement investments were undertaken on the pretext that they were going to be privatized anyway. After the handover, the private companies sacked well-experienced employees (e.g. 594 workers were fired in the privatized Seyitömer plant), and the already delayed improvement / renewal investments were not undertaken, which in turn poses a serious risk.

Some of the coal fields run by Turkish Coal Company (TK), that is those in Adana-Tufanbeyli, Bingöl-Karlıova, Bolu-Göynük, Bursa-Orhaneli-Kele -Davutlar, Manisa-Soma, Kütahya-Tunçbilek and Eski ehir-Mihallıçık are being transferred to the private sector on the condition that the new owners establish power plants and pay royalty fees. Still other fields controlled by Mine Research and Exploration Company (MTA), TK and EÜA , namely those in Af in-Elbistan, Konya-Karapınar, Afyon-Dinar, Eski ehir- Alpu will be handed over to foreign corporations through bilateral agreements.[2]

On the other hand, TK , EÜA and other state-owned companies subcontract their operations to private ones, which extract coal without any supervision and control.

TMMOB Chamber of Mining Engineers made the following statement in a press release following the Soma mining disaster, which was tantamount to occupational murder.[3]

"A horrible incident has taken place at an underground coal mine run by Soma Coal Company on the basis of a service procurement agreement signed with TK who holds the operation license. The disaster which occurred on May 13, 2014 at 3.10 p.m. in Eynez, situated in the Soma district of the Manisa province, led to the death of hundreds of mine workers including 5 mining engineers. Analyses by experts from our chamber have revealed the following:

-The employer company, license holder and the relevant public authorities have not undertaken the necessary controls or obtained due results.

- This disaster has once again shown that the Law no. 6331 on Occupational Health and Safety is not enough to prevent the worker deaths or occupational diseases. The disaster is a clear indication that the said law is a failure.

- Wrong policies have steered the profession of mining away from science and technology, and left the engineer to the mercy of the employer. Our chamber's 2010 report entitled "Occupational Accidents in Mining" had presented important findings about the Soma basin and warned of an imminent disaster.

- However, the real cause of workers' deaths is not legislative shortcomings but rather the state's neoliberal policies. Neoliberal policies such as privatization, subcontracting, royalty fees etc. put into practice since early 1980s slashed the share of the public sector in mining, and the mining know-how accumulated in state-owned companies over the years were dissipated. Production has shifted from well-experienced companies to individuals and firms who lack the required technology, infrastructure, expertise and know-how, and the state no longer carries out efficient controls; all of which have resulted in an explosive increase of the number of occupational deaths, or better said murders. Utter disregard for public interest, pushing production to the limit for more profit, long work hours, unhealthy working and accommodation conditions, and the socio-economic status of employees have all paved the way to these lethal accidents. The mining disasters in Karadon, Kozlu, Elbistan and finally Soma attest to the fact that the lives of workers cannot be left to the mercy of the market.

- Even as the fire in the mine was still raging on and research efforts continued, government officials declared that 'accidents are the nature of this business', clearly showing their stance towards science and technology."

Regulations in privatized distribution companies[4]

1. Rise in security deposits
The security deposit, which is supposed to be increased annually by EMRA in consideration of the Electricity Market Index (EPE) or the CPI, went up by 27.1% in 2011 over the previous year.
2. Rise in meter installation and disassembly fees

Yatağan Coal Power Plant Workers are protesting "The wealth you own is what you stole from us"

In 2010, the Ministry of Industry and Trade had set the total fee for meter installation and disassembly including the cost for lead and stamp wire as 12,5 TL. In September 2010, The Regulation on Customer Services was revised. Accordingly EMRA set separate installation and disassembly fees of 2x18,6 = 37,2 TL (an increase of %197.6) for 2011.
3. Connection cost
The first time the consumer is connected to the distribution network, she or he is supposed to pay a one-off connection cost, which is supposed to be increased annually by EMRA in consideration of the Electricity Market Index (EPE) or the CPI. It went up by 68% in 2011 over the previous year.
4. Electricity cut-of and reconnection fee
This fixed fee is collected from the consumer in case the electricity is cut off and reconnected for various reasons. It is supposed to be increased by EMRA in consideration of the Electricity Market Index (EPE) or the CPI, and went up by 57.7% in 2011 over the prior year.
5. PSH (meter reading) fee
The Retail Service Sales Fee (PSH) was divided into two on January 1, 2011: PSH-Billing and PSH-Meter reading. As a result, its total cost rose by 157% between 2010 and 2011.
6. Electricity leakage / theft rate
The new clause 4 added to Article 34 of the Regulation Electricity Market Tariffs reads "In case a change is demanded as regards the parameters set for state-owned distribution companies before the submission of final bids to Privatization Administration, EMRA shall assess the said demand." As a result, EMRA issued its resolution dated 15.11.2012 and numbered 4128, which raised the leakage / theft rates for 2013 – 2015 for the regional distribution companies Dicle, Vangölü, Aras, Toroslar and Bo aziçi.

Evolution of Electricity
Prices 2008-2013

PRICE (Kr/kWh)

Residental (%91,4)   Commercial (%65,7)   TETAŞ Wholesale (%86,8)
Industry (LV) (%85,4)   Industry (MV) (%76,2)   LV: Low Voltage MV: Medium Voltage

Tariff periods

04-06/2008, 07-09/2008, 10-12/2008, 01-03/2009, 04-06/2009, 07-09/2009, 10-12/2009, 01-03/2010, 04-06/2010, 07-09/2010, 10-12/2010, 01-03/2011, 04-06/2011, 07-09/2011, 10-12/2011, 01-03/2012, 04-06/2012, 07-09/2012, 10-12/2012, 01-03/2013, 04-06/2013, 07-09/2013, 10-12/2013

7. Gross profit margin
The gross profit margin ceiling for privatized or to-be-privatized retail sales companies went up from 2.33% to 3.49% for 2013-2015.
8. Price evolution
The change in electricity prices between 2008 and 2013 is shown in Table 4. As can be seen, the electricity prices have gone up by anywhere between 65.7% to 91.4% for various consumer groups in five years.

Urgent need for a public energy policy

Contrary to what is claimed by Law no. 4628, the privatization of electricity distribution companies have resulted in a rise in electricity tariffs, service fees and other costs, creating a legal mechanism for transferring financial resources from consumers to distribution companies.

The social damage inflicted on workers by low pay and precarious work, rising unemployment due to dismissals for productivity purposes, the drop in the quality of commercial and technical services due to low pay and precarious work, waste of resources due to lack of control, and the added financial burden on consumers all

show that the policy of privatization must be abandoned immediately. It is urgent that a central public structure independent of the government's influence must be recreated.

In view of the fact that energy is a common social need, the entire process from electricity generation to consumption must be organized in line with an energy policy designed, planned and implemented in a participative fashion. Such a policy should prioritize public interest, make the best of local and renewable energy resources, uphold national interests, protect the cultural and historical heritage, and preserve natural life.

Accordingly, all privatizations must be stopped. Energy generation, transmission and distribution institutions should have an autonomous public structure where employees have a say, and they should be operated in an efficient and productive fashion. Haphazard projects which are not in tune with the society and environment and are rejected by the locals should be abandoned. The share of foreign fossil fuels such as natural gas, petroleum and imported in energy consumption and generation should be slashed. The high taxes imposed on energy consumption should be lowered.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
Turkey's dilemma and the Rojava oasis

Fehim Işık

Tunisia was the beginning of the "Arab Spring," the uprisings that were impulses for changing the political and social identity of the region. Tunisia was followed by Libya and Egypt. While they did not manage to change the rulers in Libya, Egypt and Tunisia, many other Arab countries, most significantly Yemen, also experienced demonstrations and uprisings. With the self-immolation of a young man in Syria in 2011, the spark of the Arab Spring was ignited there as well. There, the people made it clear that the Syrian regime had to change by taking to the streets in demonstrations of tens of thousands and attacking government buildings.

As one of the countries that saw that the Asad regime would not be able to recuperate and that it was on its way out, Turkey reacted pro-actively, practically declaring Syria an enemy. Burnt by the first and second Gulf wars, consequently unable to establish its desired impact in Iraq's process of change and transformation and having to move within the boundaries set by the USA, Turkey seemed to not want to experience with Syria the dilemma that it encountered in Libya. This must be why a tendency fast developed to become the most influential actor in Syria "pregnant with change."

Turkey's moves and counter-moves

Immediately before the Arab Spring, Erdo-gan and Asad had become such close friends that visa-free travel was instituted, important commercial agreements were signed, an anti-PKK collaboration was begun especially after Öcalan leaving Syria, and there was even talk about a special amnesty for Syrian Kurds that joined the PKK within the framework of AKP's 2009 Opening Policies towards the resolution of the Kurdish question in Turkey. What made the two come to such loggerheads?

Clearly, the most important trigger issue for Turkey had been the Kurdish question. In a Syria undergoing regime change, Turkey wanted to be on the good side of the potential new rulers from the start. Through first the Foreign Ministry, and later all its units, it started taking into its ambit all Syrian opposition, first the Muslim Brotherhood and the National Council, and then the pro-Al Qaida Al Nusra Front and the Iraq Damascus Islamic State. Not stopping there, it started organizing, and allegedly began to arm the Syrian opposition. In short, it started providing as effective a support as it could to the Syrian opposition.

Turkey's first step was to bring together the Change Conference in July 2011. While not as effective as hoped for, it was a positive first initiative. Held in Ankara, the conference provi-

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ded Turkey, the USA and certain countries that supported Turkey taking on this role a solid idea on who was who, and how far one could walk with these groups. Another significant aspect of this conference was the attempt to sideline the Kurds, where Turkey was successful at this point in time. A few Kurdish oppositional individuals reacted weakly throughout the conference, and the conference surrendered to the perspective of the majority. Almost none of the demands of the Kurds were on the agenda of this first conference under the influence of Turkey. Subsequently, many other conferences

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were organized in Turkey, some of which were attended by representatives of Arab nations.

The pieces began falling more into place and the opposition started to take shape. Among the strong organizations in Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood began to pursue a policy that did not exclude Turkey while not being completely dependent on it. Whereas the establishment of the Syrian National Council was announced in Turkey in July 2011, the opposition did not come under direct influence of Turkey as assumed. The Syrian opposition, which receives support from Sunni Arab nations such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, did not warm up to the idea of being led by a non-Arab nation, despite its Muslim identity. The exaggeration of Turkey's role became more apparent in the Second Middle Eastern Conference, organized in the Hatay in December 2011 and focusing predominantly on Syria. Arabs underlined very clearly that they would not leave Syria to Turkey. Following the conference, there was a noticeable change in the newspaper and television news and op-eds that exaggerated Turkey's role.

Two coups and Syrian Kurds

Undoubtedly, the most important distinguishing factor between Syrian Kurds and other Kurds in the region is their semi-legal status. Kurds from Turkey who fled to Syria in the

aftermath of the Sheikh Said rebellion of 1925 produced important cultural and literary works in Syria and Lebanon. Having the smallest population of Kurds in the region, Syria remained quiet in the face of Kurds' cultural endeavors and developments while it was a Syrian mandate. This continued after the end of the mandate as well. Policies targeting Syrian Kurds began to change when the Baath party came to power in 1963.

In a census conducted before the Baath party came to power through a coup, identity cards were taken away from around 150 thousand Kurds, who were rendered refugees. With the 1963 Baath coup, this policy was complemented by an Arabization policy

in the Kurdish regions. With the law Hizan al-Arab, the first Asad took steps to create an effective Arab population in the Kurdish regions. According to the Syrian power, Kurds were migrants from Turkey, and that was why a blind-eye was turned to the various activities of Syrian Kurds as a cultural group.

The 1980 military coup in Turkey resulted in an intensive migration of Kurdish politicians to Syria. Almost all of the leading cadres of the Kurdish organizations from Turkey positioned themselves in Syria. The one organization that made the best use of its position in Syria was the PKK and its leader Abdullah Öcalan until they left the country in 1998.

In the 1990s, the PKK had started taking its place as an important actor in the Middle East. Starting its armed struggle as an organization that was limited to Syria, by the 1990s it was an organization that had multiple military camps in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan, and as many in Northern Kurdistan in Turkey, with significant support.

This position of the PKK had an impact on the transformation of Kurdish politics in Syria. Until the beginning of 1990s, organizations with politics around the axes of Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (I-KDP) and Iraqi Kurdistan Patriotic Union (I-KPU) were effective, but when the PKK announced its control in Syria and received mass support, they weakened. While the exit of Abdullah Öcalan from

Tens of thousand of Yazidis escape from their ancient homeland of Sinjar and other villages after the attacks and mass executions of Islamic State (ISIS) militants who regard the ethnic minority as devil worshippers who must embrace their radical version of Islam or die.

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Faced with an organization that has received the support of nations in the region, that trespasses borders with ease and that is equipped with heavy weaponry, the Kurds protected Serekaniye.

Syria and operations/policies that the Syrian government conducted against it in collaboration with Turkey resulted in a relative weakening of the PKK, until the Arab Spring, the PKK and those of the same political family remained the strongest Kurdish organization in Syria.

Shaping of the Kurdish opposition in Syria: the Third Way

After the Arab Spring, the fronts of the Syrian Kurds were divided into two at first. The PYD, whose politics are close to the PKK, established the Western Kurdistan People's Parliament (WKPP) with Arab opposition close to itself and a segment of Kurdish intellectuals. Led by the Syrian Kurds Progressive Democratic Party (SKPDP) and the Syrian Kurdistan Democratic Party (S-KDP), other organizations and unorganized individuals formed the Syria Kurdistan National Parliament (SKNP). There were also Syrian Kurds that lived in Europe, and they preferred to have close relations with the Arab opposition supported by Turkey and the foreign relations of Turkey. Some of them were given insignificant tasks within the Syrian National Council.

The first period of the Syrian Arab opposition organizing against Asad included a distanced stance to the Kurds, especially by the Muslim Brotherhood. As the strongest organized opposition at the beginning of the Syrian crisis, it appeared that the Muslim Brotherhood was experiencing a revanch of the 1982 Hama massacre with the Kurds. The Muslim Brotherhood, the then-strongest force of the

Arab opposition who thought that the Kurds were also culpable for the Hama massacre, did not admit the Kurds as the third power in Syria alongside Sunni and Shia Arabs during the meeting held in November 2011 in Cairo and attended by all groups of the Syrian opposition. The Kurds declared that they would not be a people without a status in the future Syria. With March 2012, they began to focus predominantly on their internal organization, albeit on two different fronts. Whereas the SKNP later joined the opposition led by Ahmed Al Carba, PYD began to chart the political line that it calls the Third Way.

The WKPP, let by the largest organization of Rojava Kurds, endowed its Third Way politics with a strategic foundation and openly started implementing it starting in March 2012. The anti-regime protests began gaining strength on the streets of Rojava, and the Kurds started organizing the infrastructure of self-rule step by step. The first spark was ignited in Kobane in July 2012, where the people first took back the land that the state confiscated from them along with their identity. Local people's parliaments were set up, and the seeds of people's rule were planted in many areas from health to education, municipality services to security.

The initial spark in Kobane grew with Derik, Efrin and Qamislo. Kurds were both self-governing, providing for the security of their own region, and pursuing an effective policy so that the region did not become a battle ground between the regime and the opposition.

Meanwhile, unity talks began between the WKPP and SKNP. The political forces of Rojava came together in Erbil with the initiation of

President Iraqi Kurdistan Region Masoud Barzani. Rojava Kurds, who signed the Erbil Agreement in July 2012, established the Kurdish High Council (KHC) with the participation of five members each from the WKPP and the SKNP. The establishment of the Kurdish High Council coincides with the official setting up of the Rojava military organization People's Defense Units YPG. By July 19 of 2012, the KHC defined the upper political rule of Rojava, and the YPG was its military force.

Intra-Kurdish tension and ISIS to the stage

As one of the parties making up the KHC, when the SKNP tried to apply co-management to rough equality in all areas of life, relations became tense. There was increasing tension between the S-KDP as the leading party of the SKNP and the PYD as the effective party of WKPP. The tension resulted in new problem between Rojava and Iraqi Kurdistan Region. With the initiative of the I-KDP, the Semalka boarder crossing, which is one of the most significant crossing points between Rojava and Iraqi Kurdistan, was closed except for humanitarian purposes.

Simultaneously, Turkey began to implement an embargo in Rojava as well. There was a desire to put out the freedom torch lit in Kobane in July 2012. People were forced to migrate and tamed with hunger. Intense effort was put into creating a new war front in an unpopulated Rojava under the control of pro-Al Qaida groups.

This was soon followed by military attacks targeting Rojava by the regional states. The support of Turkey has become more clear, as it wants to manage developments in Syria through an anti-Kurdish stance. There were also partial attacks previously. In March 2013, the pro-Al Qaida Nusra Front launched a comprehensive attack against Serekaniye (Ras al-ain), by crossing to it from Ceylanpinar (Urfa) in Turkey, and with the intention to clear the region from the influence of the YPG. The YPG resistance did not allow for that to happen. The Nusra Front had to withdraw and sign a ceasefire with YPG within a month. The resistance of YPG to Al Nusra allowed for women, as the symbols of Rojava's revolution, to become participants in the security and defense of the region through a separate unit. The Women's Defense Units of YPJ were established.

Unable to come to terms with the March

2013 attack, the Nusra Front attacked Serenakiye again in July 2013. The attack took place through Turkey again. This time, al Nusra had not only the YPG established for people's defense, but also the newly established Women's Defense Units of YPJ in its target. Rojavans defended Serekaniye, situated right across from Ceylanpinar, with a magnificent resistance.

Faced with an organization that has received the support of nations in the region, that trespasses borders with ease and that is equipped with heavy weaponry, the Kurds protected Serekaniye. In a short while, the flag of KHC was hung in Serekaniye as representing the political will of the region.

> With the declaration of the cantons, Syria where the war has been experienced at its cruelest, Rojava became an oasis where not only Kurds, but also Arabs, Assyrians, Armenians and other peoples and faiths could take a breath. Using Turkish territory and receiving financial and arms support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, ISIS used the anti-Sunni policies of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki to its benefit and expanded the military mobilization it had begun in Fallujah and Anbar.

The emergence of ISIS, which has become a menace for Rojava and the whole region, occurred at around the same time. Al-Nusra and the ISIS, which were predominantly concentrated in Iraq, started meetings to become a single organization. Although the meetings did not go as desired, the ISIS declared to its establishment that al Nusra had joined them. In this period, where the Muslim Brotherhood kept losing its power as one of the strongest oppositional forced in Syria, a new Islamic organization came to life in Rojava and Syria: the ISIS.

The ISIS received the same support as al-Nusra. Crossing through Turkey, the militants were easily able to join the war in Syria. Establishing its presence in Fallujah and Anbar in Iraq, the ISIS turned to Raqa through Deyrezor in the Sunni region of Iraq. At the same time, it attacked Serekaniye and Kobane in Rojava.

Capturing almost all Sunni settlements in central Syria, ISIS was ineffective in the face of Rojava's resistance. Rojavans protected not only themselves but also the Arab villages under attack by ISIS. The attacks by ISIS intensified at the same time as Rojava focused on the declaration of its autonomy.

Rojava: An oasis where the people can breathe

The Social Contract, which can be understood as Rojava's Constitution, was adopted in the first month of 2014. This was followed by the declaration of cantons. Cizire was declared as a canton on January 21st, Kobane on January 27th and Efrin on January 29th. The Arabization policy that was started in the mid-1960s

The Rojava Revolution was sparked in Kobane on July 19. Currently, Kobane continues to maintain the revolution by resisting the aggression of ISIS. In Syria, the Asad government is still in power and a significant part of Syria is under the control of organizations that are either off-shoots of or in solidarity with Al Qaida, which is on the list of most dangerous terror organizations.

is the reason for moving to a canton system in Rojava. With the declaration of the cantons, Syria where the war has been experienced at its cruelest, Rojava became an oasis where not only Kurds, but also Arabs, Assyrians, Armenians and other peoples and faiths could breathe.

Whereas the biggest aggressor against this oasis was the ISIS, those that supported and paved its way are also significant. Using Turkish territory and receiving financial and arms support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, ISIS used the anti-Sunni policies of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki to its benefit and expanded the military mobilization it began in Fallujah and Anbar.

10 June 2014 became a new beginning for both Iraq and Rojava. The ISIS captured Mosul, the 3.5 million capital of the state of Ninova, without any resistance. With the weapons taken from the military barracks deserted by the Iraqi army, it headed towards the Salahattin and Diyala states of Iraq. It started to push for Baghdad at the same time.

Unable to overcome the resistance of Kurds at Rojava, ISIS attacked Kobane, which it saw as the weakest link in Rojava, with the heavy weaponry it captured in Iraq. Having already taken under its control Til Ebyad between the Cizir and Kobane cantons, and therefore the eastern front of Kobane, ISIS also captured Cerablus, the western front between Efrin and Kobane cantons.

The ISIS also took over Raqa, the southern front of Kobane and Syria's oil region. Marching on with forces that bow down to it in newly conquered regions, ISIS had Rojava Kurds in its target again. On 2 June 2014, it attached the village of Zor Mixar through Cerablus in Kobane's western front. It also intensified its attacks on Kobane on three fronts and with heavy weaponry.

The YPG spokespersons announced that ISIS is committing massacres of the civilian population. There are also claims that ISIS is using chemical weapons in its attack on YPG forces. Analyses by the doctors of the Kobane Health Ministry found traces of chemicals in the corpses of three YPG members. YPG commander Redur Xelil called upon international forces to investigate the chemical attacks by ISIS. In this period of heavy attacks, Rojava's strongest party PYD called out to the Kurdish people at large with the YPG, saying, "If Kobane falls, Rojava falls, Kirkuk falls..."

PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan's call joined Kobane's cry. In his declaration from Imralı prison the PKK's leader asked for a response to Kobane's call for mobilization. Hundreds from Turkey set up tents in Suruc on the border with Kobane to support the resistance of Rojavans. Hundreds of young people travelled to Rojava to support Kobane's resistance. The Rojava Revolution was sparked in Kobane on July 19. Now, Kobane continues to guard this revolution by resisting the aggression of the ISIS. In Syria, the Asad government is still in power and a significant part of Syria is under the control of organizations that are either off-shoots of or in solidarity with Al Qaida, which is on the list of most dangerous terror organizations.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Turkey after the EP elections: Time for a new debate

Ska Keller

The election campaign is over. For us Greens, it was at times a difficult struggle against forces from the right, against the constant anti-European discourse. Often topics didn't matter, all that counted was a YES or NO to Europe as such, without a chance to point out what kind of Europe we want. In this struggle, I was the European leading candidate for the Greens to become the President of the European Commission and thereby also had to defend the simple fact that in an election the voters' voice matters. In the end, Juncker was nominated by the Council and later on elected by the parliament as the Commission President. We have moved one step further in European democracy, but only one.

During the campaign, the question of the accession of Turkey to the EU was hardly debated. Five years ago, the "Turkey question" was much more in the focus as a defining political issue, as a cleft between conservatives and progressives. Back then, there was a hope and belief among progressives that the accession negotiations would play a vital role in advocating for human rights as well as social and environmental standards in Turkey. Now, things are different.

We should take a moment to consider what this change means for our work with regard to Turkey and Turkey's accession. I think, we, meaning people inside and outside Turkey who care about the political developments in Turkey, need to change the way how we advocate for change. With this article I hope to contribute to this debate.

The Green result: strong light and some shadows

The elections of 25th of May resulted in a slightly diminished green group in the European Parliament. The group has now 50 members (together with the European Free Alliance, a Pirate and a few independent members), as compared to 58 before. The loss comes from France, where we did not manage to repeat the fantastic result from 5 years ago, from Germany, mainly due to a new electoral law, from Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands where we lost one MEP each and from Greece and Portugal where we lost our single MEPs. These losses overshadow the big successes we had elsewhere. In Austria and the UK, we increased the delegations to 3 MEPs instead of previous 2; in Sweden we doubled our MEPs from previous 2 to now 4 and became second biggest party and in Hungary we managed to have green representation. Overall, Greens managed to increase their results in quite a few places, while the south and east of Europe remain challenges for the future.

General result: the rise of the right

While the Greens in general could celebrate, other results give us more of a headache. The

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rise of the far-right hasn't been as overwhelming as some predicted - in the Netherlands, the right-wing populists actually lost - but nevertheless, it has been massive. With the Front National getting first in France and UKIP being first in the UK and many small far-right parties gaining seats, it is obvious that we cannot continue business as usual. We have to step up our political efforts to counter the far-right. For me as a German it is unbearable to see a German Nazi taking a seat in the European Parliament. And there are more fascist parties in the European Parliament that even make the Front National look like moderates.

The question of why they have been so

> The accession of Turkey to the EU has traditionally been an important topic for right-wing and far-right campaigns. This time, even though it did appear in the context of immigration and prejudices against Islam, it did not play a major role in the campaigns. That does not mean, though, that Turkey will be off the far-right agenda. Quite the opposite, Turkey for them is a symbol of many things they are against: migrants and Muslims.

successful merits an own article but to keep it short I would say that the main reasons are a deep dissatisfaction with politics and it's -partly felt, partly real- disconnection from real life and real problems; the perception that decisions and legislation never benefit the average person and their needs. The far-right parties jump into that niche by offering a protest platform and by pretending to be on the side of the average man (indeed, not woman) against the established political forces. This is even the case for obviously elitist parties like the German AfD. The EU is a good scapegoat because it seems far away and bureaucratic and it is easily blamed, even for bad policies of national governments. The far-right only needed to build on already existing resentments against the EU.

The accession of Turkey to the EU has traditionally been an important topic for right-wing and far-right campaigns. This time, even though it did appear in the context of immigration and prejudices against Islam, it did not play a major role in the campaigns. That does not mean, though, that Turkey will be off the far-right agenda. Quite the opposite, Turkey for them is a symbol of many things they are against, migrants and Muslims. Though Erdoğan´s autocratic style surely impresses some of the far-right leaders, the accession remains a potential for mobilisation for them.

This was already clear during the last legislature: debates on Turkey's accession were never about a country joining with possible benefits and flaws, but always about a Muslim country joining and many more (Muslim) immigrants coming. This racist and islamophob approach was unfortunately also taken up by more mainstream centre-right parties who thereby gave legitimacy to the general prejudice against Muslims and those people they think to be Muslims. It is clear that the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee will continue to be one of their favourite platforms for voicing their ideology directly into the cameras.

They will be indirectly supported by governments who are now fearful of the next elections and are taking up far-right issues. In many other European countries conservative parties tried to mobilise anti-Islamic resentments. In a move to catch potential UKIP-voters, David Cameron called the UK a Christian country and many other conservatives try to bind the identity of Europe to so-called "Christian values".

Since not much is happening in the accession negotiations and Erdogan is making himself increasingly unpopular also with long-time supporters of the accession process, Turkey is an easy victim in this game. Nobody loses. While this might even be true for the moment, the long-term effects of a further demonization of Turkey and especially a tiptoeing tolerance of islamophobia might very well be disastrous.

The challenge ahead

In addition to the problem of how to deal with the different shades of right-wing extremism, we will have to think about the issue of how to gain majorities in the future. A progressive majority of Socialists (S&D), Liberals (ALDE), Greens and the radical left (GUE) that was possible, though underused, during the past 5 years, does not exists anymore. A grand coalition, consisting of the conservatives from the EPP, the Socialists and the Liberals, holds the majority now and they will determine the legislation in the new Parliament. It means that there will be serious problems for transparency and political debate and therefor bereft the Parliament of tools it needs for countering the far-right.

Currently some MEPs suggested countering right-wing populists and the far-right with new technical and procedural rules. It was discussed that German MEP's lose their

right to offices in the German Parliament so the Nazis would not enter the Parliament, in addition gentlemen agreements have been made to hinder populists from getting prominent positions as vice-chairs of committees. But these are not the means to win the political struggle against them; rather, we need to counter them on political grounds. We need to make clear where we stand and why we stand there. We need to argue more, not less. Unfortunately, deputies, parties and governments are so much afraid of the radical right wing that they are likely to take the opposite path and mimic the right-wingers arguments. This will only give them legitimacy and new support. When mainstream parties turn to the right side in matters such as migration and European solidarity, they give their opponents the perfect opportunity to say "see, we were right".

What does this mean for accession talks?

Thr above discribed dynamics play a role with regard to EU-Turkey relations. Taking the results of the election into account, governments are on their guard, they will move to the right and are more likely to oppose to advances in the accession talks, not daring to stand against what they believe is the public opinion.

The Parliament doesn't have a substantial role in the accession talks with Turkey. But the EP election results matter more than the disturbance they will create in the Joint Committee. This is not the only, and possibly not

even the most important threat to Turkey's aspirations, Assuming that their government has any aspiration left for joining the 28 member states of the EU..

PM Erdoğan has not been very outspoken about EU matters lately. He is too busy wiping out any criticism against him in relation to the corruption scandals, the (post-) Gezi protests and very busy with opening and announcing new mega-projects. The biggest incentive for accession currently is the talks by the Commission with the US over a free trade agreement which would leave Turkey as member of the Customs Union but without any clear benefit. The businesses in Turkey are concerned, but that does not seem to affect higher levels of government yet.

PM Erdoğan has not been very outspoken about EU matters lately. He is too busy wiping out any criticism against him in relation to the corruption scandals, the (post-) Gezi protests and too busy with opening and announcing new mega-projects. The biggest incentive for accession currently is the talks by the Commission with the US over a free trade agreement which would leave Turkey as member of the Customs Union affected but without any benefit. The businesses in Turkey are concerned, but that does not seem to affect higher levels of government yet.

On the other side, even accession-supporters in the European Parliament have called for a freeze of negotiations as a response to Erdoğan´s style of politics. Still, this would only have an impact if there was anything

substantial to freeze. Currently, this would only give a de-facto situation an official status. Once again, the flaws of the whole accession process come to light. If negotiations are started, it must be ensured that they are conducted in a serious manner. And the most important issues should come first, starting with fundamental rights and justice. Those chapters need to be opened first, not last. If the EU would have opened these chapters, there would be a serious platform for debating the lawsuits against Kurds and Gezi protesters. There would be a reason to express concern about judicial reforms that limit independence. And there would be more to say about the sacking of police officers and prosecutors engaged in anti-corruption activities. Unfortunately, while EU governments like to talk about business, they are not very vocal when it comes to Human Rights. Cyprus is still blocking those most vital chapters, even though they have nothing to do with recognition issues.

But so far, the accession talks have always been our main leverage. This is getting more difficult with the current situation in Turkey and the pressure from the far-right in the EU. We need to find new ways to argue for engagement. Focusing on inside conditions offers new chances for emancipation and focussing on real needs, rather than checking out what the EU rule book says.

What needs to be done?

Greens need to continue to engage with Turkish activists and groups that are struggling for a more open Turkey that respects the rights of everyone. And there is much to be done. But so far, the accession talks have always been our main leverage. This is getting more difficult with the current situation in Turkey and the pressure from the far-right in the EU. We need to find new ways to argue for engagement.

Enlargement criteria were always a good and resonating argument. But let's face it: the criteria have been fairly vague when it comes to human rights and it has never been unproblematic to only point towards outside requirements and conditions. Focusing on inside conditions offers new chances of

emancipation and focussing on real needs, rather than checking out what the EU rule book says. Citing enlargement criteria as an argument for change won't be of much avail at the moment anyways. But that does not mean that ties between EU-activists and Turkish groups should be cut. It simply requires a different argumentation, focussing perhaps more on Turkish law provisions and the local constituencies.

Forces that want to support Turkish civil society organisations need to regroup. They need to understand their role as supporters, led by their Turkish peers. During the Gezi protests, people in all over Europe demonstrated in front of Turkish embassies in solidarity, creating pressure on their respective governments to give a strong message to Erdoğan. Even though Erdoğan wasn't very interested in peer pressure from other heads of state, I think this form of support can nevertheless show the way forward. People in Turkey created pressure on the Turkish government on issues of their concern and they were supported by people from the outside. I think this approach has the chance to be more meaningful then focussing on outside pressure before bringing up an issue on the ground.

While the enlargement approach had the clear limit of the talks becoming more and more inconclusive and the aim of accession seemingly further and further away, the suggested new approach also has stumbling blocks. With an extremely polarized society and an undemocratically high threshold for parliamentary elections, it is almost impossible to create a strong political counter-force. Even after Gezi and corruption allegations, the AKP won the communal elections. And Erdoğan has been elected as the new president gaining 52 percent of the votes Clearly, the local movement needs clout, stealth and endurance. But already, they have been causing more attention and more change than all the discussion about enlargement criteria in the meeting rooms of press conferences of the past years. So let's not be discouraged. The strength of the Turkish civil society movement lies in itself. The outside actors need to support it, but the terms need to be defined in Turkey. Only there you know what is helpful. It's time for a shift of balances.

CULTURE
Good series, bad series

Nedim Hazar

"Looking for art in television is like looking for love in a whorehouse"

Quinn Martin
Producer of the series "The Streets of San Francisco"

Friends at Perspectives asked me for an article entitled along the lines of "Television Series Culture and Censorship in Turkey." The topic is nice and interesting, yet the title was a challenge because "... and censorship" creates the impression that there is an anti-systemic element that is censored by the authorities.

In his book "Psychology and Abnormal Behavior in Television Series," psychologist Tarık Solmuş writes "Some series have a positive impact on cognitive development, intellect, creativity, research skills, imagination or the need to discover and render meaningful life, whereas others can have negative impacts such as attention deficit, estrangement from one's self, increased loneliness, dependency, violent tendencies turning into behavior, pornography, disrupted mother tongue, at times an intense worry or fear." This can be summarized as "there are good series and bad series." From this point of view, censorship of television series in Turkey becomes meaningful.

Which television series, one might ask, had or has a positive impact on cognitive intellect and creativity? Is it "the In-laws"? The "Second Spring"? The "Vineyard Estate"? "Valley of the Wolves"? "The Tulip Age"? I think these are amongst the most popular series in Turkey. If we accept imagination as a kind of gymnastics that positively develops the human mind, which of the above triggered or currently triggers this action?

Isn't it the case that when it first appeared series were designed to sell American housewives detergent, and based on scenarios that bend over backwards to keep them in front of the screen and make them watch the next episode? If Karl Marx was alive today, would he rephrase his famous "religion is the opium of the masses"? Or would he say "religion and television series are the opium," or even get rid of religion and just say "television series are the opium of the people?"

"Good series, bad series" is in fact like the "good cop-bad cop" concept where both do the same job—one with goodness and the other with cursing. Because the goal of all series is the same: sales.

"Program services (news, series, films and game shows) are products for TV broadcast, and the second product is the viewers. The viewers are pulled to the broadcast through the programs, packaged and sold to the advertisers." Whichever one it might be, whoever may have written or even produced it – even "Remember Darling" - it is politically naïve to see any series as playing a role in awareness raising or developing society. It is also naïve to get angry at former Prime Minister (now President) Erdoğan, whose direct interventions into TV production have become chronic, such as when he criticized the screen writers of "Magnificent Century" for differing from his own image of a Sultan and interpreting his attitude as censoring.

For instance, I was a part of the scenario writing process and designed the story flow together

Nedim Hazar
Nedim Hazar was born in Ankara in 1960. After finishing high school, he studied acting in Bochum and stage directing and scenario in Cologne and Amsterdam. Hazar produced films and programs for WDR, ARD, ZDF and arte in Germany, and for NTV in Turkey. He was among the scenario writers for the series "Love" in Turkey. In addition to being a director and a scenario writer, he is also a musician for the group "Yarinistan" that he founded.

with Erdal Özyağcılar for the series "My Love." Taking place in a valley in the Black Sea region and broadcasting on Show TV for 20 episodes, the series never evaluated its inclusion of the issue of hydroelectric dams through the potential reaction of the government or the president. This is the case both for the producer and the channel. It was even a possibility at one point that the series would be broadcast on the public channel TRT. At the production level, the only perspective with which we approached the issue of the dams and the struggle of the Eastern Black Sea residents against the dam was whether the TV viewers were ready for this. This is because the viewers are pulled to the series, packaged and sold to the advertisers. That is exactly what happened, and it was only after there was agreement that the dams would have a positive commercial impact on the series that the decision was made to bring up the issue in the first episode and subsequently go into it in more detail to keep the viewers glued to their screens. In other words, the series aimed also to glue to the screen the segments that are interested in, struggle against, or support the struggle against hydroelectric dams.

If there is talk of censorship, Artun Avcı argues it should be about market censorship: "The market logic, manifest in the viewer rates that result from economic competition, displaces the logic of censorship and acts as a cruel censoring institution. In this sense, the authoritarian rationality of viewer ratings constitute the standard of programs broadcasting in prime-time."

Flashback: Wuppertal

We have mentioned Marx, so let's continue with Engels. Around 35 years ago, while touring the Engels museum in Wuppertal, we were intrigued by the objects on alcohol and alcohol consumption, and their prominence, and asked the staff about it. Friedrich Engels was from Wuppertal and his father was a factory owner who had a textile factory there. The Wupper river valley was the center of German textile industry in the first half of the 19th century, like the Merter neighborhood of Istanbul today. Here, textile workers worked under a cruel system of exploitation like the one described in the Communist Manifesto. There were no unions. There was no insurance. There was no need for a retirement system since very few of the workers who worked like half-slaves for 12-13 hour days, without job security and in unhealthy conditions, made it to their 50th birthday. The main strategy of the employer was based

on giving a daily wage that was adequate for the worker to turn up at work the next day and have children to create new labor force. Understandably, the workers were not very happy with their circumstances. Thus, precautions had to be taken against possible riots and uprisings. Engels's father and his friends first chose to promote the consumption of cheap schnapps. Yet, it became clear quickly that this method conflicted with the main strategy as schnapps prevented workers from turning up at work the next day as well. Next, price adjustments were made in Wuppertal bars to make it impossible for workers to purchase hard liquor and beer prices were pulled down as much as possible. The employer wanted the employee to drink pure German beer. In fact, it should be drunk in liters so that the day's exhaustion (the extreme exploitation environment) is forgotten about, whereas the alcohol content should be low enough so that the worker can be productive at the workplace the next day.

There was no TV then. There were no television series. Just primitive capitalism. But now there is prime-time.

"The prime time of TV broadcast paradoxically assumes viewers that have slowly exhausted their energy through the day in the "real" world outside of TV, and who are tired of the monotony of their own world. The most 'productive' hours of TV broadcast correspond to the most tired hours of the viewer. The program at its height might have closure within itself or might required continued watching, but the result remains the same vis-à-vis the satisfaction promised. (…) The program that is at the height of the broadcast is always one that has guaranteed the maximum interest of the viewer."

If we want a slightly pessimistic interpretation of this description, we quickly arrive at the world that George Orwell describes in his novel "1984." Of course the series producers are much quicker. They have discovered Orwell in reverse, developing and marketing to the whole world the reality show "Big Brother is Watching You" in the 1990s. The owners of this format, which was broadcast in Turkey with the name "Someone is watching us" is the Dutch company Endemol, who contributes to what some might call globalization, and what I would rather call the entrenchment of a worldwide monotonous free time culture through the simultaneous publication of reality, series, game and talk shows in around 40 countries.

When Oprah Winfrey started breaking records with her talk show in the 1990s, the said company thought that "the blacks of Germany are the Turks" and immediately began its search for a female Turkish host with perfect German, and managed to rush this author, who was then a radio host, from his holiday in Bodrum to a casting

meeting in a private jet when a women host could not be found. The reason was that the aim was sales and profits.

The concept of a Black (Turkish) host in Germany did not catch on as an idea because "the public was not ready." But what if it had held? What would have changed except the company would have made a bigger profit (and I would have made it)? Would it have decreased the votes of Neo-nazis? Would the people from Turkey no longer have had their houses burnt down? Would xenophobia have disappeared?

In his article "Time for Prime-Time" Artun Avcı explains as follows how increasingly similar formats appear and program content begins to resemble one another : "Because TV is the strongest advertisement medium and due to its superiority as an advertisement investment tool, series, game shows, entertainment and other shows that resemble one another in content, scenario and story flood the prime-time broadcasts. A formula that is proven to attract a wide audience by a certain channel is repeated and entrenched by other channels who broadcast programs based on the same formula at the same time."

If there is talk of censorship, Artun Avci argues it should be about market censorship: "The market logic, manifest in the viewer rates that result from economic competition, displaces the logic of censorship and acts as a cruel censoring institution. In this sense, the authoritarian rationality of viewer ratings constitute the standard of programs broadcasting in prime-time."

How so? For instance, in the version of "Des-

> Series were born in this "it is all for commercials" environment and were given a name reminiscent of the radio period: Soap opera. Not because they were light like soap bubbles and disappeared when they popped but because they were produced by soap companies themselves!

perate Housewives" broadcast in Turkey, all the details were kept in line with the original, except for the gay characters who become heterosexual (as the "Turkish public was not ready for this").

I think in Engels' Wuppertal beer houses there was diversity and people could freely drink the beer that they wished to, provided they showed up at work sober the next day. There was Pilsener, Alt beer, Kölsch, and Weizen.

Jump cut: Soap Opera

From its beginning, TV has been a medium that was shaped through a commercial mentality, that depended on advertisement and sponsorship income and that was managed as a commercial establishment. This is how the American broadcast system is. There is also the European public broadcast approach with channels such as the BBC and ARD, where public benefit is kept in mind and where TV is also understood as a cultural and political platform. Yet, except for some attempts in 1974-1975 when İsmail Cem was the head of the public TRT, this system never gained any currency

in Turkey. As in the past, TRT continues a broadcast policy that resembles the state channels in the former Eastern Bloc countries. Private channels, on the other hand, have always taken the American broadcast system as their model. And the series were born in America.

When TV fast became widespread in the USA after World War II, it brought with it the problem of broadcast material. TV channels were set up by existing radio channels, and broadcast was made from these small venues. Under these circumstances, broadcast segments were given over to advertising industrial companies to both fill up time and provide images from outside the narrow confines of the studios.

In Orwell's fictional country Oceania, there were departments that produced literature, music, drama and entertainment for the "proletariat" and other departments that produced newspapers that did not have any substance but rather offered cheap love novels, sports, murder, sports or astrology. They also produced songs without human touch with a "lyric machine."

For instance, Procter & Gamble (whose products in Turkey include Ariel, Alo, Ipana, Max Factor, Pantene and Orkid) purchased hour long time slots on channels in 40s and 50s, and developed fictional series to fill in the blanks between commercials (to emphasize, this is not the blanks between programs but between advertisement segments), to ease the flow, keep viewers in front of their screens, and to continue on a daily basis.

The actors in these series were positive and pure characters that prepped the audience for the commercial "coming soon." The dramaturgy was clear and simple so as to cause no confusion. And it was always about love. Series were born in this "it is all for commercials" environment and were given a name reminiscent of the radio period: Soap opera. Not because they were light like soap bubbles and disappeared when they popped but because they were produced by soap companies themselves!

1950s to our day in the wide range from comedy to police series, from hospital dramas to variations of sci-fi? Wasn't "Star Wars" a cult series? Or "Lost?" Wasn't there at least a critical approach to society in "Behzat C?" (A police drama in Turkey.)

I think, like "good cop-bad cop," there is "good series-bad series." Media bosses in Turkey, such as Ferit Şahenk and Aydın Doğan, have never hidden the fact that they are profit-oriented and undertake broadcasting to that effect. Along with the international companies, and within the commercial framework we outlined above, they will naturally continue to talk about "clean" worlds, "good" families, "pure" love, and "glory" that triumph over everything bad, as originally envisioned by detergent companies. And those series are reminiscent of George Orwell's "1984," which he wrote in 1936 before there was television. In Orwell's fictional country Oceania, there were departments that produced literature, music, drama and entertainment for the "proletariat" and other departments that produced newspapers that did not have any substance but rather offered cheap love novels, sports, murder, sports or astrology. They also produced songs without human touch with a "lyric machine."

We should manage to move beyond this cycle. The discussion should be concentrated on the possibilities of pluralistic public television. This does not mean the establishment of another channel, but the restructuring of tax-nurtured TRT, its democratization and the production of methods for making it more public, and an appropriate struggle. Is this not possible at all?

Think about it: TRT is managed not by a government appointed manager and his/her cadres but a commission. The commission, in turn, comprises a proportional make-up of party representatives and women, religious groups, LGBTs, workers, youth, the old and civil society organization representatives. Is this a utopia? No. What I am trying to describe here is the public service broadcasting model of Europe.

Let's end with a real song, and inspired by Leonard Cohen: "First We Take TRT…"

"First We Take TRT"

Culture and arts theorists often point out that cinema is the current day continuation of oral literature (e.g., the storyteller, Spielmann, singers). Yet, in the words of Quinn Martin, the producer of "The Streets of San Francisco," looking for art value in series – a TV format created to sell detergent – is like "looking for love in a whorehouse."

But aren't there any significant pieces from the

1   Doruk Publishing, 2013.
2   Haluk Geray, "Radyo ve Televizyon Yayıncılığının Ekonomisi" [The Economy of Radio and Television Broadcasting], İletişim Publishing, 2005.
3   Sevilay Çelenk, "Televizyon Temsil Kültür - 90'lı yıllarda Sosyokültürel İklim ve Televizyon İçerikleri", [TV Representation Culture – the Sociocultural Environment and Television Content in the 90s] Ütopya Publishing, 2005.
4   "Dizim Başladı! Kapat, Sonra Anlatırım" [My Series is on! Hang up, We will talk Later."], H2O Books, 2011.

CULTURE
Humor is shaped by the space and time

Levent Cantek

One might speak of a similar practice in almost all cultures, but it is perhaps especially in Turkey that politicians are remembered for their quick comebacks and speech that lampoons the opposition's ideas. They speak in metaphors rather than concepts, they undermine or exaggerate in a politically romantic language. In these lands, politicians go back and forth with their rivals. They orate, lampoon and give speeches that are openly satirical, and politicians who cannot do that have to leave the stage.

A leader's criticism of another leader is traditionally mentioned almost always with jokes, idioms, exaggerated expressions and ironic comparisons. Snubbing smiles, calculated silences, provocative designations become the headline of newspapers, news for TVs and conversation material for the public. What is unfolding is a strange Karagöz-Hacivat fight, the famous shadow theater in Turkey that oscillates between humor and insult. All politicians accuse all others of being the Hacivat, of not being local, of not knowing the people.

If we remember the theories that define laugher and humor as forms of attack, such lampooning circulated by the politicians are, if not politically correct, are humorous at the end of the day. At least they give us insight into the humorous tendency in the country and the jokes and laughter that is transmitted to the majority. Professional comedians, caricaturists, those who write and draw jokes for newspapers and magazines are not entirely outside of this aura. I argue that sparring, the idiom "the one who laughs last, laughs best," and laughing at those who lose as one are winning is deeply entrenched in this land.

In narrating the relationship between politics and caricature, it can be noted that caricature stands against dominant values, power and those protected by it. Accordingly, caricature is an oppositional art. I am not going to prove or disprove this, because I do not believe that the proposition is either true or false. Caricature is a means of expression and based on how it is used, it can be read as radical opposition or passionate conservatism.

Caricature as newspaper art

Caricature is one of the modern arts that became widespread through media. In fact, its popularity is a result of technical needs. In times when there was no photography, or when it was not widespread, many things were depicted by drawing. The art of caricature was a medium that was used to render written text such as news articles and editorials comprehensible.

Newspapers reckoned with the low levels of literacy and wanted to increase sales through visuality. Visual material was easier to understand than written text. Accordingly, caricaturists along with the owners and top writers were among the top earning journalists in Turkey and the world for a long time. They were rare, had high salaries and were respected. Accordingly, their work appeared on the first pages and covers of newspapers and

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magazines with emphatic headlines.

The ties of caricature to politics and current issues cannot be thought of separately from the professional practices of journalism. Caricaturists have become journalists who think together with newspaper bosses and editors-in-chief, and who take part in important political and social matters as commentators. Their relationship to politics naturally arises out of the how up-to-date the newspaper is and the daily logic of the news. They carry over the same mentality to their own magazines and newspapers. They want editorials that they are in tune with, that are independent from the joke, sarcasm and caricature in it, and engages with a big issue, and prefer this to be written by a literary-journalist who understands politics.

I am talking about a time that begins before the republic. The caricaturists that understand themselves as journalists, and their relationship to politics did not undergo much change in Turkey until the 1970s. Magazine covers accompanied by a serious editorial with politics is a model that was repeated by each new publication. This continued until 1972, the year when Gırgır was published and reached sales of hundreds of thousands of copies. Gırgır dispensed with the editorial, reduced the

Public humor is shaped by the choices of the middle class, and a joke can become widespread only when it is compatible with the values of majority. One cannot think of humor, and popular culture at large, as outside of the elements that determine the public space. Accordingly, humor in Turkey has been intertwined with nationalist, secular and modernist mottos from the beginning.

heavy weight of text, and moved towards eroticism and non-political jokes. While its relation to politics changed and became more prominent with the changing agenda of the country, it never became a magazine that prioritized politics and lent importance to politicians to the extent that its predecessors did. Sparring humor, the provocation and lampooning of one's rival, understood as political satire, moved away from the magazines and was left to the politicians.

Political interest

Let me expand on the prioritizing of politics. I had mentioned the journalistic practices that impacted caricaturists. We should define these practices as pedagogical trends that construct the national identity, that are guiding and canonical. Journalists are among the elite that can take part in the bureaucracy, work in national education or in the parliament, and who might be elected to parliament. In a pro-regime mentality, they work and write with a strong sense of responsibility and belonging to a community, and understand themselves as part of the state. Humorists and caricaturists have never thought of themselves as outside of this framework. But technological developments impacted their status and reputation in the newspaper. What was that development? In the 1960s, publishing houses were upgraded, roads were developed, and photography displaced caricature and illustration in newspapers. The salaries dropped, and the visual burden of newspaper headlines started to fall on photographers. Caricaturists fell in the newspaper hierarchy, and more importantly their engagement with politics stopped being obligatory.

Gırgır emerged exactly at this juncture, where the effectiveness of caricature in newspapers was declining, but where this decline was not yet recog-

nized. And it tried something new. This new would be criticized by old producers for many years to come for being apolitical. Gırgır began to engage with the political and parliamentary agenda six to seven years after its launch.

Its predecessor, on the other hand, is Akbaba – the longest living satire magazine in Turkey. On account of its founder-publisher who was a former MP, it prepared its covers and editorials by observing the Prime Minister, government and opposition parties and hiding the lead writers. In its long history, Akbaba wrote many "open letters" to the Prime Minister and political leaders and was issued innumerable warnings in return.

Gırgır's success in terms of sales and Akbaba's closure has to be understood in connection to the transformation of the readership and society. Gırgır targeted an educated, middle class and metropolitan youth that did not culturally identify with politicians, and who even disliked them. Akbaba was too old for them, and unlike Akbaba, they had no idealist hopes in relation to the existing politicians.

The myth of leftist opposition

Public humor is shaped by the choices of the middle class, and a joke can become widespread only when it is compatible with the values of majority. One cannot think of humor, and popular culture at large, as outside of the elements that determine the public space. Accordingly, humor in Turkey has been intertwined with nationalist, secular and modernist mottos from the beginning. It is from these political roots that it has derived its rivals and allies. For instance, Sharia law and communism in particular were understood to be the main enemies of the regime. Minorities, modernists and foreigners were depicted by clichés that satirists rejected or frowned upon in various ways.

That the nature of humor is oppositional per se

Today, especially in light of the Gezi Uprising of last year, it appears that humor lives in and through social media. Magazines could not deal with television, and they could not keep up with the oppositional humor that was evolving by the minute in social media. To be fair, they are not leading this humor, they contribute to it, but they could not become its guiding force or pulling force.

needs to be discussed first. If it is impossible to become widespread and well-sold without reconciling with the values of the majority, and if the enemies of the regime are the enemies of the satirist, one must ask to what/whom is humor oppositional?

Republican humorists have a critical disposition that came about with western, secular-nationalist values. Their political and cultural choices were first informed by Unionism   and later the paradigm of the Republican People's Party (CHP). On the other hand, some leading names became especially important, transforming the humorists of their period, as well as the subsequent ones.

Pragmatic publisher Yusuf Ziya Ortaç and the winner of first international satire awards Aziz Nesin, with the support of the big publishing group Simavis, Oğuz Aral, have been the most important trend-setting producers. Nesin and Aral worked with Yusuf Ziya, argued with him, disagreed with him; they were names that wanted novelty and transformation of the politics of humor.

Nesin became the most important reference for all magazines that wanted to venture beyond the Akbaba lines until the 1970s. His approach to humor and political attitude has impacted almost all humorists. Even Gırgır, when it had to define itself politically, turned to localist, nationalist left tendencies that came out of Nesin's corner. These tendencies also comply with the values of the ma-

A grafitti referring to police pepper gas: "No strawberry flavor?"

Every era must be approached through its conditions, and we are now in one where the written press is receding. The avenues of politics and entertainment are significantly pluralized. Caricature and caricaturists are not as effective anymore, but the best selling printed magazines are still amongst those of satire.

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jority. And this is why Gırgır could reach such high sales numbers. Gırgır's talent for "getting angry with, and laughing with the majority" is often not remembered.

There are a few bases to the claims that humor magazines are a part of the oppositional left. To begin with, Turkey has been governed by right-wing parties since 1950. Criticism of the government makes the labeling of leftists quite easy. The conceptualization of the historiography of caricature and humor around the axis of Unionism-CHP further entrenches this claim. The inclusion of Adnan Menderes' dislike of caricatures in the historiography, the glossing over of the 1923-1950 period and the initiation of the axis of struggle with the Democrat Party (DP) were exaggerations, and much like the axis itself, rarely discussed.

According to this logic, Cemal Nadir is a libertarian and Markopaşa was captured and silenced by the police-National Security Service, caricaturists were unable to draw anything under pressure during DP rule, etc . None of these is completely the case. Locating the beginning of humor in the 1950s, understanding it through the DP-CHP power struggle, acting defensively and throwing around accusations is as easy as confusing criticism of right-wing parties for leftism.

If we try to approach satire magazines from this perspective, we let ourselves be overtaken by a one sided-outdated historiography that is stuck to the axis of judges, punishment and tolerance. Satire magazines seek popularity, which is their only criterion of survival. They have not been completely oppositional within political criteria – neither today nor in the past, or their engagement with politics

has always been limited. There is no interest outside of the cover, first few pages or certain columnists.

After Gezi

Today, especially in light of the Gezi Uprising of last year, it appears that humor lives in and through social media. Magazines could not deal with television, and they could not keep up with the oppositional humor that evolved minute by minute in social media. To be fair, they are not leading this humor. They contribute to it, but they could not become its guiding force.

Were they in the past? Were humor and caricature magazines in Turkey locations that sprung to mind in relation to political criticism in the past? There is no definite answer to this question. Satire magazines whose total sales exceeded half a million between 1975-1989 are today drastically below this number. Moreover, the population has increased. So they were more effective in comparison to today.

On the other hand, each period must be approached through its conditions, and we are now in one where the written press is receding. The avenues of politics and entertainment have been significantly pluralized. Caricature and caricaturists are not as effective anymore, but the best selling printed magazines still take their place amongst those of satire. Maybe one should adopt the reverse perspective: just as we cannot reduce opposition to political parties and politics, we cannot reduce the impact of humor magazines to sales. If we consider that those in political power occasionally files court cases against caricaturists, it appears that there is a desire to punish them because they create discomfort for those in power.

To sum up, humor magazines and caricaturists in Turkey have criticized political power within the confines of the public space and legal publishing. They have remained within the limits of journalistic practice, and developed a tradition of critique that is secular and at times nationalistic. In recent periods, they were considered oppositional with increased criticism of right-wing parties, marginal when critical of majority values, and apolitical when they criticized daily life. On closer examination, all of these critiques can apply. How they are evaluated, what they do, what they want to do, what they sell, which punishments they receive, and when they are not loved, are all complicated and chameleon-like matters, much like the other products of popular culture.

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1   In reference to the Committee of Union and Progress – translator's note.
2   A former Prime Minister – translator's note.

NEWS FROM hbs

Building organic bridges between urban and rural: The Turkish ngo forum

Organic World Congress (OWC) is organized by IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) every 3 years in a different country and this year, Bu day Association will be hosting it in Istanbul on October 13-15, 2014.

The 18th IFOAM Organic World Congress is a great opportunity to introduce the organic agriculture potential in Turkey to the whole world and to increase awareness of organic in Turkey. It will bring together the practitioners' with the latest technology, production techniques and marketing methods and enable them to meet the stakeholders in the sector.

To reach these goals, a Turkish NGO forum is organized by Buğday Association as one of the Pre-Conferences of the OWC. The NGO forum, which is funded by Heinrich Böll Stiflung Foundation, will be held at Yeditepe University. The main theme of the events is "Creating Transfor-

mation in the Relationship Between Urban and Rural", and a manifesto encompassing the views of all the participants will be prepared at the event. This manifesto will be presented to the participants at the OWC.

The civil society organizations, associations, unions, cooperatives, platforms and initiatives acting in either local or national scale are expected to participate in the Forum. 8 main topics are identified and these topics will be discussed in a technique called "The Big Wheel" by the participants. Each of the 8 topics listed below will be addressed at a different table and the participants will spend 20-30 minutes at each table, stating their opinions.

It is also planned to prepare and exhibit informative posters for all the NGOs participating in the forum. Therefore, the participants are strongly advised to register beforehand.

The main topics of the NGO Forum

1. Producer and Prosumer (Productive Consumer), NGO roles, organization types and legal regulations
2. Traceability and accessibility of the healthy food
3. Stages of the food from farm to table and awareness about real food, media relations
4. Informing the producer and database
5. Lobbying, policy making
6. Creating and supporting alternative nature-friendly economies
7. NGO cooperation and organization
8. Creating a common language

A CRUCIAL ROADMAP
Meat Atlas

The first international Meat Atlas will be presented to readers in Turkey in Turkish, within the scope of the Civil Forum on 10 October 2014 as part of IFOM.

The Meat Atlas provides a new perspective in revealing the impact of the giant global meat trade on environment and society. The report highlights the important fact that radical changes are required in the way we produce meat and dairy products and proposes alternative means to today's industrialized farming practices that depend primarily on limited land and water resources. Certain parts of the report have been expanded with additional information related to Turkey and the entire report has been translated into Turkish.

On a global scale, the tendency referred to in the report takes its roots from the rapid growing middle class of Asia. To keep up with such demand, the world's farmers will have to boost their meat output from currently 300 million tons to 470 million tons by 2050, which will double the amount of water used to produce fodder.

According to Barbara Unmüssig, the co-chair of the Heinrich Boell Stiftung Foundation, "Industrial meat production not only tortures animals, but also destroys the environment and obliges us to import large quantities of fodder from the Global South. After China, Europe is the second biggest importer of soy. Argentina and Brazil expedite their soy cultivation and almost all of the produce is used to feed the animals that we slaughter. Increased meat production also pushes the land prices up, leading to devastating outcomes. Nearly one third of world's lands are allocated to cultivation of fodder products. Small farmers are losing their land and livelihood. That schnitzel on your plate threatens the food safety of many living in the Global South."

What is the real cost of beef?

The report also demonstrates the real price incurred by the tax payers as well as the environment. Only in Europe, the environmental damage caused by industrial farming practices is estimated to be 320 billion Euros.

Where does the toxic herbicide on our plate come from?

The report tracks glyphosate, the bestselling herbicide in the world, in the human body. Most recent studies have detected glyphosate in the urinary samples of people from 18 different European countries as well as in eight of the ten breads coming out of German bakeries. Upper chamber of the German assembly demands the prohibition of this chemical product. In Turkey on the other hand, glyphosate use has seen a dramatic 11-fold increase from 2001 to 2013.

The report also examines the impacts of industrial meat and dairy production on water resources and soil. While 70% of the usable water in the world is consumed in agriculture, one third of this accounts for water used in animal husbandry activities. Becoming even more industrialized, the animal husbandry sector plays a leading role in the consumption of soil and renewable products. Every year, more than 40% of wheat, rye, oat, and corn production is allotted to feed; this means one third of the world's 14 billion hectares of cropped land is dedicated to feed.

It takes 15.500 liters of water to produce 1 kilogram of beef: Same amount of water is used to produce 12 kilograms of wheat or 118 kilograms of carrots. The area of land needed to produce a hamburger is more than 3.5 square meters per person.

According to the Meat Atlas, trade negotiations between the EU and the USA risk a degradation of food and farming standards on both sides of the pond. Food and biotechnology giants want to the EU restrictions on genetically modified food and animal feed removed and a change in the legislation governing the labeling of consumer products. The EU also intends to repeal the "preventive principle" that determines the food safety standards and to render meat industry a more globalized and industrialized one.
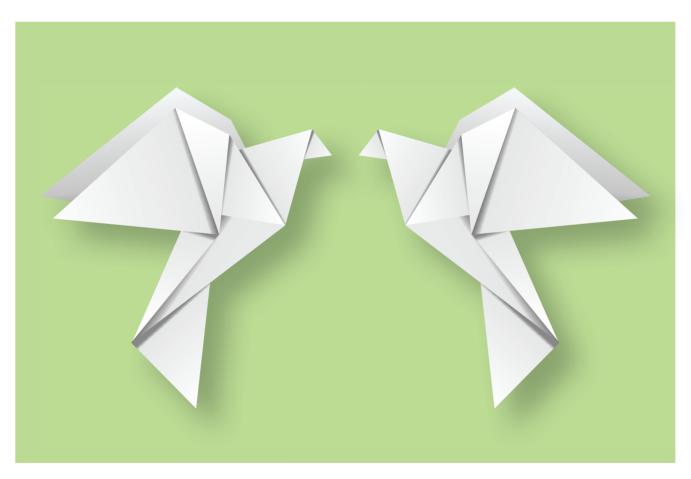
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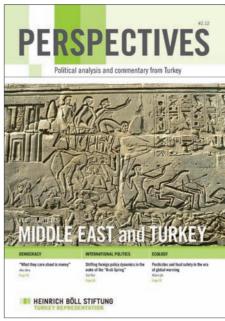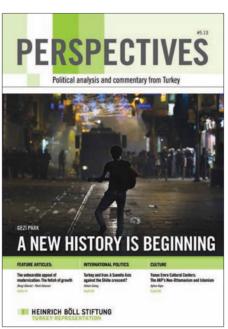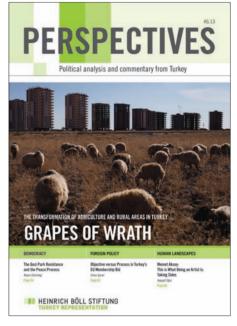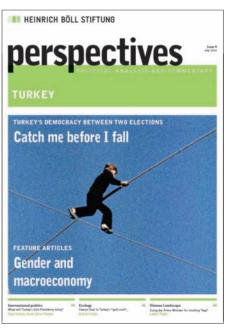
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