



*Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution.*

*"Flying Angel," a mid-16th century Ottoman painting attributed to Shah Quli. In the 1920s, Kemal Atatürk encouraged Turks to shed their Ottoman past. The role of Islam was circumscribed, and the arts acquired a European flavor. Arabic and Persian words were purged from the Turkish language. The difference between the Turkish used in 1920 and in 1982 is greater than that between Chaucer's English and ours.*

# Turkey

The Ottoman Empire was known to Westerners during its long decline as the "Sick Man of Europe." Few disputed the diagnosis when that sobriquet was applied, during the late 1970s, to the old empire's modern successor, the Republic of Turkey, suddenly beset by economic disarray, political chaos, and outbreaks of terrorism. But what *continent* the Turks belong to remains a matter of dispute. Straddling Europe and Asia, Turkey is the only Islamic nation in NATO and the only NATO member in the Islamic Conference. The Turks pray in Arabic, converse in Turkish, and write in Latin script. Ethnically, a typical Turk is an alloy of a dozen races, from Hittites to Celts to Mongols. In one of his alliterative slogans, Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Republic, probably defined his people best: *Biz bize benzeriz*—"We resemble ourselves." Here Paul Henze describes the development of the Turkish nation and its recent bout with anarchy. George Harris explains how the world looks to Turkish eyes.

## ON THE REBOUND

*by Paul B. Henze*

Every November 10, Turkey's daily newspapers display vivid full-color portraits of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on their front pages beneath such headlines as: "With You We Are Happy—Proud—Strong." Every November 10, most of Turkey's 46 million people stand silent at 9:00 a.m. as all activity in the country comes to a standstill. At that moment on that day in 1938, an ailing Atatürk breathed his last in Dolmabahçe Palace on the European shore of the Bosphorus. Yet Atatürk lives on in the daily life of the Turks in a way that probably has no counterpart anywhere else in the world.

By present-day standards, the life of the blue-eyed, Macedonian-born Mustafa Kemal was brief. He died in his 57th year, only two decades after leading his people out of defeat in World War I and launching a successful drive for the creation of a Turkish state. "How happy I am to say that I am a Turk," he declared to a people for whom the very word Turk had, under

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the Ottomans, become a term of derision, reserved for country yokels. "Turks—Be proud, be industrious, be confident!" he adjoined them as he set independent Turkey on a path toward Westernization, modernization, and democracy.

The Republic of Turkey has proved itself resilient. It survived the Great Depression and World War II relatively unscathed. Since 1950 it has experienced three great bursts of prosperity, two near-collapses of its economy, two waves of terrorist violence. Through it all, the Turks have remained united behind the ideals laid down by Kemal Atatürk. And for all the turmoil, the nation's economic development has in general proved more orderly, and more beneficial to a greater share of the populace, than that of any other nation in the Middle East (excepting, perhaps, Israel). The standard of living in Turkey today is roughly on a par with that of Western Europe at the beginning of the 1950s, and London's *Financial Times* recently predicted that Turkey in 1982 will boast the highest rate of economic growth of any nation in Europe or North America.

The transformation of Turkey since the 1920s has been profound. The country's biggest cities—Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana—are crowded with gleaming modern buildings and throngs of people wearing Western dress, the young women as stylish as any in Paris or Rome. Turkish-made Murats and Anadolos speed along the modern highways that link all parts of the country; an elegant suspension bridge spans the Bosphorus, joining Europe and Asia. On the high Anatolian plateau, irrigation has opened vast stretches of land to agriculture, while at plateau's edge the mountains rise green from reforestation.

Islam once dictated the rhythms of Turkish life; Atatürk sought to undermine its primacy. Today, the new mosques are well-attended and the old ones carefully refurbished, but Islam no longer dominates daily life as it does in Iran, Libya, or Saudi Arabia. Religion is simply a part of life, as in the Western European societies Atatürk admired.

Bright billboards and signs on shops everywhere reveal how universally the Latin alphabet has ousted the old Arabic script, and it is in Latin characters that Atatürk's hortatory pro-

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nouncements are carved and painted everywhere: over school-yard gates, in public buildings, on mountainsides. ("School is a door that opens the way to civilization"—youngsters in Eğirdir see those words on their way to class every day.) Atatürk's statue graces every town square, and there are foundries in Turkey turning out nothing but busts, statues, and monumental equestrian effigies of the Father of the Turks.

Much of what Mustafa Kemal loved about Turkey has not changed. Long brown loaves still come fresh from the oven several times daily, crisp and flavorful, the flour milled from wheat cultivated on the broad plains of Thrace and Anatolia. Yogurt

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remains a dietary staple, though it is often sold now in plastic containers with an expiration date marked on the caps. Visitors are still offered hot tea in small glasses by their hosts, and Turkish hospitality and social ritual remains largely unchanged. *Allaha ısmarladık* ("We have commended you to God"), says a person taking leave of another. *Güle, Güle* ("Smilingly, smilingly"), says the one remaining behind.

Atatürk shared Woodrow Wilson's view that "democracy is unquestionably the most wholesome and livable kind of government," although Turkey did not become a truly democratic state until after World War II. But Mustafa Kemal would find today that even in the countryside, even in places where old men chat away their days in tea-houses and backgammon parlors, Turks are interested in public affairs (voter turnout is high—about 80 percent) and are avid readers of newspapers and viewers of TV (color television has just arrived). His attempt to transform his people into active citizens has largely succeeded. As a result, he is more profoundly appreciated now by a larger proportion of the Turkish population than he was in his lifetime.

### End of Empire

Given his raw material, Atatürk's achievement appears all the more remarkable. What was left of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 did not look like the foundation for a modern nation. Beginning in the 13th century, the Ottoman Turks had ruled a dynamic multinational state encompassing North Africa, the Mideast, the Red Sea, and the Balkans, as well as the Anatolian heartland. The Empire began to crumble during the 18th century. That it survived at all during the 19th century was due less to any virtues of the ruling Sultans than to the support of France and Britain, eager to check an acquisitive, southward-moving tsarist Russia.

Admiring Teutonic efficiency and cooperating with Germans who were eager to expand into the Middle East, the "Young Turks" allied the Empire with Germany and Austria-Hungary during World War I. The price of defeat was dismemberment. The Ottoman territories were spun off into various colonial "mandates" (e.g., Iraq and Palestine), with Anatolia itself sliced for a time into French, Greek, British, and Italian zones. The Sultan's domain was reduced to a few provinces. Mehmed VI, last of the House of Osman, acquiesced in these humiliating terms, but General Mustafa Kemal, a career army officer and popular hero who had defeated the British at Gallipoli in 1915, found them unacceptable. He rallied his coun-

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trymen and turned back an invading Greek army at the Sakarya River (1921) in the shadow of ancient Gordion. Ultimately, after Mehmed fled to Malta, Mustafa Kemal won recognition by the Allies, in the Treaty of Lausanne, of an independent Turkish state. The Turkish Republic formally came into existence on October 29, 1923, with Atatürk as its President.

The Republic's territory was large by European standards—three times the size of the United Kingdom—but it had been devastated by war and foreign occupation.\* In some respects, the Turkey Atatürk inherited had not changed greatly since ancient times. The inadequate railways, part of the German-built Berlin-to-Baghdad system, provided the only modern transport there was; much merchandise still moved by camel caravan. Old Persian and Roman roads were still in use. Electricity was almost unknown in rural areas.

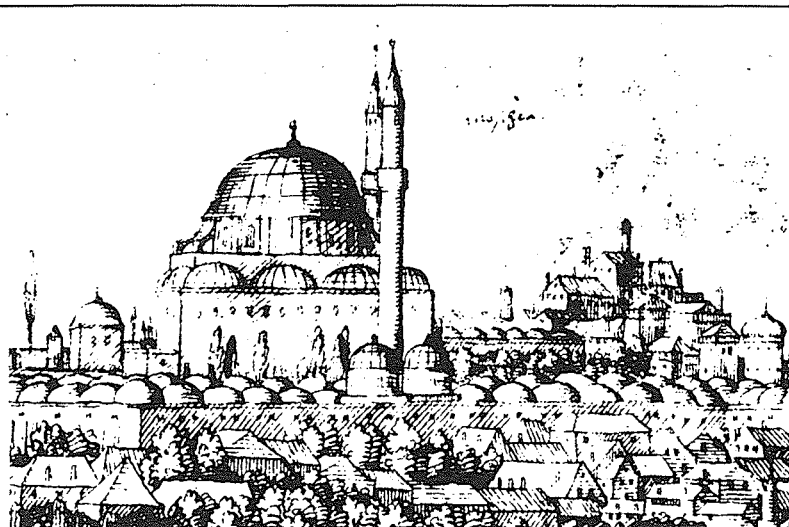
### **Abolishing the Past**

Some 13 to 14 million people, most of them villagers tilling the soil, inhabited this new nation. Life was dominated by tradition: The turban, the veil, and the fez (Muslims are not allowed to pray while wearing headgear with a brim) were worn everywhere. Literacy stood at less than 10 percent. In Istanbul, of course, European ways had flourished since the 19th century, but Istanbul was out of touch with the rest of the country. Mustafa Kemal chose Ankara as the new capital to underscore the fact that Anatolia was the true heart of Turkey. It was then a small country town clustered around a towering stone citadel whose history stretched back beyond the Hittites.

The Republic of Turkey started life with significant handicaps but also significant assets. Unlike most of the other states that would be carved out of the Mideast, Turkey had not been anyone's colony since the days of the Caesars. Unlike Saudi Arabia or Egypt, its geography was varied and rich; three-quarters of the countryside is rugged or mountainous, but the valleys are fertile, the high steppes and rolling eastern hills ideal for livestock grazing. The coastal provinces are blessed with the Mediterranean climate: cool, moist winters; hot, dry summers, perfect for olives, tobacco, and fruit. Turkey had always been self-sufficient in wheat (Anatolia was one of the breadbaskets of the Roman Empire); it also produced more than enough lamb, fresh vegetables, and citrus fruit. Fish were plentiful off the rugged, 5,178-mile coast.

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\*The French returned the small southern province of Hatay in 1939, bringing Turkey to its present size: 301,380 square miles.



Royal Netherlands University Library, Leiden.

*The mosque of Mohammed II, rising above the Golden Horn in Istanbul. Detail from a panorama drawn in 1559 by Melchior Lorichs.*

Moreover, Turkey was not riven by class conflicts. Even in its decline, the Ottoman Empire had honored the concept of advancement on merit. No hereditary nobility had gained a grip on land or political power. Atatürk, son of a minor provincial official, made his way into the best academies in the country on the basis of outstanding academic performance. In this respect, Turkish society is easy for Americans to understand.

It is clear that what Atatürk did *not* do was as crucial to Turkey's successful development as what he *did* do. Unlike the Pahlevi family in Iran, he was firmly committed to republicanism; the notion of founding a dynasty was repugnant to him. Equally important, he declared that Turkey would stay within its borders and make no claims to neighboring territories inhabited by Turks. He made his peace with the Soviet Union, and kept it, but brooked no compromises with communism (which was and still is proscribed).

Mustafa Kemal took a no-nonsense approach to creating a modern state. Atatürk abolished the Caliphate and the religious courts and schools. The veiling of women was discouraged and the fez outlawed (to be replaced, in Atatürk's words, by "the hat, the headgear used by the whole civilized world"). A Western-style constitution was adopted in 1924. The Western time system (replacing the sunrise-to-sunset method) and Gregorian cal-

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endar (instead of the Muslim lunar calendar) were introduced in 1925. In 1926, Turkey adopted new European-style civil, penal, and commercial codes and abolished polygamy. In 1928, the Latin alphabet was adopted, eventually making all of Ottoman literature, composed in Arabic script, inaccessible to the average Turk unless transliterated. In 1934, women gained the right to vote and to hold public office, and Turks were required to take surnames.\* In 1935, Sunday was made the day of rest (instead of the Muslim Friday).

### Towards Democracy

Atatürk moved quickly to get reforms established in principle and he permitted no opposition. On the other hand, reforms were never implemented by brute force, as they were in the Soviet Union. As he traveled about the country, Atatürk used rhetoric and ridicule to press his case, singling out, for example, a man in baggy pants and turban and asking the crowd, "Now what kind of outfit is that?"

Mustafa Kemal was not opposed to capitalism, nor was he a socialist, but the path to development he chose for Turkey was "étatism"—creation and management of key industries by the state. At the time, there was no other choice. Few Turks had much experience as businessmen. (Commerce, initially regarded by the Turks as degrading, had fallen into the hands of Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, of whom only the latter did not leave the new Turkish Republic in large numbers.) During the 1930s, moreover, amid a worldwide depression, domestic private capital was scarce and foreign investment hard to attract. Thus, state-owned enterprises—in textiles, mining, finance, transport, chemicals—came to dominate the Turkish economy.

This would prove a mixed blessing in the long run. While étatism got industrialization off the ground, the "state economic enterprises" (SEEs) were not profit-oriented. They developed the habit of drawing funds at low interest from the central bank to finance expansion and relied on the government to cover operating losses. As private industries developed on a large scale during the 1950s, they were protected by high tariffs. Turkey

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\*Many Turks took the names of trades and professions either directly—e.g., *Doğramacı* (Carpenter), *Avcı* (Hunter)—or by adding *-oğlu* ("son of"), e.g., *Cobanoğlu* (Shepherdson). Others emphasized personal qualities: e.g., *Demirel* (Iron Hand), *Özkan* (Trueblood). Some preferred the names of animals and birds, others place names, others military names: e.g., *Topçu* (Cannoneer), *Binbaşıoğlu* (Major's Son). Several million Turks descend from refugees from the Caucasus and Central Asia. Many of these stressed their origin in their new names: e.g., *Çerkes* (Circassian). All surnames are now inherited and taken by wives on marriage, as in Europe and America.



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aimed to produce everything it needed. When Ankara accepted Soviet economic aid during the 1960s, it was used to finance huge, state-owned industrial combines that had little chance of ever becoming profitable. One of these, the İskenderun Steel Complex, has come to symbolize the illogic of such methods of development. Located far from raw materials, many of which are actually imported from Sweden and the United States, its steel costs three to four times the world market price.

Atatürk gave the Turkish Republic a parliamentary system of government and set up the ruling Republican People's Party (RPP), but he was unsuccessful in his efforts to create other parties. His final legacy to his countrymen was to designate a capable successor: İsmet İnönü, born only three years after Atatürk. İnönü was blessed with longevity. Serving as President for 12 years (1938–50), he steered Turkey through World War II, joining the Allies near the war's end and then setting into place at home a multiparty democracy which led ultimately to his own defeat at the polls. He returned to serve as Prime Minister in three coalition governments during the 1960s and died in 1973, mourned by the whole country.

### Going on a Spree

It was İnönü who edged Turkey toward an alliance with the West, culminating in full NATO membership in 1952. Soviet territorial demands (for cession of the Kars and Ardahan regions in the east), and Moscow's pressure for "joint defense" of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus (meaning Soviet military bases) had unmistakably signaled Soviet ambitions in the area. The United States responded with the 1947 Truman Doctrine and the strategy of containment, and Turkey received generous military and economic assistance.\* Ankara dispatched 4,500 Turkish troops to South Korea in 1950 to fight alongside U.S. troops against communist aggression.

In describing the transition from Atatürk to İnönü, some Turkish writers have compared Turkey to a woman who, upon the death of her lover, finds security in the embrace of her husband. With the election of Adnan Menderes, a lawyer and cotton grower, as President in 1950, Turkey left her husband and went

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\*Turkey's 600,000-man armed force is the largest in NATO after that of the United States. The military has always occupied a special place in Turkish life, and Atatürk gave the army an important role in mobilizing the country. Especially in the remote eastern regions, Westernized army officers and their wives provided role models for the ambitious. Illiterate conscripts, meanwhile, were taught to read and write, and new draftees learned modern mechanical skills: how to use tools, how to drive, and how to install electric wires.

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on something of a spree. The chief impact of Atatürk's reforms had initially been on the urban middle class and the military, but Menderes's Democrat Party looked to the countryside, the source of its electoral majority. During the 1950s, the Republic experienced a burst of economic and social development that brought the peasants fully into the mainstream of national life. Rivers were dammed, generating electricity for small farmers and bringing new industries. A team from the Wyoming highway department was brought in to demonstrate road-building techniques, and Turkey's rural road network as a result is one of the best in the Middle East and far superior to the USSR's. Tractors became common. New factories and schools were built—and new mosques as well.

### Troubled 'Yokistan'

Indeed, Menderes was often accused by Turkish intellectuals and military men of exploiting religion for political gain in rural areas and of backsliding on Atatürk's principle of separation of state and religion. There was some truth in the charges. Among other things, Menderes built schools to train new imams and allowed the call to prayer to be read once again in Arabic (instead of Turkish). But the secular and religious spheres of Turkish life are nevertheless to this day well defined. Turkey is no Iran. It is not even Utah.

Some 98 percent of all Turks are Muslim, and religion is important in Turkey. But the state is responsible for education—even religious education—and only civil marriages are legal. The two major Islamic holidays, *Şeker Bayramı* (the Sugar Holiday) and *Kurban Bayramı* (the Sacrifice Holiday), are celebrated for three days and are legally recognized in the same way as Christmas in predominantly Christian countries. Circumcision ceremonies are major events in boys' lives, and it is a rare Turk indeed who is buried without Muslim rites. Every year, tens of thousands of Turks go by bus, jet or private car on the annual pilgrimage (*Hac*) to Mecca, and pilgrims still advertise their piety on return by painting their front doors or garden gates green. The whirling dervishes perform for two weeks in Konya each December. But officially, this is a "cultural" event.\*

The economic boom presided over by Menderes was not entirely benign. He had wanted to sell off many of the state-

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\*Most Turks are orthodox (i.e., Sunni) Muslims, but Turkish censuses, taken every five years, do not include religious information, so the exact size of various sects is unknown. Shi'ite Muslims, called *Alevi*s in Turkey, are generally believed to constitute about 10 to 12 percent of the population, versus 93 percent in neighboring Iran.



### FATHER OF THE TURKS

As a young major in the Ottoman Army before World War I, Mustafa Kemal would frequently pass part of the night with brother officers in the cafes of Salonika. One evening he looked around at his comrades and predicted what high government job each would someday hold. What position did Mustafa Kemal foresee for himself? a companion asked at last. "I will be the man," he replied, "who will be able to appoint you to all these posts." It was no idle boast.

Born to a Macedonian civil servant in 1881, Mustafa Kemal ignored his mother's wish that he become a *hafiz* (reciter of the Koran). Instead he enrolled at the Salonika Military Academy at age 12 and five years later was accepted as a cadet by the prestigious War College in Istanbul. There, in addition to studying French, mathematics, and military science, he steeped himself in the forbidden works of Rousseau, Voltaire, Mill, and the Turkish nationalist poet Namik Kemal.

His criticism of Sultan Abdülhamid II's despotic regime repeatedly landed Mustafa Kemal in trouble (and in jail). In 1905, as a newly minted staff captain, he was posted—in effect, exiled—to remote Syria, where he joined and reorganized the nationalist *Vatan* (Fatherland) society, eventually merging it with the underground Committee of Union and Progress. From the Committee came the army officers who led the Young Turk revolt in 1908 and briefly restored constitutional government. Mustafa Kemal became es-

owned companies, but when no buyers were found ended up expanding them with borrowed money that Turkey could not pay back. For a country that had largely slumbered through the late Ottoman centuries and was still adjusting to the Atatürk reforms, the economic pace of the 1950s was dizzying. Rising income, rising expectations, and rising demand brought inflation—the Turkish *lira* lost 75 percent of its value during the Menderes decade—and shortages of consumer goods. Newspapers began referring to the country as "Yokistan," a pun on the word *Yok* (meaning "there isn't any").

As economic strains intensified, Menderes and his Democrat Party became increasingly authoritarian. Journalists were jailed, opposition politicians harassed, property confiscated. Ultimately, Menderes attempted to restrict the activities of the opposition political party, the RPP, still headed by İsmet İnönü.

tranged from the Young Turks—and Enver Pasha, who emerged as their leader—as the rule of law quickly degenerated into a military dictatorship. He remained a loyal officer, however, and during World War I, led the successful defense of Gallipoli and the Dardanelles. Enver Pasha suppressed all official reports of these exploits, but word of mouth made Mustafa Kemal a national hero. At war's end, he became the focal point of resistance against the humiliating Treaty of Sèvres, imposed by the victorious Allies. In 1923, he became the first President of the new Republic of Turkey.

The name later bestowed on Mustafa Kemal by the National Assembly—Atatürk—suited him; the “Father of the Turks” behaved like a patriarch.

Once, as the National Assembly was about to approve a bill he found objectionable, Atatürk interrupted the session saying, “Please, will you put down your hands. I see I have failed to explain this point to you,” and persuaded them to reject the legislation by an overwhelming margin. He was Turkey's teacher, often using a blackboard to explain the new Latin alphabet to people in the countryside. When adoption of surnames became compulsory, Atatürk devised patronymics for those closest to him (e.g., Gökçen, meaning “of the skies,” for his adopted daughter Sahiba, a pilot).

Atatürk's personal life was less than exemplary. Vain of his appearance, he waxed his eyebrows and often strutted about in white tie and tails. He used women casually, and his one attempt at marriage failed quickly. Atatürk also spent long hours gambling and drinking rakı, a strong Turkish liqueur, instructing his household that any orders he gave be confirmed when he was sober. The heavy drinking took its toll. After a long bout with cirrhosis, Atatürk died on November 10, 1938.

At that point, a group of colonels overthrew Menderes and installed General Cemal Gürsel, who had fought alongside Atatürk at Gallipoli, as Prime Minister.

The colonels' coup of 1960, which came to be called a “revolution,” was the first of three military interventions (the others occurred in 1971 and 1980) in the Turkish political process over a 20-year period. In each case, the army intervened to preserve democracy, not to supplant it. Western intellectuals, who cling to a stereotype of Third World generals, have always found the Turkish military hard to understand. Atatürk taught his officers to regard themselves as trustees of democracy, but always to remember that “sovereignty belongs without condition or limitation to the people.” The Turkish armed forces, whose officers are drawn from a wide spectrum of the population and trained at Western-style service academies, have adhered to this princi-

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ple fastidiously. They do not wish to govern.

The officers who seized power in 1960 took a hard look at the mechanics of the parliamentary structure. Turkey's first multiparty elections in 1946, and every election since then, had involved a "winner-take-all" system. This had made it relatively easy for Menderes to keep his Democrat Party in power against growing but fragmented opposition. In rewriting the constitution, the colonels, advised by professors, introduced proportional representation, along with other checks and balances to prevent abuses of power. As it happened, the progressive 1961 Constitution proved *too* progressive. It prevented not only the abuse of power but also its legitimate exercise.

Meanwhile, Menderes and other former officials endured lengthy trials on charges ranging from misuse of public funds to "forcibly changing, modifying, and abrogating the Constitution." The former Prime Minister and his Foreign and Finance Ministers were sentenced to death and hanged. Many Turks were ashamed of this at the time, and most today consider the executions a blot on Turkey's record. The Democrat Party was proscribed, but many of Menderes's followers joined engineer Süleyman Demirel's new (and pointedly named) Justice Party.

Elections were held again in 1961. Four parties competed and while none won a majority, İsmet İnönü was able to form a coalition and the colonels went back to their barracks. A political pattern was thus established for the next two decades: parliamentary horse-trading, tenuous coalition-building, chronic bickering and factionalism, the emergence of new leftist and rightist parties, and the trivialization of important issues. Proportional representation, fine in theory, in practice encouraged political fragmentation. Compared to Turkey, the ill-fated French Fourth Republic was a marvel of cohesion.

The bright spot was the economy. From the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s, economic development accelerated. Oil was cheap and Turkey's GNP grew steadily at a rate of at least seven percent a year. Turks learned to make their own light bulbs, refrigerators, and automobiles. City families moved into roomy apartments with washing machines and kitchen appliances, paid for in installments or with VISA and other credit cards. A vigorous new private sector took advantage of the protective tariffs and a new class of businessmen emerged in fields as diverse as plastics and heavy construction. Vehbi Koç, who started out in Ankara during the 1920s with a small hardware store, became Turkey's most successful entrepreneur. His industrial empire, Koç Holding, now comprises 88 companies making everything from automobiles to ketchup.

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Elementary education became universal in the cities, and literacy nationwide reached 62 percent. New universities were founded, many on the American land-grant model and specializing in agriculture, ranching, mining, and industrial engineering. (There are more than 20 colleges and universities in Turkey, almost all government-run, with a total enrollment of about 125,000; few Turks leave the country to get undergraduate education.) Among city intellectuals, typically, socialism became fashionable during the 1960s and the works of Marx and Mao appeared in Ankara bookstores. As a political movement, however, communism remained proscribed.

### **Terrorism: The First Wave**

Prosperity reached down to the countryside, where more than half of all Turks still live. Pharmaceutical distributors like Pfizer and Squibb, subsidized by the Ankara government, made common drugs available through pharmacies everywhere. The popular Ministry of Roads, Water, and Electricity tapped springs and dug wells and strung utility lines to the most inaccessible rural enclaves. Peasants gave up homespun for nylon double-knit and even when old styles were retained—for example, the broad pantaloons farm women still wear to work in the fields—bright, flowered colorfast prints were used.

The rural population was growing, of course; underemployment was widespread. Anatolian peasants who for centuries had rarely ventured beyond the provincial capital now sought work in the cities. Great tracts of *gecekondus*—"houses put up overnight"—appeared around Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana. Other Turks moved abroad, seeking better wages. By 1970, it was hard to find a village in the most primitive portion of Anatolia that had not temporarily exported menfolk to West Germany, Austria, Holland, or Sweden. Money sent back every year by Turks working abroad—which passed the \$1 billion mark in 1973 and should approach \$3 billion this year—became a major factor in Turkey's favorable balance of payments.

Amid growing affluence, no one in Turkey foresaw the crises that materialized suddenly, continued unabated for more than a decade, and sorely tested the nation's cohesion and resolve.

It began with an outbreak of urban violence. As in Western Europe and the United States, universities suddenly became hotbeds of left-wing agitation. Soon students, or young people purporting to be students, were forming armed bands, fighting skirmishes with police, and threatening NATO and U.S. military personnel. There were riots and killings. On one occasion in

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1968, U.S. Ambassador Robert Komer's car was burned.

What lay behind the unrest? It was partly an intellectual phenomenon—leftist radicalism had acquired a certain cachet among professors and journalists. In part, students were imitating what they saw going on in the West, just as they wore blue jeans and listened to rock music. The fragmentation of the small, Marxist-oriented Turkish Labor Party (TLP) contributed to the unrest. When the TLP's leader, Mehmet Ali Aybar, condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, his extremist colleagues had denounced his views as "unscientific" and bolted, forming a variety of "liberation armies" and "liberation fronts." Meanwhile, as evidence brought out at subsequent trials would suggest, Soviet operatives were active among Turkish *Gastarbeiter* in West Germany, setting up a "support structure" there to channel funds and weapons into Turkey.\*

### From Bad to Worse

The government of Süleyman Demirel soon found it impossible to maintain public order. The kidnapping of four U.S. airmen by leftist guerrillas in March 1971 proved to be the last straw. Charging that the Demirel government had "driven our country into anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest," the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces suspended parliament and invited academics and technocrats to form a series of "above parties" governments. Turkey remained under martial law for two and one-half years as the army cracked down. More than 4,000 suspected terrorists were rounded up and tried.

Elections were held in October 1973, and Bülent Ecevit, a would-be Swedish-style socialist who had pushed an aging İnönü out of the leadership of the RPP, managed eventually to put together a shaky coalition. There were to be seven governments during the next seven years as Ecevit and Demirel leapfrogged one another into office. It was the 1960s all over again, but worse. This time the economy became part of the problem.

Even as the 1973 elections were underway, war broke out between Israel and neighboring Egypt and Syria. The Arab oil embargo and the OPEC price rises that ensued led to a quadrupling in the cost of petroleum. Ecevit opened the way to the ruin

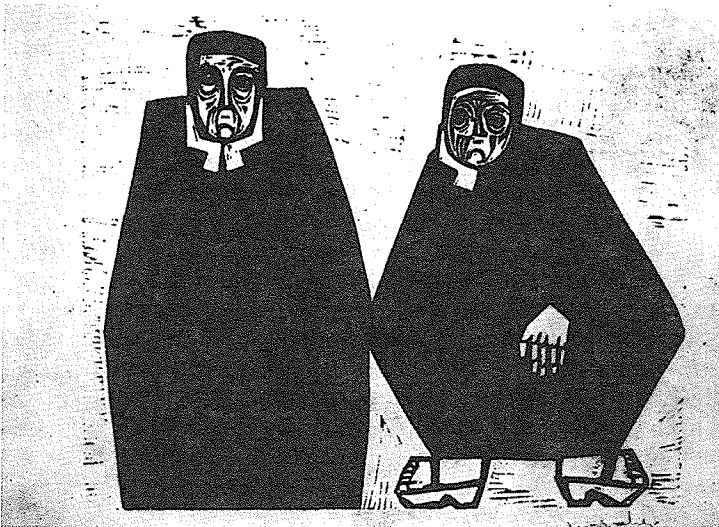
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\*A good overview of the origins of civil unrest in Turkey is George S. Harris's "The Left in Turkey," in *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1980. One of the pervasive myths among Turkish and Western journalists and academics is that the *gecekondus* were breeding grounds of discontent. The Turkish-American historian, Kemal Karpat, discovered, to the contrary, that *gecekondus* dwellers had a positive attitude toward democratic politics, had a higher voter turnout than the national average, and were among the least likely to vote for extremist candidates. See Kemal Karpat, *The Gecekondus* (Cambridge, 1976).

of a still-booming economy by raising the minimum wage while neglecting to increase the price of fuel oil or gasoline. He ignored the mounting cost to the treasury of subsidies to agriculture and to the state-owned companies (which then accounted for 40 percent of all industrial production).

The oil crisis soon induced a worldwide recession. Fewer Turkish workers were needed in Europe; remittances dropped as Turkey's oil bill climbed rapidly, eating up all foreign-exchange earnings. Belated official decisions to pass on oil price rises to the consumer prompted sudden inflation, which by 1978 was running above 50 percent annually.

Everything was made worse by a second wave of terrorism that began in 1976. If the Soviets had indeed masterminded the terrorist wave of the 1960s and early 1970s, as Ankara privately believed, they learned important lessons. The aim this time was not simply to disrupt Turkey's relations with its NATO allies but to destabilize Turkish society and undermine democracy. Soviet arms and money went not only to leftists but also to rightists, not only to students but also to labor activists, idle small-town



Courtesy Neue Galerie der Stadt Linz, Wolfgang-Gurlitt-Museum.

*The process of "Westernization" is not complete in Turkey. City women may cross their legs, read Vogue, smoke cigarettes, and run for office. In the remote countryside, the veil or çadır is still worn, and squatting may be preferred to sitting.*



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youths, the urban unemployed, and the veteran terrorists whom Prime Minister Ecevit had amnestied in 1974.

In early 1979, as killings mounted to the rate of several per day, Mehmet Ali Ağca, later known for his attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II in 1981, murdered one of Turkey's most respected newspaper editors, Abdi İpekçi. Visiting Western journalists sipping Türk Tuborg at Ankara's Bulvar Palas Hotel composed brooding essays for their readers back home: Were the Turks capable of self-government?

### A Fresh Start

The economic tide, at least, began to turn in January 1980 when the Turkish government, in the hands again of Süleyman Demirel, announced a sweeping economic reform program and gave its principal architect, Turgut Özal, son of an imam-turned-banker, unprecedented authority to implement it. High inflation had brought into existence an "underground" economy; Özal quickly eliminated this by raising foreign exchange rates to the black-market level and adjusting them daily. Subsidies to the SEEs were trimmed drastically. New export subsidies were decreed, taking effect immediately. Steps were taken to lure foreign investment. The shift towards free enterprise was popular and quickly began to produce results.

While economic decline had been arrested, terrorism had not. Arms were shipped in by land and sea from Bulgaria, Syria, Libya, and elsewhere.\* Some terrorists boasted to police or on radio of the months they had spent training in PLO camps. The leftist teachers' union, TÖBDER, became a major channel for distributing money, arms, and tactical guidance. The radical labor federation, DİSK, ruled its own "liberated" enclaves in major cities. Parents began keeping their children home from school as random terrorist killings peaked at 25 a day.

On September 12, 1980, General Kenan Evren, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, and former commander of Turkish troops in Korea, announced that the military leadership was taking control of the government. There was no resistance. Most Turks heaved a sigh of relief, even as Western European governments gasped in self-righteous dismay. A government of civilian professionals was quickly put together, with Turgut Özal elevated to the post of Deputy Prime Minister.

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\*The shipments were massive: The Turkish government eventually seized some 800,000 firearms, including 1,371 Soviet-made Kalashnikov AK-47 rifles, plus some 500 anti-tank rockets and more than five million rounds of ammunition. Total value of this weaponry has been put at \$250 million, which was 50 times the take from all of the bank robberies and all of the successful extortion attempts in Turkey during the late 1970s.

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It is already clear that what Turks call the "September 12 Action" represents a much more decisive turn in Turkey's national life than did the "Revolution" of 1960.

The first order of business was public safety. The army and police fanned out. All highway vehicles were stopped and searched at regular intervals. Informants' tips were followed up. By early 1981, some 43,000 terrorists and their supporters found themselves in jail, and about 30,000 are still imprisoned or on trial. The military crackdown enjoyed overwhelming popular approval. While restrictions on the activities of former politicians, along with isolated instances of torture (neither condoned nor covered up), have resulted in press criticism abroad and frictions with the European Left, no one who visits Turkey today can honestly maintain that military rule has resulted in an oppressive atmosphere or serious erosion of elementary freedoms.

With order restored, Turgut Özal's economic program got a new lease on life. Inflation was slowed from 94 percent in 1980 to 38 percent in 1981 and the national budget was balanced. Real economic growth last year, after two years of decline, reached 4.5 percent. Exports rose by 62 percent in 1981 to almost \$5 billion. Much of the trade has been with the Middle East, where Turkish construction companies have secured more than \$10 billion in contracts. Turks see no contradiction between expanded commercial ties with their Middle Eastern neighbors and close links to Europe and America. "Turkey is a European country," General Evren declared in April 1982, "at the same time it is also a Middle Eastern country." Atatürk might have put it differently, but times were different then.

On the political front, the military is eager to turn responsibility for governing back to civilians and get on with the modernization of the Turkish armed forces. A new constitution, long in the drafting, will be submitted to popular referendum this year. Borrowing from German and French models, the new system is designed to correct the weaknesses of the "professors' constitution" of 1961. Turkey's previous crop of politicians is barred from participating in the first elections. The betting is that General Evren, shedding his uniform, will become the next President.

Among all groups in Turkey today, especially the military, there is readiness to do the necessary to make the new constitution work. Perpetuating the old cycle of chaotic civilian politics punctuated by military house-cleaning is simply too dangerous. As one of the five generals on the ruling National Security Council told me last August, "We want to do it right this time because we might not be able to intervene again."

## THE VIEW FROM ANKARA

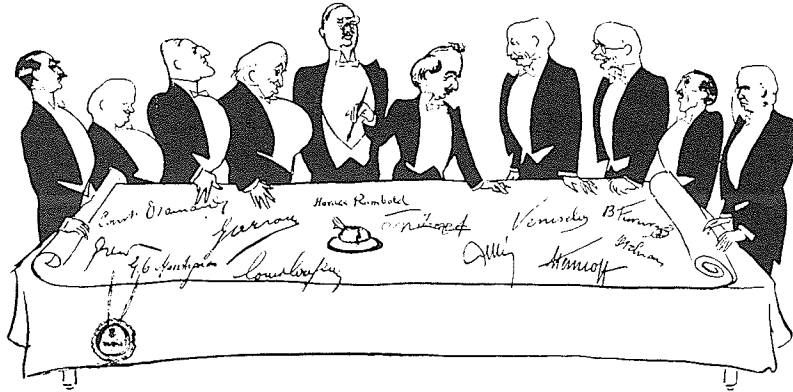
*by George S. Harris*

The Turks have been having their difficulties of late with old friends and old foes. The "Greek lobby" in the United States (there is no corresponding "Turkish lobby") joins Hellenes in Greece and Cyprus in pillorying Turkey for its 1974 occupation of the northern third of the island. Radio broadcasts from Eastern Europe, speaking in the name of the outlawed Turkish Communist Party, regularly assail Turkey's two-year-old military government. Around the world, Armenian nationalists, based outside Turkey and seeking to split off several eastern provinces for themselves, have taken the lives of 23 Turkish diplomats or members of their families since 1975.

In an interview published earlier this year, Turkey's Foreign Minister, İler Türkmen, emphasized these and other "points of distress" as he described how the world looked to him. The picture was mixed.

*The Europeans:* Since General Kenan Evren and his brother officers seized power in 1980, Turkey's European NATO partners have raised insistent questions about civil rights and the pace of return to democratic government. The Turks withdrew from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe earlier this year after members of that body castigated the Turkish military regime for "particularly flagrant and intolerable violations of the rule of law." Meanwhile, the arrests of Turkish labor leaders and politicians (including former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit) now threaten to stop completely the flow of financial assistance from Europe—currently about \$500 million a year—that has helped tide Turkey over its latest economic crisis.

*The Greeks:* Andreas Papandreou's socialist government, after coming to power in autumn 1981, stepped up the level of rhetoric against Turkey's military government and at the same time authorized oil exploration projects in disputed areas of the Aegean Sea. Last March, Greece abruptly withdrew from NATO military exercises scheduled to be held jointly with the Turks, alleging Turkish violations of Greek island airspace. After two decades, moreover, the future of divided Cyprus is still unresolved. With the Turkish Cypriot minority demanding to share political power equally with the far larger local Greek community, and the Greek Cypriots insisting on a unified island admin-



Courtesy Karacan Yayinlari.

July 1923: The signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, establishing the Turkish Republic, by representatives of Turkey, Great Britain, Greece, France, and Italy. Prime Minister İsmet İnönü is at center. This contemporary caricature was drawn by the French cartoonist "Derso."

istration under majority rule, no accord on the island's future appears to be in sight.\*

*The Soviets:* Relations with Moscow, never really warm, have cooled considerably. The Soviet Union, source of some of Turkey's electricity, chemicals, heavy machinery, and oil, and buyer of its cattle, vegetables, tobacco, and cotton, greeted the generals' 1980 takeover with open disapproval, expressing concern lest the new regime in Ankara fall in with Washington's new plans for the defense of the Persian Gulf. "Promising new dollars to Turkey for military purposes," Moscow Radio commented recently, "the United States makes demands of its small partner that are to be followed to the letter." For their part, the Turks, not inclined to worsen the situation, have refrained from publicizing any complaints they may have against the Soviet Union. In any event, as Foreign Minister Türkmen pointed out, media tirades from the USSR "are in contrast with what the Soviet Union has been communicating officially."

*The Americans:* Strong ties with the United States remain

\*The *Enosis* ("union") movement to join Cyprus and Greece exacerbated differences between the Turkish Cypriots (just under 20 percent of the population) and the ethnic Greek Cypriots (about 80 percent of the population) during the 1950s. Creation of the independent state of Cyprus in 1960 under Archbishop Makarios stilled inter-communal violence for a time, but by December 1963, clashes had resumed. In 1974, the military junta in Athens sponsored a coup unseating President Makarios. Thereupon, Turkey, citing the 1959 Treaty of Guarantee which authorized it to defend the Cyprus constitution, landed troops on the island. They have remained there ever since.

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at the heart of Turkey's foreign policy. Washington's sympathetic understanding of the reasons for the generals' intervention, and the fading memory of the 1975 vote by the U.S. Congress to curb arms sales to Turkey in the wake of its Cyprus invasion, have paved the way for renewed intimacy, with visits to Turkey within the past year by then Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger. The United States has strongly backed the effort by an OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) Consortium to provide about \$1 billion a year in relief for the hard-pressed Turkish economy. U.S. military and economic aid to Turkey in 1982 totaled \$700 million. Foreign Minister Türkmen specified that "we have no problem with the United States."

*The Mideast:* Here, Ankara has scored unusual successes over the past two years. Commercial dealings with Libya and Saudi Arabia, for example, have grown dramatically. In March 1982, Ankara concluded a trade deal with Iran worth more than \$1 billion—Turkish food and manufactured goods for Iranian oil. The Turks' trade with the Middle East—involving nearly \$2 billion in exports in 1981—now exceeds in value that with Western Europe. Thanks to the near-capacity operation of the 450-mile Iraqi pipeline through Turkey to the Mediterranean, transit fees are up, and the Iraqis have been willing to provide oil on favorable terms (\$26 per barrel in 1981, versus a world price of \$34). Not by coincidence, Turkey has assumed a more prominent role in the 43-nation Islamic Conference.

Turkey's preoccupations are not altogether new. While the republic itself is only six decades old, it is the successor to an empire that goes back six centuries. It was not during the past decade or even the past century that the Turks first traded with Arabs, fought with Greeks, haggled with Europeans. The lands and peoples now bordering the modern Turkish state were once all under the rule of the Ottomans (20 countries represented at the United Nations contain territory of the old Ottoman Empire), and the relationships and enmities between Turks and their neighbors are of long standing. More than most people, perhaps, Turks have a deeply ingrained sense of place.

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Since Ottoman days, the Turks have sat astride both the exit from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Since the time of Peter the Great (1672–1725), the Russians have perennially sought control of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits in their quest for a warm water outlet to the open sea. That goal long made Russia the Turks' most ambitious foe, and warfare between the two was frequent. It was always a cardinal principle of Ottoman diplomacy, therefore, to seek a powerful ally against the empire's Slavic neighbor. France and Britain historically alternated in this role, and it is played today by NATO.\*

### **Accentuating the Positive**

Geography is a constant the Turks can do little to change. Thus, with the defection of the Arabs from Ottoman rule during World War I, the Turks forever lost control of territories that now produce the bulk of the oil moving in international trade. In a final act that condemned Turkey to an energy-deficient future, the British in 1925 forced Kemal Atatürk to abandon his claims to the oil-rich province of Mosul. Had this area, inhabited by Kurds and Turkomans and now part of Iraq, been left to the Turks, they would today be a net exporter of crude oil and thus able to maneuver a bit more freely in the world arena.

Typically, the Turks have accentuated the positive, stressing that the end of empire allowed the formation of a relatively homogeneous national state with a clear Turkish identity. Still, a memory of the Ottoman riches lingers. Hence the dispute with Greece (a nation born out of the empire in 1830) over the Aegean seabed. The catalyst was the discovery, during the early 1970s, of oil deposits in Greek waters off the island of Thassos. The Turks quickly advanced their own seabed claims under international waters but in areas spoken for by Athens, arguing that it was hardly fair to deny Turkey the use of large tracts of the Anatolian continental shelf simply because some Greek islands were in the way. Ankara was by no means trying to abrogate the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne (which gave Turkey only two Aegean islands, Imbros and Tenedos, the rest going to Greece and Italy), but it was determined not to lose out once again in a scramble

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\*With development of ICBMs and long-range reconnaissance aircraft, Turkey's importance as a frontline NATO staging area has declined somewhat. After Turkey joined NATO in 1952, Incirlik airbase near Adana figured heavily in U.S. Strategic Air Command planning for possible wartime operations. U-2 reconnaissance flights over the USSR from this base ended after Francis Gary Powers was shot down by the Soviets in May 1960. U.S. Jupiter missiles installed in Turkey during the early 1960s were withdrawn in 1963 after the Cuban missile crisis.

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for natural resources to which it might have a claim.

Those eastern Mediterranean islands remain a sore point. Greece seized many of them in the waning days of the weakened Ottoman empire and got the rest from vanquished Italy after World War II. Enough hug the Turkish coast to screen much of it from access to the open sea, leaving the Turks largely hemmed in by Greek territorial waters. It should come as no surprise that Ankara is sensitive to the possibility, oft-threatened by Papan-dreou, that Greece will one day claim a 12-mile (versus the current six-mile) territorial limit around each of its 2,383 islands. This would put all of Turkey's normal navigation channels into the Aegean under Greek control. Under such circumstances, Foreign Minister Türkmen has said, "it would become necessary to redefine all elements of the status quo"—meaning the Aegean would be up for grabs.

#### Atatürk's Legacy

All of this helps explain "the importancy of Cyprus to the Turk," as Shakespeare put it in *Othello*. The perception of being cut off lay behind Ankara's contention, initially voiced during the 1950s, that Cyprus in Greek hands would complete a ring around Turkey. A Turkish journalist, Ömer Sami Cöşar, wrote in 1955: "One look at a map would be enough to see that all of our routes are under Greek control and blocked by countless Greek islands. . . . Should our neighbor become a Communist state one of these days, all of Turkey would be encircled with a strong Communist ring. . . . Cyprus sits astride the only route that connects us with the free world." This concern with unimpeded sea access clearly animates Ankara's insistence that independent Cyprus never unite with mainland Greece, no matter what the island's Greek majority may desire. That is why a Turkish invasion became almost inevitable in 1974 when, after years of confrontation between Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Athens installed Nikos Samson as puppet President of Cyprus. In Ankara's eyes, this amounted to a de facto union of Cyprus and Greece.

The Ottoman past has served for some 60 years as one reference point in the conduct of Turkish foreign policy. The Turks have drawn other lessons from Kemal Atatürk's 15 years as Turkey's first President. Atatürk shaped Turkish thinking in quite new ways. He was a pragmatist and experimenter. Though determined to see Turkey accepted as a modern, European-style nation, he never tried to pursue this goal by locking the country into a single ideology or foreign policy.

Atatürk renounced empire and the dream of "pan-

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Turanism" (which would have ensured perpetual conflict with Iran and the Soviet Union, both home to many ethnic Turks). Once the Republic was established, he also preached "peace at home, peace in the world." Atatürk was willing to risk war only for high ends of state—as when, to guarantee unmolested navigation, he joined Britain and France in 1937 to hunt down unidentified (but thought to be Italian) submarines prowling the Mediterranean. He did not intend to be supine, and his successors have not been, as they proved by sending troops to South Korea in 1950 and to Cyprus in 1974.

### **"No to NATO"**

Atatürk adopted the policy, followed by all subsequent Turkish leaders, of establishing especially close working relationships with Iraq and Iran (no matter who happened to hold power in Baghdad or Tehran). These countries, like Turkey, are home to large numbers of Kurds, many of whom are willing to fight (and regularly do so) for enhanced autonomy or outright independence. Atatürk also advocated formation of regional groupings of nations to enhance security. His 1934 Balkan Pact (with Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia) was complemented in 1937 by a similar alliance with Middle Eastern states (Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan) to protect his southeast flank. The image of Atatürk, evoked during the 1970s by some Turkish leftists, as a leader who would have spurned the U.S.-sponsored Baghdad Pact and Central Treaty Organization—and who might even have said "no to NATO"—is thus fundamentally misleading.

Finally, recalling how European creditors had exploited the country after the Ottoman government was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1881, Atatürk advocated self-reliance (autarky) for Turkey in principle.\* In practice, he accepted first Soviet loans (during a thaw in relations during the 1920s and 1930s) and then German and British aid, in order to develop a rudimentary industrial base. Atatürk's legacy in this respect is his most ambivalent, and vacillation has bedeviled Turkish economic strategy ever since. Skittish about "economic imperialism" but also desirous of Western capital and technology, Turkish governments have alternately put out the welcome mat for foreign investors and nationalized their operations. This per-

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\*The Decree of Muhaiem of 1881 gave the Europeans, acting through a Public Debt Administration, the right to collect a large portion of all Turkish customs revenue. European agents were actually stationed inside Ottoman customs booths. The Public Debt Administration could also veto new taxes Istanbul wished to impose on its own population. The PDA was virtually a state within a state. This regime existed up to World War I.



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formance helps explain why Turkey has never been able to attract sufficient capital from wary businessmen in the West.

Atatürk's successors during the past 35 years have largely followed his lead. All of Turkey's modern leaders have been devoted to the goal of making Turkey the developed, Westernized state Atatürk hoped it could become. But, like Atatürk, they have all felt free to experiment and adapt to new conditions.

Prime Minister İsmet İnönü's diplomatic acrobatics kept Turkey out of World War II (until 1945, when a pro forma declaration of war against the Axis powers was the price of membership in the United Nations) despite treaties of alliance or friendship with all of the European belligerents. Atatürk would probably have approved. But the early postwar years were dominated in Turkey by the threat from the USSR. Even if Turkish leaders on occasion exaggerated the danger to extract the maximum in military and economic aid from the United States (\$2.5 billion during the Eisenhower years), the pressure from the Soviet Union for the surrender of two of Turkey's eastern provinces and for joint control of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles was certainly real. The Soviets pushed Turkey into NATO's arms and the Turks were glad for the embrace. Joining the Atlantic Alliance, moreover, was construed by Turks as providing the cachet of Western acceptance that Atatürk had coveted.

### Changing Perceptions

By the mid-1960s, however, a series of events had altered the single-minded emphasis in Ankara on containing Moscow.

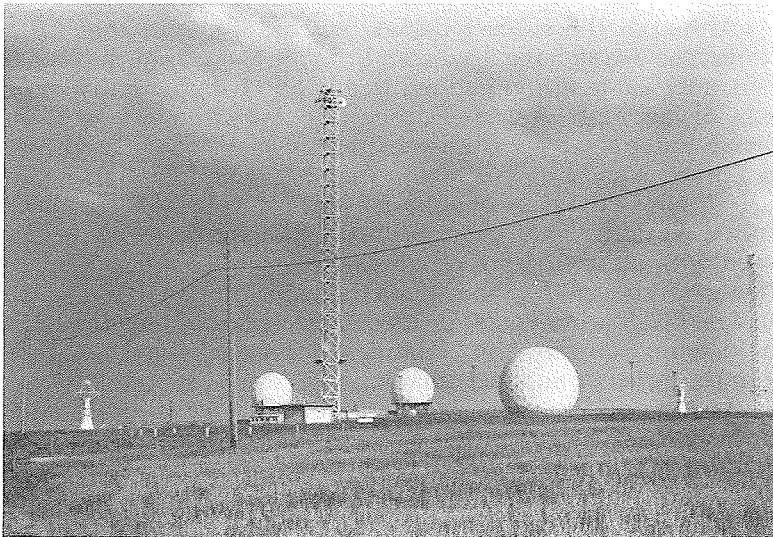
¶ The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 shocked Turkish leaders into the realization that NATO could, under some circumstances, bring insecurity rather than protection. Having accepted nuclear Jupiter missiles when most other NATO partners refused, the Turks found themselves an object of Soviet wrath as John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev negotiated their way out of military conflict over an issue far from Turkey's shores. The Turks also felt let down when the Jupiter missiles were withdrawn as part of the implicit quid pro quo for removal of the Soviet missiles from Cuba.

¶ The Cyprus crisis of 1963–64 reinforced this disillusionment. In a four-page letter, President Lyndon Johnson threatened to withhold aid in the event of a Soviet attack if Ankara carried out military operations against Cyprus. The "Johnson letter" called into question the very basis of Turkey's foreign strategy. "In half an hour we would be left without an ally," complained Prime Minister İnönü.

¶ Meanwhile, the Soviet Union modified its behavior. With the Jupiter missiles gone, Moscow began to see Turkey as less of a menace. Khrushchev's successors in the Kremlin took advantage of Turkish-American strains to improve ties with Turkey, moving toward a more even-handed position on the Cyprus dispute and assisting in various development projects.

¶ Finally, by the mid-1960s, the United States no longer felt able to provide the increasingly huge amounts of foreign aid needed to make a significant contribution to Turkish GNP. This gap was filled for a time with remittances sent back by the millions of Turkish "guest workers" who poured into Western Europe during the 1960s and '70s.

The upshot of all this was that Turkey, like many of its European NATO partners, began to shed its substantially "bipolar" view of the world for a more sophisticated assessment of the nature of things. Determined to avoid provoking Moscow, the Turks now banned active U.S. air reconnaissance over territory adjacent to the Soviet Union and later adopted a liberal interpretation of the 1936 Montreux Convention concerning the



*Photo by Paul B. Henze.*

*Nothing but the Black Sea lies between the U.S.-Turkish "listening post" on a bluff at Sinop and the Soviet Union's underbelly, 200 miles to the north. One leftist Turkish journalist has complained that Turkey's role in NATO is to be "1. an advance post, 2. a big ear, and 3. the first target."*

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passage of Soviet naval vessels through the Straits. The Montreux Convention bars aircraft carriers; Turkey has allowed Soviet warships such the *Moskva*, *Kiev*, and *Minsk*, officially designated as cruisers though equipped with canted flight decks and fixed-wing aircraft, to pass unchallenged.

While Ankara has sought to “normalize” relations with Moscow—expanding trade, exchanging state visits—Turkey has remained an active member of NATO, participating regularly in its military exercises. The Turks promptly reopened joint U.S.–Turkish military facilities in Sinop, Diyarbakır, and elsewhere in October 1978, despite Soviet entreaties, as soon as Washington lifted the last vestiges of its post-Cyprus arms embargo. But Ankara is also sensitive to perceived infringements on its sovereignty. Turkey will not allow foreign combat troops to be based on Turkish soil (as NATO forces are deployed in West Germany), and the current military regime regularly rebuts the notion that the new U.S. Rapid Deployment Force would ever be permitted to use Turkish bases.

### What Next?

Although the subject draws few headlines in the United States, the Turks have also been branching out into the Middle East, a region long slighted politically and commercially by Ankara in favor of Western Europe and the United States. The initial impetus for a shift in orientation was, ironically, Cyprus, as Turkey sought to cultivate other Islamic states during the early 1960s in the hope of winning support for its position in the United Nations. That effort proved disappointing. But it coincided with an upsurge of religious observance by Turkish Muslims and the emergence of an Islamic political party, the National Salvation Party. In 1969, Turkey became a member of the Islamic Summit, and “Islamic diplomacy” slowly acquired both prominence and legitimacy.

In the end, however, what proved decisive in building up Turkey’s ties with Middle Eastern and North African nations were the massive increases in the price of oil decreed by OPEC in 1973–74 and again in 1979. As a result of this double shock, the Turkish economy began to deteriorate. Belatedly launched in 1980, Turkey’s economic counter-offensive—a free-enterprise, export-oriented program backed by the International Monetary Fund and the OECD—unleashed a determined sales campaign abroad by nearly 200 Turkish firms. Exports aside, in 1981 some \$10 billion worth of construction contracts were signed with Libya (the main customer), Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

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Turkey's burgeoning "Mideast connection," though a boon, entails certain risks and makes certain demands. It means, for example, that the Turks must avoid being caught up in inter-Islamic disputes, such as the Iranian-Iraqi War raging near the Persian Gulf (a conflict that Turkey has unsuccessfully tried to mediate). It means embracing, if tepidly, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), despite the indirect supporting role the PLO seems to have played in the political violence that ravaged Turkey during the late 1970s. It greatly complicates Ankara's relations with Israel, warmed for years by common concern over Soviet inroads in the Middle East. Along with its Arab neighbors, Turkey has deplored the policies of the Begin government, but it has refused to sever ties with the Jewish state (which Turkey was among the first to recognize in 1948).

The Turks are a self-confident people, and that spirit has been buoyed by their recent success in putting the home front back in order. In general, and despite the familiar aggravations of their foreign affairs, they are optimistic about the future. The generals are going forward with a timetable for resumption of democratic government. When that happens—in 1983 or '84—some of Turkey's difficulties abroad will ease. Moscow, for example, will no longer have Turkey's military regime as a whipping boy. Cordial official ties with Western Europe (and full-scale economic assistance) will be revived. On the other hand, with civilian politicians back in power, relations with the United States may cool somewhat; in Turkey as in America, there are votes to be had in "running against Washington." But the Turkish leaders will no doubt realize, as they always have in the past, that Islam or nonalignment is no alternative to NATO.

The most significant trend of the past few years—the turn to the Middle East—is unlikely to end soon. The benefits are apparent to both Turkey and its Arab neighbors. Even the recent slowdown in Arab payments to Turkish contractors, caused by the current softness in the world petroleum market, has not curbed the enthusiasm. With commercial activity, of course, comes political interest. All of this virtually ensures that, in the coming decades, overall Turkish involvement in the Mideast will be greater than at any time since the dissolution of the Ottoman state in the wake of World War I. In a sense, the Turks didn't lose an empire, they (eventually) gained a market.



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## BACKGROUND BOOKS

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### TURKEY

"Westward along the high Eurasian steppe, from the borders of China across Turkestan and beyond it, there flowed through continuous centuries waves of nomad peoples. Widespread among them were a vigorous people who became known as the Turks. To the Chinese and other neighbors they were the *Tu-Kueh* or *Dürko*, a belligerent race deriving the name (so it is said) from a hill in their region which was shaped like a helmet."

So begins Patrick Balfour's **The Ottoman Centuries** (Morrow, 1977, cloth; 1979, paper), a fast-paced and authoritative history of the rise and fall of the Turkish empire. Balfour (Lord Kinross), a British scholar-traveler of the old style, has produced numerous books on Turkey, including **Europa Minor** (Murray, 1956, cloth & paper) and **Within the Taurus** (Morrow, 1955). His biography of **Atatürk** (Morrow, 1965, cloth; 1978, paper) is by far the best available and, though not always flattering to its subject, has long been a best seller in Turkey.

According to legend, Kinross writes, the Turks were guided in their ancient wanderings by a gray wolf. As Islam spread north and east from Arabia after the sixth century, the Turks, dominated by the Seljuk tribe, moved from Central Asia into the Middle East, eventually substituting the teachings of the Koran for their own pagan shamanistic worship of earth, air, fire, and water. In 1071, a date as important to Turks as 1066 to Britons, the Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan humbled the Byzantine Emperor Romanus IV Diogenes at

the battle of Manzikert, gaining a permanent Turkish foothold on the Anatolian peninsula.

The Ottoman Turks, led by the charismatic Osman, replaced the Seljuks during the 13th century. "Osman's historical role," observes Lord Kinross, "was that of the chieftain who gathered around him a people. His son Orhan was to weld the people into a state; his grandson Murad I to expand the state into an empire." Constantinople, last bastion of the Byzantine Empire, fell to the Ottomans on May 29, 1453.

Kinross follows the Ottoman Empire in detail up to its collapse at the end of World War I. More concise accounts of the Ottoman period may be found in Geoffrey Lewis's **Turkey** (Praeger, rev. ed., 1965) and Bernard Lewis's **The Emergence of Modern Turkey** (Oxford, 1961, cloth; 1968, 2nd ed., paper).

The Ottoman Empire at its height was an innovative, tolerant state. "Religious persecution as such," Geoffrey Lewis observes, "was a rare occurrence." Rather, the *millets*, or religious communities (e.g., Greek Orthodox, Armenian Christians, Jews) were left to look after themselves.

In modern Turkish, the word *millet* is translated as "nation," but the word has not entirely lost its Ottoman sense. "If you tell a Turk that your *millet* is *İngiliz*," says Lewis "he will assume not only that you have a British passport but that you are a member of the Church of England."

Some of the flavor of life in Ottoman times is captured in **Turkish Art** (Smithsonian and Abrams, 1981), a

lavishly illustrated volume edited by Esin Atil. During the 15th century, Atil notes, a *nakkashane* or imperial studio was established "to undertake all forms of decorations and arts and crafts required by the state." Talented youths were recruited and trained. The artists of the *nakkashane* always accompanied the sultan on his military campaigns, leaving to posterity a wealth of superb "documentary" paintings.

Americans and Turks have been doing business since the early 19th century. Americans built much of the empire's Navy and introduced the Turks to cotton, rum, and Christian missionaries, coming away with opium in return. U.S. relations with the Turks during this period are chronicled in James A. Field's **America and the Mediterranean World 1776-1882** (Princeton, 1969, cloth; 1976, paper).

The fine travel and guide books written about the Ottoman Empire and Turkey during the past 300 years would fill a small library. Three volumes deserve special mention.

John Freeley's **Companion Guide to Turkey** (Collins, 1979), enjoyable as armchair reading and useful on the road, blankets the country with good maps and good local history. His earlier **Strolling through Istanbul** (Istanbul: Redhouse, 1972, paper), written with Hilary Summer-Boyd, surpasses all previous introductions to the city.

Thanks to the extension of the national highway system, eastern Turkey is now far more accessible than it used to be. Gwyn Williams's **East-**

**ern Turkey: A Guide and History** (Faber & Faber, 1972, cloth) not only indicates the appropriate scenic routes, but also provides concise historical summaries of the 20 different peoples who have lived and ruled in the region.

Perhaps the greatest modern traveler in Turkey has been Britain's Freya Stark, a contemporary (and friend) of Lord Kinross. Her writings, spiced with allusions to the classics as well as bits of conversation with people met along the way, are to be savored slowly, like a selection of Turkish *mezeler* (appetizers).

Five of her books cover the western and southern parts of the country: **A Quest** (Harcourt, 1954), **The Lycian Shore** (Harcourt, 1956), **Alexander's Path** (Harcourt, 1958), **Riding to the Tigris** (Harcourt, 1960), and **Rome on the Euphrates** (Harcourt, 1967).

The reader with time to peruse only one book on Turkey should obtain David Hotham's **The Turks** (Murray, 1972). Hotham, longtime correspondent in Ankara for London's *Economist*, distills a millenium of history, politics, economics, and culture into 220 pages. The result is impressionistic, opinionated, and colorful—yet grounded in deep familiarity with the land and people.

As a foreigner, Hotham is more aware than most Turks of the general ignorance (if not indifference) in the West about the country. He recalls one visit to a London doctor shortly before heading off for Ankara. "So, you're off to Turkey!" the physician said. "Going through the Canal or round the Cape?"