

# perspectives

Issue 9  
July 2014

POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

## TURKEY

TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY BETWEEN TWO ELECTIONS

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## Heinrich Böll Stiftung - Turkey Representation

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung, associated with the German Green Party, is a legally autonomous and intellectually open political foundation. Our foremost task is civic education in Germany and abroad with the aim of promoting informed democratic opinion, socio-political commitment and mutual understanding. In addition, the Heinrich Böll Stiftung supports artistic and cultural as well as scholarly projects, and co-operation in the development field. The political values of ecology, democracy, gender democracy, solidarity and nonviolence are our chief points of reference. Heinrich Böll's belief in and promotion of citizen participation in politics is the model for the foundation's work. Editor in chief: Dr. Ulrike Dufner; editorial team: Özgür Gürbüz, Semahat Sevim, Umud Dalgıç, Yonca Verdioğlu; contributors Banu Yayla, Saynur Gürçay Heinrich Böll Stiftung Turkey Representation, İnönü Cad. Hacı Hanım Sok. No. 10/12, Gümüşsuyu İstanbul; Telephone: +90-212-249 15 54 Fax: +90-212-245 04 30 email: [info@tr.boell.org](mailto:info@tr.boell.org) web: [www.tr.boell.org](http://www.tr.boell.org)  
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# Editorial

## Turkey between two elections

This issue of Perspectives is being published between two elections. As such, we have the chance to both evaluate the local elections of March and discuss trends which might shed light on the upcoming presidential elections. Looking at the aftermath of the local elections to the run-up to the presidential elections, we strive to present a future-looking analysis based on the social repercussions of the power struggles we are witnessing and the changes that they are bringing about.

On July 1, 2014, which is the day this issue will appear in print, plans about the future of AKP will be revealed and a committee returning from İmralı prison will announce Abdullah Öcalan's decision about the Kurdish movement's stance in the presidential elections. You can read about the future strategy of the Kurdish movement in an article penned by İrfan Aktan in the present issue.

In today's Turkish political arena, gender plays an all too conspicuous role. On the one hand, prominent leaders continue politicking as if women don't even exist, on the other hand the BDP/HDP and the CHP's increased interest in gender issues render women and LGBTI individuals more and more visible in the larger picture. Even though giant projects or the economic growth policy tend to utterly disregard the gender dimension of daily life, women and LGBTI individuals have participated en masse in both Gezi protests and the struggle against those giant projects.

This suggests that we need to take a closer look at the gendered aspects of political and social change. For this reason, we try to analyze the ongoing profound political and social transformations and the policies of economic growth through the lens of "gender democracy", and draw attention to the gendered nature of local and national politics. On the one hand, we examine "purple economics", that is, the purple dimension of the economy, while on the other, we scrutinize local elections and their aftermath from a gendered perspective.

In this period circumscribed by two elections, we have also sought an answer to the question, How democratic is Turkey? The democratic deficit which appeared during the local elections, and the civic initiatives for electoral surveillance bring to mind many questions about the presidential elections:

Will the presidential candidates have an equal opportunity to express themselves on public TV and radio channels financed by the taxpayer such as TRT? How will they fund their electoral campaigns, and how will these be audited? Will "cats" once again supposedly enter transformer stations and cause lengthy blackouts on election day? Will the electoral law be revised, and how will electoral districts be determined? Is an elected president truly compatible with the current political system? Could this add momentum to the ongoing change in the political system as it will aggravate the present shortcomings of the system and the constitution, which, according to many, needs to be replaced? Given the present balance of power, what kind of a future awaits Turkish society in terms of democracy, and specifically gender democracy? We shall take up all these questions in the issue of October 1, 2014.

We wish you a pleasant read and a nice summer...

On behalf of the Perspectives team  
**Ulrike Dufner**

## TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY BETWEEN TWO ELECTIONS

# The right to vote and be elected: 30 March municipal elections

Nejat Taştan

The Independent Election Monitoring Platform was founded in 2011 by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in various thematic fields<sup>1</sup> and in different provinces. The platform has no direct or indirect relations with any political party or candidate and monitors elections according to human rights conventions and democratic standards. The platform collects data and reports on equal access of individuals to the right to vote and be elected including those rights of women, persons with disabilities, LGBTIs, persons with different ethnic or religious backgrounds, illiterate persons, and persons who have been internally displaced.



**Nejat Taştan**

Born in Adiyaman in 1964, Taştan has been involved in the human rights movement since 1986. He took part in the preparation of the Independent Election Platform's Observation Report on the Parliamentary General Elections on 12 June 2011 (author), the Education and Employment Status of the Handicapped in Turkey, Report on the Watch over Racial and Ethnicity-based Discrimination in Turkey and the Report on the Discrimination and Rights Violations against the Handicapped in Turkey (joint publication with ESHİD Publishing). He is a member of İHD, TİHV, and ESHİD.

The Platform carries out monitoring activities with a focus on the process of voting and counting of votes in line with the human rights conventions ratified by Turkey, national legislation and the decisions of the Supreme Electoral Council.

Despite the application made to the Supreme Electoral Council for an independent election observation status to be granted to the platform, our petition was rejected although there is no explicit provision in the law prohibiting the granting of such status. However, the Platform still observed the 2011 parliamentary elections in ten provinces and produced an observation report.<sup>2</sup> During the local elections of 30 March 2014, the Platform observed the elections in 15 provinces with the participation of 48 NGOs. The Election Monitoring Platform has decided to observe the Presidential Elections of August 2014 and the parliamentary elections of 2015 in more provinces.

## Pre-election environment

Turkey held the local elections of 30 March 2014 in an environment where democratisation reforms had been curtailed, where no concrete steps were taken in the peace process with regard to the Kurdish issue, in the midst of social tension created by the heavy-handed, violent and antidemocratic response by the government against the civil protests known as the Gezi Park protests, and in the midst of the political tension created as a result of the operations that started on December 17, 2013. These operations were based on allegations of corruption against four ministers from the ruling party and their relatives as well as some business men. During the election period, this pervasive social and political tension, which also had repercussions in the media and infiltrated all walks of life, has resulted in many open assaults where some citizens have lost their lives.

Political parties, leaders and media organisations failed to take action to reduce such tension and many examples of discrimination and hate speech were observed at the political party meetings and in media channels.

The election authority, the Supreme Electoral Council, and other government organs have not met their responsibility to take the necessary measures to ensure that rights such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and the right to partake in decisions can be enjoyed.

## Our observations and findings

The Supreme Electoral Council is responsible for the entire election process from the creation of voter registries to the finalisation of the election results. Decisions of the Supreme Electoral Council are final; they are not open to judicial review and this poses important problems. The decision



of the Council prior to the elections that all radio and television advertisements of candidates and political parties must be in Turkish<sup>3</sup> as well as the decisions it has issued regarding appeals made against election results have been controversial.

them to be elected. None of the political parties have a policy in place to prevent discrimination in the process of determining the candidates. Political parties and candidates have not shared their election expenditures and sources with the public.

*Before the mayoral elections on March 30, Ak Parti (Justice and Development Party) organised a meeting at Istasyon Square.*

## Voter registries

The voter registries are created and updated based on the address-based population registry system. The existing system deprives some individuals of casting votes, such as the homeless and women living in shelter homes.

Some regulations are implemented arbitrarily in the preparation of the registries. Some mentally disabled individuals are included in the registry whereas others are not, even when their conditions are the same. Furthermore, some individuals, who need to be removed from the registry according to the law, are still included.

The address-based population registry system, which is the basis for the voter registries, is managed by the government. There are loopholes that can lead to the abuse of this system.

## Political parties / candidacy period

Once again, in these elections, political parties mostly determined their candidates by means of selection by the central organs of the party. Disabled individuals, LGBTI and Roma who applied as pre-candidates were not included in the political party candidacy lists in ranks that would enable

## The freedom to engage in election activities and the right to information

The Supreme Electoral Council has issued a decision requiring all political election advertisements on radio and television to be made in Turkish. This decision is a violation of the right to be informed of voters who do not speak Turkish. The election meetings, election bureaus, provincial and district centers of many political parties as well as their candidates were attacked during the election period. Despite warnings made by the media, opposition parties and civil society concerning this matter, the government has failed to take the necessary measures to prevent such incidents and the judicial authorities have not carried out effective investigations.

The bans on social media during the electioneering activities have resulted in a violation of voters' right to information.

The State Motorways Traffic Law and the Law on Misdemeanours were used as a means to restrict the right to electioneering activities and the public administrative bodies have fined people who took part in the meetings and campaigns of opposition parties.

Throughout the elections, public resources

and public authorities were used in favour of the ruling party.

Generally speaking, not all political parties/candidates were given equal opportunities to use the media.

### Election day

The head and members of the Polling Station Committees and the voters did not have sufficient information regarding the voting procedure. For the most part, the voting procedures were not explained to the voters. Illiterate and non-Turkish speaking voters faced difficulties while voting. A large proportion of the votes that were found to be invalid resulted from a lack of information regarding the voting procedure.

The polling station committees consisted mostly of men. Almost no women were assigned as head of polling station committees.

The ballots were not designed to cater to the needs of the illiterate and the visually impaired. The restriction on independent candidates regarding the use of symbols, emblems, etc., has resulted in inequality between political parties

and independent candidates. Illiterate voters who wished to vote for independent candidates faced difficulties.

Most of the voting locations were not easily accessible by disabled and elderly citizens. Citizens who were not able to physically access the voting locations were not able to vote. In some locations, security forces were arbitrarily assigned to polling stations. In many locations excessive security blockades were put into effect.

The votes of individuals living in closed institutions under the supervision of the government (nursing homes for the elderly, homes for the disabled) were abused. Voters in these institutions were given directions to vote for a particular party.

In many places, the campaign materials of political parties/candidates were not removed on election day. The polling station zones became stages for the power displays of political parties/candidates.

The secrecy of votes was violated in many places. In particular, some illiterate, elderly or disabled citizens had to cast their votes openly. In some places, votes were cast collectively. The principle of open count was violated in many

## Electoral security and beyond: The example of “Oy ve Ötesi”

Sercan Çelebi



**Sercan Çelebi**  
Sercan Çelebi: A speaker for Oy ve Ötesi, he studied Economics and International Relations at Yale University. He currently holds office as the general manager of a social media and communications company.

A crucial development triggered by the Gezi uprising was a sudden change of topic in conversations among friends: from “Where is this country heading to?” to “So what are we doing, friends?” Youngsters from all walks of life—previously deemed apolitical—decided to become active agents in a process which touched their lives. For the first time, young people from my generation realized that they were not alone and could make a difference by acting together, revealing an immense energy for change.

Oy ve Ötesi, translated as “Ballot and Beyond,” was a project for channeling this energy towards concrete, short-term results. As distinct from, or maybe complementary to, long-term demands for systemic change, the activists of Oy ve Ötesi wanted to make an immediate difference. 35,000 thousand volunteers were recruited from De-

cember 2013 until March 2014. United around the objective of “reclaiming the ballot box,” volunteers monitored 26,000 of the 32,000 ballot boxes in Istanbul, touched 97% of the votes cast, and played an important role in ensuring the transparency and legality of the electoral process.

places and citizens who wished to observe the counting were not allowed to do so.

## Appeals

These elections have been marked as having had the highest number of invalid votes in the history of Turkey. Various political parties have appealed against the election results in many locations. There are allegations of double standards in the decisions of the provincial election committees regarding the rejection or acceptance of these appeals. The elections were cancelled in 13 places. Two of these places are provinces while five are districts. Elections will be held again at these places on June 1, 2014.

## Conclusion

The elections were turned into a vote of confidence for the government by the AKP (Justice and Development Party), the CHP (Republican People's Party) and the MHP (Nationalist Movement Party). The BDP (Peace and Democracy

Party) mostly highlighted the theme of autonomy. This has resulted in a shift of focus where the elections had a signification far beyond the local, and the voters' preferences were affected.

The recent elections have, once again, shown that the Law on Political Parties and the election legislation need to be changed and democratized in line with international human rights standards. This gains more importance in a country where there are no channels for democratic participation other than the elections and where a 'democracy of the majority' is exercised based on ballot box results. In conclusion, on March 30th 2014, Turkey has witnessed the most strained elections ever in its history, with immense controversy regarding their results and legitimacy.

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- 1 The Platform comprises NGOs that carry out activities in the areas of women's rights, disabled rights, human rights, LGBTI rights and patient rights.
  - 2 <http://www.esithaklar.org/bagimsiz-secim-gozlem-raporu-yayinlandi/>
  - 3 Our application to have this decision changed was rejected by the Supreme Electoral Council.

## Ballot box surveillance

Our main observation about the elections was the striking difference between the election day organization of different political parties. Many of our volunteers agree that the ruling party had a much more efficient and sustainable system of electoral surveillance, both in quality and quantity. Considering that the electoral system is based upon the assumption that all political parties are equally represented at the ballot box on election day, it would not be wrong to say that our volunteers prevented the translation of this organizational inequality into election results through the decisions of ballot box committees.

Another key point is that ballot box committees take many actions in breach of laws and regulations. The observers are not brought to the ballot box area by the legal deadline, the voting of disabled –especially mentally disabled– individuals is not organized in an orderly fashion, and there are fundamental mathematical problems in the presentation of final ballot results, to name but a few problems. The main reason is that the members of ballot box committees, which are supposed to ensure a smooth election day in line with regulations, were not sufficiently trained about the applicable legislation. In fact, our volunteers frequently indicated that the few hours of training

that Oy ve Otesi had offered turned them into "authorities" at the ballot box. Accordingly, the volunteers assumed a huge responsibility on election day.

A last observation concerns the visible change in the skepticism of the voters toward the electoral system and ballot box safety. Voters had become skeptic about electoral security due to hear say or baseless anecdotes published in the media; however, they realized that their hesitation would not disappear as long as they did not become a part of the process. Maybe one of the most concrete contributions of the project was that it mobilized our volunteers to act on a phenomenon/issue that they wanted to change or develop.

All these experiences obliged us to take an inevitable decision concerning the period ahead. Our volunteers, who asked "How did the electoral process function before we came along?!" and realized their huge responsibility, stated that they wanted to participate in more ballot box surveillance starting from the presidential elections of August 10. In this respect, Oy ve Ötesi decided to organize volunteer electoral surveillance in İstanbul, Bursa, Adana, İzmir and Ankara. These five provinces constitute one-third of the entire electorate. We will then be able to expand these efforts across Turkey and have a huge nationwide footprint during the general elections.

## Diligence, trust, self-sacrifice

It was hard work and dedication which brought Oy ve Ötesi to this point. The project concept was finalized after long debates and different models were proposed. Many people who were with us at the start left for various reasons, while we were joined by even more decisive and ambitious others. We had placed high hopes for the “Oy ve Ötesi goes to the universities” meeting, which was a huge fiasco since just three students, including one undercover officer, appeared. At the end of the first six months we had only a few hundred volunteers, and found ourselves questioning whether the initial target of 33,000 volunteers was indeed attainable.

The success of a team of volunteers may lie in the decisions made at such turning points and the complementarity of team members. The main driving force behind Oy ve Ötesi was the immense diligence, trust and self-sacrifice of individuals who we barely knew. Their resolve fueled our desire to power ahead, which in turn brought in hundreds of more volunteers every day. This virtuous cycle was what inflated an initial group of eight into 35,000 volunteers.

## New projects

Oy ve Ötesi has turned into an association ([www.oyveotesi.org](http://www.oyveotesi.org)), and continues its projects under this new structure. We are establishing three working groups based on our experience of the March 30th elections and the feedback from our volunteers. The first group comprises volunteers who strive to expand and enhance the ballot box surveillance organization. From the lawyer network to the IT infrastructure, from the division of labor during the day to relations with political parties, we have drawn numerous lessons from our first experience. We shall now apply that know-how in the field to create an organization more efficient and sustainable for both ourselves and our volunteers.

The second will be a group which will share our findings with the High Electoral Council

(YSK) and political parties so that the shortcomings of the electoral system are rapidly fixed. To be managed by lawyers specialized on electoral law, this group will formulate concrete and short-term solution proposals, and will track results.

Finally, we have the Regional Priority Map (BÖH) project, which excites all of us. One crucial feedback from the volunteers was that the activity should not be limited to the election day, and that communication efforts and volunteering mechanisms should be spread across the whole year. The volunteers had greatly enjoyed the warm relations established around the ballot box, which allowed individuals to break the barriers erected around them by today's heated political debates. BÖH is designed to open the first small holes in these walls, and then pave the way to fraternization between different social groups. As part of this project, volunteers will visit different neighborhoods in Istanbul to learn what people want from local elected officials, and make lists of their demands for themselves and their communities. The relations established in the medium to long-term can potentially help the volunteers formulate whole new projects in the future. The lists prepared will be shared in a transparent fashion, so that officials and voters can monitor them and a direct connection can be established between these two parties. One key characteristic of BÖH will be the bilateral communication it entails. Voters will voice their demands, and officials will share their responses to these. Oy ve Ötesi will manage the process, and also plan possible courses of action to answer these demands via our volunteers and the civil society at large.

We are cognizant that we have embarked on a long journey, and that our volunteers and followers have high expectations. Everyone can be sure that we will do our best to craft a future governed by reason and conscience. We welcome all goal-oriented individuals willing to make a change. Oy ve Ötesi shall continue to present a concrete and clear-cut path to anyone who wants to live a better life in this country and is willing to make sacrifices to this end.



## TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY BETWEEN TWO ELECTIONS

# Women's and LGBTI politics between two elections

İlknur Üstün

The results of the 2014 local elections can be evaluated by the cost to our lives, by looking at what will happen in different localities and by giving it some time. The power wars that got out of hand with the release of the December 17th recordings turned the elections into both a power display and new search for power. The otherizing political discourse that the prime minister has increasingly been setting his hopes on formed the main themes of the election discourse, and this is without a doubt what we will use to make predictions as to what might be waiting for us in the future.

I would like to underline once more the importance of looking at and trying to understand where we live and our daily lives. I am talking about the relationship between our daily activities and life as a whole. As a matter of fact, the relationship that can or cannot be established between the local and the general or "high" politics is also an indication of the extent to which existing policies include us and the distance between them and our lives. No political process that does not see, know or have something to say about who lives where, how and under which conditions in the city, in the district and in the neighborhood can ever have a chance at equality and freedom; or justice and peace. A discourse of equality, justice and peace that does not include "everyone" would only be power sharing; it refers to certain people and groups, the parties at the negotiation table. In that case, there is a need to know, see, show and act according to whom that "everyone" consists of, how they live, what they are affected by and how, the mechanisms of ostracism in the places that we live that have taken root in daily life and became ordinary and inured, and the numerous and various forms of violence and discrimination. The problem is that violence and discrimination

are constituted and become systematic through daily life. Power shapes, determines and restricts life. It prevents the possibility of an equal and free life. Justice and equality will not be possible for women as long as they cannot have a say in the way that their lives are shaped or are not taken into consideration in local politics.

There are good practices, even if limited, that bear gender equality in mind, acknowledge differences and take women into consideration. These practices transform not only women's lives but social and political life as well. The most important aspect of these practices is that it creates the means to organize the city or the neighborhood together with its residents by considering them as participants. There are examples of participatory, gender-egalitarian municipal practices like in Batman, the Nilüfer district of Bursa and the Bağlar district of Diyarbakır, where neighborhood committees and street delegations are set up with quotas to ensure women take part in all these organizations.

The BDP has been striving to implement an "ecological, participatory and libertarian" model of local government. Despite promising examples, it is still hard to talk about a common model" that



**İlknur Üstün**

İlknur Üstün graduated from the Philosophy Department at Ankara University and is a member of Amargi Feminist Theory and Politics Magazine's editorial board. She is among the founders of the Women's Coalition, Local Politics Working Group, and European Women's Lobby - Coordination in Turkey as well as being a member of the Justice and Equality Group of the Human Rights Joint Platform. She has written articles and carried out research and field work on feminism and political organization, participation, local politics, access to justice, discrimination and civil society. She is among the co-authors of the books titled "Warm Family Environment", "Understanding Trabzon" and "Did We Study In Vain?"

has materialized through policies and practices.

The presence of women in local government is crucial to the success of gender equality policies. Indeed, even with the limited examples, we can see women who are municipal administrators. Women have also caused the local government to build/strengthen ties with women's organizations and feminists. Nonetheless, the very low rate of women's representation in local governments is the biggest manifestation of women's systematic exclusion from local governments. Before the 2014 local elections, 28 mayors out of 2950 were women. The ratio of women among the members of municipal councils was less than 4 percent. Out of the 30,000 thousand mayors elected in Turkey in 83 years, only 82 have been women. In 42 provinces, there has never been a female mayor elected throughout the entire history of the Republic.

A local government that excludes women and women's lives is like a microcosm of the general sexist structure of politics as well as the hierarchical and otherizing way of doing politics. It is indicative of the weak relationship between the local government and democratic elements. The fact that the ratio of women in municipal councils are, unlike in many democratic countries, lower than that in the parliament demonstrates that the elements that the local government is associated with are not democratic.

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### The election process

In the local elections, not a word was uttered as to how the lived places or daily life would be affected. Not only were the statements issued irrelevant to the locality, but the people saying those words were not from there either. Mostly, party leaders or top party officials spoke. In the AKP, almost only the prime minister spoke.

Local governments have the power to directly affect and transform daily life, right then and there. It is in within arm's reach, be it in building justice, freedom and equality, or in solving big problems that seem inextricable. The space that politics opens up regarding the local allows us to see problem areas that are defined and specified through lives and individual stories, what has been left out, and to develop different solutions to all of these. Therefore, the strength of the con-

nection between the locality and the center and the way it is built is related to the limits and quality of this political space. The recent elections have shown that the link between the local place that is lived in and daily life is almost entirely broken. We never got to hear about how the candidates planned on running the municipality, what kind of a solution they offer for which problem, how they will distribute the resources or what they planned to do. We never knew whether they were aware about people with different identities lived there. Starting from December 17, we listened to the recordings of corruption that demonstrated the power sharing and alliances of the state, the government and the local administrations.

When the link between the center and the local is based on rent sharing and alliances formed to sustain power, neither the organization of daily life and common living spaces nor any regulation concerning life as a whole includes an approach that takes "everyone" into consideration. The characteristic of the relationship built with the place and the resident is not interlocution but rather ownership as can be seen in many examples that the current understanding of politics has shown us. It is not a coincidence that the number of women in provincial chairs of political parties can be counted on the fingers of one hand. In the recent elections too, the methods by which the candidates were determined as well as the campaigns themselves were like a war of seizing cities and local administrations. It would be naïve to expect from a war that negates politics as a means of problem solving or liberation a result in favor of women, the dispossessed and the ostracized.

### What have the political parties done?

In the memorandums that political parties sent to their organizations regarding the conditions of candidacy, we have seen the first sentences in which local administration is linked with women,. That was as a result of the struggle conducted by women's organizations for years that women do not pay fees. Another issue was the quota for women even if it was expressed in different ways. However, we should state that this was pronounced by a very limited number of parties and that it was not put into practice by many of them. The BDP declared in its memorandum that the principle of co-chairship would be in effect and that applications for nominee by people who have committed crimes against women would not be accepted.

Candidates, as always, were determined through initiatives of the top party officials or the party leader, due to the antidemocratic structure of the political parties. The candidacy process was



dominated by the “strategies to seize” the cities, alliances and negotiations with power holders. Neither the quota in the statute, nor the crumbs in the memos that sounded like equality, nor the decisions of primary elections, nor the women’s branches counted for anything. The December 17th process has really reinforced the tendency to form a political line through opposition to AKP and has been influential on the determination of the candidates. However, in an atmosphere where the AKP/the prime minister sharpened and deepened differences, defined politics as a dichotomy of “us and them” and started a war on whomever was not on his side using all sorts of state apparatuses, this opposition did not play out in the way that policies were adopted to include “the others.” What such a politics that turned the elections into a battlefield of big power wars would do for women, lgbt’s, the poor and the ones that are deprived of power was to push/throw them further out and that is what happened.

### Peace and Democracy Party - Peoples’ Democratic Party

The Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) differed from the others with the steps it took in favor of gender equality and women. In the BDP and Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), candidates were determined by a committee that women were active in. The power and influence of the struggle carried out by Kurdish women’s move-

ment and women’s organizing in determining the women candidates and the places where a quota is set, as well as in forming and implementing the party policies, should once more be underlined. The fact that they initiated co-chairship at local governments is a crucial and historic step in terms of women’s presence in politics, gender equality and intra-party democracy. The preparations for the elections indicates what a big emphasis BDP places on local administration, the role it has in daily life and the place that is lived in. It is the center of politics,

*LGBTI families are in a demonstration on Istiklal Street.*

In the local elections, not a word was uttered as to how the lived places or daily life would be affected. Not only were the statements issued irrelevant to the locality, but the people saying those words were not from there either. Mostly, party leaders or top party officials spoke. In the AKP, almost only the prime minister spoke.

and women’s organizing is one of the constituent elements of that. The pursuance, strengthening and spreading of policies in favor of women and establishing of a broad gender equality that includes lgbt people demonstrates the need for the continuation of this struggle of women with its persistent power in the face of the changing priorities of critical periods. The presence of women’s organizing will be one of the guarantees of the democratic character of the demo-

cratically autonomous local administrations.

The HDP, having prepared for the elections in a short time, has given a picture of a party that strived to materialize its organization, party structure, policies and discourse in its own makeup. It is promising that “it sees all the areas of struggle of all democratic opposition forces as a common area of struggle”, as explained in the party program. On the other hand, despite the experience it has acquired from the Peoples’ Democratic Congress and the fact that it has progressed to a certain extent, the path that the party will follow is open to being tested with many questions. Gender equality, togetherness of different identities and the emphasis on a discourse of social peace weren’t limited to just words. With the 50 percent gender quota, the practice of co-chairship, the nomination of and the support given to LGBTIs, they touched places and lives that had never experienced alternative politics and practices. It was a big shortcoming that policies covering local issues weren’t discussed much during the election campaigns, even though there were many reasons to do so.

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Candidates were determined through initiatives of the top party officials or the party leader, due to the antidemocratic structure of the political parties. The candidacy process was dominated by the “strategies to seize” the cities; alliances and negotiations with power holders. Neither the quota in the statute, nor the crumbs in the memos that sounded like equality, nor the decisions of primary elections, nor the women’s branches counted for anything.

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### Republican People's Party

The Republican People's Party (CHP) has determined its strategy and agenda for the elections according to the AKP. Within the power wars and the wars over the cities, it did not or could not form a political line with and in favor of the people against whom these wars were directed, who have suffered violence and have been ostracized. We could not, unfortunately, see policies or program regarding gender equality. The fact that a model such as “CHP municipalism” cannot emerge—despite the CHP municipalities such as the Nilüfer municipality and their promising, exemplary work that it could be taken as a model—reveals how much the party’s politics actually includes links with the locality and its residents.

The top officials and the leader of CHP determined the party’s candidates. A quota was added to the statute but was not put into practice. Women were virtually not taken into account at all in the lists. The nomination of a person from the

lgbt community was an important step for CHP. Only 53 women out of 150 were able to become candidates for nomination for mayor. Very few of those were in places where CHP was guaranteed to win the election; although their party did not give them the necessary support, they increased the party’s vote with the work they did. The leader called out to women at every rally and said he expected the work they did would carry the party to power from them. This expectation, which appeared to be sincere, did not include hiring women in municipal administrations. The fact that he did not put into effect the quota that he set at the party convention, that he did not offer tools or take necessary measures to support women went on record as the unchanging attitude at the CHP even though the administrators at the party change. The decrease in the number of women applying to the CHP for nomination can be interpreted as a decrease in the expectation of women at CHP’s grassroots in this regard from their party. On May 3, the CHP leader met with over 800 women that are nominees, candidates for nomination, mayors and who work at the administrations of the party’s provincial/district centers in Ankara. At the meeting where the party’s vice presidents and party headquarters’ women’s branch were also present, women from İzmir, Erzurum, Antalya, Bodrum, Sivas, and other cities questioned and criticized what went on at the CHP during the elections. It is important that these voices were heard, even if it came after the results of the elections that made people unhappy. There is no telling to what extent these narratives will be taken into account, but it is promising. Let’s hope not to hear such derogatory words as “we could not find a female candidate that had the desired qualifications” at any elections anymore from CHP officials.

### Justice and Development Party

The Justice and Development Party (AKP), with its authoritarian manner of politics that is dominated by an environment of oppression and violence and deep social separations, did all that was necessary for the elections to take place under extraordinary conditions all around the country. Surely, gender equality cannot come out of a political structure that bears no trace of any democratic element, and ramps up identity conflicts and social tensions! When I say this, I reserve the importance of looking at what falls outside the general party policies and pushing make do what is not done, in the world of local administration that opens doors to individual initiatives.

When the AKP’s memorandum asks one third of the nominees for council members to be women and women’s branches to take part in

the nomination committees, it doesn't mean a thing other than caring for their image when we look at the words that the prime minister utters and the party's practices. Conversely, we know and see that there are people who snap up every single word that the prime minister delivers against women and take on these duties, carrying them out immediately at various places around the country.

## Election results

The political parties announced their nominees almost at the last minute. Women were excluded from the nominees' lists as much as gender equality policies were excluded from party programs and elections' memos. The ratio of women nominees were very low except for the BDP and the HDP. According to the official numbers that were announced after the elections, 7 out of 817 mayors of AKP (0.8%), 7 out of 232 mayors of CHP (3%), 1 out of 169 mayors of MHP (0.5%) and 24 out of 100 mayors of BDP (24%) are women. Out of all 1381 mayors, 39 are women (2.82%). As a result of the 2014 local elections, along with BDP's 68 chairwomen that are not included in the official numbers, there are 107 women mayors. Except for the increase that BDP's co-chairship practice has brought about, there was not a significant change in the representation of women.

Even though current politics excludes women and their daily lives, they were organized almost everywhere and carried out their own electoral work; they followed the political parties, formed a list of demands and delivered it to the candidates and the parties, ran campaigns in accordance with women's demands and tried to make their voices heard by larger segments of the society. They pointed out to the indispensables of the alternative politics in establishing justice, equality, freedom and peace. Women and their organizations looked out for their lives and the places they lived in in Adana, İzmir, Istanbul, Mersin, Ankara, Muğla, etc. The political party monitoring that the Women's Coalition carried out throughout the elections is going on as monitoring of the municipalities' gender policies, enhancing the tools for intervention in politics and pushing the limits of political and social participation.

We have not entered the period of elections under leading processes where a will for change or a progress in gender policies was mentioned. On the contrary, women go on struggling not to lose their acquisitions and keep their demands on the agenda. Up to this point, they had to tussle with numerous aspects of war and male dominance.

The Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) differed from the others the steps it took in favor of gender equality and women. At BDP and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), candidates were determined by a committee that women were active in.

With the two upcoming elections, politics clearly does not hold out the prospect of easy times for women. It seems like Turkey's social and political development will continue forward with ups and downs. Neither the peaks nor the bottoms of these waves are suitable to make accurate projections about rights and freedoms. It is not easy to see the horizon from these points. There may be people who think all the acquisitions are being wiped out; as yesterday, there were people who thought we were advancing a great deal with the ruling party's winds. Yet politics is something much more complex than the components that stand out.

- 1 Such as men being assigned as secretary of mayor at some of the BDP municipalities, the increasing of the number of female directors at the municipal agencies, women being employed as bus drivers at the Bağlar municipality after a driving training, the designation of a market place in Diyarbakır to women and the neighborhood committees at the Nilüfer municipality. (İlknur Üstün, "From the Local to the Local Elections, From Justice to Peace", Amargi Feminist Magazine, issue 32)
- 2 Peace and Democracy Party, a mainly Kurdish political party in Turkey (Translator's Note)
- 3 This information has been taken from the website of The Women's Coalition. <http://www.kadinkoalisyonu.org/tr/node/186>
- 4 I had discussed how these alliances are formed straight away and strongly over women's lives and the connection between the center and the local, in the article, titled "From the Local to the Local Elections, From Justice to Peace" in the 32nd issue of Amargi Feminist Magazine.
- 5 AKP has declared that the application fee would be charged from women at half rate; CHP, that women would not be charged (It was stated that candidates would be charged a 250 TL fee for nominee for mayor, candidates for municipal and provincial council membership would be charged a 100 TL filing fee, and that a notice that the candidate has participated in the local administrators' trainings that are organized by the party and cost 250 TL was a condition); MHP, that women would not be charged (but practice has varied from place to place) and BDP and HDP, that women would not be charged.
- 6 AKP had asked that "attention is paid so that one out three council members is a woman" and that provincial and district women's branches take part in the forming of the nominees' lists. BDP declared that it would implement a 40 percent quota for women and that it would nominate women in 23 places. HDP declared a 50 percent quota.
- 7 Peoples' Democratic Congress is the platform that HDP grew out of.
- 8 The percentage of CHP's female mayoral candidates was 4.5.
- 9 For numbers and rates of women nominee for mayor according to political party and place of election at the 2013 local elections (in Turkish): <http://www.kadinkoalisyonu.org/tr/node/192>

## TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY BETWEEN TWO ELECTIONS

## Kurdish movement restructures itself

İrfan Aktan

The Kurdish movement, which has become a key regional actor in the aftermath of the Syrian civil war and the social transformation in Rojava, is undergoing a structural overhaul in Turkey. While it fights against the regimes of Iran, Syria and Southern Kurdistan, the PKK (Workers' Party of Kurdistan) realigns its political stance in Turkey and strives to advance its institutionalization in this conflict-free period.



İrfan Aktan

Aktan was born in 1981 in Hakkâri-Yüksekova and studied Communications and later did his graduate work in the Women Studies Department at Ankara University. The author of two books, *Nazê/Bir Gôçûş Öyküsü* and *Zehir ve Panzehir: Kürt Sorunu / Faşizmin Şartı Kaç?* Aktan has worked for *Birgün* newspaper and *Nokta*, *Newsweek Türkiye* and *Yeni Aktüel* magazines and has served as the Ankara representative of IMC TV. He is currently working at *Express* magazine as a reporter and writer.

The Kurdish movement has started in-depth debates on the two critical issues of the left and Islam, and is getting ready to take a clearer stance in this regard in the coming period. Islam and socialism have always been complicated issues for left-wing movements in the Middle East. For a leftist organization with a Marxist background, PKK has been immensely successful in garnering support from the Kurdish society, which has a strong Islamic tendency.

It is not a coincidence that, in the face of state repression in the 1980s, the Kurds did not choose to get organized in an Islamist movement. First of all, after the Sheikh Said uprising, the state placed regional religious opinion leaders under its control and thus prevented the possible rise of an Islamist Kurdish organization. State efforts to this end date back to 1924 when Kurdish aghas and intellectuals were sent in exile to western provinces, pointing to the Republic's long track record in this respect. Until the 1990s, the state elites had perceived all Islamist movements organized among Kurds or Turks as "a reactionary threat against the secular republic" and had never tried to connect the

Kurds to the regime via Islam. The basic reason for this was the fear that a new Islamic movement among Kurds could spark a new rebellion like that organized by Sheikh Said. As such, in the aftermath of the Sheikh Said uprising, the state tried to assimilate Kurds not through Islamism but rather Turkism. This effort did indeed create a certain transformation of Kurdish tribes. Tribal chiefs, who used to double as religious leaders, were deprived of this second role in time; more secular, pro-state chiefs rose to prominence.

Immediately after the repression of the Sheikh Said uprising, the organization *Xoybûn* planted itself in the Middle East (mostly Lebanon and Syria) in late 1920s and staged the Ağrı Uprising from there, pointing to the beginnings of a secular Kurdish movement; however, the organization failed to garner widespread support and was defanged by state repression in the early 1930s. After the Dersim massacre of 1937-38, there came a long period of silence for the Kurds in the years from 1940 to 1960, again as a result of military campaigns. In this era, Kurdish Islamist movements either went underground or continued their existence as congregations without political aspirations.

## The legacy of socialist movements

From the 1960s onwards, the rising left-wing and socialist movements in Turkey supported Kurds' basic rights -at least in part-, and triggered a revival in the Kurdish movement which had sympathy for the left. Most Kurdish opinion leaders of the epoch were secular-minded children of tribe chiefs or the representatives of the Kurdish aristocracy. A large part of Kurdish opinion leaders first joined the



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Democrat Party (DP), but then opted for the Turkish Workers' Party (TİP). From late 1960s onwards, the Kurdish intelligentsia gathered around TİP, then Revolutionary Cultural Centers of the East (DDKO), the student movement Dev-Genç, and increasingly around Kurdish leftist and socialist groups such as Kawa and Rizgarî, paving the ground for the current Kurdish movement embodied in PKK. It is thus possible to say that although the current Kurdish movement found its predecessors in the socialist movement, it managed to expand itself thanks to a perspective that did not reject Islam—unlike conventional leftist groups. This approach differentiates the PKK from both the previous Kurdish intelligentsia with an aristocratic background and the Turkish socialist movements. It has also allowed the PKK to garner sympathy amongst the oppressed classes and organize the most radical ever uprising against the state and the tribal chiefs who collaborated with the state.

In the 1980s, the Kurds who were exposed to state oppression did not really have the chance to question the religious perspective of an organization which responded to the state with an armed uprising. Since the state never grasped this fact, it tried to stop Kurds from supporting the PKK by bolstering the Kurdish Islamist group Hizbullah, which fought against the PKK and its urban militia. In the 1990s, while the state elites and Turkish Armed Forces suppressed Islamist Turkish parties and organizations in the west by bran-

ding them as “reactionary threat”, they gave carte blanche to this radical Islamist group in Kurdistan. However, in the late 1990s it became obvious that Hizbullah was no match for PKK, and the state largely destroyed the armed wing of Hizbullah. Hizbullah's atrocious acts in the 1990s pushed Kurds further away from political Islam and state, and closer to the PKK.

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The negotiations between the state and PKK and the possibility of an agreement signaled an end to the Gülen sect's role in Kurdistan. Previously, the Gülen sect was given free rein in the region to set it free from PKK's control.

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### State Islam vs. democratic Islam

On the other hand, from the very beginning, PKK and Öcalan had always underlined the need for “true Islam” to counter the state's Islamist policies in the region. In his lengthy İmralı defense speech, Abdullah Öcalan reiterated his arguments about Islam, dating back to the 1990s: “In a sense, The Communist Manifesto by K. Marx and F. Engels runs parallel to Quran, the alleged revelation from God to Prophet Muhammad. The first is coded in scientific and European terms, and the second in religious and Oriental terms. The socialist society and proletarian dictatorship correspond to the Islamic community de-

pictured in Quran, and Islam's understanding of internationalism, freedom and equality is stronger and more systematic than that of socialism. The Islam's understanding of 'sulta' (sultanate) is no less systematic than the socialist dictatorship in real socialism. Both phenomena underwent continuous development throughout the centuries."

By likening the crises of real socialism and real Islam to each other, Öcalan strives to formulate a new and ideal model of administration. He criticized both belief systems, and also drew inspiration from both. How could it be possible to fight against the state which deployed Islam against Kurds, without countering Kurds' beliefs and culture? Öcalan's response to this question is as follows: "State Islam and an Islamic state are both imperious and anti-democratic. Trying to legitimize the state via religion or religion via the state leads to religious fundamentalism and renders religion dysfunctional. This is the basic reason why Islam carries such weight in Kurdish society. In a sense, religion allows for self-defense against the state. The fact that Kurdistan harbors many religious sects is also closely related to self-defense. Individual Islam, on the other hand, has a moral effect against the lack of trust prevalent among Kurds. Until capitalist modernity started to have ideological effects in Kurdistan, Islamic culture played a role at least as important as tribal culture; Islam allowed for the establishment of social bonds that go deeper than tribal connections."

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When the Gülen sect voiced its opposition against the Oslo process, AKP activated Hüda-Par, a continuation of Hizbullah, and started to support radical Islamist groups such as Al-Nusra and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) against PYD forces in Rojava, which in turn triggered a different reaction from the PKK.

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The state's decision to stop supporting Hizbullah in late 1990s did not herald an end to its policy of deploying Islam against the Kurdish movement. Hizbullah was liquidated simultaneously with the withdrawal of the armed PKK forces to outside Turkey in 1999. The gap left behind started being filled by the Fethullah Gülen sect. In the 2000s, the Gülen sect's clout in Kurdistan reached its zenith. It was thought that while an armed Islamic group triggered a reaction against the state and Islam among Kurds, a more sympathetic Islamic discourse would encourage Kurds to support the state. However, the Gülen sect

soon started to get out of the state's control, making the AKP increasingly anxious. Likewise, the Gülen sect was seen as the main force behind the police operations against Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), which fueled Kurds' fury against the sect. Although it is generally thought that the Gülen sect did not enter into conflict with the government before the December 17 corruption probe, in fact the sect had already become deeply concerned since the talks between the PKK and the Turkish intelligence agency MİT started in 2009 in Oslo. That is because negotiations between the state and the PKK and the possibility of an agreement could signal an end to the Gülen sect's role in Kurdistan. Previously, the Gülen sect was given free rein in the region to set it free from the PKK's control. Indeed, during that period, the Gülen sect came to enjoy considerable clout in Kurdistan. However, when the sect voiced its opposition against the Oslo process, the AKP activated Hüda-Par, a continuation of Hizbullah, and started to support radical Islamist groups such as Al Nusra and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) against PYD forces in Rojava, which in turn triggered a different reaction from the PKK. In October 2013, Abdullah Öcalan drew attention to the dangers posed by Al Nusra activity in Rojava and invited religious leaders of Kurdistan to organize a Democratic Islam Conference, which took place soon after, on May 10-11 in Diyarbakır. The conference was marked by Öcalan's letter, in which he invited Islamic groups to defend democracy, equality and freedom against the state, and all authoritarian conceptions of Islam: "The rabble-rousers of Hizbullah and Al Qaida constitute two hubs of atrocity, symbolizing the current-day fascism brought upon the Islamic community by capitalist destruction. They spread fascism across the region with decapitations and gallows, killing the people of Kurdistan, as well as Muslim and non-Muslim peoples. Whereas authoritarian secularist and nationalist fascism continues to rage on now as it did in the past, we now witness a new fundamentalist religious fascism being spread by the said parties and groups. The liberation movement in Kurdistan will never side with these two heresies -one nationalist the other radical Islamist- and will never allow them to gain importance. I believe that the liberation movement that you represent will defend radical democracy against all kinds of nationalist, Islamist, sexist, patriarchal, statist etc., perspectives and policies. I find meaningful the 'unity of nation' upheld by the contemporary Islamic community; this does not correspond to the rubbish





slogan of ‘single state, single nation, single flag.’ On the contrary, the relevant Quranic verse reads ‘We have created you in the form of different tribes, so that you get to know each other,’ which points to a ‘unity of nations’ around a pluralist, democratic, egalitarian and free-minded reading of Islam. I am confident that your congress will outline a correct perspective and accurate principles on Islam’s universality and singularity, the Islamic unity of nations, as well as the plurality and uniqueness of different denominations.”

Despite claims to the contrary, it can be said that the PKK (and Öcalan) does not have a populist perspective on Islam and instead tries to prevent it from being instrumentalized by the government. While positioning itself against “real Islam”, it does not refrain from blending its ideology with Islam’s provisions in defense of the oppressed. To this end, it upholds Islam’s cultural heritage and a more individual religious experience, while opposing the state’s attempts to manipulate Islam.

As the Democratic Islam Conference was being held, the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) and the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) were having a debate on a radical transformation. The Kurdish movement decided to pull the BDP out of Ankara and turn it into the main actor for the construction of democratic autonomy in Kurdistan, whereas the HDP started working on spreading the concept of democratic autonomy across Turkey. In an article published on May 10, HDP’s co-president Ertuğrul Kürkçü said the following in the context of the Democratic

Islam Conference: “The Kurdistan Liberation Movement and the HDP are both secular movements. They do not favor any religious group against another, show respect to all beliefs, and defend the rights of everyone who are oppressed and ostracized by the rich and powerful for their beliefs. As such, its struggle against the state’s use of Islam as an instrument for legitimizing power does not make HDP alien to any religious group, such as the Alevi or Christian communities.”

*A view from HDP’s conference*

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## Efforts to expand HDP

Although it is not possible to foresee the results of HDP’s and Kurdish movement’s efforts to uphold “democratic Islam” against state Islam, it could be argued that the Gülen sect will henceforth be less active in Kurdistan due to its conflict with the AKP. If the Kurdish movement brings under its control the space previously occupied by the Gülen sect, more pious Kurds will not tilt towards parties and groups such as Hüda-Par, which instrumentalize Kurdish nationalism.

Meanwhile, the ideological debates and maneuvers of the Kurdish movement are not

limited to the concept of “Islam.” It has recently voiced increasingly harsh criticisms towards leftist and socialist groups which remain distant to it. One PKK leader, Duran Kalkan, penned an article in the newspaper *Özgür Politika* on May 5, 2014 under the pseudonym Selahattin Erdem, and criticized leftist parties such as Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP) which stay out of the HDP and invited them to join the HDP: “The local elections of March 30 have shown that ÖDP benefits the system by fragmenting the opposition and failing to present an alternative. ÖDP fragments leftist and democratic forces and rallies them behind CHP. The party appears to be independent, but objectively jumps on CHP’s bandwagon. It prevents the unity of democratic forces and hampers the construction of an alternative force. It melts the socialist and democratic movement inside CHP. As such ÖDP stands out as the most important barrier to the new democratic alternative that the HDP is trying to craft. The ÖDP neither disbands itself, nor does it join the unity inside HDP. It does not create a different democratic alternative, either. Well, where will this situation end, and to whom will it serve? Does this have anything to do with the political line of Mahir Çayan?<sup>1</sup> Is this not tantamount to rendering the radical democratic alternative ineffective and serving the system and the CHP? This situation, however one might describe it, must be ended immediately. The ÖDP barrier in front of the HDP must be overcome urgently. The best way to achieve this would be for the ÖDP to return to the political line of Mahir Çayan and join the HDP, which embodies his line in the current day.”

In response to Kalkan’s article, ÖDP’s co-president Alper Taş said that ÖDP will decide on its own political position and indicated that the HDP project amounts to “mixing apples with oranges”: “We participated in the debates for the establishment of the HDP from the very beginning. The comrades invited us, and we joined and voiced our views. However, this project is fragmentary, and not holistic. It mixes apples with oranges. Its horizon is limited to the Kurdish question. We also observed that the relations between the different groups making up the HDP are weak, rather than organic. We believe that the HDP’s political stance is not correct and has a say only on the issue of identities. In a period of capitalist crisis, we believe that the left in Turkey should pursue an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist position. Naturally, the liberation of different identities is a question that concerns the left; however, we believe that class-related problems should have a priority.”

After the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan announced during Newroz celebrations in 2013 that their wish to end armed struggle was not tactical but strategic, the Kurdish movement embarked upon efforts to adapt itself to this new process. In terms of legal institutional politics, these efforts corresponded to the immediate aftermath of the local elections of March 30. Indeed, all of the BDP MPs joined the HDP, and it was indicated that the BDP will focus totally on Kurdistan. Despite what Alper Taş suggests, the HDP claims that it includes class-based problems among its priorities. Furthermore, it strives to base its political line on the dualism of “capitalist modernity vs. democratic modernity” formulated by Öcalan with a class-based perspective. In this respect, it seems that the BDP will seek solutions to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, and the HDP will struggle against the centralized capitalist system across Turkey. Furthermore, the HDP is expected to start a new initiative to reach out to the wider masses in the country. That is precisely what is being preached by Abdullah Öcalan, Cemil Bayık and Duran Kalkan, who are the leaders of the Kurdish movement which is the biggest force inside HDP. Similar arguments are voiced by the HDP members, suggesting that the party will try to expand towards new social groups. In this regard, the HDP will have to be more open-minded, and try to reach the conservative and religious sectors towards which it used to remain distant, as well as to those secular-minded sectors who are closer to the line of the old SHP (Social-Democratic People’s Party) rather than today’s CHP.

## How will HDP act in the presidential elections?

On the other hand, the Kurdish movement has been accused of acting together with the AKP at different stages of the negotiations between the government and Öcalan. It is unnecessary to reiterate these discussions here, but many people wonder how the HDP will act during the presidential elections. Although Ertuğrul Kürkçü announced that the HDP will present its own candidate, it does not seem plausible for the HDP to support Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, the joint candidate of the CHP and the MHP in the second tour: The CHP’s position on the Kurdish question does not win the hearts of Kurds, and the MHP pursues an ultra-nationalist line.

On the other hand, it should not be expected for the HDP to refrain from criticizing the



*Ertuğrul Kürkçü announced that the HDP will present its own candidate, it does not seem plausible for the HDP to support Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, the joint candidate of the CHP and the MHP in the second tour.*

AKP's probable candidate Tayyip Erdoğan on his role in the Roboski massacre and responsibility in the horrible mining accident in Soma. As such, the HDP and the Kurdish movement could possibly decide to boycott the presidential elections, like they did the constitutional referendum on September 12, 2010.

Indeed HDP's new copresident Selahattin Demirtaş pointed to a possible boycott of the elections in an interview to Milliyet newspaper's Serpil Çevikcan on June 25: "It would be a huge mistake to make a binding declaration before the results of the first tour. I do not deem it possible for a candidate to get elected in the first tour. In the second tour, the principles around which the candidates build their campaigns will influence the voters. Of course, some voters may reject both of the candidates who make it to the second tour and opt for a boycott instead. If voter turnout falls, candidates may get elected with much fewer votes."

Prior to the presidential elections, AKP proposed a legislative change to grant legal guarantee to the settlement process. Such a revision coupled with further radical measures in the run-up to the elections could tilt some Kurdish voters -at least those without an organic tie to HDP- towards Erdoğan. Erdoğan may increase this effect if he promises to speed up the settlement process once he becomes president. However, in any case, if HDP's candidate does not make it to the second tour, it does not seem plausible for the party to invite its constituency to vote for Erdoğan, due to the Roboski and Soma massacres. Support for Erdoğan in the second tour would fuel the debate inside HDP -which has already been aggravated with EMEP's (Emek Partisi

(Labor Party). A socialist party, one of the founding parties of HDP) decision to abandon HDP- and lead to cracks and ruptures inside the party.

It is not possible to forecast the electoral effects of AKP's general policies, and the social reaction against the Soma massacre; however, these elections seem set to be a critical turning point for the HDP and the Kurdish movement. At the HDP congress held recently, BDP joined the HDP, leading to disgruntlement

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On the other hand, it should not be expected for the HDP to refrain from criticizing the AKP's probable candidate Tayyip Erdoğan on his role in the Roboski massacre and responsibility in the horrible mining accident in Soma. As such, the HDP and the Kurdish movement could possibly decide to boycott the presidential elections, like they did the constitutional referendum on September 12, 2010.

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inside the latter. The elections will either end or aggravate this disgruntlement. In any case, it is said that the HDP and the Kurdish movement will have undergone a serious structural and political overhaul by autumn, and will have a new political stance against the AKP which becomes increasingly authoritarian. We shall soon find out.

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<sup>1</sup> The urban guerrilla leader who founded the organization that was the forerunner of ÖDP in the 1970s.

## TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY BETWEEN TWO ELECTIONS

# AKP's pool economy as a political model

Serpil Sancar

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung's representatives in Turkey and Germany jointly organized the fourth edition of the Turkey Forum on April 28, 2014 in Istanbul. Around forty distinguished participants attended the roundtable entitled "Is There a Way Out of the Political Turmoil in Turkey?" Turkey's contemporary political problems, the handicaps of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches and the future of the Turkish economy were discussed. We would like to share with you a short assessment by Serpil Sancar, who gave one of the main presentations of the forum.



### Serpil Sancar

A faculty member at Ankara University in the Faculty of Political Science, her research interests include political science and women's studies. Serpil Sancar teaches political theory, political sociology and social research methods. Her recently published books include *Türk Modernleşmesinin Cinsiyeti: Erkekler Devlet, Kadınlar Aile Kurar*, (The Gender of Turkish Modernization: Men Establish the State, Women Found the Family, İletişim Yayınları, 2012, İstanbul); *21. Yüzyıla Girenken Türkiye'de Feminist Eleştirinin Birikimi*, (Feminist Criticism in Turkey in the 21. Century, ed., two volumes, Koç Üniversitesi Yayını, İstanbul, September 2011); *Erkeklik: İmkânsız İktidar/ Ailede, Piyasada ve Sokakta Erkekler*, (Manhood: The Impossible Potency / Men in Family, Market and on Streets, Metis Yayınları, İstanbul, 2009); *İdeolojinin Serüveni: Yanlış Bilinç ve Hegemonyadan Söyleme*, (The Travails of Ideology: From False Consciousness and Hegemony to Discourse, İmge Yayınevi Ankara, 2009).

The political strife which started on December 17, 2013 and pitted the government against some members of the judiciary was not resolved by the local elections of March 30, 2014. In order to forecast what developments may follow and what possible exits from the crisis might be, we need to first take a look at the key political actors in Turkey. The ruling party and its components, the Kurdish political movement, and the civic political community that organized the Gezi protests stand out as the three main actors.

The first among these, the AKP (Justice and Development Party) is not an ordinary ruling party, it maintains its hold on power by having created a unique structure. When it arrived in power, the AKP began to manage a combination of informal production, rent-seeking activities, and Islamic politics. It synthesized these components in an original fashion to create an urban capitalism based on rent-seeking, which provides the party with many advantages. The party wins elections and thus maintains a virtual monopoly over electoral politics.

### The leader of the "pool economy"

"The pool economy" is a new model deployed by developing countries which hope to industrial-

ize rapidly. These latecomers fall outside the North Atlantic capitalist economies of the center, which have grown rich through colonialism. The expression pool economy is more specific to Turkey; however, a similar model can be seen in some newly globalizing capitalist economies, such as Russia or Latin American countries. The model is centered around a "financial pool" created by the government, especially through revisions to development plans. The economic rent created thereby is transferred to pro-AKP companies via public tenders, and some of the profits of these companies are appropriated and channeled to a financial pool. These companies thrive on the vast loans extended by the banking and credit system, which in turn is financed by the international hot money flowing into the stock exchanges. The houses, offices and commercial centers planned by these companies provide a boost to the construction sector and to the durable consumer goods industry. Their products are sold to the citizens/consumers who take out long-term debt especially in the form of state-guaranteed mortgages.

Government officials administer this triangular plan of public works, public tender and credit, take their share of the surplus created thereby, and use it for various purposes. This is a "surplus accumulation model" seen in weak capitalist

economies which are incapable of generating surplus rapidly. The model is based not on surplus created through the workings of the capitalist market and then appropriated during the production process, but instead on sharing a pool of unearned income comprising the unearned income or economic rent appropriated by the state through its unilateral political powers.

Although this model is centered on income generated through informal and illicit means, many market and political actors can view it as legitimate and explicitly join the race in order to get a bigger share of the pool. Furthermore, this fraudulent scheme is not limited to politics, rent-seeking and pro-AKP companies. If it were, we could view it as a simple corruption or bribery scheme. The money in the pool is distributed to pro-government NGOs, foundations, and pro-AKP organizations that are defined as “associations serving the public interest” in the form of donations or project funds. Most of these organizations have a religious character, and the money is invested in schools, dormitories, social facilities and aid in the name of piety. As such the model also encompasses Sunnite solidarity and a claim to “serve the people.” However, a vast range of pro-AKP political activities is financed from this pool. The government mobilizes huge funds which opposition parties can only dream of, thus shadowing its rivals and winning votes. As such, money raised through corruption is distributed by the government through commercial, religious and political channels, among its supporters—in unequal shares, needless to say. This mechanism does not involve spending the taxes accumulated in the state budget, and is totally illicit; as such, no one seems to lose from it. Capitalists, politicians from the ruling party and even citizens benefit from and approve of it; then they vote for AKP to support the political actors running this system and grant it legitimacy.

Obviously, things are not so simple. This scheme is not limited to Islamic institutions and actors, international financial corporations, the national political system, the companies that win the tenders, and pro-government “civilian” NGOs and foundations. Crucially, these mechanisms also connect the market-state-religion triangle to electors. As a result, we are faced with not just an economic but also political system.

The pool economy is not limited to urban rent-seeking (creation of new urban plots, distribution of loans, and transfer of funds from pro-AKP companies to the pool). The state’s regulatory powers also generate economic rent through oil imports, energy tenders, informal exports and imports (think of the bribe money distributed by Reza Zarrab, for example), and these sums are transferred to the pool, too. Hence, three levels

overlap with each other: On the political level, the state’s sovereignty is deployed to bring state mechanisms under the control of the government. On the commercial level, the economic rent created is transferred to companies which are rendered pro-AKP and controlled closely. The surplus appropriated is then used to finance political activities which deliver services and support to “pro-AKP citizens,” with an Islamic bias. As such, religious social assistance and solidarity networks become very much dependent on government policies and the pool economy.

The pool economy is both a model of surplus and economic rent creation, and a model of financing politics. The recent crisis in Turkey broke out when an internal conflict arose between the parties that operated this model. Some of the illicit transactions in the model were exposed, which helped us better understand the model.

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### Political outcomes of the pool economy model

The pool economy helps pro-AKP individuals get a share of the pie, and translates political support into vote through clientelism. As such, a sine qua non of the model is an efficient political organization or party.

This structure not only generates pro-AKP electors, but also builds a repressive authoritarian regime which suspends the rule of law and rights advocacy. Political fractions which strive to control the pool economy wage war against each other; and no holds are barred in this strife. As a result, state institutions comply with unlawful orders, the bureaucracy becomes dysfunctional, and the judiciary branch is subjected to repression and punitive appointments. Today, due to the purge in the police and other state institutions, many services have come to a halt.

### Sustainability of the pool economy

The sustainability of this model depends on a number of factors. The first is the absence of severe economic crisis. Although a crisis is always a possibility, it does not seem imminent. The po-

litical agent of the model, the AKP, should be free from crisis and must hold on to power.

The AKP is a party led by an authoritarian leader, or an elected despot. Frequently politicians are sacked from the party for disagreeing with the leader; the rapid circulation in senior positions leads to vacancies which are filled by pro-market experts. In such a model, the displacement of the leader usually spells doom for the party. The leader and his inner circle have the power and means to eliminate any internal opposition and maintain control. The party's authoritarian and despotic structure is what allows the leader to do so. The leader, who has managed to navigate the ship so far, now wants to become president of the state and continue to run both the party and the pool economy.

Another option for sustaining the model would be the replacement of the AKP by another actor such as the followers of Fethullah Gülen, or the CHP (Republican People's Party). These options appear implausible, since they are seemingly viewed as unreliable by the proponents of the pool economy.

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### Is democracy but a dream?

The current political crisis is triggered by a conflict between two different modes of Islam. One is the Gülen sect, which argues that Turkey should be led by an Islamic capitalism strongly integrated with North Atlantic capitalism. The other is the AKP, which claims that Turkey should act more autonomously, make allies in the Middle East and Asia Pacific, forge its own brand of Islamic capitalism, and an economic, political and cultural universe on the model of Muslim Brotherhood. Both sides have their companies, areas of investment, trade routes, as well as political, social and religious followers, which now seem to be pitted against each other. However, this conflict could easily turn into partial cooperation with time.

In contemporary Turkey, it is crucial how much support can be garnered for democratic reforms in the presence of the pool economy. Islamic reformists still strive to make Islamic piety more and more legitimate in public space. This Sunnite political line should not be expected to see itself as "one among many" and reach a

consensus with other political actors based on democratic principles.

On the other hand, it also seems certain that the future political requirements of the pool economy, namely a presidential system with a strong executive branch and narrower electoral districts which will favor the ruling party, will not receive enough support.

### The Kurdish movement and Gezi protesters

The Kurdish movement, which is the second key actor, enjoys bargaining power based on an armed revolt and also civilian political support. The movement oscillates between establishing an independent state versus autonomous self-government. The Kurdish movement has been very successful in mobilizing women and youth; however, it cannot yet extend its clout beyond the region to win the votes of Kurds living in other provinces of Turkey. Its main political demands are a new, non-ethnic definition of citizenship, recognition of cultural rights, and autonomy. As such, the Kurdish movement can neither oppose AKP head on, nor criticize the fact that the pool economy renders democracy impossible.

On the other hand, the civilian political actors who created the Gezi movement and who are mostly pushed outside of mainstream politics can get results occasionally. In fact, they stopped plans to construct a shopping mall on Gezi Park and thus showed that the pool economy can in fact be challenged.

Civic organizations, which assume public services ignored by the state are based mainly on voluntary labor and sometimes get funds from local and international sources, constitute a horizontal, plural, small and heterogeneous political universe. These groups advocate for environmentalist, feminist, LGBT causes, monitor human rights, and organize democratic protest. They are diverse political actors, effective in generating intellectual and cultural information and strategies. They won't or can't join mainstream political institutions. They can't transform the CHP, and have a distant relationship with the Kurdish movement. Their political demands include democratization of political parties and the electoral system, transparency and accountability in the financing of politics, and a constitution that upholds freedom.

In the coming days, the future of the pool economy will depend on whether these actors have the will and power to change the model. As of yet, there is little reason to expect a new alliance of political actors which can uproot the pool economy model and implement democratic reforms.

## GENDER AND MACROECONOMY

# Purple Economy: A Future vision of a new economic order beyond the green <sup>1</sup>

İpek İlkkaracan

The green economy was suggested as a future vision of a new economic order in response to the environmental crisis. Recently, in the context of the global economic crisis, the vision has been extended also to entail solutions to the problem of rising unemployment through green jobs. This short paper aims to introduce an alternative future vision for a new economic order complementing the green economy and addressing the multiple systemic challenges: A “purple economy” where the color purple is used due to its symbolic significance in the feminist movement in many countries around the world.

As global capitalism matures into the 21st century, its potential as a sustainable economic system of production and reproduction is being increasingly challenged by a multitude of crises: namely, the deepening economic crisis and rising global unemployment, the long-standing environmental crisis coupled up with an alarming food crisis, and what some feminist scholars have called the emerging crisis of care.<sup>2</sup>

## The crisis of care

The crisis of care refers to a transformation whereby society is becoming one that is less able and willing to provide caring labor, an indispensable component of human well-being. Caring labor entails production of all necessary goods and services for care of children, the elderly, the disabled, the sick, as well as healthy adults including oneself. The decreasing ability and willingness of society for caring labor is instigated through a number of mechanisms that are an organic outgrowth of the current economic system. Globalized market competition, threat of increasing unemployment and decreasing real wages for the less-skilled, all combine to increase labor market demands and

impose strict limits on availability of caring time and energy. Moreover, environmental degradation creates increasingly tough material conditions for livelihoods in rural subsistence communities where care work entails a substantial amount of unpaid productive work dependent on natural resources such as land and water as inputs. To the extent that caring labor continues to be provided, this takes place under conditions of deepening gender inequalities intertwined with deepening inequalities among women, children and families due to class, racial, ethnic and national origin. International migration of caring labor, for instance, is one of the perverse outcomes of the care crisis that reproduces these inequalities on multiple, intertwined levels. For women of higher socio-economic status in the North (and also in the South), their engagement in the labor market has been made possible to a large extent by access to low cost caring labor of migrant women of lower socioeconomic status from rural areas or from the South. International care migration provides a low cost solution to the crisis of care in the North at the cost of generating another crisis of care in the South for families left behind.<sup>3</sup>

An economic system that reproduces itself at



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the expense of deepening multiple inequalities is not sustainable. Hence the crisis of care poses a systemic challenge to capitalism. Himmelweit (2007) questions if the current state of affairs is shifting towards a society less able and willing to fulfill caring norms:

This is an urgent question of political will and power. Without intervention, people may be less willing and able to fulfill caring norms, which may thereby be eroded. Those who assume caring responsibilities despite such pressures will pay a higher price for doing so and may have less influence on policy than those conforming more to less caring dominant norms. Not to adopt a generous strategy for caring now will shift power away from those who continue to care, erode caring norms, and make it more difficult to adopt a more caring strategy in the future. Without such a strategy, standards and availability of care will fall, and with a high cost to society as a whole, and in particular to those who continue to care.<sup>4</sup>

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### The purple economy

The Purple Economy refers to an economic order which is organized around sustainability of caring labor through a redistributive internalization of the costs of care into the workings of the system just as the green economy is organized around sustainability of provisioning by nature through internalization of environmental costs into production and consumption patterns. The green economy acknowledges that we depend on earth's natural resources, and therefore we must create an economic system that respects the integrity of ecosystems. The Purple Economy acknowledges that we depend on caring labor as an indispensable component of human well-being, and hence we must create an economic system that accounts for the value of care work and enables its provisioning in a sustainable manner, without reverting to mechanisms that reproduce inequalities by gender, class, and origin.

In putting forth my vision for a Purple Economy, I draw together the insights gained from and the claims made by feminist economists about the care economy for the past few decades.<sup>5</sup> By inno-

vating such an expression, I also hope to provide a catchy phrase to communicate the feminist vision of an egalitarian economic order by resonating the popular vision of the Green Economy.<sup>6</sup>

The call for a purple economic order is a response to the so-called crisis of care, which originates from the unequal allocation of unpaid caring labor amongst men and women; and amongst women by class and origin, and the consequences thereof for their participation in paid work and access to income. This has been the major theme in research and activism under second wave of feminism in the past half century.

The imposition of domestic work and child care as the primary roles for women is the material basis of gender inequalities not just because it is unpaid work. In addition, as given time is a limited resource, it determines the extent to and the ways in which women can participate in paid work and earn income, pursue educational opportunities, enjoy time for leisure and self-development, participate in public pursuits such as politics and activism, and claim equal standing with men. Numerous studies from different countries show that as women increasingly engage in the labor market to become income earners, they continue to be primarily responsible for unpaid caring labor. Hence access to income earning comes at the cost of longer working hours—paid and unpaid combined—and growing tensions as women attempt to reconcile their new roles as paid workers with their traditional roles as carers.

### The care economies in the North and South

In the best case scenarios, represented by the EU and other Northern economies with relatively developed social welfare states, socialization of care services (such as universal access to child care), access to paid care leave and relatively better labor market conditions have instigated somewhat more egalitarian outcomes. Yet, even in these economies, while gender employment gaps narrowed to a large extent, occupational and industrial gender segregation, gender wage gaps, vertical gender segregation, inequalities in political representation, decision-making and time-use continue to persist, reflecting women's unequal share of the care burden. Needless to say, all these hierarchies play themselves out beyond gender, as multiple inequalities also marked by class and origin. As the recent global economic crisis has shown, a negative and unstable macroeconomic environment is quick to pose threats to the social welfare state in a context of fiscal austerity policies as per conventional macroeconomic thinking.

On the other end of the spectrum, in the least





developed economies of the South, markets have exploited natural resources and low cost labor, but growth has deformed rather than transformed subsistence economies. Millions of women remain as unpaid rural agricultural workers in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and their unpaid caring labor entails longer hours and harder conditions, which is made worse by the environmental crisis.

In many other developing economies of the South, where capitalist growth was unable to generate enough demand to absorb women into paid employment, the norm of a single male breadwinner with full-time female homemaker norm has become institutionalized, providing a fertile ground for social conservatism. Turkey, which has one of the lowest female employment rates globally, is a case in point. Beyond the huge gender employment gap, there are also substantial gaps amongst women by education level and by marital status even when controlling for education level. For instance, while the labor force participation rate for prime working age of never-married women with 8-years of primary schooling is 48%, for their married counterparts the participation rate falls to 19%. Similarly for high school graduate women, the participation rate falls from as high as 63% for never-married women to 29% for married women. University graduates have the smallest gap by marital status: 82% vs. 73%. Male participation for primary working age men is around 90% independent of education level or marital status.

How to explain these gross inequalities amongst different groups of women in Turkey?

University graduate women earn higher wages and belong to higher income households which enable their access to market substitutes for own caring labor time (hired domestic help, private day care centers). Moreover, they are more likely to have formal jobs, which enable their access to legal rights care leave, provide them with the added motivation of social security coverage and generally better working environments. Yet university graduates make up as little as about 10% of the total female adult population in Turkey. The majority of adult married women have high school (24%) or lower education (65%), which provides them with employment situations hardly conducive to reconciling work and family.

Hence the dominant profile of women's labor market engagement is one where women participate at relatively younger ages prior to marriage and childbirth and depart thereafter to return only under conditions of household financial needs.<sup>7</sup> Faced with low wages, long working hours, high rates of informal employment, and the lack of

*Women are protesting in front of renowned apparel retailer Ermenegildo Zegna supplied by ISMACO company. ISMACO refuses to recognize Deri-iş trade union and continues to violate workers' rights.*

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public provisioning of care services, labor market engagement is a hardly empowering process for women. Rather it is an attempt by most low skill households to keep themselves above the poverty line at the expense of care deficits in the household.<sup>8</sup> It is in this context that a growingly conservative political discourse on gender issues has found overwhelming support from the female electorate whose dominant profile is urban full-time homemaker with less than high school education. Policies supporting and celebrating women's full-time homemaking role (such as payment of cash transfers to women taking care of elderly or disabled family members; or calls by the Prime Minister for three children; and similar propositions by CHP to pay family insurance to women) were appealing to most women.<sup>9</sup>

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### Redistributing the burden of care: Four pillars

What is needed is a new economic order which eliminates the growing imbalances of the ability to care within and across societies, through an egalitarian redistribution of the care burden between the private and the public spheres, as well as between women and men. The purple economy aims to extend the vision for a new sustainable economy beyond that of the green economy. Just as the green economy calls for a reordering of priorities placing nurturing of nature at the center, the Purple Economy calls for a reordering of priorities placing also nurturing of human beings at the center. The green economy needs a re-organization and regulation of production and consumption in harmony with the pace of renewal of natural resources; the Purple Economy needs a re-organization and regulation of production and consumption in harmony also with an equitable and sustainable system of reproduction of human beings.

Hence, the starting point would be one where economic and social policies recognize, account for and redistribute the care burden through systemic internalization of its costs via a public social care infrastructure. This would be based on an economic philosophy guiding planning that first of all acknowledges access to care as a basic human right and is therefore a state obligation (just as,

for instance, access to schooling and basic health services). Moreover, it recognizes that an effective public social care infrastructure is an indispensable precondition for enabling equal access to decent work for women and men.

As such a purple economy would stand on four pillars:

1. Universal public provisioning of social care services for children, the elderly, the disabled and the sick;
2. Labor market regulation for gender egalitarian work-life balance;
3. Policies to address special needs of rural communities where unpaid care work (predominantly of women) entails a larger array of productive activities dependent on natural resources;
4. Regulation of macroeconomic environment for nature and nurture as the core objectives of macroeconomic policy.

The first three pillars constitute elements of an encompassing public social care infrastructure; while the fourth one refers to a macroeconomic context that enables its effective functioning.

Public social care infrastructure would enable the sustainability of reproduction in an egalitarian manner. Public provisioning of care services necessitates investment in social care sectors. Obviously financing would be a challenge particularly for developing economies. This could be done through reallocation (and where necessary expansion) of government spending, as well as through providing incentives for private investment in the care economy. Global pacts for reallocation of military spending to a purple care fund, as well as purple taxation and purple care finance schemes would need to be mobilized. Investments in labor-intensive social care sectors also have the potential of alleviating the effects of the economic crisis through generation of 'purple' jobs.<sup>10</sup>

Regulation of the labor market for gender egalitarian work-life balance, would be based on four sub-components:

- legal rights to paid and unpaid care leave for child care as well as other dependent care for both men and women supported by appropriate purple insurance systems;
- regulation of labor market working hours within decent job standards;
- right to flexible work arrangements to address the household care needs of employed adults that vary over the life cycle; and
- regulation of labor market to eliminate discriminatory practices; most importantly, equal pay for work of equal value.

The combined aim of these labor market regulatory policies would be a transformation of household structure from single male breadwinner,

full-time female homemaker model or a one-and-a-half worker model, towards dual-earner, dual-caretaker household model. This would require that both men and women have equal incentives and opportunities to reduce labor market hours over the life cycle depending on caring responsibilities. Hence, over the life-cycle as the needs arise, families may have to switch back-and-forth to a ¾ x 2 earner model.

The third pillar pertains to special needs of rural communities. A majority of the world population primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia live in rural subsistence economies based on small-scale farming, where women for most part have the status of unpaid family workers. The conditions that they face in terms of performing caring labor are vastly different from urban populations in middle- or high-income economies. Building an efficient care infrastructure in these communities needs more than public provisioning of care services (and labor market regulation for the most part is tangentially relevant). The care infrastructure in these communities would need to be supported by public and private green investments in agriculture and rural infrastructure, green technology transfer programs that build on women's local knowledge of ecosystems, targeted agricultural subsidies for women, employment programs targeting landless women in green sectors such as organic farming as well as employment guarantee programs targeting women in public works.<sup>11</sup>

Regulation of the macroeconomic environment for nature and nurture is a necessary pillar of a purple economy for the measures above to achieve their intended objectives. This means that conventional macroeconomic policy thinking would need to undergo a huge transformation to first of all let go of its obsession with GDP growth and efficiency as the exclusive goals. Rather, growth and efficiency would be acknowledged as possible tools amongst others of macroeconomic policy in reaching its ultimate objectives of nature and nurture, but by no means are they indispensable tools. Employment generation based on decent jobs would need to become a core objective, not only for addressing global unemployment but also in acknowledgement of the fact that decent jobs are needed also for millions of women around the world who are excluded from the labor market.

## Conclusion

The effort in the past two decades to analyze and to account for unpaid work and its consequences for women's participation in paid work has not been sufficiently translated into practical action and policies. It is possible to assert a similar claim for green economy proposals. Obviously the conven-

tional economic paradigm that dominates common wisdom is a huge obstacle. What is needed is a paradigmatic shift prioritizing of nature, people and sustainability over growth and efficiency; acknowledging that markets are not self-regulatory and promoting a regulatory social state with 'embedded autonomy.' The Purple Economy – complementing the Green Economy—spells out the components of a feminist vision for a new economic order hope to facilitate such a paradigmatic shift.

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- 1 This article is an adapted version of my 2013 article published in Röhr, U. and C. van Heemstra (ed). 2013. *Sustainable Economy and Green Growth: Who Cares?*, Berlin: LIFE e.V./German Federal Ministry for the Environment; pp. 32-37. The entire publication is accessible at [http://genanet.hostingkunde.de/fileadmin/downloads/Green\\_Economy/workshop\\_care-eco\\_web.pdf](http://genanet.hostingkunde.de/fileadmin/downloads/Green_Economy/workshop_care-eco_web.pdf).
  - 2 For a detailed discussion of the multiple crises see: Ilkcaracan, I. 2011. "The Crisis of Care: Another Limit to Sustainable Growth in Market Economies", in A. Tonak (ed.), *IMF and the World Bank: A Critical Debate*, İstanbul: Bilgi University.
  - 3 Beneria, Lourdes. 2008. "The crisis of care, international migration, and public policy," *Feminist Economics*, 14 (3): 1-21.
  - 4 Himmelweit, Susan. 2007. "The Prospects for Caring: Economic Theory and Policy Analysis," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 31 ( 4): 581-599, 2007.
  - 5 This invaluable work on unpaid labor and the care economy by feminist economists include (but definitely is not limited to) work by Diane Elson, Gita Sen, Günseli Berik, Lourdes Beneria, Maria Floro, Nancy Folbre, Nilüfer Çağatay, Radheka Balakrishnan, Rania Antonopoloulos, and Susan Himmelweit.
  - 6 The terminology "Green Economy" is used in this paper in a general sense synonymously with sustainable economy or ecological economy and not a particular, limiting definition that depends on conventional market concepts such as the use of price mechanisms as the only policy tool and green growth as a presumed goal.
  - 7 To the extent that women with low skill labor (majority of female population) are absorbed into paid employment, this was more through a push effect instigated by falling real male wages and rising male unemployment under periodic economic crises.
  - 8 See Emel Memiş in this volume who presents the results of a first time study on Turkey which points out that time-poverty and care deficits constitute an inevitable outcome of paid employment for low-skilled women, yet rarely taken into consideration in evaluating the welfare impact of employment policies.
  - 9 Ilkcaracan, I. 2012. "Why so few Women in the Labor Market in Turkey: A Multi-dimensional Analysis", *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 18 (1), 2012, pp. 1-36.
  - 10 The case of South Korea following the 1997 Asian crisis maybe the most informative. The South Korean government, as a policy response to the economic crisis, promoted subsidies to investment in the social care sector as 'the new growth engine' of the economy. This social investment strategy was designed to address a multitude of social and economic problems: the demographic crisis (an extension of the crisis of care), employment creation against the economic crisis and also creating equal opportunities for women's integration into the labour market. For a detailed discussion, see Ilkcaracan, I. (2012), "Work-Family Balance and Public Policy: A Cross-country Perspective", *Development*, 55 (3): 325-332.
  - 11 See Indira Hirway (2008), "Impact of Employment Guarantee Programmes on Gender Equality and Pro-Poor Economic Development", *Levy Economics Institute of Bard College*, on the implementation of employment guarantee programs for rural women in India.

## GENDER AND MACROECONOMY

# Global financial crisis did not leave the labor market untouched

Özge İzdeş

As we come to the end of speculative growth model based on the surplus of foreign currency and low interest levels, Turkey has become one of the most precarious economies. Instead of the “high growth” myth, the topic of conversation is now that foreign debt is growing at a rate faster than the national income and that financing depends on short term foreign investment. As international credit firms describe Turkey as risky, and growth expectations are lowered, we feel that the crisis is at the door.<sup>1</sup>



Özge İzdeş

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The distribution of economic growth benefits depends on dynamics of sharing. However, in crises, which are the other side of the coin, we witness the gravest consequences in employment, wages and poverty numbers. The speculative growth model, which is incapable of creating employment, brought together high growth numbers with double digit levels of unemployment. As of January 2014, non-agricultural unemployment based on the narrowest definition was 12.3 percent. This allows us to understand how shaken the employed, who feel insecurity and the risk of unemployment at every moment, are with the possibility of a crisis. As the social cost of economic fluctuations take on the human faces of those we know, and have an identity, it becomes a lot more visible.

## Women’s labor in periods of stagnation and crisis

As gender roles continue to remain one of the basic determinants of participation in economic

life, the gendered structure of market relations and markets themselves results in an unequal distribution of the burdens of these changes. A gender sensitive perspective understands the processes of production and reproduction as inseparable parts of a whole, and sees work as the total of paid and unpaid work. Economically visible paid work in the market might be regulated by a formal or informal contract in the private or public sector. Unpaid work includes subsistence production, volunteer work, unpaid care work for family or household members, and other activities undertaken to sustain the cycle of house work and home life. Unpaid reproductive work that is expected from women, and accepted as normal, determines women’s participation in other types of work, their conditions, and options. For women who are stuck between the laws of production and reproduction, gendered division of labor has burning consequences of material and immaterial inequality. Women have to make the ‘choices’ under these constraints.

In episodes of stagnation and crisis, women’s labor cannot be divided up between paid and unpaid labor. Especially in countries like Turkey, where one cannot talk of welfare state policies to limit the impact of dire straits or financial policies that counteract economic flows, maintaining the level of wealth in the face of decreases in household income results in increased pressure on women to both undertake paid work and increase unpaid care work within the household.

As family members become unemployed, wage cuts occur, income becomes irregular, the welfare state spending decreases in crises the income and welfare level of the household decreases. The decrease in household income brings about the search of new possibilities of income, and a decrease in expenditures. Economic diffi-

## Labor stat by gender 2000-2013

Years	Growth (GNP-fixed) %	Unemployment Total	Unemployment (Broad def.) (Male) %	Unemployment (Male) %	Unemployment (Broad Def.) (Female)	Unemployment (Female) %	Percentage of the Discouraged among the Unemployed (Male)	Percentage of the Discouraged among the Unemployed (Female)	Labor Force Participation Rate (Male) %	Labor Force Participation Rate (Female) %
2000	6,8	8.8	9,06	7,8	17,69	13	15,22	30,56	70,9	17,2
2001	-5,7	11.6	11,19	10,3	19,36	16,6	8,91	16,87	70,6	17,4
2002	6,2	14.2	13,74	13	21,18	18,7	6,10	14,61	69,8	19,1
2003	5,3	13.8	13,21	12,6	20,30	18,3	5,53	12,15	68,9	18,5
2004	9,4	13.6	14,95	12,5	27,05	17,9	18,93	41,19	69,1	17,7
2005	8,4	12.8	14,71	11,6	29,70	17	23,89	51,54	70	18,7
2006	6,9	12.2	14,69	11	30,53	16,4	28,49	55,34	69,3	19,5
2007	4,7	12	14,03	10,8	28,42	16,1	26,06	51,62	69,3	19,8
2008	0,7	12.8	15,06	11,6	29,89	16,6	25,89	53,20	69,5	20,8
2009	-4,8	16.6	18,76	15,3	33,29	20,4	21,69	48,74	69,9	22,3
2010	9,2	14.2	16,16	12,6	31,10	18,7	25,05	49,13	70,4	23,7
2011	8,8	11.9	13,68	10,2	28,15	16,5	28,56	49,41	71	24,8
2012	2,2	11.1	13,09	9,4	26,43	15,5	30,84	48,8	71	26,1
2013	4	11.5	13,04	9,2	27,94	16,4	29,84	49,4	71,6	28

culties disrupt the norm of 'man as the breadwinner' and women's income becomes critical for the household welfare. Besides households with low incomes are particularly dependent on women's unpaid labor for the consumption of services or products that they cannot purchase from the market. For women who experience a dual pressure on their time, the opportunity cost of paid labor is unpaid activities that increase household welfare and enable to save via reduction of expenses. In this sense, for women who feel pressure under the poverty of time, the decision to undertake paid labor is dependent on the comparison between the welfare to be gained from paid labor with the welfare from unpaid labor that will be sacrificed.<sup>2</sup>

However, especially in periods of crisis, even this unpleasant choice becomes a luxury. Efforts of the employers to decrease labor cost leads to the unraveling of full-time, secure, formal jobs, and their transformation into informal, low-paid jobs. This process is paralleled by an increase in the demand for women's labor. In periods of crises, women work in jobs that men are less inclined to accept. This shows that women who are pushed in to the market under economic hardship do so based on a desire to survive rather than a rational choice. In this sense, the impact of crisis on women's paid labor can only be understood by moving beyond the distinction of paid/unpaid labor, and by understanding the interaction of

the two kinds of labor, their power to determine one another, and the intertwined nature of the dynamics of push and pull.

In terms of demand, periods of crisis have multiple tendencies. The demand for women's labor is shaped based on a) sectoral shifts, b)

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In periods of crises, women work in jobs that men are less inclined to accept. This shows that women who are pushed to the market under economic hardship do so based on a desire to survive rather than a rational choice.

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gendered attitudes of employers/the entrenchment of gender norms and c) strategies of cost reduction. A crisis effects certain sectors first and/or disproportionately results in sectoral shifts in the demand for labor. As man and women are not equally represented in sectors and occupations, the separation of women's jobs and men's jobs means that the sectoral shifts in a crisis impacts both genders differently. A second widely encountered tendency is the perspective that at times rationalizes existing inequalities and further entrenches them, and at others is openly discriminatory. This perspective results in women who are awkwardly included into the labor market to be the first ones discarded in lay-offs. Those

who explain why women get laid off first through the perspective of human capital rely on the inequalities of the labor market such as the lower skill levels of women, their lower levels of education, lack of tenure, non-unionization, and their fragile employment positions thereby serving a vicious cycle. On the other hand, even when they are of equal qualification and characteristics, as “men are the breadwinners” women’s income is more easily interpreted as additional income, and their unemployment is seen as preferable to that of men. Another possibility is the perception of women as an asset during periods of crisis, when employers want to decrease the cost of labor. In economic dire straits, women workers are preferred over men. As employment conditions decline, women become the motor force of this process due to their non-organized participation and low bargaining power, women become the motor force of this process.

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Informalization, the working poor, the regression in development plans that came with structural unemployment, and the proliferation of inhumane life conditions focused policy debates on the compensation of the social costs of the crisis more than ever.

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### The impact of the 2008-2009 global financial crisis on employment

The global crisis, which began in the USA in 2008 as a financial crisis, then spread to the EU countries and transformed into a debt crisis, left behind a long period of stagnation and a perception of continuity. Unemployment, which could not be resolved prior to the pre-crisis period despite high levels of growth has become the most acute problem as there has been 28.5 million loss in employment and 39 million redundancies since 2007. We observe that, both sectoral shifts that came with the crisis, and the increase in efficiency expected from those who kept their jobs has contributed to the problem of unemployment and its changing structure. The increasing share of discouraged workers and long-term unemployment resulted with a permanent and structural unemployment problem. (ILO, 2013).

With the global crisis, the positive developments in gender equality in employment achieved between 2002 and 2007 were reversed, and the gap between the two genders began to widen (ILO, 2011 and 2013). In developed countries, where trade-based sectors were dominated by male employees, they were the first to be affected by the crisis. In developing countries, the concentration of women in export sectors

resulted in a reverse effect. With increased unemployment, conditions of employment were distorted. As secure jobs disintegrated, men lost their positions and women were pushed to the labor market to work under conditions that were uncertain and precarious in all respects. In the world at large, some women lost their pre-crisis jobs and fell out of the labor markets, whereas some became integrated into the labor market as supplementary workers who are ready to work under all conditions to compensate for the loss in household income. Informalization, the working poor, the regression in development plans that came with structural unemployment, and the proliferation of inhumane life conditions focused policy debates on the compensation of the social costs of the crisis more than ever. The structuralization of unemployment and the proliferation of insecure flexible employment necessitates the implementation of active employment policies, and the creation of humane, secure jobs. Almost all reports published in the aftermath of the crisis recommend such active employment policies, demand-creating policies and especially the wider application of state generation of jobs in crisis periods (WB, 2011; ILO, 2013).

### The effect of the crisis on Turkey’s labor market

Turkey is financially and as trading partners dependent on the USA as the center of the crisis and the EU both financially and in terms of trade. Thus, the impact of trade was felt in the decrease of capital flows and trade income. As distinct from other consecutive crisis that followed the financial liberalization (1989), the exportation of the 2008 crisis which was exported to Turkey in 2009 demonstrated the extent to which Turkey has become open to external shocks and dependent on foreign markets. With the crisis, the national income decreased by -14.3 percent, and the 2009 national income became -4.7 percent (Akyüz, 2010, p. 24).

The absolute change in the official unemployment level in the 2007-2009 period of contraction is very high for both men and women (4.5 percent). Changes in the level of official unemployment for men increased by 42 percent, whereas women’s unemployment increased by 27 percent, demonstrating that the crisis resulted in a more striking change with regards to men’s unemployment. The striking increase in male unemployment undoubtedly results from the very high pre-crisis levels of women’s unemployment. The number of women employed during the crisis is around 10 percent, and the level of women that entered the labor force during this time increased

by 12.6 percent. Two thirds of this increase has come at the cost of male employment. In other words, women have been employed in the place of men in the labor market. (İzdes, 2013).

The shrinking of export in 2008-2009 resulted in a contraction of 3.4 percent in national income, and mostly impacted the construction, wholesale and retail trade and manufacturing sectors most (Uygur, 2010). With the crisis, employment in Turkey decreased by 12 percent in the first quarter of 2008, and by 23 percent in the first quarter of 2009. The sectoral shifts took place from industry to services and the agricultural sectors where informal and unpaid family labor is intensively services and the agricultural sector. When we look at which sector employees the crisis impacted first, we see that in the 2007-2009 period men who worked in manufacturing, trade and construction sectors were effected more, whereas women's employment was impacted negatively in sectors such as manufacturing, wholesale and retail sale, and banking were women laborers are concentrated. Additionally, the contraction in mining and construction sectors impacted women as well (Yücel, 2012). In the finance sector, which comprises almost half of women's employment, women were the first ones to be laid off.

The decrease of household income and purchasing power resulted in the decrease of basic spending such as education and health, and moreover food spending (WB, 2011, p.45). The burden of this decreased spending was placed on the shoulders of women, who tried to make their impact unfelt. Women joined the labor market as added workers in an attempt to sustain a living. Whereas the ratio of supplementary workers is 11 percent of all employed, the proportion of women is much higher than that of men. Out of all women whose possibility of joining the labor force increased when their husbands got laid off, 74.5 percent of women who became added workers were housewives (İlkkaracan, 2012). The working conditions of women who join the market to compensate for the decrease in household income is also very important. Unfortunately, a significant proportion of the jobs created are informal and insecure. Therefore, the possibility of any good to come out of the 2009 crisis is very low. Moreover, as the crisis increases the invisible labor of the women more than that of men, that women start to work does not solve the gendered division of labor. On the contrary, it results in a structure that places a double burden on women (Memiş and Kaya Bahçe; 2011). It is clear that women's time is not infinitely flexible and that the currently produced survival reflexes are not sustainable. As we are once again talking about the

crisis, we need policies that calculate not only the visible costs of crises but also the "invisible" ones, as they do not leave some of us untouched.

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1 International agencies downgraded Turkey's credit rating on account of problems in public financing, increased pressure in foreign financing, increased risk of a sudden stop of foreign investment flows and political turmoil: Moody's: Baa3-, Standard and Poors: BB-. Moreover, the IMF and the WB downgraded their expectation of growth rates for Turkey for 2014 to 2.3 percent and 2.4 percent respectively.

2 Ertürk and Çağatay (95) have related the double pressure on women's labor with consequences for investment and household savings, emphasizing the macro variants of this decision and its impact on dynamics of overcoming the crisis, thereby demonstrating the macro consequences of the two kinds of work.

## GENDER AND MACROECONOMY

# Measuring poverty: An old issue, a new approach and some conclusions<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Masterson, Emel Memiş, Ajit Zacharias

In the last thirty years, inequality in income distribution has increased in all countries, especially in developed nations. Growing income inequality and poverty, worsened by the Great Recession<sup>2</sup>, became the central issue in recent discussions. Survey results from the 2014 World Economic Forum indicated that income inequality is the biggest threat to global economy.

As in other countries, income inequality and poverty in Turkey are closely related to long-standing structural problems. Foremost among these<sup>3</sup> are rates of employment that cannot keep up with the rates of economic growth, high levels of unemployment,<sup>4</sup> and widespread unpaid and informal work. The belief that fast economic growth can solve all these problems has led to a policy agenda of macroeconomics targeting growth rates. However, the relevant literature notes that the reduction of inequality and poverty is necessary to increase efficiency in the market economy, to achieve macroeconomic stability and for economic growth. Beyond economic necessity, the resolution of these problems is indispensable for founding a fair and equal society.

Hence, governments use policy tools such as differentiated taxes to redistribute income, social aid and support programs, labor market policies and support for educational expenses. These policies rely on conditionality and target group approaches rather than a universal approach. Usually in determining the target population and policy evaluations these stan-

dard measures of inequality and poverty are used. The method used in measurement and its underlying assumptions become matter of concern not just for academic purposes but they are the tools that directly affect people's lives. The group most impacted by the possible negative consequences of the assumptions are the poor households on the lower rungs of the income distribution.

The standard poverty measuring method used by the Turkish Statistics Institute implicitly assumes that economic life and work life are limited to the market.<sup>5</sup> The most widely used absolute poverty measure<sup>6</sup> is a comparison of the market income of households (or their consumption spending) compared with the income/consumption amount that represent a minimum standard of living. Households are ranked with respect to the minimum living standard and those that fall below the minimum level are defined as poor. This calculation assumes that all the needs required for a minimum level of wellbeing can be acquired through the market.<sup>7</sup> However, certain indispensable needs such as childcare and household care take place in the reproductive sphere that falls outside the bounds of the market. In determining households' wellbeing, considering these needs is crucial. By ignoring the household production needs, it is assumed that the resources necessary to meet these needs are always present. Such an assumption is highly problematic in the context of content and comprehensiveness of the measure.<sup>8</sup> A holistic measure of wellbeing can only be possible by taking into account the household production that takes place outside of the market. Towards this aim, UNDP Turkey and the Levy Institute have developed the Levy Institute Measure of Time and Consumption Poverty (LIMTCP) for Turkey.<sup>9</sup>

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**Emel Memiş** is a professor of economics at Ankara University specializing in macroeconomics, gender and economic development. She is a member of the University's Women's Studies Center and an instructor in the Gender Studies program. Memiş joined the Levy Institute in 2007, and has recently taken part in a research project on unpaid work, poverty, and time poverty for the case of Turkey.

### What does the new approach contribute?

The LIMTIP measure of poverty moves poverty beyond standard measures and limits of income/consumption factors. Household service needs are taken into account along with income/consumption needs. It measures whether the resources can meet household care needs<sup>10</sup> as well.

The measure determines the number of households with a time deficit, then evaluates whether the adults in this household have the income to be able to compensate for their time deficit through the market. Households with income sufficiently above the poverty level can meet their household production deficit through commodities and services they purchase from the market, whereas other households that are above the official poverty line might not be able to amend their time deficit due to a high level of household production deficit or an insufficiently high level of income. Officially, these households are not designated as poor; standard methods cannot reflect their poverty. The LIMTIP measure uncovers this hidden poverty and provides a multi-level evaluation framework targeting existing policy. It sheds light on problems of growth without employment, the increasing deficit of social care services in the Turkish economy, and the blind spots of existing policies that target higher participation in the labor market.

### Dimensions of hidden poverty

The LIMTIP<sup>11</sup> ratios examine time and income poverty. They demonstrate that almost half (45

percent) of the households that are not defined as poor in official data are in fact time poor. A third of the households in this group do not have the income level to compensate for their time deficit. According to the official statistics, 24 out of every hundred households in Turkey are under the poverty level, and this percentage increases to 35 when time deficit is taken into account (Graphic 1). The 11 percent difference corresponds to 1.8 million households and 7.6 million individuals. Whereas the number of poor individuals is 21.4 million according to official numbers, it increases to 29 million with the new measure. The official ratio of urban poverty increases from 17 percent to 26 percent with the addition of a million households. It is also noted that there are 800,000 hidden poor households in rural areas, bringing the official numbers from 39 to 51 percent.

When the minimum wealth measure is adjusted

Graphic 1: Official and LIMTIP Poverty Rates

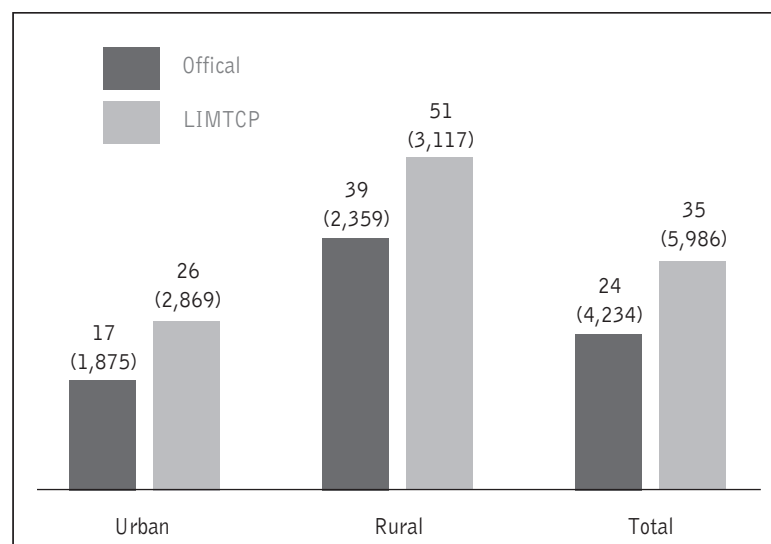


Table 1: Time impoverishment, according to gender and poverty level

			Total	Employed
Turkey	Not Poor	Men	21	29
		Women	12	48
	Poor	Men	34	42
		Women	32	68
Urban	Not Poor	Men	21	29
		Women	11	48
	Poor	Men	33	42
		Women	21	68
Rural	Not Poor	Men	19	24
		Women	18	42
	Poor	Men	29	34
		Women	44	67

ted to time deficit concerns, the number of poor increases to 41 percent overall. Sixty-five percent of households that are officially defined as poor and 37 percent of households that fall outside the

mes the official numbers. The difference between the average LIMTCP and official deficits indicate that the official measure grossly understates the unmet consumption needs of the poor population. Time deficit of individuals is most frequently caused by the long working hours they spend with their paid work in the labor market. This can also result from the long hours spent to fulfill household production and care needs, and that for the individuals who devote long working hours to both are faced with a double time constraint. In Turkey, of the ten million individuals who are time impoverished, a million are occupied solely with care work within the household. Almost all members of this group are women. Given the gendered and unequal division of labor in the labor market, this is not surprising. In rural parts of Turkey, 14 percent of women are time impoverished on account of household care work, yet still join the labor market as workers.

When the group employed in the labor market is included in the calculation, the segment where time poverty is highest is working women, at both urban and rural settings. Sixty-nine percent of working women are time impoverished, whereas this rate is 34 percent for working men. When this group is categorized according to the time they labor in the market, the inequality of the gendered division of labor becomes even more manifest. Seventy percent of women who work full-time are time impoverished, whereas this rate is 37 percent for men. In the group that works 36-50 hours per week, women are six times as time poor as men. Another interesting finding is that time impoverishment is widespread not only for full-time but also for part-time workers in Turkey. For instance, among those who work 35 hours or less, four percent of men and 37 percent of women are time poor (Graphic 2). This difference could be expected given that average hours of household production by employed women stood at 31 hours per week, compared to seven hours by employed men.

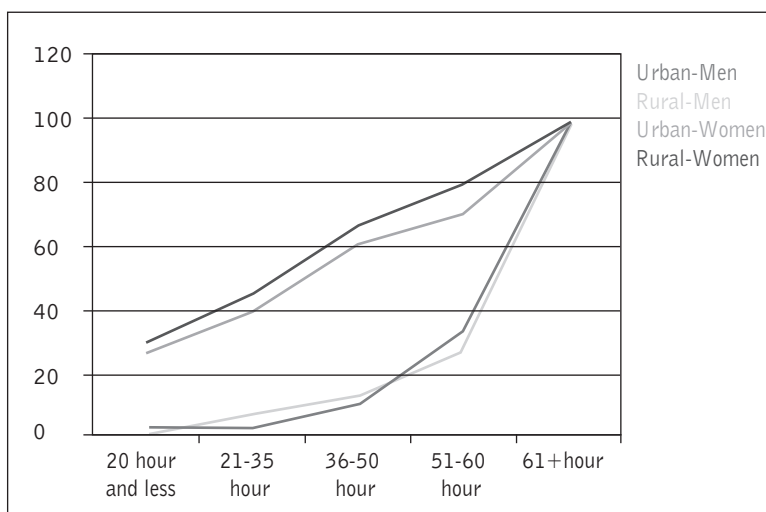
The depth of time deficit also provides important information regarding gender differences. For instance, if a working woman with a mid-level income wants to compensate for her time deficit through the market, she has to spend half of her income. This results points to not only the time dimension of gender inequality, but also the unequal income/income gap in the market.

Forty-five percent of the households that are not defined as poor in official data are time-poor. A third of the households in this group do not have the income level to compensate for their time deficit. According to the official statistics, 24 out of every 100 households in Turkey are under the poverty level, and this increases to 35 percent when the time deficit is taken into account.

poverty definition of the official measures are time impoverished. Hence, income poverty is positively correlated with time poverty. In both urban and rural settings, women who live in poor households are most affected by time poverty (Table 1).

Time deficit impacts not only the ratio, but also the depth of poverty. The LIMTCP shows that more than half of the officially poor households are time impoverished and that the consumption deficit of these households is approximately 2.5 ti-

Graphic 2: Time poverty levels – labor market participants



### Is it enough to increase employment opportunities?

According to the scenario based on the LIMTCP measuring method, it is possible to estimate how the poverty levels would change if all the able

adults in poor households were working.<sup>12</sup> Seventy-seven percent of adults that live in urban poor households and 84 percent of adults who are members of rural poor households work in income generating jobs in the market. Eighty-six percent of urban and 84 percent of rural new employment comprises women. This increase in women's employment results in particularly significant decreases in poverty, but these jobs leave workers time impoverished. The results provide proof that without steps to transform the existing gendered division of labor, and without solutions for the household division of labor and gendered occupational and sectoral divides in the labor market – and most fundamentally the long working hours and wage inequality—increased employment opportunities are not adequate.

### Some macroeconomic considerations

The poverty measure that takes time deficit into account shows that poverty levels in Turkey are much higher than the official rates. The data shows the necessity of increasing employment opportunities, ensuring better working conditions, providing and disseminating public social care services, and re-thinking the content and scope of social assistance programs. Policies which support women's employment must ameliorate the time deficit that arises from a gendered division of labor and discriminatory attitudes. Moreover, these policies must not be limited to urban settings. Flexible work arrangements such as part-time work proposed by the National Employment Strategy<sup>13</sup> cannot prevent women's time impoverishment. The data also provides important information concerning long working hours, low wages and insufficient social care services in the labor market,<sup>14</sup> and social assistance programs that are not connected to employment. It underlines once again the the issue of growing deficit in social care services.

Sixty-nine percent of working women are time impoverished, whereas this rate is 34 percent for working men. When this group is categorized according to the time they work in the market, the inequality of the gendered division of labor becomes even clearer. Seventy percent of women who work full-time are time impoverished, whereas this rate is 37 percent for men.

years of the 2000s, Turkey has the lowest employment rate amongst OECD countries with 48 percent (whereas the average is 66 percent). The participation of women in the laborforce is also very low in comparison to OECD countries (31 percent). This is considered an inexplicable mystery.

- 1 This article is based on data from research previously conducted by the authors. The full text of the research can be accessed at: <http://www.levyinstitute.org/publications/?docid=2071>.
- 2 The worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, which has started in the USA in 2007 and has impacted every country in the world. For detailed information on the impact of the Great Recession on Turkey see İzdeğ (this issue).
- 3 Despite high levels of economic growth in the first

- 4 Turkey is among the top 15 countries in the world in terms of the highest rates of unemployment.
- 5 Feminist economics that problematizes the exclusion of reproduction from the scope clearly demonstrates the limits of economics in this regard. For a study on poverty through this perspective, which evaluates it in all its conceptual and theoretical dimensions, see Çağatay (1998).
- 6 The Turkish Statistics Institute calculates not only absolute but also comparative poverty levels. This paper will focus on the former as official ratios used in international comparisons are absolute. For detailed information on comparative and absolute poverty levels see the TSI (2009).
- 7 For studies that propose the inclusion of household production in poverty analyses, see Antonopoulos (2008), Çağatay (1998).
- 8 This problem can be better explained through a simple example. Let's take two households with the same income. One is a single adult household with two children and the adult is employed in the market. The other is a two adult household where one of the adults is employed in the market. When wellbeing is considered as limited to income/consumption level, both households share the same ranking according to the minimum standard of living. The minimum necessary income level is equal to the income of the working adults. The two be equal according to the equivalence scales are used. However, it is not possible to claim that the two households with completely different household care needs attain the same living standard. The care needs of the household with two children is possibly a lot more, and has to be met by a single adult. This simply reflects how actual household needs could easily be misidentified, when the household production needs are not taken into account.
- 9 For detailed information on alternative new measuring method see Zacharias, Masterson and Memiş (2014) <http://www.levyinstitute.org/publications/?docid=2071>.
- 10 For detailed information see Zacharias, Masterson and Memiş (2014).
- 11 Survey data on time use is available only for the year 2006, which makes it possible to calculate LIMTCP levels for this year. The 2006 household budget data and time use data are matched using the statistical matching method.
- 12 For detailed information on simulation see Zacharias, Masterson, and Memiş (2014).
- 13 For a comprehensive evaluation of the National Employment Strategy please see Toksöz (2012).
- 14 For more detailed information, see İlkkaracan (this issue).

## ECOLOGY

## Season final in Turkey's "gold rush"

Arif Ali Cangı

In Turkey, the sector that creates the biggest environmental hazard is mining. The extraction of mineral ore leads to destruction of topographic features, and damage to forests and flora. Furthermore, cyanide and other chemicals used in separating minerals activates heavy metals which are normally found in innocuous form in nature, and causes long-lasting pollution of the soil, water and air.

**Arif Ali Cangı**

A graduate of İstanbul University, Faculty of Law, Cangı has been working as attorney-at-law in İzmir since 1993. He sat on the boards of the İzmir branch of the Modern Lawyers Association's (ÇHD) and the İzmir Bar Association for two terms. He was spokesperson for Movement for Solidarity amongst İzmir-Bergama, Eşme, Sivrihisar, Havran/Küçükdere (2003-2004), the Alliano Initiative (2004-2006), and the Ege Environment and Culture Platform (2006-2008). In 2009, he was presented as an İzmir mayoral candidate by the Together We Shall Achieve Platform. He was a co-spokesperson of the Greens and Left Party of the Future (YSGP) for a one-year term.

Gold mining, which started in Bergama-Ovacık in the early 1990s, is a serious ecological problem, and has triggered mass movements in protest. The Bergama-Ovacık Gold Mine was a turning point for Turkey's environmentalist movement. The process commenced in Bergama, and has spread to the Kozak Plateau, the Kazdağları mountains, İzmir's water basin Efemçukuru, Uşak Kışladağı, Artvin, Erzincan, Gümüşhane and other provinces. Currently, the Ovacık gold mine continues to make headlines in the context of the conflict between the government and the Gülen sect, and is a case worth analyzing in regard to the ecological movement in Turkey.

**Court decisions**

The lengthy legal struggle of the Bergama Movement would necessitate a separate article by itself. In order to avoid a long list of court decisions, the following summary is offered.

First, as a result of a lawsuit signed by 652 residents of Bergama in 1997, the Council of State cancelled the gold cyanidation permit<sup>1</sup> granted by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to the company Eurogold in Ovacık. The Council of State based its resolution on the Constitution's Article 17 regarding "the right to live" and Article 56 on "the right to live in a healthy environment." On the grounds that "human's right to live can only be exercised in a healthy and undisturbed environment, the protection of nature is indispensable for human life, the Environmental Impact Reports (ÇED) on the said activity pointed to risks for the environment and human health, and the materialization of these risks would have a negative impact on lives." The Council of State declared that "the gold cyanidation permit goes against public interest." In line with this resolution, İzmir Administrative Court cancelled the operation permit granted to Bergama-Ovacık Gold Mine.<sup>2</sup>

The court decision epitomized the Bergama movement. As a result of this decision based on the Constitution and applicable laws, the operation had to be stopped. However, that did not happen. Bergama became the focal point of discussions about the right to environment and the rule of law. Incredible methods were utilized in order to circumvent court decisions and to keep the Bergama-Ovacık Gold Mine running.

A scientific commission set up by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) issued a report to bypass the court decision. The new permit issued on the basis of this report was again overruled by the court, on the grounds that "this is tantamount to challenging the court's final decision, which in turn corresponds to a violation of the rule of law."<sup>3</sup> This court decision was also



Villagers from Bergama/İzmir protesting against gold mining in the region.

disregarded.

This time, the Council of Ministers issued a resolution which went against legislation and corresponded to a violation of these court decisions.<sup>4</sup> The Council of State overruled the resolution by the Council of Ministers.<sup>5</sup> Later on, European Court of Human Rights ruled that Article 6 / 1, the right to a fair trial, and Article 8, the right to respect for private and family life of Convention for the Protection of Human Rights were violated.<sup>6</sup> Despite these decisions, the operation was halted only temporarily. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry issued a new permit. Later, upon the request of the US ambassador<sup>7</sup> the zoning plans were revised and the mining company was granted a new license to operate. Although the revision to the zoning plan was overruled by the court,<sup>8</sup> an enterprise permit was issued despite the lack of a favorable zoning plan, based on post-2004 amendments to laws and regulations. The mining company continues to operate as if nothing happened, as if no court decision was issued.

To summarize, courts banned the operation of the Bergama-Ovacık gold mine numerous times since 1997, however, none of these decisions were implemented. The ECHR's resolution went unheeded. Companies such as Eurogold, Normandy, Newmont and more recently Koza continue to run their mines.

## Laws amended at companies' whim

In the neoliberal system, the utmost effort is expended to ensure the free circulation of capital, and to liberate economic activity from the fetters placed on it by the public via dere-

gulation. Globalizing companies get parliaments to pass laws which benefit them.

Multinational companies keen on making huge profits through gold mining did not fail to react to the social protest and court orders against Bergama-Ovacık Gold Mine. Not pleased with the legislation protecting the environment, they started a clamor arguing "these laws make it impossible to do mining in Turkey; foreign capital will flee." Upon their demand, the Mining Law and Law on the Amendment of Certain Laws (No. 5177) came into effect on June 5, 2004, that is, World Environment Day. In the preparatory phase, a Newmont executive, Gordon Nixon said "The Mining Law was penned in coordination with Newmont officials in Ankara."<sup>9</sup> Before the law came into effect, twenty businessmen including representatives of Eldorado Gold

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Courts have banned the operation of the Bergama-Ovacık gold mine numerous times since 1997. However, none of these decisions were ever implemented. The European Court of Human Rights resolution went unheeded. Companies such as Eurogold, Normandy, Newmont and more recently Koza continue to run their mines.

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visited Prime Minister Erdoğan and asked for his support. Erdoğan responded by saying "The Mining Law is being discussed at the Parliament. We have passed a law supporting foreign investment, and will resolve your problems."<sup>10</sup>

In line with these promises and reassurances, the new Mining Law was penned almost

directly by these companies and a total of eleven other laws were amended. The only objective of these legislative changes was to “deregulate mining. These revisions totally disregarded the protection of nature and jeopardized many social and legal gains in terms of environmental protection. Based on legislative changes, the Council of Ministers issued the Regulation on Mining Operation Permits, which relaxed the constraints even further. A new kind of law was crafted. This law upheld the plunder of nature, and disregarded nature. Lawsuits were filed with the Constitutional Court for the annulment of the law and with Council of State for the annulment of the Regulation. Four and a half years later, the Constitutional Court decided that the Article 7/1 of the Mining Law was unconstitutional.<sup>11</sup> The Constitutional Court also found the Article 10/3 of the Law on Environment unconstitutional. It states that “mine, oil and geothermal exploration activities are exempt from Environmental Impact Assessment reports” and cancelled it. The Constitutional Court decided that the annulment decision would come into effect a year later; however, the Council of

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Multinational companies started a clamor arguing “these laws make it impossible to do mining in Turkey; foreign capital will flee.” Upon their demand, the Mining Law and Law on the Amendment of Certain Laws (No. 5177) came into effect on June 5, 2004, that is, World Environment Day.

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State stopped the execution of the Regulation on Mining Operation Permits based on the annulled law.<sup>12</sup>

After these decisions by the Constitutional Court and the Council of State, important revisions were made to the Mining Law on June 10, 2010. These changes were even worse than the previous ones. New administrative commissions were set up to include representatives of the operating companies. In case a court decision limited mining operations due to another investment, the investment expenditure of the mining company would be covered by the party which benefited from the decision. Operating licenses could be issued for special natural protection zones, national reserves, wildlife protection areas, protected forests, endemic cedar and juniper forests, areas protected by the Law on Coastal Areas, and first-category military zones. The Administration of Forestry could allow mine exploration and operations in forests, and the

construction of temporary buildings to run these activities. As a result of the revisions, the entire power to issue mining enterprise establishment and operation licenses was granted to governors and Special Provincial Administrations, and municipalities were completely bypassed. It became legal to issue mining permits without changes to zoning plans or the previously necessary building licenses.<sup>13</sup> This revision, many other laws that followed, and the executive decree on the establishment of Ministry of Environment and Urbanization totally shelved natural protection concerns, and paved the way for ecologically destructive investments. With the most recent amendment to the applicable regulation, forest areas were totally pried open for mining operations.<sup>14</sup>

These legislative changes also had an effect on the Bergama case. Despite consecutive court orders, Bergama Ovacık Gold Mine was granted new permits and operation licenses were renewed despite the lack of a favorable zoning plan. The mining company continues to operate as if no court decisions were issued against it. Since the ore in Ovacık is being depleted and getting more costly to extract, the company is seeking new reserves in other areas. First, earth dug out from Balıkesir-Havran and Gümüşhane was examined; then, four new quarries were established in the Kozak Plateau. Of these, the one in Çukuralan is operational at the moment and its capacity has been increased twice. Since the operation continues despite court orders, the locals feel helpless. The unemployment in the region makes things easier for the company, which has recruited a member from each family and partially broke up the resistance.

### The December 17 probe: End of the “gold alliance”?

The corruption probe launched on December 17, 2013 in Istanbul extended to the cabinet, with sons of certain ministers being arrested. As a result, the power bloc was shaken up and yesterday’s close friends became today’s enemies. The alliance between the Gülen sect and AKP government collapsed and the war hatchets were dug out, which had an impact on the firm Koza Gold Mining. In the last days of 2013, İzmir Special Provincial Administration stopped operations in the Çukuralan Gold Mine ran by Koza, known to have ties with the Gülen sect,<sup>15</sup> due to lack of “Environmental Permit or Environmental License Certification.”<sup>16</sup>

This action thus revealed that the mine was

allowed to operate for three years despite lack of an environmental permit and license. The Special Provincial Administration had given the company a temporary permit in April 2010, and a first-class non-health commercial enterprise establishment license in April 2011. Apparently, the company was granted these documents despite lack of the obligatory "Environmental Permit or Environmental License Certification", which pointed to an unlawful collaboration between the administration and the company. On the other hand, we are probably witnessing a simple skirmish since the administration decided to stop operations, rather than take back the enterprise establishment license -which would lead to the closure of the company. Indeed, the administrative court overruled the decision to stop operations and work recommenced at the mine.

## From Ovacık to Soma

At the web site of the Izmir Directorate for Environment and Urbanization, it was announced that a public meeting would be held on February 6 in regard to the Ovacık Gold Mine Third Waste Storage Facility. However, the hour and location of the meeting were not announced. We do not know whether such a meeting was held, and if so, by whom. Allegedly a waste storage facility is to be built at the open quarry on top of the hill near Ovacık village. Hasan Gökvardar, a mining engineer who worked for long years at the Ovacık Gold Mine, said "The area where the storage is to be built is below sea level at around levels of -50 to -100. The underground water in Ovacık is at +40 to +60. The mine starts at +900. As such, the waste storage is to be built over underground water resources and permeable alluvial layers."<sup>17</sup>

Up until now, risks have always been disregarded, and unlawful practices have become business as usual at the gold mine in Ovacık. It remains to be seen whether this will continue as before, or whether the "gold alliance" will fall apart, allowing the nature of Bergama to recover.

On the other hand, other anti-environmental alliances power ahead, and new laws and regulations set to destroy nature are passed. At the massacre which took place in the Soma coal mine on May 13, 301 miners died according to official figures, revealing the ferocity of this veritable attack on life. The

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experience of the struggle against the Bergama-Ovacık Gold Mine shows that we need to construct an ecological political line to protect the environment, and life itself. This line must be centered around creating an ecological society. We have to achieve this in order to stop new alliances which destroy nature and put lives at risk.

- 1 Gold cyanidation is a metallurgical technique for extracting gold from low-grade ore.
- 2 Council of State, 6. Chamber, resolution dated 13.05.1997 and numbered 1996/5477 E. - 1997/2312; İzmir 1. Administrative Court, resolution dated 15.10.1997 and numbered 1997/636-877.
- 3 İzmir 1. Administrative Court, resolution dated 01.06.2001 and numbered 2000/896 E. 2001/485 K.; İzmir 3. Administrative Court, resolution dated 10.01.2002 and numbered 2001/401 E., İzmir 1. Administrative Court, resolution dated 23.01.2002 and numbered 2001/239 E., among others.
- 4 Council of Ministers, resolution dated March 29, 2002 and numbered P 2002/4.
- 5 Council of State, Joint Commission of 6. and 8. Chambers, resolution dated 23.06.2004 and numbered 2002/2618 E; Council of State, 8. Chamber, resolution numbered 2005/2927 E. ve 2006/1138.
- 6 ECHR, 3. Chamber, decision dated November 10, 2004 and numbered 46117/99, on "Taşkın et al. vs. Turkey".
- 7 See [www.evrensel.net/05/01/27/gundem.html#1](http://www.evrensel.net/05/01/27/gundem.html#1)
- 8 İzmir 4. Administrative Court, resolution dated 21.04.06 and numbered 2005/5 E., 2006/636 K.
- 9 [evrensel.net/04/03/17/ekonomi.html#1](http://evrensel.net/04/03/17/ekonomi.html#1)
- 10 [radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=77929](http://radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=77929)
- 11 [rega.basbakanlik.gov.tr/eskiler/2009/06/20090611-16.htm](http://rega.basbakanlik.gov.tr/eskiler/2009/06/20090611-16.htm)
- 12 [egecep.org.tr/Admin/photos/urunpdf/633806947104843750.pdf](http://egecep.org.tr/Admin/photos/urunpdf/633806947104843750.pdf)
- 13 [izmirizmir.net/arif-ali-cangi-cevre-gunu-madenciligi-y1449.html](http://izmirizmir.net/arif-ali-cangi-cevre-gunu-madenciligi-y1449.html)
- 14 [t24.com.tr/haber/birakin-baltalari-ormanin-sesini-dinleyin,256622](http://t24.com.tr/haber/birakin-baltalari-ormanin-sesini-dinleyin,256622)
- 15 [patronlardunyasi.com/haber/Akin-Ipek-Fethullah-Gulen-benim-ilham-kaynagim/153424](http://patronlardunyasi.com/haber/Akin-Ipek-Fethullah-Gulen-benim-ilham-kaynagim/153424)
- 16 [yesilgazete.org/blog/2014/01/01/cemaatin-altin-madenine-durdurma/](http://yesilgazete.org/blog/2014/01/01/cemaatin-altin-madenine-durdurma/)
- 17 [yesilgazete.org/blog/2014/02/07/bergama-ovacik-koyune-ucuncu-siyanur-cukuru/](http://yesilgazete.org/blog/2014/02/07/bergama-ovacik-koyune-ucuncu-siyanur-cukuru/)

## ECOLOGY

# The Ukraine - Russia crisis and Turkey: Foreign dependence on energy is not destiny

Necdet Pamir

The crisis pitting Russia against Ukraine is getting more serious due to the power struggle between the EU and USA, and Russia. The dominance in Ukraine constantly shifts between Russia and the “West”, and the two sides of the conflict use different weapons to gain control of the country. This conflict has the potential to negatively affect Turkey’s energy sources, but foreign dependence on energy does not have to be Turkey’s fate.

Before being “toppled” by street protests, the Yanukovich government had been invited by Russia to join its Customs Union. The EU, on the other hand, had proposed an “open-ended” Association Agreement to the Ukraine. Russia has been using natural gas exports as a trump card, and therefore had sold gas to the Ukraine at a price (268.5 dollars per 1000 cubic meters), much lower than its EU price. Russia reinforced this “carrot” policy through 14 agreements signed with the Yanukovich administration on issues ranging from airplane engineering to warship construction. When the Ukraine decided to shelve the EU’s Association Agreement proposal, Russia seemed to have won the first round.

However, the Ukrainian government’s decision triggered anti-Russian street protests which eventually forced Yanukovich to abandon power and flee the country. Russia’s response was swift: the price of gas exported to Ukraine rose to 400 dollars. Russia also declared that unless the Ukraine paid back its alleged debt of 3.3 billion dollars, it would stop the gas flow; from June 2014 onwards will only sell

prepaid gas to the Ukraine. Reactions to the conflict were different in the Ukraine’s eastern regions neighboring Russia. There, protesters took to the streets against the new government in Kiev. In a referendum in Crimea, the population of the province decided to join Russia.

Turkey’s decision to act in unity with the EU and USA on this issue seems natural, due to its NATO membership and historical ties with Crimean Tatars. However, time will tell how Russia will react to Turkey’s stance. Turkey is highly dependent on Russia in natural gas imports (58%). Turkey is also dependent on Russian oil albeit to a much lesser extent (8%). Turkey runs a large foreign trade deficit in its commerce with Russia. Following the development in Crimea, the USA and EU not only declared that they didn’t recognize the referendum results, but also imposed sanctions against Russia.

## Russia’s natural gas and oil export potential

Natural gas accounts for around 24% of primary energy consumption across the world.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 18% of known natural gas reserves are in the Russian Federation. No other country can come close to the Russian Federation’s annual gas export potential which is ca. 180 billion cubic meters.

According to data by the International Energy Agency, the Russian Federation’s 2013 gas exports to Europe (including Turkey) stood at 167 billion cubic meters. 82 billion of this total passes through Ukrainian pipelines.

In 2012, Ukraine’s consumption of natural gas was 50 billion cubic meters versus a production of 19 billion cubic meters (BP data).



**Necdet Pamir**

A faculty member at Bilkent University, Necdet Pamir chairs the Energy Commission of the Republican People’s Party (CHP). He is also the chair of the Chamber of Oil Engineers’ Energy Policies Working Group



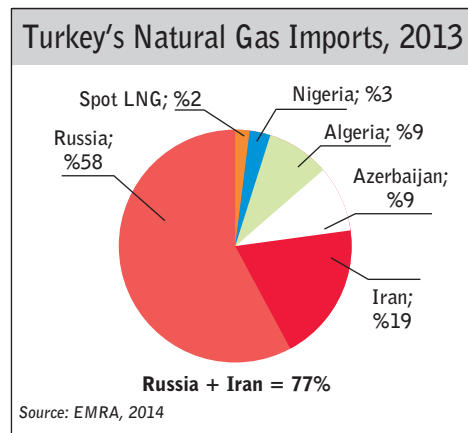
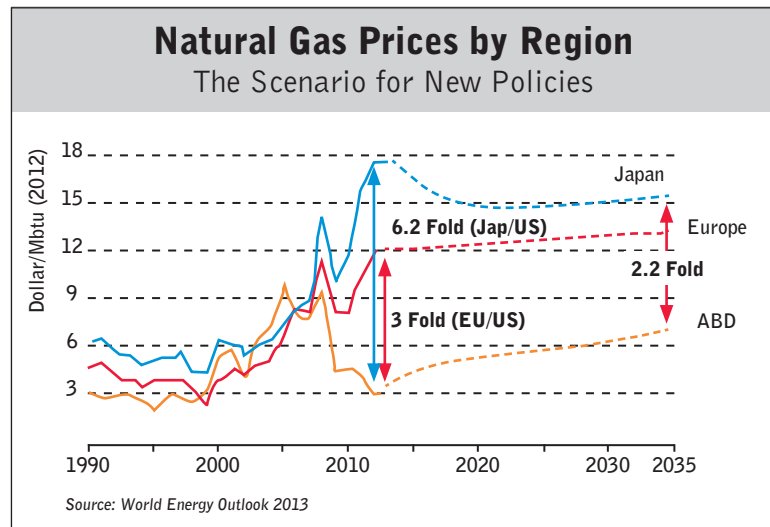
Ukraine imports all of the difference (31 billion cubic meters) from the Russian Federation, and is thus utterly dependent on their natural gas. Ukraine also has a key position in Russian oil exports to Europe. Mainly through the Druzhba (Friendship) Pipeline, 310 barrels of oil were exported daily in 2013 to Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic and Bosnia. The Russian Federation meets almost the entire oil consumption in these countries. Furthermore, crude and processed oil are also shipped to Europe via Ukrainian ports.

Measures which could help Europe and Turkey diversify their energy sources and reinforce energy security include gas shipments from the USA expected to start from 2017 onwards, increased LNG (liquid natural gas) exports from Africa and the Middle East, and gas transport from the Caspian basin, Iran, Iraq and Eastern Mediterranean via Turkey. However, none of these options could “steal” the leading role from Russia which supplies Europe with 161.5 billion cubic meters of gas. These alternatives require a multilateral and well-balanced foreign policy and economic solutions which would offer something to all actors. For instance, there are limits to American gas exports to Europe. First, it does not seem very plausible for the USA to forego such an “unfair” advantage. Second, the EU is wary of “shale” gas due to concerns about its adverse impact on the environment.

72% of Turkey’s primary energy consumption is dependent on foreign sources. The country meets 30.9% of its total energy via natural gas,<sup>2</sup> 58% of which comes from Russia. This percentage is almost twice the 30% limit proposed by the European Commission to EU nations for energy purchases from non-EU countries. Turkey’s 2012 energy import bill is 60.14 billion dollars, which accounts for more than one quarter of total imports. This is not sustainable.

Last year Turkey imported around 45 billion cubic meters of natural gas. Of this, 38.4 billion cubic meters were bought by BOTAŞ and private companies.

Natural gas imports from Russia arrive in two different pipelines. One is the Blue Stream Pipeline which passes under the Black Sea to reach Samsun. The other is the Western Pipeline which exits Russia, crosses Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria to enter Turkey at Malkoçlar, Thrace. Disruptions in the said pipeline, mainly during winter months, lead to serious problems. The main areas where natural gas is consumed are electricity generation, manufacturing, houses and the fertilizer industry. As such, disruptions have a negative impact on these industries and drive prices up.



This second pipeline, which passes through Ukraine, provides natural gas to the Turkish regions of Marmara, Thrace and Istanbul, which consume much energy. In order to understand the importance of a disruption in this pipeline, one should take a look at the volumes of current gas procurement contracts and Turkey’s very low natural gas storage capacity.

Turkey is 72% dependent on foreign sources in its primary energy consumption. The country meets 30.9% of the total energy it consumes via natural gas, 58% of which comes from Russia. This percentage is almost twice the 30% limit proposed by the European Commission to EU nations for energy purchases from non-EU countries.

In addition to the volumes shown in the table on BOTAŞ’s natural gas procurement, the private Ege Gaz terminal can import 16 million cubic meters daily. Russia or the transit countries can disrupt gas flow in the Western Pipeline. The Turkish Energy Minister Yıldız says “Officers at Gazprom indicate that they do not deem possible any disruption in the gas flow. I don’t believe that we will

### Gas Procurement by BOTAŞ

Source-Route	Volume by Contract million m <sup>3</sup> /day
Russia – Western Pipeline	58
Russia – Blue Stream Pipeline	48
Iran	29
Azerbaijan	19
M. Ereğlisi (LNG) (Nigeria and Algeria)	22
Marmara (TPAO – Storage)	18
Akçakoca (TPAO – Production)	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>178.1</b>

have any problems.”<sup>3</sup> This approach is too optimistic. The gas flow can be cut for various reasons and concerns, and was indeed cut in the past many times. A disruption of 40 million cubic meters per day cannot be quickly compensated for with increases from another pipeline or with LNG procurement on the spot market. In winter months, daily gas consumption goes above 230 million cubic meters on cold days. Even if Ege Gaz passes into action, total supply will remain below total demand. This, in turn, will lead to a crisis first and foremost in electricity generation, 44% of which depends on natural gas. Then electricity distribution companies will impose power blackouts on the industry and houses under the pretext of “breakdown” or “maintenance work”.

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In terms of energy security, it is incomprehensible why a country which consumes 46 billion cubic meters has a gas storage capacity of just 2.9 billion cubic meters. Storage volume thus corresponds to a meager 6.3% of consumption. This rate is 19% in Germany, 20% in France, 30% in Italy and 49% in Ukraine.

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Another of Turkey’s handicaps is its very limited natural gas storage capacity. In terms of energy security, it is incomprehensible why a country which consumes 46 billion cubic meters has a gas storage capacity of just 2.9 billion cubic meters. Storage volume thus corresponds to a meager 6.3% of consumption. This rate is 19% in Germany, 20% in France, 30% in Italy and 49% in Ukraine. Plans to construct a one billion cubic meter storage under the lake Tuz Gölü, which go back a decade, led nowhere and were cancelled twice due to corruption charges. The gas storage, whose tender was completed last year, will bring total capacity up to 3.9 billion cubic meters in 6-7 years; but total gas demand will have reached 76 billion cubic meters by then (according to

BOTAŞ forecasts). As such, the ratio of storage to consumption will actually fall to 5.1%!

The natural gas flow via Ukraine could be disrupted due to problems in Russian-Turkish relations, actions by Ukrainian Neo-Nazi groups which support the current government, or a decision by Russia to stop gas exports to Ukraine which could lead the latter to “siphon” some of the gas sent to Turkey. NATO’s Patriot batteries placed in Turkey, the missile shield, and Turkey’s aggressive policy towards Syria seriously irritate Russia which accounts for 58% of Turkish gas imports, and Iran, which accounts for 19%. As such, conciliatory remarks by ministers do not make the issue any less risky.

### Seeking alternatives to Russian gas

Although Turkey needs to rapidly lessen its dependence on Russia, especially in natural gas, this dependence will get even stronger with the Akkuyu nuclear power plant project, where Russians will be in control of everything from construction, operation, fuel supply and fuel management. The numerous handicaps of nuclear energy is another serious problem. Russia is building a market share in natural gas distribution, too.

The Nabucco Pipeline Project, touted in Turkey as “the agreement of the century”, collapsed even before it could take off. In its place, there is now talk of TANAP (Trans Anatolian Pipeline) which will transport gas from the Azeri gas field of Shah Deniz to Turkey and then to Europe. This joint project by SOCAR, BOTAŞ and BP is planned to bring 6 billion cubic meters of gas to Turkey and 10 billion to Europe in its first stage. Although this will be important in increasing resource diversity, this volume is far from breaking the Russian hegemony over Europe, which imports an annual 161.5 billion cubic meters from the former. The EU’s foreign dependence in natural gas stands at 70%, and is expected to reach 76% in 2020. In 2012, Europe imported 377 billion cubic meters of gas via pipeline and 69 billion cubic meters in the form of LNG, which add up to 446 billion. Around 37% of this total came from Russia. As such, the first stage of TANAP will have but symbolic value. When the other two stages are completed, total production will attain 32 billion cubic meters. It is uncertain how much of this total will be consumed in Turkey and how much will be transported to Europe via TAP (Trans Adriatic Pipeline).

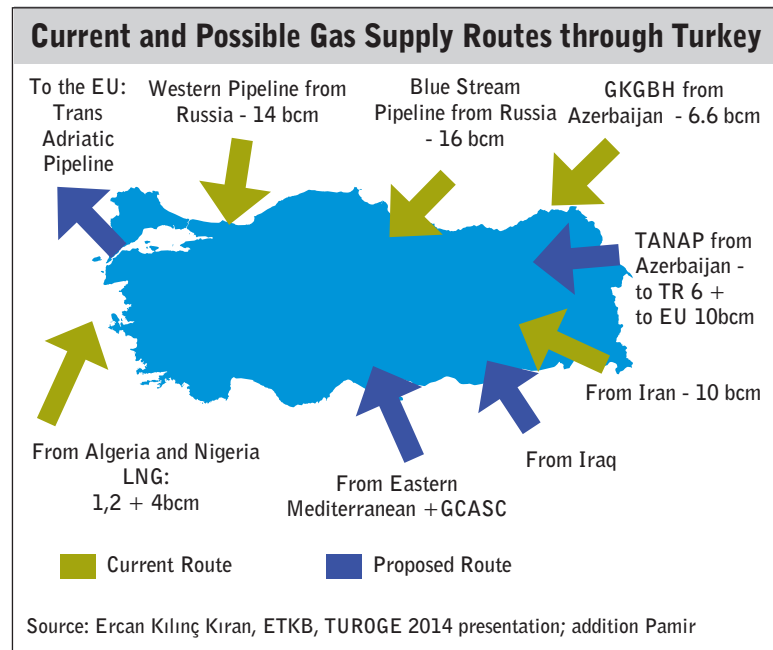
Other options which could bolster energy supply security in both Turkey and Europe

include the potential in Iraq, the ongoing “detente” with Iran, and new discoveries in Eastern Mediterranean. In all such projects, the expectations of importers (the EU), suppliers and transit countries must all be met at the same time. Plans that violate Iraq’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and Constitution will not bring about a solution. The Turkish government’s unlawful cooperation with the regional government in Northern Iraq have become an important source of risk. Iran, on the other hand, accounts for 17.6% of all proven natural gas reserves in the world. However, it consumes nearly all of its production, and thus cannot export any gas. If the detente brings an end to the sanctions on Iran, these rich resources could contribute significantly to energy security in Turkey and Europe.

If one or more such projects pass through Turkey, the country’s strategic importance will increase. The economic return of pipelines is less than usually thought, but they add value to the countries they pass through. However, as is the case with the Kerkük-Yumurtalık pipeline which is frequently subject to sabotage, they can be destabilizing. Due to the crisis between Ukraine and Russia, eyes have turned once again to Turkey. Nevertheless, Turkey’s problematic foreign policy, anti-democratic practices that jeopardize rule of law on the domestic arena, arbitrary changes to the regulations in the energy industry, or the destruction of nature for monetary gain are either overruled by the judiciary struggling to preserve its independence, or scare away domestic and international investors. Thus, a huge potential is about to be squandered through wrong policies.

## The full half of the glass

In Turkey, renewable energy sources are still untapped. In 2013, Turkey consumed 240 billion kWh of electricity; however, the country is thought to have an untapped domestic energy potential of over 800 billion kWh, on the condition that energy efficiency is improved and current power plants are renovated. When there is a disruption of foreign natural gas, Turkey cannot just push a button and tap into these reserves. Therefore, Turkey must transition to a well-planned and practical renewable energy policy which will also provide employment to the young population. The government talks about decreasing the foreign dependence on natural gas and coal, and the share of these resources in electricity generation. Nonetheless, the total portfolio of the natural gas power plant licenses recently distributed by EMRA



has reached 29,184 MW. This figure corresponds to 44.4% of the total installed capacity in Turkey (65,735 MW as of April 2014)! In imported coal, this percentage stands at 16,000 MW (24% of total installed capacity). These figures point to a serious contradiction between what the government does and preaches.

Due to the crisis between Ukraine and Russia, eyes have turned once again to Turkey. Nevertheless, Turkey’s problematic foreign policy, anti-democratic practices that jeopardize rule of law on the domestic arena, arbitrary changes to the regulations in the energy industry, or the destruction of nature for monetary gain are either overruled by the judiciary struggling to preserve its independence, or scare away domestic and international investors.

Turkey is becoming more dependent, and less secure in terms of energy, economy and even foreign policy. The full half of the glass, however, harbors rich renewable energy resources, and a well-educated workforce which is currently victim to nepotism. In case these rich and valuable assets are supported with effective plans for manufacturing equipment to turn domestic resources into electricity, Turkey can find a solution to its energy bottleneck.

- 1 BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2013.
- 2 Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (ETKB), General Energy Balance Sheet, December 2013.
- 3 <http://www.cnbce.com/haberler/enerji/yildiz-gaz-akisinda-sorun-olmaz>

## INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

## What will Turkey's G20 Presidency bring?

Sarp Kalkan - Gizem Şimer İlseven

Turkey is set to assume the G20 presidency during the year 2015. How could Turkey contribute to G20? How could Turkey's G20 presidency benefit the region?



**Gizem Şimer İlseven** graduated from TOBB ETÜ University, Department of International Relations in 2011. Currently a postgraduate student at the same department, she has been studying international institutions and regional policies at TOBB (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) since 2011.



**Sarp Kalkan** holds a Bachelor's degree in economics and an MBA from METU. He currently pursues his PhD in finance at the same university. Having joined the TEPAV team in 2005, Kalkan focuses on industrial policies, development of competition, financial markets, energy and environmental policy. Besides, since 2011 Kalkan has been serving as consultant to the TOBB president. He studies the B20/G20 agenda and represents TOBB on these platforms.

The members of G20 account for 85% of global income and 75% of world trade, not to mention two-thirds of the world population. The establishment of G20 can be traced back to the crises that hit the world economy in 1990s. It was in 1999 that economy ministers and central bank heads from 19 developed economies and the EU got together to discuss steps to be taken for the future of the global financial system.

When state presidents convened at a separate summit in 2008 to discuss the global economy and formulate solutions, it became official that G20 would be the highest negotiation platform in this respect. G20 has brought decision makers together twice a year at first, and once a year since 2011. Although it lacks the capacity to implement its decisions, it tops the list of mechanisms which underpin international economic cooperation and global economic policy-making.

### For a more inclusive G20

In a more general sense, the G20 focuses on the resolution of global economic imbalances, macroeconomic and financial stability, and steps for the sustainability of growth and employment. It has indeed achieved relative success in these efforts, yet G20 essentially aims to prevent global economic crises.

The critics of G20 ask whether it would

have any *raison d'être* in the absence of a global crisis. They underscore that, in case no crisis looms large in the foreseeable future, the G20 must diversify its work areas and have a broader agenda to maintain its presence.

Although there seems to be no crisis on the horizon, it is evident that global imbalances and interdependencies will continue. A more enhanced globalization and the increasing interdependencies it brings along necessitate the formulation of more efficient and diversified instruments of economic policy among nations.

G20 focuses mainly on how developed economies and giant international corporations are affected by global fluctuations. However, the driving force of the global economy is neither developed economies nor giant companies. The forces that shape today's world are developing nations and SMEs. In practice, SMEs and developing economies run into more serious problems. For instance, while a tradition of cooperation has taken root in the North dominated by developed economies, there is no proper South to South cooperation to speak of in the South, which is home to developing economies and SMEs. The biggest three export partners of China are the USA, Mexico and Germany. Yet China is less efficient in exporting goods in demand to developing countries such as India, South Korea and Turkey.

Another example concerns the financial system. Today's financial system is designed according to the structures and needs of developed economies. The system does not adapt itself to the structures of developing economies. The global system should rapidly be revised to respond also to the needs of developing economies. The most suitable platform we have at hand for this purpose is G20.

Another key criticism directed at G20 is its lack of access to many parts of the world. The decisions taken by G20 leaders can be implemented only in their nations. Although the G20 countries shape a large part of the world economy, an analysis of the membership profile reveals that Africa and a large part of the Middle East fall outside of G20's area of influence. If the G20 is keen on taking steps concerning global macroeconomic policies, it should be able to formulate policies which cover all nations from the least developed to the most advanced.

### What could Turkey's presidency change?

In 2015, Turkey will assume the tenth presidency of the G20 for a one-year term. This is an important chance not only for Turkey and its region, but also for the future of the G20.

In mid-1980s Turkey embarked upon a serious economic transformation, which later turned into reform in the post-2001 crisis era. In the last ten years the Turkish economy more than tripled in size. Even during the global crisis of 2008 and the ensuing financial crisis in Europe, it continued to grow. The G20 presidency of Turkey, which was hit by a severe crisis before undergoing a tough reform process and making visible progress, will set an example to other countries which struggle with crisis and similar economic problems. During its presidency Turkey can not only share these experiences with the rest of the world and increase its visibility, but also take up the issue of economic crisis which under-

lies the G20.

On the other hand, global growth and developing countries seem set to top the G20 agenda in 2015. A developing economy itself, Turkey can act as the porte-parole of all deve-

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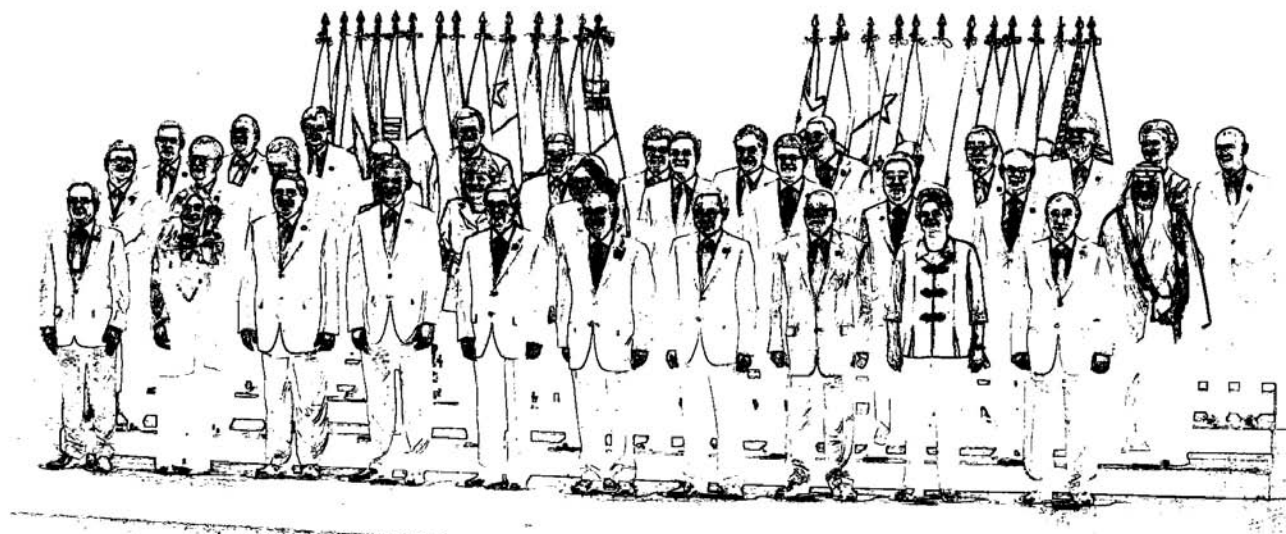
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veloping countries in the G20 and urge the G20 leaders to take joint decisions to this end.

The biggest difference that Turkey's G20 presidency in 2015 could create would be to make the voice of the Middle East heard on the G20 platform, which for years has made global headlines only with its political turmoil, failing to draw attention to its economic issues. As is known, the country which hosts the G20 summits can invite non-G20 members and organizations to the event. In 2015, Turkey can invite neighboring countries and organizations to the summit as both host and a country of the region, thus drawing the attention of the G20 leaders and the global community to the regional economy.

Turkey's G20 presidency brings along a huge responsibility. If it can make progress on the areas where the G20 is most harshly criticized, Turkey can occupy an important place in the history of the G20's and put its signature on work beneficial to the entire region.



## CULTURE

## Tweets and Streets: Rare flowers of history

Interview: Ayşegül Oğuz

**Osman Akinhay**

Born in 1960 in Ödemiş, Osman Akinhay graduated from Ankara University, Faculty of Political Science in 1976 and was jailed in 1980. In prison, he became a translator and eventually translated over 110 books. He penned three novels: *Gün Ağarmasa* (2002), *Ölüme Bakmak* (2005) and *Ölülerimiz* (2010). He edited various volumes and interviews on political struggles, and wrote a booklet on Gezi uprising: *Gezi Ruhü - Bir Direnişin Halesi* (2013). He is currently the editor of the Agora publishing house and the Mesele book magazine.

**The publishing house Agora has published your Turkish translation of Paolo Gerboudo's book "Tweets and the Streets." Why is it so important to understand Twitter? How did you become interested in Twitter and Facebook?**

**Osman Akinhay:** I became aware of the importance of Twitter in January 2011, with the Tahrir uprising. However, what really drew my attention to the use of Twitter by the social opposition were lawsuits such as the one filed against the KCK (Kurdish Communities Union), where citizen journalists shared news and photos from inside courtrooms. There Twitter and Facebook provided alternative media channels. Twitter has an instantaneous and extensive character, whereas Facebook leaves a longer trace. Facebook has played a significant role in the Egyptian uprising. In the Spanish Indignados movement, however, Twitter was more prominent. In the Occupy Wall Street protests in the USA, where the headquarters of both Facebook and Twitter are located, these two channels had a very limited effect. In fact, Paolo Gerboudo observes that it was only after the Occupy movement received press and TV coverage that it drew attention from the social media.

**How does the Gezi uprising compare with Occupy Wall Street in terms of the relation with social media?**

The revolt in Egypt was an explosion. Indignados was similar, but with important differences. The movement in Madrid was based on reclaiming a central square and organizing demonstrations around it. As such, Indignados and Gezi are more similar in nature, whereas Occupy has fewer parallels with Turkey. I observed that the Spanish and American movements were based mainly on the organization of protests. In these countries, law and order and the regime were not challenged. In Turkey, however, the government perceived Gezi as a

threat to the regime. In Turkey, the resistance was more destructive than in Spain or the USA. **One year on, is the Gezi movement still going strong?**

The history of social struggles teaches us that revolts are like rare flowers in history. They rarely bloom; but when they do, they take everyone by surprise and have a strong effect on people's minds. Their impact can only be assessed in hindsight. As long as the revolt does not spark a revolution, the government initiates a period of restoration, trying to muzzle and control the movement. We are not at that stage yet; although there is a certain retreat, the Gezi spirit is still there. Gezi is the strongest grassroots uprising in the history of the Turkish republic. I was witness to the period before the military coup of September 12, 1980; however, I never saw such a spontaneous rebellion. That's what I felt strongly on the night of May 31, 2013.

**What is the difference, in your view, among leftist movements, protest movements and social movements?**

There might be analytical differences, but I don't consider them to be very important. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, Fukuyama declared the ultimate victory of capitalism with theses about "The End of History." Later on, the so-called anti-globalization movement rose to prominence in the West, starting from Seattle. This wave continued roughly until the occupation of Iraq, when it reached its zenith in the anti-war movement. After the war broke out, we saw the movement die off. In 2005, the suburban revolts in France signaled our entry into a new century. In terms of social movements, the difference with the pre-1990 period was huge. It might be suggested that there was a certain continuity between the anti-globalization movement and the protests of current day, but Paolo Gerboudo



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claims in his book that Seattle, Genoa and the other social forums or the anti-G7 protests were more vertical in nature. The post-2011 demos, he suggests, are more horizontally organized. Social media has of course played a role here. Changes in communication technology also change the medium of communication. Nowadays social media pretty much assumes the role attributed to the newspaper *Iskra* by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in early 1900s. The instruments of revolt and dissent of the 20th century differ significantly from those of the 21st century. In the 20th century, there were constitutive uprisings. The goal was revolution, and one recognized the presence of the so-called socialist system even if one was critical of it. You believed in the possibility of a revolution and the advent of socialism. And you fought for this cause with resolve. What was the driving force? The proletarian movement. What was its basis? The idea that the working class had the force to lay down tools and stop production on national and international scales. After 1990, the most important counter-revolutionary act by capitalism was the establishment of a regime of flexible and precarious work. This regime of work and production hits the leftist movement in two ways. First, the movement is deprived of the physical force which allows it to affect economic and social life in a country. In France, large factories such as the 6500-strong Renault factory are split up; it becomes harder to stage

strikes that stop daily life such as the Kavel and Netaş strikes of early 1960s in Turkey. What is the result? Think of the Turkish Airlines strike, which had the ability to affect 4500 employees. When this total is divided into sub-contracting firms of sixty to hundred people and some of the work is outsourced, the workers' joint force, solidarity and ability to stop daily life by

*Heavy police presence in Beyoğlu district became a routine after Gezi Protests.*

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They rarely bloom; but when they do, they take everyone by surprise and have a strong effect on people's minds.

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laying down their tools are eradicated. We have recently witnessed numerous strikes such as those at *Tariş*, *Çapa* and *Kazova*; however, these struggles do not seem to spread their energy and experiences to other workplaces to constitute a "working class." In the current system, we do not witness united workers toppling the government, but rather each worker becoming a wolf to fellow workers. Across the whole world, the number of poor people rises, but the divisions amongst them get larger as the ideologies, slogans and mottos which used to unite them morally, politically and economically lose strength.

**Precarious and flexible working conditions now concern all workers, including white-collar employees...**

Indeed. Let's connect this to Gezi. It was frequently said, "Why didn't the working class come to Gezi Park?" One reason was that Taksim is far from their workplaces; it took hours to arrive. White-collar employees, however, came in huge numbers. Aside from the physical distance, the difference in employment regimes played a role here. Blue-collar employees still have a bond with their employer and enjoy a degree of job security. The precarious white-collar employees, however, even if they are paid 8000 TL (approximately 2700 Euro or 3,800 USD) a month, feel less secure than blue-collar employees with a salary of 1200 TL (417 Euro or 570 USD). The debates on the unification of the radical left in the run-up to the March 30, 2014 local elections once again revealed the weakness of radical left in Turkey. The objective fac-

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Paolo Gerboudo claims that Seattle, Genoa and the other social forums or the anti-G7 protests were more vertical in nature. The post-2011 demos, he suggests, are more horizontally organized. Social media has of course played a role here.

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tor underlying this problem is the employment regime, which shapes the mindset of workers and leads to an absence of common slogans. **One noteworthy piece of graffiti in Gezi read "I couldn't find a slogan"...** Gezi produced a plethora of slogans. It also offered a recipe of unification for the radical left. The park forums which mushroomed after the Gezi revolt are a great opportunity for the Turkish leftist movement. Early in the morning, on June 15, 2013, there was talk in Gezi Park about an imminent police crackdown. Most left-wing political groups suggested that the protesters needed to abandon the park. They feared possible rout, plunder, and even deaths. When the Taksim Solidarity group announced its decision to abandon the park that evening, it was booed by the demonstrators. At the same time, seven or eight assemblies convened inside Gezi Park, and after long discussions decided that the park would not be evacuated. That decision went against what left-wing groups and Taksim Solidarity wanted. But it turned out to be correct, in my view, as we had the chance to resist for a few more days. The government's brutality was revealed further. Armed forces were deployed in Mecidiyeköy<sup>1</sup>, which exposed the true stance of the government on the issue of military oversight. After the police attack on Gezi Park, those assemblies gave birth to park forums in neighborhoods. The forums are spontaneous

grassroots organizations which resemble the soviets of 1905 or the workers' councils in Italy. The forums epitomize the Gezi uprising, and offer a channel for the unification of the radical left. According to data obtained from the police, two and a half million people joined the Gezi revolt. At most 30 thousand of them voted for HDP, the Peoples' Democratic Party, and other socialist parties at the local elections, whereas the rest voted mainly for CHP, the Republican People's Party. Nevertheless the left's potential area of influence corresponds to the masses mobilized during Gezi.

**Forums lay the groundwork for horizontal organization, isn't it?**

Horizontal and vertical, in fact. Let's think of similar cases the world over. The legitimacy of the October Revolution came from the soviets, which were the people's assemblies. An announcement by the Abbasağa Park Forum, for instance, enjoys more legitimacy than those by leftist groups such as Halkevleri (People's Houses) or the ÖDP (Freedom and Solidarity Party). It has particular appeal and legitimacy in the eyes of the two and a half million who took to the streets during the Gezi revolt, since it allows them to participate in political action as individuals. In his book, Paolo Gerboudo suggests that the social media creates empathy between people with very diverse economic or social positions and in distant physical locations. That empathy allows people to come together; however, empathy does have its limits.

**The writer repeatedly underlines the connection between online activism and off-line activism on the field.**

We see that empathy can bring people together up to a certain degree, but demonstrations have their own dynamics. The founders of Facebook or Twitter could not have imagined how these channels would be used in Tahrir. Actually, they simply wanted to make money by helping people socialize. However, this new technological medium gave people another means of communication. We will see in time how the relations between Facebook, Twitter and the government evolve. I don't expect them to side with the protesters, though.

**In the preface to the Turkish edition, the author asks the following question: "Is social media activism already a thing of the past in this world where everything immediately turns obsolete?" What would your answer be?**

The world changes very rapidly. As Milan Kundera asks in his novel *Slowness*, where will we stop or move in such a rapid world? How will we determine our speed? Of course everything quickly becomes obsolete. If you don't go online for two hours, you see that the public agenda



in Turkey has changed radically. Very popular in Turkey, Facebook is not a thing of the past and people continue to use it in new ways. Maybe new technological media will appear and gain more popularity. However, online empathy will continue.

**How do today's youngsters compare to those of your generation in terms of curiosity, learning, ambition and organization?**

No historical period is like another. The only common denominator is capitalism. I spent my youth in the 1970s, and new generations rose in the 1980s and 1990s which experienced a different youth due to the depoliticization imposed by the fascist junta of 1980. First of all, the high school education system received a huge blow. In the 1970s, we witnessed the last aftershocks of the worldwide revolutionary wave. The Cuba revolution and 1968 were still recent events. Revolutions erupted in Africa. The education system and social life were very different back then. However, the new generation managed to organize the June uprising. In the preface to my book *Gezi Ruhü* (The Spirit of Gezi), I write: "It is not us but the young generation who organized this uprising. We simply had the chance to witness it from the best location – its very center." However, the level of their awareness is another question. Can we compare them with us? These are relative issues. They are brave young people, and their activism is no weaker. Concepts are important here. We say "activism" now, whereas back then we used the word "militancy." Arundhati Roy says that activism is a civil society-centered concept, describing those who stage demos on the weekend but mind their own business on week days. I believe that today's youth is a generation of revolt. Social opposition is on the rise across the world and will eventually find its own model of organization.

**Do you go on Twitter frequently?**

I don't read newspapers, instead I go on Twitter and find the links to news stories worth reading. Sometimes I don't even click on the links. It can be enough to see some people mention an issue or voice a criticism. On the other hand, since Twitter takes up too much of our time and provokes the desire to learn about everything, it makes it harder for us to focus on a specific content and delve deeper.

**One striking aspect of the Gezi uprising was humorous slogans.**

I was in jail in the 1980s and early 1990s, but in the 1970s and even in the early years of the Freedom and Solidarity Party (founded in 1996) politics were a somber affair. Humor and militancy did not go together. The humor magazine *Gırgır* was very popular, but humor

had not made headway into our daily political discourse. Recently I saw the following slogan written on the Taksim Emergency Hospital: "Rebellion, revolution, freedom! Wtf, I ran out of wall to write on." We could not, or rather would not even imagine such a graffito. Turkey's 1968 was a mainly urban movement, centered in Istanbul and Ankara. In the 1970s, social dissent spread across the country and became rural. Those cultural codes shaped our lives. Had Deniz Gezmiş not been listening to Rodrigo, even classical music would be deemed illegitimate. The left gradually turned into a peasants' movement, and the social composition

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On certain evenings, we organize Twitter parties, much like pajama parties. As a book publisher, I confess that I spend more time with my iPhone than with words printed on paper!

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of political inmates and the Kurdish movement reinforced this tendency. We had to wait for ÖDP for a return to urban culture. ÖDP's claim to be "the party of love and revolution" signaled the return of social dissidence to the city. The Gezi uprising also added an urban hue to the opposition.

**What is your conception of a 21st century revolution?**

Since the concepts of proletarian revolution and proletarian internationalism are becoming obsolete as concepts and perspectives, the world lacks utopias nowadays. This is accompanied by an absence of political objectives. In the last century the antagonism was between labor and capital, whereas in this century it also includes the conflict between human and nature. As such, the emancipation of humanity will be a result of both political and ecological struggles. The youth of this century will eventually craft its own organization, utopia and path to emancipation.

**Do you have any favorite tweets?**

I remember one tweet in response to Elif Şafak, criticizing the famous author for her commercialized ways ("Ticari sağa çek" in Turkish)! There are numerous great tweets. On certain evenings, we organize Twitter parties, much like pajama parties. As a book publisher, I confess that I spend more time with my iPhone than with words printed on paper!

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1 A neighborhood about 5 kilometers from Taksim.

## HUMAN LANDSCAPE

## Suing the Prime Minister for insulting "fags"

It has always been difficult for me to share my story – even with those closest to me. However, well aware that personal is political and that this is not just my but rather our story, I have decided to pen this piece. The opening sentence of Orhan Pamuk’s novel “The New Life” is like a summary of my story: “I read a book one day and my whole life was changed.” It all started with a book I found in my uncle’s bookshelf, the year I started high school as a boarder. The book convinced me that one could have a homosexual relationship, and that a homosexuality other than that screened on TV was possible. I am still under its influence.



**Levent Pişkin**

Born in 1989 in Artvin, Pişkin is a graduate of Ankara University, Faculty of Law. A member of the executive committee of the Peoples’ Democratic Congress, he is an attorney-at-law.

I was born in a small town to a family of workers with strong kinship bonds. I felt that there was something bizarre about me, but I had no one to empathize with me. There were two TV anchors, Fatih Ürek and Kuşum Aydın. My father would curse and change channel as soon as he saw either of them on screen. My bizarreness had both similarities and differences with theirs. I was not the same as them, nor did I behave or act like them. I had fear, and the only thing I had to deal with this fear was the mechanism of denial, a well-established institution in our society. I lived under the protection of this establishment – which I was trying to topple at the same time via socialist activism. There was another me deep inside of me. It was not the real me and annoyed me very much: leftist on the one hand, but homophobic / transphobic, moralist and occasionally sexist on the other.

## Emancipation through the rejection of masculinity

While I was at university, Tekel workers began to resist the privatization of their enterprise. I was involved with the student association Genç-Sen. At a visit to the Tekel workers’ picket line, a friend handed me an invitation from Kaos GL regarding its Commission on Sexual Orientation and Identity Discrimination in Education! That’s how I learned about the LGBTI activist group Kaos GL and started to participate in their meetings on behalf of Genç-Sen. Genç-Sen was a student union and we could not disregard the problems of LGBTI students. We were “idealists” fighting for equality and freedom, and LGBTIs were also victimized by this system, right? During my stint at the commission, the distinction in my mind between “us” and “them” remained intact. We were simply showing our solidarity with their emancipation struggle. Then I fell in love with someone, an LGBTI activist. That’s when I realized that I had to change sides. I had to speak to him, although I dreaded being exposed. Eventually, I came out: I had started the LGBTI struggle as an apparent heterosexual man but now would continue as my true self. Now I did not have to treat men as if I saw them as friends only. I would no longer have to join in “guy talk” or be subject to questions like “What kind of a man are you?” The rejection of masculinity was an emancipatory experience. Rejecting masculinity and revealing my homosexuality was liberating, but what would I say to my family, how would I continue to socialize, how would I find a job? There was a simple I would simply add the LGBTI struggle to socialist struggle!

In that initial excitement, I felt that I could just find myself by disclosing my homose-

xuality, and thought that the movement was very emancipatory. I had yet to confront the power of heteronormativity, which never lets you be yourself. My pink dreams about the LGBTI movement were dispersed as soon as I started to see the hierarchies of victimhood, class-based tensions and relations of power. Identity can dominate other practices and experiences and create a particular kind of power.

### Organized LGBTI struggle today

While working at several LGBTI organizations, there were many incidents of discrimination and violence against LGBTI people. Just as I felt suffocated by the hate generated by society and state, the Gezi uprising started. The work of the last twenty-one years became visible in the park. Society (or at least a part of it) saw us or pretended to see us for the first time. Tens of thousands of people joined the eleventh edition of the Pride March on İstiklal Avenue! This was the first real contact between “us” and “them,” and a rather successful one at that. Meanwhile some Turkish left-wing groups, the Kurdish movement, other peoples living in Turkey, and the united LGBT movement had come together under the umbrella of Peoples’ Democratic Congress, the HDK. I became the co-president of the Beyoğlu district organization and a member of the HDK Executive Committee. This was an important development because it attests to the point that the LGBTI movement has reached. LGBTIs are part of and have a say in one of the biggest political movements in Turkey. Then the Prime Minister filed a complaint about a “fag” for calling him a fag (*ibne* in Turkish.) “Fagness” was put on trial, in a lawsuit pitting Turkish Republic’s Prime Minister against a fag. This lawsuit filed against me (due to the principle of the individuality of criminal liability) was not limited to a personal issue, however, since the personal is always political. The movement took a stance on this



I felt bad for being bizarre. The only thing I had at hand to deal with this fear was the mechanism of denial, a well-established institution in our society. I had lived for about seven years under the protection of this establishment. There was another me deep inside.. It was not the real me and annoyed me very much: leftist on the one hand, but homophobic, transphobic, moralist and occasionally sexist on the other.

affair, and the movement shall win in the end!  
That is why this is not simply my story: De te fabula narratur!

NEWS FROM hbs

# Learning from Gezi

S. Nazik Işık

Turkey is already a tense country, made even more tense by the Prime Minister every day. Life tells the government to resign; but it holds on to power, continuing to “other” almost everyone with its perspective far from “good governance”.

Then there is “us”. We have set out from İstanbul Taksim and found our true place at Gezi Park, cognizant that the Gezi uprising symbolizes what is “new.” We are trying to love and understand this “new”, striving to open up space not only for ourselves but also for others. We are frustrated and surprised that things did not turn out the way we expected them to; however, we are nevertheless trying to create the new large mosaic portrait of Turkey. We love the land we live upon, are aware that the sky unites us all, refuse to get used to our countless losses from Abdullah Cömert to Uğur Kurt, reject violence, and are keen on living together in peace. We may not know each other as well as we should, but still try to achieve freedom, equality, participation and solidarity—in short, democracy. A bunch of people out of this “us”, which had soared to vast numbers in 80 provinces of Turkey during Gezi, got together in İstanbul on the first anniversary of Gezi during a two-day event to discuss first the past and then the future. Together with guests from the young social movements of Spain, Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, we had a conversation, trying to understand each other and what’s going on or will go on around us. We discussed how we could shape the future for the better.

## Diversity meets participation

Without exception we all agreed on one thing:

that the Gezi protesters were very diverse. Environmentalists, feminists, LGBTI activists, anti-capitalist Muslims, parents supporting their kids, leftists (of course), individuals from the Kurdish movement, independent activists, artists, and most interesting of all, football fans from different teams who are well known for the strong rivalry among them. What did this diversity signify? We knew that everyone had different motivations, but there were common points, too: democracy, participation and an anti-government stance in reaction to the police brutality targeting the right to protest.

## Did Kurds join Gezi?

Gezi brought together those who would not act together under normal circumstances, and this had drawn everyone’s attention. A few participants pointed out that some groups did not really mix in with the others even during the demos. The nationalist youth association TGB was one case in point. Others indicated that many Kurds flew the flag of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), while numerous Turks carried Turkish flags.

A heated debated turned around the participation of Kurds in the Gezi protests. BDP/HDP was indeed a component of the Taksim Solidarity. Yet there was limited participation from the Kurdish movement, and almost none in cities outside of İstanbul, Tunceli and Ankara—notwithstanding individual Kurdish participants. The Kurds staged only a few demos in solidarity. A speaker from Diyarbakır said, “Kurds just stayed home and watched.” Gezi fell outside the agenda of the Kurds. Worries about a possible interruption of the “peace process” had a negative impact on their participation, and the widespread slogan “We are the soldiers



### S. Nazik Işık

Active in the women’s movement since 1975, S. Nazik Işık is the co-founder and president of Association for Egalitarian Life. She focuses on the issue of home-based work. She is a planning expert specialized in the job market, employment, problems related to work, and social security. She is a member of the Party Assembly of CHP.

of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk)" alienated Kurds. Speakers from the Kurdish movement were asked the question "Will you cooperate during the presidential elections?"; pointing to both an underlying problem of trust and the ongoing efforts since Gezi to construct a common opposition front.

### Multitude portrayed as marginal sect

Can the plurality in Gezi be attributed to a certain age group? Yes, according to a well-publicized survey seeking an answer to the question "Who participated in Gezi?" Yes, if we limit the movement to the squares of Taksim, Kızılay, and Gündoğdu. In this regard, Gezi signaled the youth's return to the street. Across Turkey, however, Gezi was not limited to the youth. People from all age groups rose up when the Prime Minister and the Istanbul Governor spilled blood and violence at the Gezi uprising which had started out to defend a handful of trees allowing one to get some fresh air in the city center. In İzmir, in at least five spots across town, every generation took to the streets or banged on pots at night.

### Inevitable relapse: which social classes joined Gezi?

Did Gezi have a class significance? The well-educated middle class youth was active in the initial defense of the park. Later on, the movement went beyond the boundaries of a single class. The horrible police brutality and ensuing deaths urged many social sectors to take to the streets in protest of the government and its interventions on their life style. However, as we also saw during the meeting, it was the new social movements which gave Gezi its real color. Nevertheless, we could not decide during the meeting as to how we should interpret the participation of the football fans. In İzmir, for instance, the fans of the four major national teams as well as local teams joined forces in May Day celebrations for the first time.

There is one social group who did not participate in Gezi and we don't know when they will rise up: farmers and peasants. This group has problems with the government not just because of the crisis of agricultural production but also the effects of gold and coal mining or hydroelectric plants on nature. We mentioned them just once during our meeting, and only in passing: some villagers had participated in the protests after the death of Abdullah Cömert.

### Does Gezi have an ideology?

Gezi put an end to arguments on the apolitical nature of today's youth, since huge masses of people from diverse backgrounds joined the action, fully aware that they would face violence. It made the system vulnerable. Everyone poked fun at the system, and not just in humor magazines. Did Gezi have an ideology? No. But Gezi corresponded to a rejection of the intervention into people's life styles, demands for a safer future, a desire for participative democracy at local and national levels, and the wish to live in peace.

### They are welcome! We are not alone

Our guests from Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy and Spain made us feel that we were not alone. They showed us once again that local is indeed global at the same time. It felt great to remember the "one world, one struggle" slogan of the World Social Forum, and stand together in our diversity. All examples suggest that people want more freedom, democracy, and participation. The common problem is the incapability of the current political system in solving problems and ensuring participation. Everywhere, there is the need to breathe new life into politics. Especially in the former socialist countries, NGOs have ceased to be a force of dynamic change, instead focusing exclusively on "projects." The new social classes, particularly precarious groups who cannot even become employees, have expanded significantly and need to be analyzed closely.

### Political parties do not inspire hope

In one session, we welcomed representatives from political parties such as the Republican People's Party (CHP), the BDP/HDP, the Greens and the Left Party of the Future (YSGP) and the new Gezi Party. We saw that the political parties had not foreseen an uprising like Gezi. I learned the following from the assessments made in this session:

In the past, MPs had managed to stop police brutality during demos. During Gezi, the MPs had absolutely no effect on limiting police violence and indeed suffered from it.

Gezi showed that parties must make way for youth in politics; but this has yet to be translated into practice.

The participation of Anti-capitalist Muslims and women wearing headscarves forced people to think outside the box.

The LGBTI movement became very visible.

They were not very successful in having their candidates elected to municipal assemblies, but they started to establish relations with municipalities based on the LGBTI agenda.

The alliances established during Gezi did not always continue afterwards.

As a result, current political parties have not sufficiently grasped the demands and expectations of Gezi, due to their policies and perspectives.

## New policymakers, new political action

Gezi happened in an environment where different social movements did not know each other sufficiently. Gezi has urged these movements to wonder and learn more about each other. In other words, during Gezi different groups realized that they were not the only victims.

LGBTI activists indicated that they carried their inner diversity to Gezi, placing the issue of social rights on the public agenda. Feminists suggested that Gezi allowed non-feminist women to hear their voice. They observed that other women were also reacting against the discourses of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan targeting the female body. There was very limited progress in terms of abandoning homophobic and transphobic discourses and embracing a pacifist stance. In particular, the sexist slogans chanted by the protesters was an important issue of discussion.

Another critical observation was that traditional social movements were not effective in Gezi. The trade union movement, for instance, made a very limited contribution to Gezi. We know that in cities outside Istanbul and Ankara, most demos were organized by the unions and chambers; but most participants agreed that these did not constitute the driving force of Gezi.

## The aftermath: echoes and repercussions

Gezi was a success. The park is still there. They were not able to start the construction of the shopping mall. Most of the park forums after Gezi discussed the handicaps of mainstream politics and the problem of organization. Public forums continue to gather today, but it must be said that the initial dynamism is no longer there.

It is debatable whether Gezi had any positive impact on the outcome of the local elections. There was not enough time for this experience to have an effect on different social spheres and the political arena. Now, environmental and urban

activists have focused on new experiences such as community organizing and occupied social centers. The LGBTIs are working on the issue of representation on local government level. Three district municipalities in Istanbul are planning to implement the "Protocol on LGBT-Friendly Municipal Services." Certain municipalities across Anatolia have also signed the protocol. Women continue to hold their meetings.

There are new initiatives such as Oy ve ötesi (Ballot and beyond). It was very critical for a civilian initiative to try to secure election and ballot box safety, and to remain neutral regarding all political parties at the same time.

The lawsuits continue. The trials about the murders are moved from one city to another. The police officers implicated in violence go free, but protesters are behind bars. Of course, many are disturbed by this!

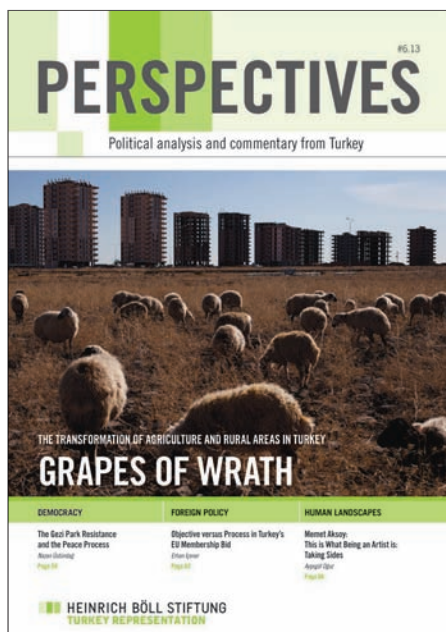
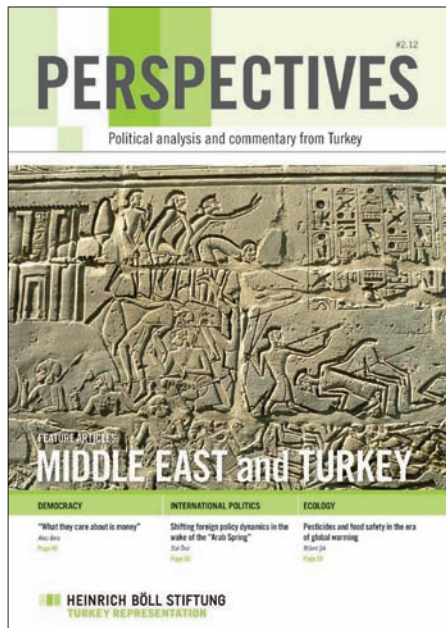
Citizen journalism is on the rise and social media is gaining in importance, with the appearance of new media outlets such as Çapul TV and 9/8 news agency. The government has banned YouTube and Twitter, turning Turkey into a laughing stock for the entire world.

The Gezi Party has issued free software such as "common arena" and "people's chair" to be used by everyone. This is one characteristic of the new political style: openness.

## How do we continue?

During Gezi we learned that we should listen to, understand and speak to each other. The park forums provide a multilateral, participative and diverse platform and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung has contributed by organizing this meeting. However, we need to continue to make evaluations and discuss our future pursuits. There are vast social groups trying to find their own voice, and a long and winding road before the new social movements.

At Gezi, we defended the right to protest, the rule of law, democracy, freedom and solidarity. We all rediscovered the beauty of the street. We started to discuss social rights. Now we need to go further. Current dialogue mechanisms such as city councils and Economic and Social Council (EKOSOK) were not mentioned once during the meeting. Either we are far from these participative mechanisms, or they are obsolete and artificial. If so, then we need to invent new dialogue mechanisms. The social media and park forums which we have discovered recently are important yet insufficient channels. Now we need to create new instruments to say new things! New instruments to bring us together... A long road lies ahead, and demands a lot of courage.



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