

perspectives

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POLITICAL ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

TURKEY



CAPITAL AND CAPITALISTS IN TURKEY

It's all for capital
my love

Democracy

Everything is public now,
Gülfer Akkaya

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The privatization of art or the sphere
of legitimacy of capital, Nurdan Durmaz

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Raif Türk: A Kurdish businessman,
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COVER PHOTO: Graffiti in İstanbul-Kadıköy taken from the lyrics by the local rock band Kesmeşeker, which was popular during Gezi Protests.

Editorial

The moment you open and start reading this issue of Perspectives, Turkey will have just gone through a fierce election campaign. The local elections were presented to the public as a milestone in Turkey's politics, as if each and every voter will decide the fate of the country's future. The tension began before the election and led people to believe that with their vote, a new page in the history of Turkey will begin. This emphasis of the incredible importance of the elections increased the tension and made the people afraid of the future: What will happen after the elections?

If we try to filter out the substance of all these questions that arose before the election, the main question seems to be: What will be the chance for democracy in Turkey?

In the last months, we can observe an incredible rollback of democratic achievements that had been gained in recent years. We can observe an increasing authoritarianism that has already entered many spheres of private life. We can observe an increasingly rude and brutal language and forms of political debate, which create permanent new enemies and deepen conflict in society. Only a few days before the local elections, people seem to be exhausted and without orientation, in a mood of depression, hopelessness and in fear about their future. The overwhelming mood at the end of this dirty election campaign was: Just let us get through these elections—whatever the result might be, we want societal peace again.

But, as two politically much more important elections are scheduled right after these local elections, this wish for societal peace might not be very realistic. The chances for democratic reforms also seem to be not very realistic. Signs of a deepening of the polarization of the society seem to be the most realistic option.

Some of the voters link their vote to the hope of new steps towards a peaceful settlement of the Kurdish question. For some, the AKP still seems to be the only guarantor of progress in the peace talks and peace process. For others, progress in peace talks can only be attained with steps toward democratization, which seem to be not realistic at all with the AKP. For some, the re-establishment of rule of law and accountability is a precondition for sustainable peace talks. This would mean accountability not only in regard to corruption cases but also in regard to the legal cases of recent years. If, as the Prime Minister states, there exists or existed a parallel state in the judiciary,

what does this mean for all the political trials of the past and present? How can people gain confidence in a state apparatus that seems more and more shaped by political affiliation and less by competence? How can civil society, individuals, develop confidence in state authorities, when even the president of the Republic defends the closure of the Internet platform Twitter while stating that this is illegal?

To be honest, the fate of this country will not be decided with these elections. It is a milestone in a long period of societal conflict this country has to go through. The outcome of this severe process is still open. This is the only point that allows people not to lose their hope and fall into despair.

On behalf of the Perspectives team

Ulrike Dufner

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Authoritarianism and political crisis

Yunus Sözen

Authoritarianism boils down to omnipotence. A regime is authoritarian when a political actor holds all the political power, cannot be held accountable and there is lack of conflict between the political elites – even if that actor is the most popular leader or party in the said country. Located in the opposite end of the political spectrum, modern democracies are regimes of equilibrium where power is divided among various groups, the strong are subject to checks and balances, and the political elites are in competition or conflict within a given framework. In brief, in this type of regime the opposition can pressure the government by using the freedoms of expression and association, and the power is not concentrated but separated, and the different power centers balance each other.

**Yunus Sözen**

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According to these basic definitions, we could characterize the Turkish political regime as follows. First of all, from 2007 until 2010, Turkey completed its transition to an electoral/ competitive authoritarian system¹ under AKP (Justice and Development Party) rule. In this stage, the political debates in Turkey centered around the axes of secularism vs. Islamic conservatism, and civilian vs. military rule; however, Turkey became increasingly authoritarian in political institutional terms in the sense that a certain political actor rapidly concentrated all power in its hands. The institutional basis for this development was all too evident, since the constitution of 1982 made the executive much stronger than the other powers and also difficult to hold accountable. In the same constitution, the liberties of the opposition, which are supposed to hold the government accountable, are not guaranteed either as they should be in a modern democracy. The only factor which can

balance the executive is an anti-democratic one: namely, military intervention in civilian politics. Accordingly, after the AKP won two consecutive elections, came to control the posts of Prime Minister and President, and ousted the military from the political scene, no democratic or authoritarian adversary was left – considering that the high judiciary was also defanged after the referendum of September 12, 2010. In brief, AKP not only eradicated the military's oversight in the political system but also laid the groundwork for its own authoritarian rule.

Another key factor for the concentration of power in AKP is its ideology, according to which the national will is represented by elected rulers and any attempt to question their decisions is tantamount to going against the national will. AKP deployed this ideology against not only the military but also against attempts at constitutional oversight, dissident media outlets and various political organizations. After gaining control of the executive and legislative branches, the AKP increased its clout inside the judiciary, too, and severely restricted the leeway of the opposition, which it branded as the enemy of the national will. For instance, the mainstream media has been either brought under government control or muzzled. In 2013, even as the biggest protests in the history of Turkey erupted in its most central square, the mainstream media did not cover the event – precisely because of the authoritarianization that took place between 2007-2010.

In the period between 2010 and 2013, which followed the establishment of electoral authoritarianism, the debate in Turkey centered not on authoritarianization but rather the policies implemented by an unchecked government in line with its conservative and populist ideology. The so-called '4+4+4' education law, limitations on alcohol consumption, and neoliberal urban policies are cases in point. The Gezi uprising can be



interpreted as the rebellion of the masses which rejected these right-wing and conservative social policies, but lack modern democratic opposition channels against the omnipotent government. The AKP's response to the Gezi uprising carried the political crisis to a whole new level. As such, the issue went much farther than a problem of authoritarianism and its social policies and turned into a crisis of good leadership (inability to govern the country according to the general interest). In response to Gezi, the government tried to reinforce its constituency by branding the dissident masses as the enemy of the national will (who refuse to recognize electoral results), in line with its populist ideology. To put it more concretely, the government tried to portray the rebels as an elite which is trying to roll back the gains of the conservative sectors in the last decade. As such, the government chose to govern just one sector (its constituency) by creating oppositions, instead of governing a "country" which could be conceptualized as a community of citizens.

Although it seemed successful in this attempt, the government saw its general legitimacy challenged radically. Then on December 17, 2013, AKP took a serious hit in the form of a corruption probe allegedly managed by the Gülen sect – its covert coalition partner in the last 12 years – which is well-organized inside the judiciary and the police. Although the probe obliged four AKP ministers to resign, the party reacted to this threat in the same way, that is, by organizing another attack against the enemies of the national will (this time, the Gülen sect). In a very short space of time, thousands of police officers, prosecutors and bureaucrats were dismissed and replaced, blocking the corruption investigation and establishing the total control of the party over the state. As a result, the AKP pointed to the ballot box as the

only place to resolve both the discontent (Gezi) against the regime (authoritarianism) and its policies (conservatism and neoliberalism), and the accusations of arbitrary rule, corruption and lawlessness (brought up by the December 17 probe). Consequently, local elections were no longer a platform for electing local officials. These elections were much more than a vote of confidence for the government, becoming an arena where the AKP's political regime and corruption was voted on.

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Electoral strategies of political parties

AKP's electoral strategy was to consolidate its constituency by pointing to an "other," who allegedly threatening its values and existence. The threat was embodied first by the dissidents who took to the streets during Gezi, and then by the corruption probe of December 17. In line with this strategy, Erdoğan equated his own political future with the future of the conservative and religious sectors that he incorporated into the political system. In this manner, he strived to avoid a possible disintegration of his base due to corruption

scandals or political instability.

The CHP (Republican People's Party), on the other hand, deployed a two-pronged strategy to maximize its votes, setting out from the assumption that the majority of the Turkish electorate is composed of right-wing conservative individuals. On the one hand, in certain metropolitan centers, CHP opted for conservative and right-wing candidates; on the other, it staged only a mild opposition against AKP rule which has governed numerous large cities for the last two decades and established clientelistic relations in poor neighborhoods in order to give voters the message that their lifestyle will not be threatened under a CHP rule. However, the CHP could not maintain this strategy, and found itself portrayed as the political party which threatens the status quo of the masses.

As for the MHP, it opposed the peace process and criticized the government's corruption and lawlessness. However in comparison with the CHP, the MHP was more successful in staying out of the polarization created by Gezi and December 17. It is probable that the party opted for this political line deliberately, trying to present itself as an alternative to right-wing voters estranged from the AKP. The BDP-HDP (Peace and Democracy Party / Peoples' Democratic Party), the fourth largest

the general elections of 2011, the BDP-HDP increased their votes albeit by a small margin (less than 1%), the CHP's votes remained unchanged, and the AKP lost over 2 million votes (6.5 percentage points), whereas MHP increased its votes by over 2 million (4.6 percentage points).

Although it is evident that local candidates play a crucial role in local elections including the votes cast for municipal council members, we can draw certain general conclusions. For instance, an analysis of the municipal council votes by provinces reveals that the AKP lost votes in almost all provinces (with the exception of a few like Diyarbakır and Mardin), even if we take into account the effect of individual mayor candidates. The MHP, on the contrary, has increased its votes in almost all provinces. The CHP increased its votes in a few provinces but lost votes in many more. The most probable reason why it has preserved its overall percentage is the rise in its votes due to certain individual candidates in metropolitan centers such as Istanbul (an increase of 5.5 percentage points) and Izmir (of 2 percentage points). In terms of vote percentages, the MHP is the clear winner of the elections, and despite the general impression, it seems to have stolen votes from not only AKP but also CHP in many cases. Besides, although the results of Ankara are far from final (as of April 3), the AKP has not suffered serious losses despite the fall in its votes. The underlying reasons are the change in the law on metropolitan municipalities, the huge margin between the AKP and the CHP, and the number of incumbent mayors from AKP (incumbency effect).

Maybe the most critical question concerning the electoral results is how the AKP has managed to preserve its votes or why the CHP has failed to increase its share, amidst the political crisis and corruption allegations. To respond to this question, we must turn to the long term factors which determine electoral behavior: In Turkey, conservative and / or right-wing voters constitute a significant majority.³ Looking at voting patterns, we see that the share of right-wing parties has never fallen much below 60%, and has indeed climbed to 70% and higher after the 1995 elections. Furthermore, the key party of this category, namely the AKP, has embraced a large part of the right-wing political elite (e.g. Numan Kurtulmuş, Süleyman Soylu) and there is no right-wing-alternative appealing to the same constituency except the nationalist and conservative MHP. In addition, the AKP has integrated vast religious and conservative masses into politics albeit through authoritarian means, and has granted them recognition and dignity; this has created an important ideological bond.⁴ As for the economic factors which have an effect on short-term voting behavior, the AKP does not seem to face significant headwinds. After the 2009 elections

AKP's electoral strategy was to consolidate its constituency by pointing to an "other," who allegedly threatening its values and existence. Erdoğan equated his own political future with the future of the conservative and religious sectors that he incorporated into the political system. In this manner, he strived to avoid a possible disintegration of his base due to corruption scandals or political instability.

party in the country, had a hard time positioning itself in the run-up to the elections. There could be various reasons why the BDP-HDP hesitated in criticizing the AKP government during acute crises such as Gezi or December 17: 1) The ongoing peace talks with AKP; 2) The idea that its constituency suffers more from symbolic or physical violence, rather than corruption or authoritarianism; 3) The wish to reach out to conservative Kurdish voters, who have a favorable opinion of the AKP.

Election results

Although subject to change, the preliminary results of the elections are as follows: the AKP won 43.3% of the votes, the CHP 25.6 %, the MHP 17.6 %, and the BDP-HDP 6.6 %.² When compared with



Erdoğan supporters are greeting him in their burial-robes, a theme he occasionally refer in his speeches to emphasize his fearlessness.

held in the middle of the economic crisis (when the AKP's votes dropped to 38%), Turkey initially returned to rather high growth rates, and since 2012 has posted lower but still positive growth figures.⁵ As such, the AKP's loss of 6.5 percentage points due to the political crisis and mismanagement must be considered to be rather significant, considering the party's overall position.

One key reason why this drop has failed to change a perceived "AKP victory" is Turkey's multi-party system dominated by a single party. Due to the huge margin between the first and second parties (26% in 2007, 24% in 2011, 17% in 2014), the opposition has little hope of coming to power despite a considerable drop in the votes of the former.

The fact that the CHP has failed to increase its votes can be explained by the same factors. Furthermore, although the CHP's tactic of presenting right-wing mayor candidates has given these candidates a fighting chance in the mayoral vote, it has failed to bring up the party's overall votes or even votes for municipal council members (except in Istanbul). For example, Mansur Yavaş got 44% of the votes in Ankara, whereas the CHP received only 32% (just 1% higher than in 2011). The MHP, on the other hand, seemed to benefit from the shift of some AKP voters to its ranks.

Political significance of electoral results

Omnipotence has first led to social policies of exclusion, in accordance with the ideology of the ruling political party. Later, following an external uprising (Gezi) and an internal one (17 December), AKP opted for an arbitrary mode of governance (governing only for the support of its base),

enjoying free rein in implementing neoliberal conservative policies. It is these conditions under which Turkey went to the ballot box. In such conditions, elections cease to be an instrument of democracy, and become one of authoritarian and arbitrary rule. Whatever the reason for the drop or rise in votes or the voters' motivation in casting votes may be, the elections have an ulterior political significance independent of all these: The arbitrary and authoritarian framework has received approval, even though electors have not voted with this in mind. What is changing, therefore, in Turkey is not the behavior of voters, but rather that of the political elite in power. Furthermore, due to strong ideological bonds, the AKP's capability of shaping its constituency in its own image is much more powerful than that of previous conservative governments. The electoral results suggest that this mode of government is here to stay for some time. Nevertheless, grassroots movements and the presidential elections could lead to cracks inside this omnipotent regime and to conflicts between those in power, which in turn might herald the transition to a more balanced political system.

- 1 Schendler, Andreas. 2006. The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism. Schendler ed. Electoral Authoritarianism içinde. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner, pp. 1-23. For the Turkish case, see Sözen, Yunus. 2008. Private View, "Turkey between Tutelary Democracy and Electoral Authoritarianism", Fall, no:13, pp. 78-84.
- 2 <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yerel-secim-2014/>
- 3 Ali and E. Kalaycıoğlu, 2009. The Rising Tide of Conservatism in Turkey. New York, Palgrave.
- 4 Sözen, Yunus. 2011. Yeni yol, "AKP ve bir otoriterleşme ideolojisi olarak neo-muhafazakâr popülizm", August, no: 43, pp. 7-23
- 5 See, Çarkoğlu, Ali. 2014. Turkey Goes to the Ballot Box. Brookings, pp.1-8.

CAPITAL AND CAPITALISTS IN TURKEY

Gülen sect: Reached for the state,
got capital instead

Ayşe Çavdar

A religious sect now defies the strongest political party in Turkey. There must be a reason for this alarming self-confidence. Is it rooted in history; that is, does the sect have a long heritage? Not really -it is a movement that started to take shape in the 1970s. What about economic clout? Well, sort of; but in a country where each transaction must be approved by the state, economic force can translate into business investment only as far as the state allows it.



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As such, it is hard to talk about huge business power in this respect. International connections? The Gülen sect is being investigated by the FBI, branded as “suspicious” by Germany and its schools are banned in Russia, Uzbekistan, Iran, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan; it is now trying to gain clout in religious conflicts in developing countries such as Nigeria, Sudan and Somalia. This kind of international influence is not enough to challenge a ruling political party which has secured 50% of votes. Although Prime Minister Erdoğan suggests otherwise, Gülen’s followers cannot be likened to the Assassins of Hassan-i Sabbah, that is, an army of believers willing to die for their faith. Well, what is really at stake then? How have they come to secure so much political power?

A familiar starting point: Fighting communism and evolution

The name of the association where Gülen chose to step into politics is rather telling, considering the conditions of the epoch. After completing his military service in 1963 in İskenderun, Gülen returned to Erzurum and participated in

the establishment of Anti-Communist League of Turkey (TKMD). During the Cold War era, Anti-Communist League (KMD) was one of the prominent projects designed for Turkey. KMD became active in 1950 in Zonguldak and opened its first official branch in Istanbul in 1956. However, the association was not to be long-lived, and was closed down after the 1960 military coup. In 1963, it was reestablished under the name TKMD and came to be associated with CIA-supported counterinsurgency operations. After the association was eventually closed down, some members of TKMD played a role in the establishment of Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and Society for Dissemination of Science (İlim Yayma Cemiyeti).

Various biographies of Gülen suggest that in this period, despite being a co-founder of TKMD he also attended meetings at People’s Houses (Halkevleri), probably to compensate for the negative historical image associated with the former.

In following years, Gülen worked as preacher (vaiz) at mosques in Thrace and the Aegean Region, in particular, Edirne, Kırklareli and İzmir.

Stately aspirations inside the state

Subsequently Gülen rose to notoriety because of two political lawsuits. In the first lawsuit, he was placed under custody in the aftermath of the March 12 military coup on May 5, 1971 for violating the Article 163 of the Turkish Criminal Code, which could be summarized as “conspiring to establish a religion-based state.” After seven months of imprisonment, he was finally released in 1974. Meanwhile, he continued to give sermons in Edremit, Manisa and Bornova. Gülen can be said to have shot to fame after imprisonment and acquittal. In 1975 and 1976,

Gülen travelled across Anatolia, preaching against communism and Darwinism. He started to publish the periodical *Sızıntı* in 1979, which took up similar themes.

Gülen got into trouble with the state once again during the 1980 military coup. A search warrant was issued against him, obliging him to hide. The Prime Minister Turgut Özal at the time had the warrant cancelled a few years later. Mehmet Keçeciler, who then was their go-between, recalls that period in a long biographical interview, published by Hayy Kitap:

“Fethullah Gülen vanished into thin air just before the military coup. Following the 1983 elections, we came to power. I was the head of ANAP’s [Motherland Party] party organization back then. There was a search warrant for Fethullah Hodja. The late Burdur Governor İsmail Günindi was an old friend of mine from when we were working as state employees.... One day Günindi came to the ANAP Headquarters to say thank you. Alaattin Kaya and Mevlüt Saygun were also in my office. Kaya was the publisher of *Zaman* newspaper, and Saygun the manager of Fethullah Hodja’s education institutions. I introduced my visitors to one other. İsmail said ‘Fethullah Gülen Hodja is in hiding for no good reason. The prosecutor of Burdur only wants to take his statement; then they will let him go. The sect is causing unnecessary trouble by urging Fethullah Gülen to flee.’ Naturally, Kaya and Saygun were all ears. İsmail said all this, and then left. A few days later, Kaya and Saygun paid me a visit; Kaya said that they had talked to the Hodja about the issue. He had said ‘I will turn myself in, if Turgut Özal gives his word; I will give a statement.’ They said that they wanted to meet with the Prime Minister. I expressed their wish to Mr. Özal. I was a bit worried though. To make sure, I called İsmail (governor of Burdur) and said, ‘Talk with the prosecutor and double check. It would be very unpleasant if Fethullah Hodja turns himself in, only to be arrested. Our prestige is at stake here.’ İsmail then contacted the prosecutor and called me back: ‘No worries. They won’t arrest him; they will just take his statement and let him go... Once I made sure that he would not be arrested, we paid a visit to Mr. Özal together with Kaya and Saygun. Özal said to them, ‘I confirm what Mehmet has told you.’ A few days later, Fethullah Hodja did turn himself in in İzmir, gave a statement and was let go.”

From this anecdote, we can see that Gülen already enjoyed protection and privileges from the highest officials of the state back then. However, it is not so easy to grasp the reasons behind this influence. That is because, although Gülen seems to act like the heir of Said Nursi, a



key figure in the Islamist movement in Turkey, his words and political activities are not representative of Nursi’s line. Although he once had ties to the Okuyucular branch of the Nur sect, he went his own way after the sect was divided into two: Whereas the Yeni Asır circle voted no to the 1982 Constitution, the Şuracılar branch voted yes. Gülen’s new line was harshly criticized by the followers of Said Nursi, although there was significant competition and strife amongst the latter. The criticism was mainly aimed at Gülen’s close ties with the state and private business.

Gülen started his political career in Accociation For Fighting Communism, which was know for its counter-guerrilla operations and was crucial to Nationalist Action Party’s (MHP) foundation.

The Gülen movement was fully aware of class-based and cultural divides and made good use of these. The Gülen sect did not aspire to social harmony; they translated existing class and culture divides into intra-sect dynamics, and offered upward class mobility as a source of promise and motivation.

The opus of Said Nursi is still read and discussed in student houses, schools and conversation groups controlled by the Gülen sect. Different branches of the Nur sect, although in discord about almost every issue, do agree that Gülen is far from being an heir of Said Nursi’s political and religious thought.

Gülen resigned from the civil service in 1981, as there was a search warrant against him. He continued to write articles for magazines and gave unofficial sermons. Then in 1989, he became a voluntary preacher at Valide Sultan Mosque in Üsküdar. His first books comprise the sermons delivered in this mosque. By the 1990s, Gülen was already a frequently cited political figure. Everyone talked about his schools,

students, prep schools called “dershane”, companies, and even attempts to place his followers in the army and police. In 1994, he established and became the honorary president of Foundation of Journalists and Writers (Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı), which became the flagship of the Gülen sect. The foundation became a prominent political player by organizing the Abant Meetings in the aftermath of the military memorandum of February 28, 1997. The objective of these meetings was to help Turkish political elites reach consensus, even if a basic one, on key issues. Indeed, the AKP project was based on such a basic consensus. The bureaucratic clout of the Gülen sect would thus be coupled with the political popularity of Tayyip Erdoğan and his entourage. Liberal intellectuals contributed to this alliance a legitimizing discourse with democratic references. Rocked by political turmoil, unsolved political murders, and cases of corruption in the 1990s, Turkey

could not fully capitalize on, has turned out to be a critical advantage for the Gülen sect and for National Vision. Both movements can thus develop a religious teaching steering away from moralistic principles and practices, which could otherwise lead one to question certain political and economical activities: They offer Anatolian religious groups—historically excluded from the economic sphere and distribution networks—an opportunity to thrive under current capitalist conditions. In a world where conventional, deep-rooted sects preach humility and moderation, and try to preserve their autonomy by keeping the state at bay, this lack of historical roots allows the Gülen sect and National Vision to uphold ambition and organization “for the sake of God”—the so-called “service”—to engage in conspicuous consumption on order to praise the force of faith, and to utilize the weapons of the enemy in the fight for survival. In other words, it allows them to disregard the discrepancy between the instrument and message. In this respect, the competition between the Gülen sect and AKP—itself a transformed representative of the National Vision—is far from surprising.

Another dynamic powering the rapid ascent of the Gülen sect in the 1990s is related to the built-in inequalities of the socio-economic system. The Gülen movement was fully aware of class-based and cultural divides and made good use of these. The Gülen sect did not aspire to social harmony; they translated existing class and culture divides into intra-sect dynamics, and offered upward class mobility as a source of promise and motivation. If you studied hard, you could be accepted to a higher echelon. Otherwise you risked losing the advantages associated with your sect membership or remaining stuck with no socio-economic mobility. As such, the organization resembled the management of a large corporation, where awards and punishments are distributed to according to performance and social capital.

And finally, the third dynamic was shaped in the area left vacant by the state. They helped each other when purchasing a car or house, or when setting up a business. Additionally, a vast network of businessmen also provided that key ingredient of well-oiled market mechanisms, that is, trust. Since they had trust in each other, they could sign long-term business contracts. In local chambers of commerce and industry, these business networks eventually led to political clout. The same was true for schools and student houses. After a person joined the sect as a very young university student, they no longer had to worry about choosing their job, their spouse or even the name of their child. The sect also

Sect members could easily repay soaring foreign currency debts despite exchange rate hikes, thanks to internal solidarity. They helped each other when purchasing a car or house, or when setting up a business. Besides, a vast network of businessmen also provided that key ingredient of well-oiled market mechanisms, that is, trust. Since they had trust in each other, they could sign long-term business contracts. In local chambers of commerce and industry, these business networks eventually led to political clout.

was in a pretty desperate position. It was almost inevitable for AKP—rivalled only by Cem Uzan’s Youth Party (Genç Parti)—to become the rising star of center right.

Gülen sect on the rise

The main dynamics underlying the stellar rise of the Gülen sect are to be found in the transformations of religion, politics and state. Let’s start with the first one:

Unlike the Süleymanlılar sect, which rose to prominence in similar fashion, and the National Vision (Millî Görüş), which first appeared as a political project before turning into a sect, the Gülen sect does not have a historically rooted tradition. Although Gülen traces his philosophical roots back to Said Nursi and certain Islamists even claim his sect to be a modern branch of the Kadiri denomination, Gülen has long abandoned these political and philosophical references. This lack of roots, which the Süleymanlılar

became the social guarantor of business capital, which the state could not provide. As the state became less and less reliable, sects become more and more so. However, this has also changed in recent years. Having lost its flexibility, the Gülen sect—and others, too—started closing themselves to the outside world, and sharing their beliefs and “acquisitions” only inside their own circle. As such, sects stopped expanding by offering reassurance to more and more people, and instead started to give a bigger share of the rewards to current members. Thus, the social and economic relations established by the sect turned into a sphere of privilege.

Transformation of capital as the scene of competition

The so-called Gülenist capital has come about by liberating itself of conventional Islam and its deep-rooted traditions. Although initially organized in the business organization MÜSİAD, Gülen-related businessmen soon differentiated themselves from other MÜSİAD members by business methods. In 2005, they set up TUSKON, which became a rival alternate that granted significant favors to its members. From 2007 onwards, MÜSİAD members started asking AKP officials why the sect received preferential treatment. To understand this competition, one must examine what funds were allocated to which companies by the development and investment agencies set up under AKP rule, as well as the political connections of concerned companies. Nevertheless, it must also be noted that AKP's animosity towards the sect has become more visible as MÜSİAD increased its clout.

On the other hand, the feeble percentage of MÜSİAD and TUSKON members among Turkey's largest corporations suggests that this competition takes place on a rather limited base and that this capital accumulation process has yet to find its own feet, independent of political support.

According to 2010 data provided by the Istanbul Chamber of Industry, the number of MÜSİAD and TUSKON members among the 500 largest members of the chamber does not even reach one hundred. The total share in employment of these two rival associations is around 10%. Their joint share in total profits is also around the same percentage. Considering that only 8 MÜSİAD members made it to the list in 1990, there obviously has been considerable progress. Judging by the table below, one could argue that Islamic capital does not have much weight among the top 500 members of Istanbul Chamber of Industry, and that it compensates

for this disadvantage through political and bureaucratic advantages offered by AKP. As such, the rivalry between TUSKON and MÜSİAD not only has a rather small stake, but also seems very risky. TUSKON has made significant headway by exporting 2.5 times MÜSİAD's export volume; however, this seems set to change due to the ongoing conflict between AKP and sect.

	ISO 500	MÜSİAD	TUSKON
Number of companies	500	31	45
Ex-factory sales (TL billion)	210.6	7.6	12.4
Share in total (%)	100	3.6	5.9
Exports (USD million)	46.224	1.004	2.522
Share in total (%)	100	2.1	5.5
Profit (TL million)	15.555	671	986
Share in total (%)	100	4.3	6.3
Number of employees	516.305	19.981	33.469
Share in total (%)	1000	3.8	6.5

The first signs of tension between Gülen and AKP surfaced in 2007. The reason for conflict was same with that of their alliance in 2002. Erdoğan and his entourage enjoyed huge political popularity; however, they lacked support in the bureaucracy, which found itself in a straitjacket after the February 28th memorandum. According to their initial agreement, the Gülen sect would support AKP with members who graduated from its schools and then took office across the world; which could also be seen as a privilege granted to the sect by AKP. And it worked. Prime Minister Erdoğan's proud claim “We have eliminated bureaucratic red tape” actually pointed to a change of guard in the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy was now put to the service of the party. According to this equation, the party was equivalent to the general public, as it enjoyed 50% electoral support.

It is not hard to guess that the alliance between Erdoğan's team and the Gülen sect ran into problems from the very beginning. Nevertheless, the problem first surfaced with the Mavi Marmara crisis. This ship, which allegedly transported aid to Gaza under the control of the NGO called İHH, was supported by Erdoğan, whereas Gülen indicated that Israel's permission should be sought beforehand. With the subsequent killing of nine Turkish citizens on the ship by the Israeli army, this became a turning point in the relations between Gülen and AKP.

The second crisis, which triggered consid-



Compared to MÜSİAD, which is relatively narrow in scale and geographical reach, TUSKON has a wider imperial vision. TUSKON companies are competing worldwide with global companies.

able public uproar, was soon covered up as it risked damaging both parties. The scandal was related to claims of corruption in the agency regulating university and civil service entrance exams, the ÖSYM, and thus concerned millions of people. The government and sect made their utmost to limit the scandal surrounding this key institution. In 2010, the civil service entrance exam KPSS was cancelled after claims that the questions were leaked to Gülenist test prep centers (dershane). AKP seemed to confirm these claims as it tried—in vein—to bring the ÖSYM under direct government control. Similar accusations were made about other exams organized by the agency; however, due to the extremely sensitive nature of the issue, the scandal was soon covered up, and the rivalry between the two sides inside the bureaucracy did not fully surface.

The third key moment in the tension between the sect and AKP concerned Hakan Fidan, the head of the Turkish intelligence service MİT. The crisis broke out on February 7, 2012 when the special prosecutor in charge of the KCK lawsuit, Sadrettin Sarıkaya, invited Fidan to give a statement about the case. Prime Minister Erdoğan clearly stated that Fidan would not do so. Immediately, a legislative change was passed to grant Fidan and his team legal immunity. In fact, this was the beginning of the nightmare for AKP, which had previously capitalized on the

support of Gülenists in the judiciary and police to end the army's control over the political arena. This was done by means of lawsuits dubbed Ergenekon and Balyoz. It must have become clear to Erdoğan that the Gülenist seeds he himself had planted in the bureaucracy would cause him serious headaches in any conflict of interest.

Finally, hell broke loose one year later, with the eruption of the dershane (university test preparation centers) scandal. The government wanted to close down the centers and increase the number of private schools (kolej) instead. However, the centers were the main channel of socialization for the Gülen sect. Even more importantly, the sect exploded with anger to see AKP, to which it had lent so much support in the bureaucracy, take a clear measure to eradicate its social base. Although the government finally passed legislation to postpone the closure of the test prep centers by two years, the looming crisis could not be avoided.

What happened after the police crackdown on government corruption on December 17 are the scenes of a duel between the two modern streams of Turkish Islamism: the Gülen sect and the AKP. In one corner we have the Fethullah Gülen sect and their business concerns, which boast great support in the bureaucracy, judiciary and police; in the other, AKP with its huge clout in the legislative and executive branches. What is positive about all this is that the scandal has revealed the banality of Turkish Islamism, as it turns around such worldly issues as corruption and nepotism. As such, Gülen and AKP have jointly put an end to an epoch when the historical power of Islam as a religion could be translated into political legitimacy by Islamists.

The sect also became the social guarantor of business capital, which the state could not provide. As the state became less and less reliable, sects become more and more so. However, this has also changed in recent years.

Having lost its flexibility, the Gülen sect –and others, too– started closing themselves to the outside world, and sharing their beliefs and historical “acquisitions” only inside their own circle.

CAPITAL AND CAPITALISTS IN TURKEY

Public–private partnerships: The fauna of corruption

Sermin Sarıca

According to one point of view, the term public–private partnership (PPP) is being used by governments and institutions such as the EU as a “softer” alternative to the word “privatization.” As suggested by Hodge and Greve, expressions such as “public–private partnerships” invite more people and organizations to join the debate and enable private organizations to get a market share of public service provision.¹

It is probably for this reason that when his legal proposals for PPP in the health sector were criticized as a privatization scheme in 2007, the Health Minister Recep Akdağ responded by saying “This is not privatization, but capitalizing on the power of the private sector to bring better quality health services to the citizens.”² However, the private sector is much more candid in this context. For instance in a report by the foreign investors’ association YASED, it said that “PPP amounts to privatizing today the public investments of tomorrow.”³

According to some theorists, “It would be erroneous to equate PPP projects with privatization,” since “whereas in privatization processes, the state totally or partially cedes its role as a service provider in an area to the private sector, in PPP projects the state and private sector usually coexist in a certain area

and provide joint services.”⁴

Yiğit Karahanoğulları suggests that, although it is possible to view PPP as a privatization scheme, “privatizations amount to the total or partial transfer of means of production under public ownership to the private sector (...) and as such privatizations are limited by the total volume of public assets available and the reactions of the society” and accordingly “one reason for the expansion of the PPP model is the fact that conventional privatizations are about to reach their economic and political limits.” PPP also opens up a space of profitability and a new market for the private sector; however, “PPP is different in that (...) the resource transfer is signed into contract even before the facilities are founded, and that the commercial relation between the public and private is extended over a very long process which starts with the facilities’ construction, followed by their operation and finally transfer to the public. (...) In the classical privatization model, however, the commercial relation between the public and private is a one-off affair.”⁵

It is true that in PPPs, there is not a definite transfer to private capital, but rather an ongoing relation between the public and private. Nevertheless, one cannot say that PPP is not privatization judging by this criterion only—especially in countries where the transfer of ownership is closely connected to political positions. If we do not reduce privatization to ownership transfer and take a broader perspective considering that “the privatization of state services includes all policies, which, to varying degrees, submit the economy to free market criteria rather than socio-economic needs,”⁶ then we can argue that it is possible to privatize the finance, production, ownership and management of public services and monopolies, wholly or partially.



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Public Private Partnership in Health Sector Symposium. Right: Signature Ceremony for Public Private Partnership in City Hospitals.

According to a more historical approach, “advances in means of production, new techniques of work organization, qualitative changes in the labor power, a deepening of capital accumulation, a weakening of the market’s creativity in ensuring the realization of capital (profitability) and the ups and downs of class struggle create new articulations between public services and free market actors.”⁷⁷

The EU gives a rather broad definition of PPP in a Green Paper: “PPPs describe a form of cooperation between the public authorities and economic operators. The primary aims of this cooperation are to fund, construct, renovate or operate an infrastructure or the provision of a service.”⁷⁸

The EU gives a rather broad definition of PPP: “PPPs describe a form of cooperation between the public authorities and economic operators. The primary aims of this cooperation are to fund, construct, renovate or operate an infrastructure or the provision of a service.” In this sense, PPP can be viewed as a new and special form of privatization.

In this sense, PPP can be viewed as a new and special form of privatization. As a privatization method based on a “new public management” approach designed to circumvent limits on public borrowing, PPP amounts to building a new hospital, school, highway, etc., and operating that facility to recover investment expenditure and generate profit over a long period.

PPPs come in two forms. The first is the concession contract, where the private company receives a certain fraction of user fee, e.g., in water service or paid highways. The second is the private finance initiative (PFI) contract that is widespread in the UK, where the private company is paid directly by a public agency. The concession model is applicable only when



payments are collected from end-users, whereas the PFI model can be adapted to any public service.

In a more advanced PPP model dubbed “institutional PPP” by the European Commission, a joint public service enterprise is set up as a company owned by both public authorities and the private sector. Such joint enterprises can sign a contract with municipalities to deliver certain services. For instance, private companies and municipalities both have stakes in water companies in Italy, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

To summarize, the instrumentalist perspective which pits the state against the market should be abandoned and PPPs ought to be viewed as a type of partnership where the state’s functions are changed to become more corporate.

PPPs in Turkey

In Turkey, the amendment of a single article of the Law on basic Health Services initiated the legislation on PPP entitled “Building health centers in return for leasing.” In July 2006, the Regulation on Retrofitting Health Centers in Return for Leasing or for the Operation of Non-



Medical Facilities and Services allowed the construction of public health centers in return for leasing or for the operation of non-medical areas. Afterwards, the executive decree on Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Health was amended so that in June 2007, at the very last session of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) before the elections, the two independent directorates of Public-Private Partnership Directorate and Construction & Repair Directorate were set up. Then, in the last parliamentary session before the 2011 elections, an “omnibus law” was passed to allow the transfer of hospital buildings and other real estate built under the PPP scheme to the public housing administration TOKİ. In April 2011, a public tender was held for an integrated health center in the province of Kayseri. Under this scheme, city hospitals and health campuses were to be built in 29 provinces. In February 2013, the Draft Law on the Building and Retrofitting Facilities and Obtaining Services using the PPP model was approved by the TGNA’s Planning and Budget Commission. According to the web site of the Public-Private Partnership Directorate, as of December 2013 the PPP scheme covered 20 health centers. Of these, four are under construction, nine are in the contract stage, three are in the final proposal

stage, one is in the initial proposal stage, one has passed the preliminary tender stage, and preliminary tender announcements have been made for two others.⁹

According to this model, private sector consortiums will raise the necessary funds, build the hospital buildings and other facilities, and manage them. The state, on the other hand, will grant the plot of land to the entrepreneur for free (as per the additional Article 7 Paragraph 1 of Basic Law on Health Services, the contractor can also build facilities on her/ his own plot of land; however, as indicated by O. Karahanoğulları, entrepreneurs naturally prefer the transfer of public land)¹⁰, employ medical personnel and provide core health services. In return for the construction of the facilities and the provision of services, the state will pay rent to the private enterprise for 25 years.

In this model where the state pays rent to and purchases some of the services provided from private companies, the said companies can recover the initial investment in a short period of about three years. In the remaining 22 years, the companies will generate vast earnings in the form of rent, service payments, incentives, exemptions or guarantees.

This investment and service scheme is mainly deployed in the health service in Turkey;

however, in the coming years, it is expected to be expanded to other public services, especially education. That is because it is a model especially convenient in areas where privatization is difficult. It supposedly lessens the budget burden by extending payments over a longer period of time and enabling the circumvention of borrowing limits. Indeed, eight paragraphs were added to the Law on Higher Education Credit and Dormitory Agency to allow for the “construction of dormitories and other facilities in return for leasing.” An executive order issued in September 2011 enables the establishment of schools and education campuses via PPP.

Although this model resembles the older “built-operate-transfer” model of privatization, it allows companies to post higher profits. Since the basic service is provided in a building owned by the private entrepreneur, the state pays rent over a long period. The state allocates public land to the companies for free for periods of 25 to 35 years. The companies can operate every area of the hospital they build. During this period, the companies are paid rent for the building and also service fees in return for the “public services” they provide. The companies also generate revenues by operating every commercial area in the hospital, from the canteen to the kindergarten. Since

In numerous countries, a number of PPP schemes have been cancelled for violating the basic rules of competition and leading to corruption. The examples came from Denmark-Farum, France-Villemandeur, Germany-Frankfurt, Belgium-Flanders and lastly Brazil, where Siemens was banned from participating in public tenders.

the public assumes the responsibility of the basic health services, private entrepreneurs can focus on other public services and auxiliary services that have a guaranteed profit. The vast mass of users who need public services and the sheer size and indispensability of the goods and services needed to generate basic services guarantee customers and profit for private entrepreneurs. In addition, the private entrepreneurs are exempt from the Value Added Tax, stamp tax and other duties in the purchases of goods and services. They are provided with the full backing of the Treasury when applying for international loans for investment purposes. Companies can also build hospitals in forest areas. The state guarantees “customers” by promising that the hospital will have a mini-

mum 70% occupancy rate.

There are even more perks for the private sector: All second and third level public health centers and schools in the provinces where city hospitals or education campuses are to be built are gradually being closed down, and highly profitable downtown locations are thus being opened to privatization.

Corruption and PPP

In public finance, PPP paves the ground for moral hazard in many respects. First of all, since the projects are on a vast scale, only a couple of companies can join in and competition is limited, although competition is presented as the main advantage of bringing in private companies. In numerous countries, a number of PPP schemes have been cancelled for violating the basic rules of competition and leading to corruption. The examples came from Denmark-Farum, France-Villemandeur, Germany-Frankfurt, Belgium-Flanders and lastly Brazil, where Siemens was banned from participating in public tenders.¹¹

PPPs lead to serious problems of transparency. The key reason is that private companies refuse to disclose certain data to the general public claiming that they constitute commercial secrets. This limitation of transparency can block accountability in PPPs, since audit costs are very high, and the public sector lacks the means and resources to control the private companies involved. In many cases, the private company is much more in control of the project as regards quality and production costs.¹²

According to Price, the (as of yet unproven) assumption that private sector brings about increased productivity can only be valid in a perfectly competitive market economy where bankruptcy is a possibility. In the PPP model, however, the projects concerned are on a vast scale and therefore seen by governments as too big to fail.¹³ The private company involved knows that it will be supported by the government if it runs into financial trouble, and this leads to moral hazard. That is because the private company knows all too well that it assumes no real risk, whatever the PPP contract says.¹⁴

Corruption can arise at every stage of the process, beginning from the selection of the company since it is dubious whether the public tender is organized in an unbiased way. Frequently, companies that pay bribes or make donations to the electoral campaigns of policymakers or have close connections with them win the tenders. The audit of the quality of the work delivered is similarly questionable.

The company can compromise service quality by using inadequate materials. The objectivity of the quality control process is generally dubious. Bribing officials usually costs much less than carrying out the investments that requires meeting quality standards.

The main objective of a private entrepreneur is profit. Private companies strive to slash the costs imposed upon them by government regulation. For instance, time is key for companies. As such, whereas private entrepreneurs try to avoid delays such as construction permit processes, public officials can easily postpone such decisions for months. In such a case, bribe can be demanded or offered to “speed things up.”

Another important factor in PPP-based investment projects is land. In a development project, various means of corruption can be developed to lower the cost of land. For example, a private firm might be interested in developing a certain plot of land but unwilling to purchase it at the market price or invest in its infrastructure. Instead, the company can bribe local officials to cut the market price of or have them build infrastructure in the plot planned for development. Alternatively, legislation concerning the use of a certain plot, such as zoning plans, can become the subject of corruption. Local officials can change their minds as to whether the area will be used for agriculture, residence or commerce, etc.

In addition, private investors are keen on lowering the taxes, duties and other regulatory costs imposed upon them by the government. The government holds the right to provide incentives such as subsidy, tax discount or land grants to companies willing to invest. For instance, the government can grant a company the right to use a location or service, free of charge. Likewise, the government can offer access to loans at below-market interest rates. In all such cases, firms may opt for various methods of corruption to obtain financial incentives or slash investment cost.

The discretionary power of government officials in key positions who control such important decisions¹⁵ is closely related to the cost of corruption; the bigger the discretionary power of officials and the smaller the options before the companies, the higher is the cost of corruption.¹⁶

In the face of such risks, from 2004 onwards the European Union’s Progress Reports demanded that Turkey establish an independent anti-corruption unit in line with neoliberal governance principles; AKP ignored this demand for a long period. Instead, in 2009, the Prime Ministry Audit Department’s “Anti-Corruption

Coordination Unit” was given this task under the direct orders and approval of the Prime Minister himself. The government tries to create its own “coalition of winners” so as to legitimize neoliberal policies in the eyes of the masses on the one hand, and alleges the existence of a “parallel state” inside the state to discredit and fend off accusations of corruption and bribery on the other.

Recent events oblige us to seek an answer to the following question: Should PPP be viewed as a very functional component of state restructuring in the post-1980 era in line with a neoliberal perspective, or do the cases of corruption which erupted after the December 17th probe show that AKP disregards norms of regulatory government such as transparency and accountability to its benefit?

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CAPITAL AND CAPITALISTS IN TURKEY

Media capital and ultra-cross media ownership

Gülseren Adaklı

In Turkey, a dependent capitalist country, the media displays ownership and control patterns different from those in other parts of the world. Across the world, large media outlets tend to pursue profit just like companies in other industries, and media production accounts for a large part of their growth strategies. In Turkey, this is not the case. In Turkish capitalism, media investments are “instrumentalized” towards ulterior goals such as securing investments in other sectors and gaining political clout.

**Gülseren Adaklı**

Born in 1966 in İskenderun, Adaklı graduated from Gazi University's Faculty of Communications in 1988. She went on to work at the production and news departments of media outlets such as TRT, Hürriyet Production, THA and ATV. In 1995, she joined the Faculty of Communications at Ankara University as a research assistant. Adaklı submitted her master's thesis entitled Reality Shows in Turkey in 1998 and her PhD thesis Ownership and Control in Turkish Media Sector (1980-2003) in 2003. Since 2010, she has been giving lectures at Ankara University on media policies, the history of communications, and political economy of the media and culture.

In the wake of the capitalist crisis of the 1970's, media investments gained momentum and expanded in the 1980s and 1990s.¹ Media outlets, whose number dwindled, followed expansion strategies which accelerated three main types of integration.

Horizontal ownership occurs when a corporation in a certain sector strives to control target audiences and markets in different subsectors with multiple products/companies. For instance, a corporation running a TV channel that appeals to the general public may also set up a news channel or specialized newspapers with specific target groups.

Vertical ownership is when a corporation tries to control the entire supply chain, from the procurement of raw materials or basic inputs to the delivery of the end-product to the consumer. When a single company manages to control the entire production process, a strong tendency towards monopolization appears in the sector.

Cross-media ownership refers to strengthening control in a certain medium by

stepping into other media. For instance, a holding company dominant in the music industry might invest in book publishing or cable TV industries with a view to compensate the cyclical slowdown in the former by profiting from growth in the latter. Once a taboo, the wave of neoliberalism turned this into a legitimate aspiration.²

Ultra-cross media ownership is when a holding invests in the media as well as other industries. In general, Turkish media outlets guarantee investments outside the media. Such holdings may capitalize on their power in the media to take part in public tenders, government incentives and allocations, and privatizations.

This “new media architecture” has been gaining momentum in Turkey and across the world since the 1980s.³ Some claim that the media should not serve the interests of the government or business, but that of the general public; the media should contribute to an egalitarian and democratic social order. However, the new media architecture disregards public good. The relationships of media companies with other industries make media outlets cautious about any content which might jeopardize such joint interests. Power hubs (i.e., governments, bureaucracy, companies, and regulatory agencies) capitalize on their media power to gain profit or political clout.

“Pro-AKP media”: Media outlets instrumentalized more than ever

After the military coup in 1980, consecutive Motherland Party governments allowed capital to enter the media sector and the integration of the latter into the banking and fi-



nance industries. Under AKP rule, the media industry has completely merged with manufacturing and services, resulting in a media complex dependent on the government. The media has become more instrumentalized than ever before in Turkish history, displaying not only political parallelism,⁴ but also upholding the objectives of the AKP government regardless of its own policies.⁵ Accordingly, instead of the popular expression “biased media” (yandaş medya), I use the term “pro-AKP media,” which denotes an ensemble of political, social and economic relations. The media owes its presence and clout to AKP, occasional conflict with the government in the last ten years.⁶

During the Gezi protests, pro-AKP media outlets’ headlines were almost identical to one another, as can be seen in these publications of June 7, 2013.

Under AKP rule, certain media outlets suffered from economic repercussions, such as hefty tax fines. Two cases are the tax penalty of TL 3.7 billion handed to the Doğan Group in 2010⁷ and the economic hardships imposed upon Taraf newspaper for its critical stance.⁸

Pro-AKP media outlets, which became significantly visible from 2007 onwards, generate media content which serves government purposes. They define the terms of political debate through news reports and debate programs, but their influence extends beyond this. For instance, the Çukurova Group, which once controlled Akşam newspaper and Show TV, succeeded in producing a new billionaire (Mehmet Sepil) in a single year thanks to its subsidiary Genel Energy, which was granted the right to extract and

distribute oil in Iraqi Kurdistan.⁹ How would it be possible for this media boss to support an editorial line critical of the government’s Kurdish policy? The example of Mehmet Emin Karamehmet will illustrate this, as will that of Ferit Şahenk, owner of the Doğu Group, which drew criticism for its coverage of the Gezi protests.

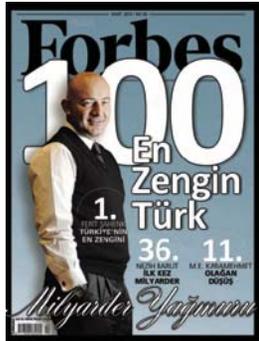
Oil investments of Genel Energy in Iraqi Kurdistan. The company is a subsidiary of Çukurova Holding, former owner of Show TV and Akşam newspaper.

Ferit Şahenk, owner of the TV channel NTV, was designated the richest man in Turkey in the Turkish edition of Forbes magazine in 2011. Şahenk also made it to the headline of the Zaman newspaper on April 26, 2009.¹⁰

The ways in which these media outlets act are very similar. For instance, according to the Law No. 3684 concerning the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), media companies were unable to participate in public tenders. In 2001 the Doğan Group lobbied to allow media outlets to submit such tenders and to raise the limits on the foreign ownership of these outlets. Until the Law No. 6112 passed in March 2011, the legislation was ambiguous and thus unreliable in the eyes of investors – especially foreign companies. All media companies expended immense efforts to amend the law. Today business groups that own TVs, radios, etc., can submit public tenders without any problem as a result of this joint political campaign. Holding companies can step in and out of a critical industry such as the media without hurdles, because these “collaborative cartels”¹¹ have left

These identical headlines are taken from pro-AKP newspapers on 7 June 2013, during Gezi Park Occupation. "I would sacrifice my life for democratic demands".





Bottom: The owner of NTV television Ferit Şahenk was listed number one in 2011 Forbes Wealthiest People in Turkey. Şahenk was on the front page of Zaman newspaper on 26 April 2009.

aside their disagreements to support political initiatives that pave the way for strategic investments in construction, contracting and energy. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate who operates these holding companies, how they are enriched via public tenders, what kind of networks they create, and the role of the AKP government in this context.

Prominent cases of ultra-cross media ownership

The handover of Sabah-ATV: The Sabah-ATV handover sparked significant debate. Established by Dinç Bilgin, Sabah-ATV was acquired by Turgay Ciner in 2002 before being seized by TMSF (Security Deposit Insurance Fund) in 2007. In 2008, it was transferred to the pro-AKP Çalık Group almost like a gift through a highly controversial payment method.¹² In time, the Çalık Group came to suffer huge losses but was saved from its demise by the government. In December 2013, Sabah-ATV was sold to the Kalyon Group, the rising star of the construction industry during AKP rule.¹³

The acquisition by Kalyon Group has led to many rumors. During the corruption probe initiated by the police on December 17, 2013, many recordings were made public via the Internet, some of which suggest that the Minister of Transport at the time, Binali

Yıldırım, and the Prime Minister's son Bilal Erdoğan urged the Cengiz-Limak-Kolin consortium to acquire not the media assets of Çukurova Group but those of Sabah-ATV.¹⁴ When Umut Oran, an Istanbul MP from Republican People's Party submitted a parliamentary inquiry on this acquisition the, Presidency of Telecommunication and Communication demanded that the text of the inquiry be removed from the MP's personal web site!

Transfer of the media companies of Çukurova Group: Obligated to abandon his banking investments in 2002, Mehmet Emin Karamehmet was left with Turkcell and Digitürk as his most important companies. Media outlets such as Show TV, Skytürk and the Akşam newspaper posted huge losses, and were unable to pay employee salaries for months on end. On May 24, 2013, the Security Deposit Insurance Fund seized the Group's media companies, and almost immediately, Show TV was sold for a ludicrously low sum to Turgay Ciner, who enjoyed strong relations with the government. The other media outlets such as Akşam newspaper and Skytürk channel¹⁵ were first bought by a consortium among the construction companies Cengiz-Limak-Kolin, which had also been awarded the public tender for the construction of the third bridge over the Bosphorus. As soon as the news of the acquisition became public, Limak's owner Nihat Özdemir announced that they had cancelled their decision to buy the said companies. Finally, Ethem Sancak, who had briefly stepped into the media industry in 2007 with the Star Media Group, made a comeback when he was most needed and acquired these companies.¹⁶ Upon the completion of the sales on November 21, 2013, Sancak acquired Çukurova Group's media companies with the exception of Show TV in return for 62 million dollars.¹⁷

Ethem Sancak, who openly admits that he reentered the media business to support PM Tayyip Erdoğan,¹⁸ had formed a joint-venture with the British company Alliance Boots back in 2001 to establish Hedef Alliance; then he sold all his shares in the company to Alliance Boots in 2013.¹⁹

Ciner Media Group/Turgay Ciner²⁰: Turgay Ciner's biggest media companies (Sabah-ATV) were seized by the state in 2007, after then he also established new media companies. His editorial line avoided any friction with the AKP government. The senior managers intervened in any content which might jeopardize Ciner's non-media investments. For instance, a popular quiz show at

Under the AKP (Justice and Development Party) rule, the media industry has completely merged with manufacturing and services, so that the government has been able to create a media complex organically dependent on itself. The media has become more instrumentalized than ever before in Turkish history. The said media complex not only displays political parallelism, but maybe more importantly, always upholds the objectives of the AKP government regardless of its own political ideology or publishing/broadcasting policy.

the TV channel Bloomberg HT was discontinued when its producer and presenter İhsan Varol posed questions that seemed to be in support of the Gezi protests. The program was banned in the wake of the corruption probe of December 17.²¹

Following the corruption probe, a so-called “tape war” between the government and the Gülen sect started through dissemination of secretly taped conversations. It was then alleged that Ciner had close relations with Gülen. In a conversation leaked on the Internet on January 13, 2014, it was alleged that Ciner said the following: “This newspaper will never publish a story which would compromise you... I shall never allow a piece which might embarrass his eminence (Fethullah Gülen).”²² Even though the exact network of the Gülen sect remains unknown, Ciner’s Park Holding is known to have sponsored the Intercivilizational Dialogue Congress organized by the pro-Gülen Foundation of Journalists and Writers on June 6-7, 1997.²³ The AKP government (read: the PM) ensured that its henchmen rose to managerial positions in the Group, possibly to increase its power. In 2012, Ciner acquired Kasımpaşa Sports Club²⁴ and subsequently appointed Mehmet Fatih Saraç, known to be very close to the PM, to the boards of both the football club and the media group. The leaks also showed that, on a day when the Gezi protests spread across the country, Erdoğan called Saraç in person and demanded the removal of a news scroll on Habertürk. A new piece of legislation concerning the Internet, passed just after the recordings were leaked, gave Presidency of Telecommunication and Communication the right to prevent such leaks for good.²⁵

Milliyet’s June 3, 1997 edition indicates that Intercivilizational Dialogue Congress held in Istanbul was sponsored by Park Holding, Kentbank and THY.

The Leviathan of neoliberal capitalism

Ultra-cross media ownership denotes neoliberal capitalism’s intricate network of relations. The media has been tightly constrained since the 1970s, jeopardizing freedom of expression and other civil liberties. The AKP government used police power and media power to suppress the Gezi protests of June 2013, and continues to block freedom of expression. However, although the ownership structures of the media were realigned to support the AKP government, this was

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Sabah-ATV 8 Patronlar Binali Yıldırım'ın Belediye Başkanı Olması Durumunda İhale Alamayacaklarını Düşünüyorlar

parçaları da bulunacak. Özel olarak hazırlanan maddeyi, resmi madalyaların yanında verilecek. » Spor

Fransa, 1 milyar 500 milyon (2.5 milyar TL) karşılığında Wildcard olarak bu yıl kupaya katılacak. » Spor

İhaleye katılmayı istemeyenler için son başvuru tarihi 17 Şubat. Çıkarılmıyorsa ihale süreci kapanmış olur. » Spor

Çocukların eğitimde başarılı olmaları için devlet tarafından desteklenmelidir. » Spor

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Hürriyet

VEKİLE DE YASAK

Telekomünikasyon İletişim Başkanlığı (TİB), CHP İstanbul Milletvekili Umut Oran'ın Sabah'ın satışını sorduğu soru önergesini haber yapan sitelere yazılı gönderdi.

'SANSÜR VAR' TARTIŞMASI

CHP Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Umut Oran, "Başbakan, Sabah ve ATV'nin satışını iptal ettirmesi konusunda harekete geçmesi" iddiasını içeren soru önergesini Meclis Başkanlığı'na verdi. TİB, bu haberi yayımlayan internet sitelerine akşam saatlerinde "Yayın yasağı var, soru önergesini çıkarın" yazısı gönderdi. Bunun üzerine "sansür" tartışması başladı.

YAZI, UMUT ORAN'A DA GİTTİ

TİB, CHP'li Oran'dan da kişisel sitesine koyduğu önergenin kaldırılmasını isteyeceğini için yazı gönderdi. Oran ise beş gün içinde "Türkiye'de ilk kez mahkeme, yasamaya sansür koymaya çalıştı. Kim hangi hakla soru önergesi veremese, istenince yayımlanması yasağı koymaya cüret edebilir. Başbakan'ın emriyle TİB, haram.gov.tr adresine giriş yasağını kaldırması için yazı gönderdi. Soru önergesini de mi silecekler?" » 17

not enough to stop the Gezi protests. Thus, the government sought recourse in heavy-handed tactics, branding all international criticism as “conspiracy.”²⁶

The Turkish media is an integral part of a group of abbreviations such as TOKİ (Public Housing Administration), HES (hydroelectric power plant), AVM (shopping mall) and TFF (Turkish Football Federation), which form the basis of the collective capitalist class. The social results of all this result in

Top: The “tapes”, apex of surveillance society...
Below: News sites that covered CHP MP Umut Oran's questioning of the sale of Sabah-ATV media companies were warned by Telecommunication and Communication Agency.

Pro-AKP media outlets, which became significantly visible from 2007 onwards, generate media content which conspicuously serves government purposes. In particular news outlets, months and years have passed without the slightest criticism of the AKP. They are able to define the terms of the debate through news reports and live debate programs, and thus the material and human resources of the country are brought under governmental control under pretexts such as “urban transformation” or “overcoming the energy crisis.”

war, neglect of earthquake victims, “unsolved” political murders, racism, anti-Kurdish sentiment, forced migration/displacement, murders of women and transsexual individuals, poverty, deprivation, and cultural impoverishment.

The AKP government made use of not only police power but also media power to suppress the Gezi protests which erupted in June 2013, and continues to suffocate the media’s freedom of expression in an outright fashion. However, although the ownership structures of the media were realigned to support the AKP government, it was not enough to put an end to the Gezi protests.

- 1 Ben Bagdikian associates this “attack into the media” with family companies’ decision to abandon various markets to get rid of their tax burden. Bagdikian, Ben (2000): *The Media Monopoly*, 6. edition, Boston, p. 11-13.
- 2 In 1975, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) banned a company from controlling a daily newspaper, TV and radio in the same local market; however, it annulled this rule in 2007, thereby accelerating the liberalization of the media industry.
- 3 For further detail on the new media architecture, please see: Adaklı, Gülseren (2009): *The Process of Neoliberalisation and the Transformation of the Turkish Media Sector in the Context of the New Media Architecture*, in: Harrison, Jackie and Wessels, Bridgette (eds.): *Mediating Europe: New Media, Mass Communications and the European Public Sphere*, Oxford, New York, p. 286-317; (2006): *Türkiye’de Medya Endüstrisi. Neoliberalizm Çağında Mülkiyet ve Kontrol İlişkileri*, Ankara.
- 4 “Political parallelism” is a term used by Hallin and Mancini to indicate the distance between media outlets and political viewpoints in a country. Hallin, Daniel and Mancini, Paolo (2004): *Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politics*, Cambridge.
- 5 See Adaklı, Gülseren (2009): *2002-2008: Türk medyasında AKP etkisi*, in: Uzel, İlhan and Duru, Bülent (eds.): *AKP Kitabı: bir dönemin bilançosu*, Ankara.
- 6 Under the direction of Ahmet Altan (2007-2012), *Taraf* newspaper had given its support to the AKP government against military oversight. However, when the PM was seen to have a very close contact with the chief of general staff, the newspaper was still able to publish very critical headlines. Moreover, in times of dispute between the Fethullah Gülen movement and the government, the newspapers and TVs close to Gülen criticized the AKP very harshly.
- 7 CNNTürk (18.02.2009): *Doğan Holding’e rekor ceza*, <http://www.cnnurk.com/2009/ekonomi/sirketler/02/18/dogan.holdinge.rekor.ceza/514295.0/index.html> While the Doğan Group was handed hefty tax fines and defanged, the pro-AKP media outlets were relieved of all tax burdens. Please see *Taraf* (24.06.2013): *Vergide abidik gubidik işler*, <http://taraf.com.tr/haber/vergi-abidik-gubidik-isler.htm>
- 8 A journalist friend of mine once suggested that the short history of *Taraf*, launched in 2007, could be interpreted as a fairly lucid reflection of the relation between the Gülen sect and AKP. In hindsight, this idea seems to be vindicated with the developments following the operation probe of December 17, 2013, which AKP circles called a coup by the Gülen sect.
- 9 <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Gundem/?i=305755&t=28.02.2011> <http://www.genelenergy.com/operations/kurdistan-region-of-iraq.aspx>
- 10 Ekrem Dumanlı and Turhan Bozkurt (26.4.2009): *Türkiye, Batı’dan kopmuyor*, (interview with Ferit Şahenk), http://www.zaman.com.tr/pazar_ayin-konugu-ferit-sahenk-turkiye-batidan-kopmuyor_841538.html
- 11 Bagdikian, Ben (2000), p. xv.
- 12 See Adaklı, Gülseren (2009).
- 13 Hacer Boyacıoğlu (20.12.2013): *100 milyar TL’lik ihale devi medyaya girdi*, in: *Hürriyet*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/25409671.asp>; *Hürriyet* (20.12.2013): *Sabah ve ATV Kalyon’a satıldı*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/25407253.asp>.
- 14 In Turkey, where the lack of reliable sources has become a very serious concern, these “leaks” are far from the norms of the famous whistleblower Julian Assange’s criteria of “scientific journalism”; however, one is obliged to take these as a starting point. For Assange’s journalism, see Adaklı, Gülseren (2011): *Wikileaks versus Kapitalizm?*, in: Binark, Mutlu and Fidaner, Işık Barış (eds.): *Cesur Yeni Medya. Wikileaks ve 2011 Arap isyanları üzerine tartışmalar*, İstanbul, <http://ekitap.alternatifbilisim.org/files/cesur-yeni-medya.pdf>. For leaked recordings concerning the Sabah-ATV acquisition see <http://haramzadeler.weebly.com/1/post/2014/02/turkuaz-medya-fezlekesi.html> (accessed on February 3, 2014)
- 15 In its decision dated January 16, 2014, the Competition Authority (Rekabet Kurulu) ruled that Ethem Sancak’s ES Mali Yatırım ve Danışmanlık A.Ş. (trade registry no: 750749) was allowed to acquire all the shares of Çukurova Group in T Medya Yatırım ve Sanayi A.Ş., Atlas Yayıncılık ve Ticaret A.Ş., Alem Radyo ve Televizyon Yayıncılık Ticaret A.Ş., Bilişim Radyo Televizyon Yayıncılık Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş., Sakarya Kent Radyo ve Televizyon Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş., T Medya Magazin Yayıncılık Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş., T Medya Televizyon Yayıncılık Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş., Karova Medya Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş., T Medya Pazarlama ve Dış Ticaret A.Ş., T Medya Baskı Teknolojileri A.Ş., Ad Grup Basın Servisleri ve Ticaret A.Ş.’ <http://www.rekabet.gov.tr/default.aspx?nsw=SdEReVrahMmojT7mo8o9zg=-H7deC+LxB18=>
- 16 *GazetecilerOnline.com* (4.10.2013): *Akşam ve Sky’ı AKP medyası mimarına sattılar*, <http://www.gazetecileronline.com/newsdetails/11416-/GazetecilerOnline/aksam-ve-sky39i-akp-medyasi-mimarina-sattilar>
- 17 *Hürriyet* (22.11.2013): *Sancak, Akşam ile Skyturk’ü satın aldı*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/25178294.asp> <http://www.turkmedya.com.tr/>
- 18 *Patronlar Dünyası* (2013): *Ethem Sancak: Medyaya Erdoğan’ı desteklemek için girdim*, <http://www.patronlardunyasi.com/yhaber.asp?haberid=121933>
- 19 Songül Hatisaru (2013): *İlacı İngilizlere sattı, Ruslarla Yandex’e giriyor*, *Milliyet*, September 7. <http://ekonomi.milliyet.com.tr/ilaci-ingilizlere-sattir-uslularla/ekonomi/detay/1760124/default.htm>
- 20 <http://www.cinermediagroup.com/index/en>
- 21 *Radikal* (23.12.2013): *Kelime Oyunu yayından kalkıyor*, http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/show_tv_uc_programi_yayindan_kaldirdi-1167668
- 22 *Takvim* (13.1.2014): *Gülen’in skandal ses kaydı ortaya çıktı*, <http://www.takvim.com.tr/Guncel/2014/01/13/gulenin-skandal-ses-kaydi-ortaya-cikti>

- 23 Çakıroğlu, Perihan (1997): Fethullah Hoca'dan işadamları destekli din kongresi, in: Milliyet, June 3.
- 24 Tolga Arslan ve Volkan Öner (17.12.2013): Kasımpaşa Spor'un 'başarı' öyküsü, <http://www.habervesaire.com/news/kasimpasa-spor-un-basari-oykusu-2634.html>
- 25 For a detailed analysis of the new censorship measures introduced by this legislation, please see Altıparmak, Kerem and Akdeniz, Yaman (2013): 5651 sayılı Kanunun değişiklik tasarısının getirdiği değişiklikler üzerine bir değerlendirme, http://cyber-rights.org.tr/docs/5651_Tasari_Rapor.pdf
- 26 The PM criticized international media outlets which covered the Gezi protests and the government's stance towards the media. For example, see (16.6.2013) Başbakan Erdoğan'dan Batı Medyasına Eleştiri, <http://m.amerikaninsesi.com/a/1682948.html>. The PM directly targeted the BBC journalists Paul Mason and Selin Giritli. For two examples of news stories which roused the ire of Erdoğan, see Mason, Paul (3.6.2013): Analysis: The hopes that blaze in Istanbul, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22752121> and Giritli, Selin (13.8.2013): Turkey media crack-down: Who to blame? <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-23628066>.



CAPITAL AND CAPITALISTS IN TURKEY

The political orientation of the Kurdish capital

Interview: İrfan Aktan

Let us start with the Hewsel Gardens that is a topical issue these days. There is a resistance at the Diyarbakir region, upon the claims that Hewsel, the historic green area of Diyarbakir will be zoned for development. What is the core of the Hewsel case?

Ayşe Seda Yüksel: Suriçi constitutes one of the most important parts of the urban transformation projects of the Housing Development Administration (HAD, TOKİ in Turkish) in Diyarbakir. However, the HDA also declared Hewsel Gardens to be a housing reserve area in November 2013. A housing reserve area means a housing zone where people who live in hazardous areas or buildings are planning to be transferred to. HDA made a statement that permission will not be given for housing here, but that Hewsel will be restructured. A similar statement was made by the governor's office. BDP MP Altan Tan also issued a similar declaration. Quite simply, it is not yet clear who says what about Hewsel. Nevertheless, the discussion that started with Hewsel is very important. While the state intervention in the city commodifies urban space, it also politicizes it; it helps political groups struggle with their right to the city with more concrete and tangible demands. But, like I said, the stands of the related parties are not clear yet.

Could one of the reasons for this be the unclear position of the Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality?

We can say that the Kurdish movement has opened up new horizons in the model of urban administration since the early 2000s. When we look at the political past of the Kurdish movement, we see that it maintains a critical stance against capitalism. We also need to bear in mind the relationship of this critical stance and political struggle with the macro transformations in Turkey and around the world. Things changed with the gradual increase of interregional inequality in par-

allel with the neoliberalization of the economy in Turkey starting from the September 12th coup, the appearance of the urban entrepreneurship discourse and the increasing intervention of the state in urban spaces from the mid-2000s up until now. Along with some reforms, municipalities have gained relative autonomy from the center. This has opened up a new area of struggle against the state to the Kurdish movement through municipalities. Despite this, municipalities do not stand much chance against the players of this big transformation. For instance, the Kurdish movement has not come to an agreement on the transformation in Suriçi. Once the HDA plans the urban transformation, it is not really possible for the municipality to stop this process. For example, people from the City Council or the Municipality used to say: "Since we could not resist the transformation, we are trying to get directly involved and at least try to make sure that the process goes more easily for the ones that are going to be evicted." However, this also has to be said; for many players both at the Sur Municipality and at the Metropolitan Municipality, the transformation at Suriçi means economic development through tourism. We should not forget the statements of the Mayor of Sur that he expects Suriçi to become a tourist attraction after the transformation.

How does the Municipality conduct its relations with the Kurdish capital?

I had observed in 2007 in Diyarbakir that there was a very strained relationship between the political elite of the Kurdish movement and the business people in the city. Not just the political elite, but people of Diyarbakir in general described business people as robbers, profiteers and unreliable people. Many asked me why I was working on "these people". That was even a perception that a lot of business people had internalized. Many business people I met in Diyarbakir saw the capitalist class as untrustworthy and as people who



Ayşe Seda Yüksel

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do not know anything about commerce and who could not even become business people. One of the most important reasons for this perception is that the business people in Diyarbakir have just very recently got a start in business. We have done a research in 2007 in Diyarbakir Organized Industrial Zone and interviewed nearly hundred companies. Business people in Diyarbakir mostly come from farm families that have immigrated to the city in the 1970s.

For instance, Raif Türk, who is one of the most prominent business people of Diyarbakir was formerly a reporter for the newspaper, Özgür Gündem...

Yes. We cannot talk about institutionalized family companies, a second or third generation commercial bourgeoisie or a capitalist class that has proven itself in the manufacturing industry. This characteristic of the capitalist class also determines the relationship it will have with the rights-based political struggles. Each newly emerging capital class is in favor of stability rather than rights and democracy. We can say that it is a very inexperienced yet dynamic class and on the other hand, it may use very aggressive strategies.

What are those aggressive strategies?

It is a class that is obliged to make use of legal gaps and to advance via relationships and that holds on to these relationships more aggressively since it feels obstructed or left out. A Kurdish business person had told me: "We always long for things that are supposed to happen but do not; that we can make happen but cannot."

Do you agree with the observation that during the Justice and Development Party (JDP) period a new upper-middle class has been strengthened and developed through subsidies against the Kurdish movement?

Economic reports show that there is an important recovery in the region since 2002. The recovery coincides with the JDP period but there have been other developments in the same period. The abolition of the state of emergency is an important factor in the recovery of the region's economy. Yes, Kurdish capital has gotten stronger during the JDP period but we cannot claim that this was accomplished solely by the JDP. After the USA's intervention in Iraq, the Iraqi Kurdistan opened up a very important economic door. The number of export companies that have been established since 2002 in Diyarbakir have increased about four times.

Is the exportation done mainly to South Kurdistan?

Around 55% of Diyarbakir's export is done to Iraq; marble, stone and food... There are many business people from Diyarbakir who go into the construction and service sectors there and open up restaurants and hotels. We see that Kurdish capitalists established close relations with the state of emer-



gency governors and bureaucrats in Ankara in the 1990s. If they hadn't established relations with the state, they would not have survived. And that is what lies beneath the negative perception of the capitalists among Kurds. I talked to many business people who were left out and went bankrupt in the 90s because they stood close to the Kurdish movement. There are people whose businesses took a nosedive after Tansu Çiller said: "We have a list of the Kurdish business people who help out the PKK." The ones that were able to survive are the ones who established close relations with the state of emergency governors and bureaucrats in Ankara at the time.

Looking at the power that the Kurdish movement has gained, can we not say that the relations of the capitalists with the state have changed, even if it is only partially?

We see that after 2002 the business people repositioned themselves in their relations with the Kurdish movement and the local politics. On one hand they have to sustain their relations with the state, but on the other hand, they need to not be in conflict with the military and the political wings of the Kurdish movement.

Yes, Kurdish capital has gotten stronger during the JDP period but we cannot claim that this was accomplished solely by the JDP. After the USA's intervention in Iraq, the Iraqi Kurdistan opened up a very important economic door. The number of export companies that have been established since 2002 in Diyarbakir have increased about four times.

What is the approach of the Kurdish capitalists towards the Kurdish movement's ideology like?

Let us acknowledge that you cannot imagine another group of capitalists in Turkey that are as critical of the state as they are. Most of the business people I met start the conversation by talking about 1915. They mention the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1980s, the evacuation of villages and torture. Even the foundation of Diyarbakir Industry and Business Association tells us a lot. In 1995, one of the meetings they held in order to found the as-

Youths in Diyarbakir have started a one-week sit-in to draw attention to the cutting down of trees in the eight thousand years old Hevsel Gardens despite all the obstacles by police forces. "Dicle resisting from Hevsel to Gezi" is the slogan of the youths. Hevsel Gardens, which covers an area of 700 hectares, has been Diyarbakir's nutritional source since the city was established thousands of years ago. Located on the banks of the Tigris River, it is situated on fertile soil that is rich of alluvium and still provides the vegetable and fruit needs of Diyarbakir.

sociation was raided and the business people were taken into custody due to holding an “unauthorized meeting.” When Çiller’s “list of the Kurdish business people” appeared in 1993, most of them were followed and threatened. We are talking about people who have experienced the state’s dark side one way or another.

Does the Kurdish capital have a significant power in Kurdistan?

The Kurdish capital in Kurdistan is not in the center of power; it is a capitalist class that is on the outside, on the periphery, pushed out. They also directly suffered and are still suffering from the state’s unlawfulness. Hence, they react against the Kurdish movement only when it disturbs stability. But that does not stop them from ideologically agreeing with them on many issues.

We see that Kurdish capitalists established close relations with the state of emergency governors and bureaucrats in Ankara in the 1990s. If they hadn’t established relations with the state, they would not have survived. And that is what lies beneath the negative perception of the capitalists among Kurds.

When the Democratic Society Congress brought forth their democratic autonomy text, there was an article on the minimization of capitalism. JDP MP and business person Galip Ensarioğlu reacted to this text by saying “People who have not even run a grocery store in their lives are offering an economic model to Kurdistan.” How does this targeting of the Kurdish movement affect the way capitalists politically position themselves?

Minimization of capitalism means the rejection of the capitalist class that is trying to institutionalize. So this is an ideological attitude that contradicts the existence of Ensarioğlu. The Kurdish capital is in accord with the Kurdish movement regarding the cultural dimension of the Kurdish identity; on claiming the language and the culture, and defending a certain political autonomy. But the vein of the Kurdish movement that criticizes capitalism, of course, frightens the capitalist class.

There is also the rise of the middle class in Kurdistan...

Yes, that consists more of sections of the society who have positive relations with the Kurdish movement such as local politicians, lawyers, doctors, and members of NGOs. We observe this development, for instance, in Kayapınar.

What kind of a place is Kayapınar?

It is a place where middle classes live, where there are modern building complexes. It is the modern face of Diyarbakir; a place that is decorated with parks, boulevards and shopping malls. Similarly, there are also other urban spaces such as Hamra-

vat Houses where wealthier people live, and where there are one or two-story luxury homes and mostly members of the upper-middle class live.

We know that, during the March 2006 incidents, a group of young people wanted to march toward these houses. There had also been some attacks against the shopkeepers who did not put up the shutters after a child named Yahya Menekşe was run over and killed by a panzer in Cizre in 2008. Could such incidents be considered signs of a class-based conflict within the Kurdish politics?

Let us go via Diyarbakir again. Yes, the risk of urban segregation is gradually increasing. For example, registered unemployment is around 13 percent. We can say that the real numbers are higher. The age group where unemployment is the most common is the group aged 25-34. The recent relative enlargement in the construction sector has created 25 percent employment in the city. However, growth based on construction cannot continue to increase. When the employment in construction stops, Diyarbakir is going to turn into a city where the gap between the rich and the poor is very sharp; even now, we can say that this gap is continuing to increase. Another thing we need to emphasize is that while this gap is growing, the negative perception about the business people is starting to change. After 2010, there has been an accommodation between the business people and the Kurdish movement or the municipality. Prior to the referendum, businessperson Raif Türk, along with numerous other business people, had announced that he would vote “yes” and some of his bulldozers had been burnt down by members of the PKK. Osman Baydemir came out and made a statement along the lines of “my bulldozers have been burnt down.” That indicates an important convergence. Following Baydemir’s statement, comes the campaign: “2013 should be the year of the Diyarbakir city walls.” We know that DISIAD (Diyarbakir Industry and Business Association) worked really hard for this campaign along with the municipality. Such developments have changed the negative perception among Kurds against the capitalists and they have begun to be perceived as a necessary class for the city. Still, the decrease in the employment in the construction sector may once again reverse this perception.

But the development in the construction sector also includes the urban transformation practices which cause the poor to be displaced...

Of course, we will see the outcome of the transformation in Suriçi together. As a Kurdish municipality, to evacuate Suriçi means to displace the people who have gone through forced migration for a second time. So far, almost 250 houses have been demolished in Suriçi. The people who lived there have been sent to the HDA buildings at a place outside the city called Çölgüzeli.

Was there no resistance?

They could not find an entity to complain to. When they go to the municipality, they are directed to HDA and when they go to HDA, they are directed to the municipality. Those whose houses were demolished were for the most part people who came in the 1970s, before the forced migration. But when the transformation spreads to other neighborhoods where victims of forced migration live, things may change.

Why doesn't the municipality reject this transformation process?

The municipality is thinking about overcoming the economic problems through tourism. Osman Baydemir says they can attract three million tourists after completing the restoration of the city walls.

Can we say that the thesis of "democratic modernity against the capitalist modernity" that Abdullah Öcalan has envisaged will have difficulties in being realized by the Kurdish movement?

The statement, "We want to run our cities by ourselves" symbolically opens up a space of struggle for the Kurdish movement but economically, we cannot talk about a revolutionary municipalism. They act within the existing economic system. It is an interesting paradox; on one hand, you want to open up an area of employment for the poor in the city, but in order to be able to do that, you get involved in urban transformation projects. Taking the unemployment and the poverty into consideration, they have to attract capital into the city. However, as the city transforms, you may turn the people you want to protect, into the outcasts of the city.

You said that the people who came from completely different professions in the 1970s have become the current Kurdish capitalists. How did they acquire the accumulation?

There are people who somehow save money through stationary businesses and then invest this savings, for instance, in the mining sector. On the other hand, there are rich people who have maintained strong relations with both the politicians in Ankara and the local politicians. These are mostly the people who have become rich in the 90s. Then in the 2000s, there are people who have turned their savings into investment by making use of the incentives through their relations in Ankara. Yet, it should also be stated that the rich people of Diyarbakir or the region are relatively rich for the region. For example, in the 90s when a cement factory was being privatized, ten business people from Diyarbakir come together and they could not find the money to buy the factory. On the other hand, there are many families who have emigrated from Diyarbakir and got rich in the west: the Tatlıcı's, the Ceylan's, Halis Toprak... They are all rich people from Diyarbakir who have no ties left with Diyarbakir. This picture points out the vagueness of the concept of the Kurdish capital. Who is the Kurdish

bourgeoisie? Is it Halis Toprak, the Pirinççizade's or Raif Türk?

Until the 2000s, the state was trying to steer the Kurds through clan leaders. But now the clan leaders have, for the most part, lost their influence. Whereas clan leaders have vassals, capitalists have workers. Is there a possibility that the capitalists take over the mission of the clan leaders?

It has been possible for JDP to take votes from a lot of Kurds through the promise of employment and bread and butter. Today, this promise is working in favor of the JDP. Whether the relationship with the workers resemble the relationship of the clan leader with his vassals depends both on how much strength the Kurdish capitalists will be able to gain and the fractures in the semantic maps concerning the perception of the businessperson.

The Kurdish capital is in accord with the Kurdish movement regarding the cultural dimension of the Kurdish identity; on claiming the language and the culture, and defending a certain political autonomy. But the vein of the Kurdish movement that criticizes capitalism, of course, frightens the capitalist class.

The Kurdish movement has attained a certain level of strength in its struggle with the state. Can we say that now the class segregation has added a new dimension to the Kurdish issue?

That is unfortunately true; however, indicators of this situation had appeared before. For instance, the March 2006 rebellion, even though it had started because of the use of chemical weapons against the guerillas, it was a rebellion that had a very distinct class characteristic. The rage of the poor was directed not only toward public institutions and the police, but at the same time toward the stores where the upper classes shop, the cafés that are of high symbolic significance and the banks. We can see the March 2006 rebellion as the first manifesto of the class segregation. On the other hand, there is a very wild capitalistic transformation in South Kurdistan. Professor Neşe Özgen's observations there are important: Kurds live like refugees in Kurdistan, in their homeland. They are being worked under severe conditions. Iraqi Kurdistan can offer us clues regarding the consequences of the developments in the north. If you try to create economic progress and employment under the conditions of wild capitalism, you open up a door into a situation where exploitation is multiplied. One of the points to take into consideration regarding the Kurdish issue is this class segregation. A very radical neoliberal transformation is being experienced. In the forthcoming period, we may face class conflicts as a concrete problem.

ECOLOGY

Kavar as a development model

Nurcan Baysal

"Here, from June through September, women go to the mountains and highlands to milk the cows. We set off on foot at 10 am and reach the cattle in about an hour. We milk them for half an hour and then walk back home with 10 to 25 liters of milk on our backs. We reach home at 12.30. There is more work at home, such as cooking, caring for the children and boiling the milk, all of which occupies us until 5 pm. Even more work awaits us, as we spend two and a half hours milking the sheep and goats.¹ In total we need five hours for milking the animals... Rural development, you say—what is that? We women would be very pleased if the road we take to get to the animals for milking could be improved. It's full of rocks which cut our feet. If the road were fixed, the work would be much less tiresome... I wish we had a tractor to take us to the animals."²

**Nurcan Baysal**

Born in 1975 in Diyarbakır, Nurcan Baysal graduated from Ankara University, Faculty of Political Science. She received her master's degree from Bilkent University. From 1997 until 2007, she carried out projects on development and poverty in Diyarbakır as part of UNDP schemes. From 2008 until 2013, she took office as rural development program director at Hüsni Özyeğin Foundation. She provides services as Middle East consultant to various international fund providers and foundations. Her first book "O Gün" [That Day] (2014) was published by İletişim Yayınları.

These are the words of a woman from the Düzcealan (Çorsin in Kurdish) village located in the Tatvan-Kavar basin. Kavar is a basin by the Van Lake, and included six villages and five hamlets. In the 1990s, state security forces forcefully evacuated three of these villages, burnt one down (Çorsin), and obliged the remaining two to accept the village guard (koruculuk) system. The total population is composed of approximately 1800 individuals, 88% of whom have a primary school education or less, and 30% of whom are illiterate. 79% of the illiterate population is women. In 2008 figures, the monthly income per capita in the basin is 109 TL and the median income is 82 TL. As such, the income level is below the Turkish starvation limit.³ 6% of the total population suffers from physical and/or mental handicap. 60% of the basin's population is younger than 25 years of age. Accordingly, the basin is Turkey's most impoverished area in terms of all development criteria.

In 1993, many inhabitants of Kavar had to migrate to big cities such as İstanbul, İzmir, Manisa and Mersin when their villages were forcefully evacuated by the state. In the early 2000s, they started to return to their villages through their own means. I got acquainted with them during this period of return in September 2008.

Setting out

In 2008, the Hüsni Özyeğin Foundation decided to implement a rural development program designed to improve the quality of life in impoverished rural areas, and recruited me as the director of the program. In the first six months while trying to outline our modus operandi, I visited poor rural areas of Turkey. I conducted research on the efforts of rural development in Turkey and abroad, and sought an answer to the question "What rural development?" "What kind of rural development should there be? Who is to do the 'developing'? Why are we to 'develop' them? Who says that eating at a table is better than eating on the ground? Doesn't development risk destroying the diversity of life? Who is to define poverty? Who is poor according to whom? Are all these highways constructed in the name of development? How are we to give a human face to development? Can there be development without justice and equality? Can there be a development which is blind to identity, language and culture? What is the place of the right to a decent life in development schemes? What purpose does development serve if it ignores inequality..."⁴

Our main reference point was the relation between development and human rights. We believed that development was a human right (the right to development). Towards late 2008, we had outlined the main principles of the Rural Development Program (as an integrated, partici-

pated and flexible program advocating human rights, centered on the individual, upholding gender equality and defending the sustainability of natural resources) and decided on Kavar as our first basin.

Kavar Rural Development Project

From October 2008 through January 2009, we held meetings with diverse groups such as women, girls and kids, and determined the content of the program and activities together with the habitants of Kavar. Sometimes we would discuss the same issue for days on end. These meetings lasted about three to four months. During this process we gained the trust of the Kavar population who at first were a bit skeptical towards the foundation:

“We first thought that this was all a plan by the state, which sent you to us. I was cautious and said ‘They are strangers, we shouldn’t welcome them’.. We didn’t know what was going on. We had no trust in you. But now things are different.”⁵

In December 2008, we established a monitoring and assessment system which would allow us to evaluate the consequences of the program in the coming years,⁶ and in January 2009 we launched the activities of the Kavar Rural Development Program. The activities roughly fall under eight categories: social welfare, enhancing economic capacity, infrastructure, empowering women, organization and sustainability, natural resources, cooperation and partnerships, and influencing rural policy.

To enhance economic capacity in the basin, not only tens of thousands of walnut trees were planted, but also the habitants of Kavar were trained in arboriculture since they had forgotten even the most basic skills after spending many years in big cities. On the one hand, the stalls in the basin were fixed, and women received seminars on animal and dairy hygiene. More and more maize was planted for silage purposes. Furthermore, a cultural center (Yeniden Yaşam Merkezi: Back to Life Center) was established with the support of the Japanese Embassy to enrich social life and organize cultural events. Intermediaries were contacted to help women market the honey they produce. To ensure children’s access to education, repair work was started in the schools which had been abandoned since the 1990s, kindergartens were set up, and a school providing eight years of education was constructed for those Kavar children (6 to 7 years old) who previously had been obliged to attend distant boarding primary schools.⁷ Numerous artistic and cultural activities were organized including children’s libraries, film screenings, children’s choirs and drama clubs. The annual Kavar festival was launched, and



village halls were set up in every village to house training seminars and other social activities. All these efforts were crowned in 2011 with the establishment of Kavar Co-op Society for Rural Development. A milk collection center was set up under the umbrella of the co-op society to bring the milk to the market. The co-op also started to package and sell the grain grown in Kavar as well as the honey produced by local women. There were additional efforts to improve the meadows, plant seeds in the meadows, carry out reforestation and generate solar energy so as to ensure the sustainable and enhanced utilization of natural resources.

“This is the first time we had civilian visitors in Kavar”

The Kavar Rural Development Program ran from 2009 through 2013, and 2014 was planned as a year of transition to end the program. One key element which differentiated the Kavar basin experience was the strong trust between the project team and target audience, which allowed villagers to discover their potential and build social and institutional capacity as envisaged by the program. This discovery allowed the villages in the basin to get organized under the umbrella of a co-op society and act together. Public agencies, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector participated in the program.

Another factor which sets apart the Kavar basin experience is the joint progress of social and economic empowerment efforts, and the focus on environmental and natural issues during the development process. The development experience in Kavar is based not on production for production's sake, but rather the well-being of individuals. Aside from production and income issues, the program has a comprehensive perspective on women's social status, children, the elderly and disabled, sustainable use of natural resources, protection of biodiversity, efficient usage of water resources, protection of local architecture, as well as organization and solidarity.

At the end of the five-year period on December 2013, the final evaluation of the Kavar Rural Development Program was carried out. Although the final report has yet to be published, the first findings point to numerous favorable developments in the villages participating in the project versus villages in the control group:⁸ a rise in employment rates, increasing per capita income, rising numbers of cattle and sheep, improved school attendance rates for both girls and boys.

As the peace process makes progress, many ex-villagers from the region will leave the big cities' slums to go back to rural areas. Refugee camps like Mahmur will be disbanded and the fighters in the mountains will return. In total, millions of people will go back home.

Development and peace

Another key characteristic of the Kavar Rural Development Program is its being the first ever comprehensive development program in Turkey conducted in a region of conflict, as some Kavar villages were evacuated in the 1990s and the village guard system was imposed on others. The program had an important impact on the reestablishment of relations between villages, the reinforcement of the ties between the villages and public agencies, the repair of the disintegrated social fabric—in short, on the strengthening social harmony. A Kavar villager expressed this in the following terms:

“Up until now all of our visitors were soldiers. This is the first time we have had civilian visitors (foundation personnel) in the village.”⁹

Another individual from a village once evacuated by the army said,

“Thanks to this project, we now have better relations with the other villages (where the village guard system is established). Now we milk our cows together and no longer perceive each other

as enemies.”¹⁰

Every summer, three or four interns from universities in Western Turkey joined the program. One such intern active during the summer of 2011 said,

“It was only after my two-month internship in Kavar that I understood what the people in the East have to suffer. Hundreds of people came here and went back as part of the project, and they were all affected by what they saw. I believe that the project has an effect on peace-building efforts.”¹¹

Today, when the peace process ranks high on the public agenda, the Kavar Rural Development experience is more valuable than ever. As the peace process makes progress, many ex-villagers from the region will leave the big cities' slums to go back to rural areas. Refugee camps like Mahmur will be disbanded and the fighters in the mountains will return. In total, millions of people will go back home. However, since they have been far away from the countryside, fields and agriculture for 20 years, most of them will not even know how to trim a tree. Comprehensive and integrated socio-economic schemes like that in Kavar which focus on the individual and her/his rights will make a positive contribution to the durability of peace.¹²

- 1 Milking the sheep and goats is called *beriyeye gitmek* in the local vernacular.
- 2 A 28-year-old married woman from Düzcealan village, with two children. Özyeğin Foundation, Field Study Report, Ayşe Gündüz-Hoşgör, Kavar, Bitlis, August 2008.
- 3 In 2009, the starvation limit for a family of four was estimated at 287 TL, and the poverty limit at 825 TL. Source: TÜİK Haber Bülteni: 2009 Yılı Yoksulluk Çalışması Sonuçları, <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaber-Bultenleri.do?id=10952>.
- 4 Nurcan Baysal, *O GÜN*, İletişim Yayınları, 2014, İstanbul, p.14.
- 5 Nurcan Baysal, *O GÜN*, İletişim Yayınları, 2014, İstanbul, p.29.
- 6 In the Kavar monitoring-assessment scheme, the impact analysis method was used. In order to scientifically measure the difference created by the program and to ensure that the same impact can be reproduced in other sites, a system was developed under the leadership of Oxford University's Meltem Aran to deploy the differences-in-differences methodology which compares the control group villages with the project villages over time.
- 7 These schools are called *YİBO* (short for *Yatılı Bölge Okulları*) in Turkish.
- 8 The assessment work by Meltem Aran of Development Analytics is not yet complete; only the preliminary findings are presented here.
- 9 Man from Dibeikli, June 2013, interview by N. Baysal.
- 10 Man from Yassica, December 2013, Özyeğin Vakfı toplantısı.
- 11 Young woman, July 2012, interview by N. Baysal.
- 12 Nurcan Baysal, “Çözüm Sürecinde Kalkınma”, *BİANET*, <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/151743-cozum-surecinde-kalkinma>

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DEMOCRACY: CENSORSHIP OF THE INTERNET

Fight against participatory democracy

Serdar Paktin

After President Abdullah Gul approved law No. 5651, often referred to as the New Internet Law, reactions began to grow on a national and international scale. With the new law on the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), which was passed right after the New Internet Law, the state will now be able to monitor the economic and private activities of anyone it wishes. Thus, every citizen of the Turkish Republic will become part of an Orwellian dystopia.



Serdar Paktin

Graduated from Military High School and quit Air Force Academy. He has B.A. in Cultural Studies. He worked as an editor for Arena Magazine. He did his M.A. in Liberal Studies at The New School for Social Research in New York. He did Strategic Planning for Marketing Communications. He worked as Strategic Director of Social Media Campaign for Republican People's Party (CHP) in 2011 Turkish General Elections. He took part in GriZine.com and bugunbugece.com as Content Strategist. He worked as a Senior Campaigner at Change.org. Currently, he is teaching Online Reputation Management at Kadir Has University and is Content Strategy Consultant for Adam Mickiewicz Institute of Poland.

A social engineering and perception management campaign has been conducted by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) for years through the indirect control of the mainstream media outlets. This process was interrupted to a great extent during the last year. One of the most important reasons for this was that citizens of Turkey, whose majority population is made up of young people, increasingly began to use the new media tools in a more efficient and courageous manner. People had gradually come to feel trapped, restrained and pacified due to the "space restriction operation" they experienced as part of the imposed social engineering. In the case of Gezi Park, citizens who felt trapped by this social engineering project found a medium to express their reactions. Thanks to new social media, the world has heard this shout, leading to a disruption of the international perception management campaign. Therefore, the state felt the need to make radical new regulations. After these regulations are put into place, Turkey will never be the same!

After the 2011 elections, many who did

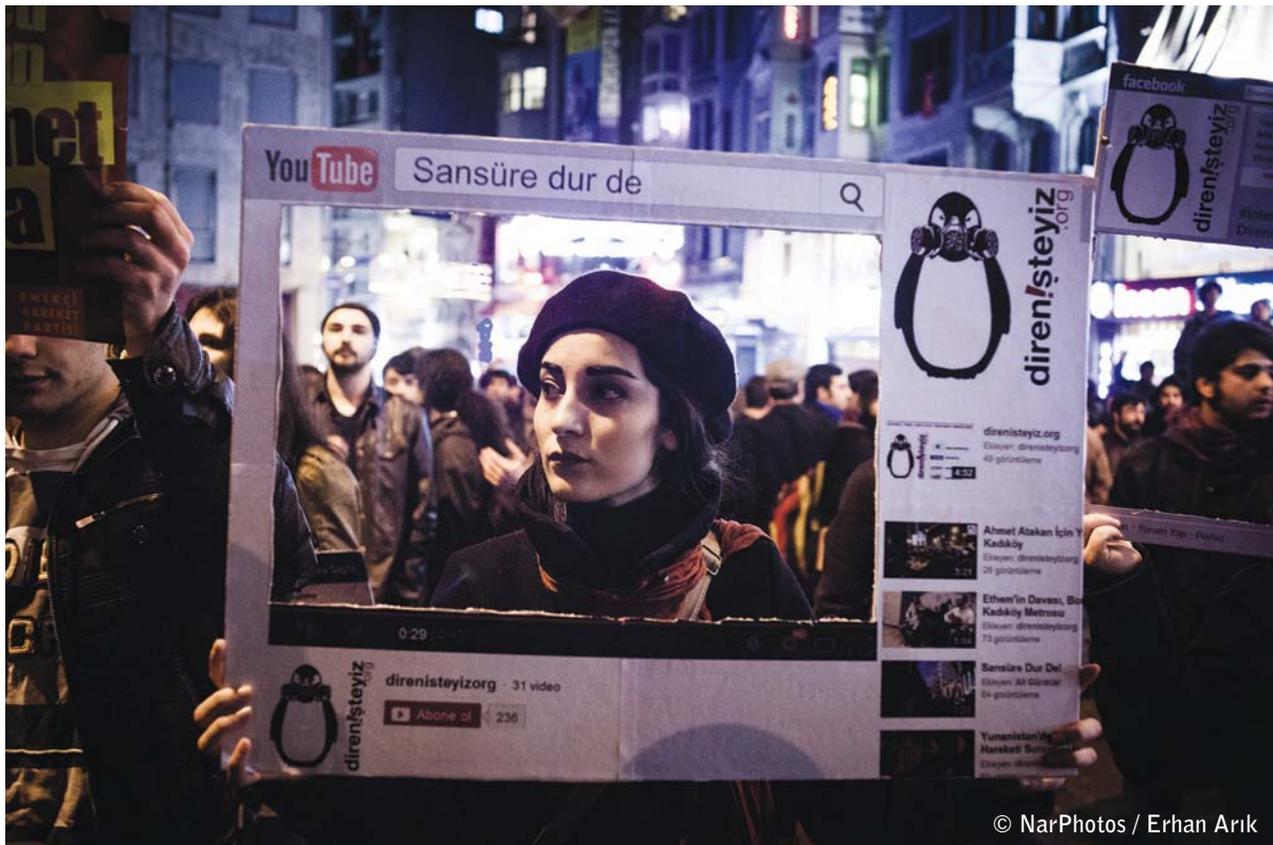
or did not like Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, many thought that the things he said in his balcony speech were promising, or at least they had given credit to what he said. The prime minister promised more democracy and freedom in that speech and insisted on putting the Safe Internet Regulation into effect despite a significant reaction from the public. At the time, he justified the regulation by stressing the need to prevent child pornography and to protect children and youth from the harmful content on the Internet. After public opinion showed reservation regarding this regulation with the #internetimedokunma (*let my internet be*) hashtag on the Internet and a march of over 40,000 people on İstiklal Street in Istanbul in Spring 2011, the regulation which was planned to take effect on August 22, 2011 was withdrawn for revision. The new version took effect on November 22, 2011 and an effort was made to publically discredit the people and groups who had objected to it.

The AKP government distorts the meaning of and discredits the concern, criticism, protest and opposition directed toward the restrictive regulations that it has introduced, and attempts to publically represent these people and groups as if they are against progress. Hence, an effort is made to justify the disproportionate force and police violence exerted against these people and groups.

Space restriction operation

Before moving on to a general review of the New Internet Law and the MIT Law which was passed directly afterward, let us remember these words that the prime minister said in his speech after the 2011 general elections:

"With the strength and the authority that we



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have received from our nation, democracy will attain more advanced standards, freedoms will progress significantly and people will be able to express themselves more easily. I sincerely wish all my 74 million brothers and sisters to feel at peace.”

Not only did the prime minister not do anything to stand by these words, but, with the disappearance of the threat of “the military domination”, he continued to carry out the social engineering in a much more obvious and inconsiderate way, which his party has been supporting slowly but surely since 2002. The reason that they have lost the support of liberal groups and the Fethullah Gulen community is due to the ways in which these attempts at social engineering have become more blatant.

Government officials, spokespersons and the prime minister in particular have made manipulative statements using imperious and authoritative language on all sorts of issues. This is done in order to impose their ideas on society, ideas which have no scientific basis whatsoever and which are framed entirely around their own ideology. Statements such as “Every abortion is a murder,” “Women must bear at least three children,” “Anyone who drinks alcohol is an alcoholic,” and “It is impertinent for pregnant women to walk on the street” have in effect exerted pressure on the public sphere and effectively restricts the freedoms of individuals. It should also be stated that there is a social group that considers the words of the prime minister

commands, and these people try to enforce his words with the mentality of riot police.

I interpret this approach as indirect pressure or censorship which is used to regulate the public sphere as part of a process of social engineering. Apart from that, especially after 2011, the freedom of communication and expression was increasingly restricted via many laws and regulations including the Safe Internet Regulation. They were able to influence and – as the latest telephone records that were made public proved – manipulate the editorial policies of almost all the media organizations through kind but firm instructions. Journalists and researchers who could not be controlled were imprisoned with various allegations and trials on remand that lasted for years, and were thus silenced. The ones who were not imprisoned were fired by the media bosses through a direct “request” from the prime minister.

The AKP government wants to block the development of any social objection, criticism

People protest the government plan to expand controls over the public's use of the Internet. The riot police intervened the protestors in Taksim

With the development of the web 2.0, the globalization and the metaphor of “the global village” that social scientists had foreseen started to materialize. Now, individuals got out of the passive role that the one-way communication imposed on them and became part of two-way communication. Consequently, this made people active participants of what was going on around the world.

and opposition, by means of the social engineering project and the “space restriction operation” that it conducts as part of that. A “religious generation” has already begun being raised like the prime minister wants. Scandals in the educational system are made public almost every day regarding curriculum changes, the rising number of religious vocational schools, the new “4+4+4” educational system, the “Preschool Education Religion Project” that has been established in order to Islamize preschool education and many other initiatives.

Orwell’s dystopia

When people have to rely on “traditional” media like television, radio or newspaper to get their information, it is necessary to develop a sort of a “mental decoder.” In order to carry out a critical analysis, it is important to examine which news items these media present, how they present them, the register or tone, and the length of time the items are presented and what the images contain. It is essential to know about the stance and approach of the news source in order to analyze the messages being sent through the media channels and to really understand

The AKP government and the Prime Minister Erdogan perceive this participation as a “curse” and an activity of an enemy of the state. Consequently, they try to prevent the society’s activity on the Internet (and also other economic and private activities via MIT) just like in George Orwell’s dystopia.

what is what. Of course this does not mean that the content on the Internet is impartial and independent of this system. However, the situation on the Internet is not as restrictive.

Since the general elections in 2011, the structure of mass communication, reporting and political propaganda have completely changed in Turkey. There are several reasons for this: the ban on political advertisements has been lifted, different kinds of actors and shareholders have joined the political arena, and the society has started using new media tools much more effectively and in ways that allow them to set the agenda.

Regarding the Internet Law, experts, IT lawyers, journalists, academics, and even EU and US officials have declared their concerns that the law would lead to an absolute surveillance society. It is obvious that with this law, Turkey is following the restrictive approach of countries

like Iran, China and Saudi Arabia.

The countries that do not adopt the restrictive approach are systems that have been shaped and established within the conditions of the modern industrial period. During the change from the agricultural society into the industrial society, economics, religion, social life, family structure, types of manufacturing, tools of communication and, of course, regimes have changed. The systems that were established within this frame can by nature only work on a representational level and are inherently cumbersome structures, so they resist change in order to perpetuate the system.

Furthermore, the concept of scientism that came with modernity replaced the concept of religion that was brought by the preceding period. On the basis of the faith that scientism and scientific information constitute the absolute and one and only truth, the production of information has taken the place of the previous absolutist structure. In other words, just like the Vatican and the clergymen were the representatives of God’s absolute knowledge, within modernity, academies have become the centers of absolute knowledge and scientists the representatives of this knowledge. Since the belief was that real knowledge was one and ultimate, it needed to be learned in certain centers through certain methods and in certain forms, and conveyed to others in this way.

Likewise, communication in the modern era took shape within this frame. Information was gathered in encyclopedias, and the absolute truth could be learned from the encyclopedias which were the scientific holy books. The newspaper, radio and then television were channels of communication that developed around this approach. In these platforms which we call the traditional communication channels, there is a one way communication: from the giver to the receiver of the message.

The giver of the message is the party that owns the sources of information and the means of information production. Since the information source is absolute and ultimate, the message it conveyed was considered correct and final, and it was not questioned. The receiver of the message is the party that perceives and –depending on their perceptive capability – interprets the message within the frame, content and context that the giver built it. The relationship between these two parties was always one way. There was no way of the receiver giving feedback to the giver. The means of feedback were scarce and again under the control of whoever owned the communication channels. Besides, the receivers of the message had learned the absolute correct knowledge

that was filtered by the state ideology at the state-controlled educational institutions in the same way, so they were expected to perceive the message they received in the same way. Thus, it was an automated system of sorts.

After the Internet started being used by the masses, communication went on the same way it was throughout the period known as web 1.0. We, the message receivers, accessed the Internet as passive participants. Later on, communication tools started to advance and acquire a character that gave way to people's own participation.

One of the first major shocks of the modern order came with Napster, a platform that made possible sharing music files between individuals. When millions of people started to share music on Napster, the control of the global music market was destroyed. The next stage was the web 2.0, where people could directly access sources of communication and knowledge; they went from being the message receivers to message givers and receivers at the same time. From this point forward, everything started to change very rapidly.

With the development of the web 2.0, the globalization and the metaphor of "the global village" that social scientists had foreseen started to materialize. Now, individuals got out of the passive role that the one-way communication imposed on them and became part of two-way communication. Consequently, this made people active participants of what was going on around the world.

These developments caused people to communicate, produce information and organize much faster and more effectively. Hence, the hegemony of the absolute correct knowledge and central communication channels that modernity has brought started to lose its validity. Nation-states, academia, newspapers, television and the existing economic order can continue their existence through this one-way communication because in this way they can sustain their ideologies.

On the other hand, people have obtained a tool through which they could participate in the decision making mechanisms. By means of this tool, they want to participate in decision stages that will affect their lives in their neighborhoods, cities and countries. For instance, the Gezi events that spread throughout Turkey started out because many individuals and organizations wanted to participate in the project designing process of Gezi Park even though all demands were persistently ignored and a shopping center was planned to replace the park.

When we look at the social and political mobilization in the last ten years, we can see that by means of the new communication tools,



people can rapidly organize and mobilize, influence their country's agenda, make their voices heard by the international community, and even change their country's administration. There are two paths that can be followed in the face of this challenge: attempting to stop it or adopting these developments and embracing the change. The last Internet Law shows that Turkey has chosen the first path.

Again, when we look at the change in the last ten years, we can realize that many brands and companies quickly try to adapt to this change and make effort to transition to a participatory administrative structure. However, in Turkey, the AKP government and the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan perceive this participation as a "curse" and an activity of an enemy of the state. Consequently, they try to prevent the society's activity on the Internet (and also other economic and private activities via MIT) by prying, censoring when appropriate, or putting people in prison, just like in George Orwell's dystopia.

But there is something they don't know: change has happened. Trying to stop that will be a move which will only speed up the end of the government. In conclusion, all regimes in the world have to find a way to transition from representative democracy to participatory democracy.

DEMOCRACY

Everything is public now

Gülfer Akkaya

Your mobile phone rings. You answer. Immediately, you hear mechanical sounds—like switches being turned on and off... When you say “hello,” you hear the echo of your own voice. You can’t hear your interlocutor, they can’t hear you... And there are many other signs which suggest that your phone is tapped... You might say, couldn’t it be a simple technical problem? Well, it probably can’t be, not least because you keep on asking yourself, “Is my phone tapped?”

**Gülfer Akkaya**

Akkaya was born in the Kürkçü village of Sivas. Her native language is Kurdish. A graduate of İstanbul University, Faculty of Literature, Department of Social Anthropology, she is currently pursuing a master’s degree at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Department of Sociology. Her published works include the Turkish books entitled *Unutulmasın diye... Demokratik Kadın Derneği* (2008) and *Sanki Eşittik, 1960-1970’li Yıllarda Devrimci Mücadelenin Feminist Sorgusu* (2011).

As recently as five or six years ago, we wouldn’t think it probable for our phones to be tapped. We used to make up lists of our friends whose phones might be tapped by the police, and have a lot of fun talking about this. That’s how it began. First, the most “political” friends were tapped. This was no secret—everyone knew! The ruling coalition between AKP and the Gülen sect branded individuals as being “too political” in order to normalize their slander campaign against revolutionaries and the Kurdish movement, followed by house raids, arrests and violations of basic rights. Then it happened to those who were “less political.” The people who asked themselves “Is my phone tapped?” grew in number. Everyone began to be suspicious.

In 2009 and 2010, the AKP and the Gülen sect jointly organized wave after wave of police raids to arrest members of the Kurdish liberation movement and socialists. Gülenist police officers penned indictments which were approved without question by public prosecutors. Dissidents were taken to courts with special powers (Özel Yetkili Mahkemeler, or ÖYM in Turkish) where the basic principles of jurisprudence were violated and individuals were accused of “acting like

the member of an illegal organization without being one.”

In these indictments, the evidence presented to courts for membership in an illegal armed organization included use of expressions such as “materials, revolution, revolutionary, organization, package, bread, parsley, friend, gift,” or acts such as tying a puşi scarf, playing rummikub, meeting up for a drink, and countless other daily acts. These indictments defied the principles of reason and jurisprudence, and increased the pressure on society at large. Everyone suddenly became extremely cautious about what they said over the phone. People simply stopped using many casual expressions. Self-control was our only friend.

All of this might sound like a joke, but these mind-bending indictments did indeed lead to the imprisonment of thousands of people on the charge of membership in an illegal organization. The Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay) has yet to pronounce its verdict on many more such cases. These lawsuits will soon be taken to the European Court of Human Rights; the verdicts will probably not be in favor of the Turkish state.

The crucial question is why did the AKP and Gülen carry out these operations and put thousands of people in prison without reason? Put simply, they were engaged in an act of political cleansing. Their plan was to eradicate all dissidents, so as to have free rein in ruling the country according to their political ambitions, get wealthier by plundering and embezzling Turkey’s riches, and extend their stay in power by violating justice. The spoils were huge. AKP and the Gülen sect formed a united front against Kurds, socialists, and all those who demanded democracy and freedom; however, when it came to sharing the spoils of political power among them, their so-called partnership got into trouble as they waged war against one other, each crying



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“Everything will be ours.”

The war between AKP and Gülen’s supporters reveal the havoc wreaked across the society and state during 12 years of AKP rule: biased media, partisan relations based on nepotism, strong rent-seeking bonds between government and certain business groups, illicit capital inflows crucial for the domestic economy, an international money laundering network supported by the AKP, political Islam’s sexist and conservative influence on the society, rising rates of femicides, and extreme homophobia.

From sex tapes to corruption tapes

In 2009 a secretly filmed videotape was leaked which allegedly showed Deniz Baykal, the then President of Republican People’s Party (CHP), in bed with a woman other than his wife. (It needs to be remembered that in 2003, Baykal had met with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Beylerbeyi and accepted an arrangement to allow the latter to become an MP.!) This video recording by unknown individuals put an abrupt end to Baykal’s political career. After this maneuver, blows below the belt became more and more prevalent in Turkish politics. The intimacy of individuals and the secrecy of private life were overtly violated by the Prime Minister Erdoğan and his lieutenants. Today, even as a plethora of secretly taped conversations reveal the Prime Minister’s attempts to change the results of political surveys, we

must remember that back in 2003, Erdoğan had suggested that the videotape about Baykal was not a private but a “public” affair, since “Baykal is seen with not his wife but another woman.”

Here, the word “public” (“genel”) was a reference to the Turkish word for brothel (genel-ev). As is known, a brothel is an establishment where sex workers sell their bodies to men under state supervision. The state commodi-

Thousands of women gather for 8th March rally in Kadıköy.

If the prime minister thinks he has the right to expose the private life, romances and sexual affairs of the leader of the main opposition party, wouldn’t this increase the number of femicides committed in the name of “honor?” Indeed, the number of femicides grew by 1400 percent under AKP rule—according to official figures!

fies women’s bodies by taxing these establishments. The Prime Minister, by characterizing a relationship among two consenting adults as “public,” thought this gave him the right to intervene. He poked fun at them and acted like moral police at the same time. He acted very shrewdly; he seemed to have no concern for the woman whose private life was exposed, but at the same time targeted the woman implicitly. The Prime Minister and his partner Gülen knew very well that they had biased media at their disposal, too ready to do all their dirty work.²

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to expose the private life, romances and sexual affairs of the leader of the main opposition party, wouldn't this increase the number of femicides committed in the name of "honor?" Indeed, the number of femicides grew by 1400 percent under AKP rule—according to official figures!

Intimacy lost

The Intimate sphere has always drawn people's attention in every society. Sometimes this occurs when the veil of intimacy is made public. The leaking of secretly taped conversations is simply a political continuation of the society's interest in others' intimacy. If the society were not interested in probing into the intimate lives of others, wouldn't it take a tough stand against those politicians who leaked sex tapes that compromised their adversaries and demand such politicians to be punished? Wouldn't it reject this kind of politics? Wouldn't it drive out of the political arena all these moralists with secret tapes who intervene in our lives like a vice squad?

Aside from women, another area of special focus for the AKP-Gülen power bloc was youth. Creating a religious, obedient and conservative youth was among their key targets. This is not a matter to be taken lightly. Those who were ten years old when AKP came to power now are 22, and constitute fresh cohorts of voters, workers and political actors. These individuals were brought up in the sexist, chauvinistic, militaristic, homophobic, religious and conservative atmosphere created by the Prime Minister during his 12 years in power.

Government control over the female body

Issues such as the debate on whether female and male students should share the same apartment, the creation of a society of informants, relations between the two sexes, and government intervention toward the female body are all embedded in the social consciousness. Without societal "consent," a government will have to resort to violence.

The Prime Minister is silent on these issues nowadays, probably because he is too busy dealing with political and economic corruption scandals. Previously however, he did not miss any occasion to "advise" women to have at least three children. Indeed, he went beyond advice and utilized every method at hand, such

as revising the legislation on abortion, having civil servants make house visits to create lists of pregnant women, and sending fathers of single pregnant women SMS messages which read "Congratulations, your daughter is pregnant."

The Prime Minister has indicated that, from his office in Dolmabahçe, Istanbul, he looks at the outfits of female passengers in the nearby ferry pier and is not at all pleased with what he sees. Therefore, it was no surprise to hear the AKP spokesman Hüseyin Çelik say that he found the décolleté of a particular female TV presenter to be too audacious; she was promptly sacked. The number of presenters with headscarves is increasing in pro-government TV channels; simultaneously, the government criticizes the outfits of women without headscarves, and women who don't want to lose their jobs dress in a way that AKP would approve of.

When it comes to policies concerning women, AKP has opted for the method of polarizing women and pitting different groups against each other. Giving birth or not; wearing a headscarf or not; believing in God or not; supporting the AKP or not; upholding the institutions of marriage and family or not; believing in gender equality or not... This polarization benefits the prime minister: a polarized society with Alevis vs. Sunnis, Kurds vs. Turks, law-abiding citizens vs. terrorists, police supporters vs. the rabble-rousers in Gezi Park.

Under AKP-Gülen rule, religion imposed political control over the female body as the government openly tried to turn women's body into an instrument of AKP rule. It became advantageous to be a Muslim woman with a headscarf. However, even that was not enough; one had to be a Muslim woman with a headscarf who supported AKP.

However, on the subject of Muslim Kurdish women who also wear headscarves, the Prime Minister warned police officers saying that "Our security forces should take whatever action is necessary against those who have become agents of terrorism—regardless of whether they are children or women."³ Kurdish women have suffered immensely from police brutality. When the media broadcast in 2006 scenes of police violence, the Prime Minister said "I have a request for the print and visual media. I see that certain videos are broadcast on TV. Whose propaganda are you trying to show? What is the use of broadcasting such scenes on TV? It would only cause trouble for this country. I ask the media to have some common sense. Terrorists are trying to make propaganda; you do it for them for free."⁴

Creating religious and submissive youth

Aside from women, another area of special focus for the AKP-Gülen power bloc was youth. Creating religious, obedient and conservative youth was among their key targets. People who were 10 years old when AKP came to power now are 22, and constitute fresh cohorts of voters, workers and political actors. These individuals were brought up in the sexist, chauvinistic, militaristic, homophobic, religious and conservative atmosphere created by the Prime Minister during his 12 years in power.

The education system has shifted from using a scientific to a religious content where sexism and animosity towards other religions are encouraged even further. Simple neighborhood schools are turned into Islamic seminary schools. The Prime Minister's declarations about male and female students sharing the same apartment should be read within this context. He called university students "Donkeys loaded with books..." and went on, "So much ignorance can only be the product of education."⁵

"Female and male students share the same apartments. I have given orders to the governor; we shall supervise such student apartments."⁶ Some parents were told that their children engaged in prostitution or received weapon training in student houses.⁷ However, the AKP-Gülen cadres who believed that only married men and women can only share the same apartment did not have their way. Nevertheless, they did not refrain from resorting to force. The Prime Minister personally gave orders for mixed student houses to be raided by police. He even called on neighbors to inform the police about co-ed houses.

The government's use of force was rebuked by society, as was seen in Gezi. In turn, the prime minister's hatred of women and youth, at the forefront of Gezi protests, reached immense proportions. The set-up of the so-called "Kabataş incident" presents an example of how the AKP tried to use the female body for political purposes.

The AKP-Gülen conspiracy against Gezi

In a mass political rally, the prime minister had overtly targeted Gezi protesters, saying "They attacked our daughters and sisters wearing headscarves." Later on he said to a group of AKP MPs that "One of our sisters and her baby suffered a despicable attack in Kabataş."⁸

Zehra Develioğlu, the daughter-in-law of an

AKP district mayor, had claimed that during the Gezi protests that she was sexually assaulted by 70 to 100 men wearing bandanas and leather gloves in Kabataş, she and her baby had numerous bruises, and the assailants had even urinated on her.⁹ She had also presented a medical report. However, CCTV recordings which surfaced on February 14, 2014 revealed that no such attack had taken place and that Zehra Develioğlu had indeed met with her husband in Kabataş and left the environs without incident.

The Prime Minister personally gave orders to governors for such mixed student houses to be raided by police. He went even further by calling on neighbors to act like vice squads and inform the police about mixed houses.

The prime minister simply fabricated the claim that a woman with a headscarf was sexually assaulted by men, just as he had claimed that Gezi protesters had drunk beer in a mosque where they had taken refuge during police intervention. Why did the prime minister try to provoke feelings of hatred, escalating social tension even further? Inspiring hatred and utilizing hate discourse is a crime.

This conspiracy against the Gezi uprising failed thanks to the common sense of the public. The Prime Minister openly tried to instrumentalize the female body during the Gezi protests. The Kabataş incident clearly shows that, everything can be bought and sold: Islamic values, intimacy, private life, and journalists' integrity, etc. I am frequently asked the question "How much does the government intervene in private life?" The answer is a phrase borrowed from the prime minister: Everything is "public" now—to ensure that AKP rule continues!

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FOREIGN POLICY

Turkey and humanitarian assistance

Sema Genel

Turkey has become a significant donor today in terms of official development assistance, which also includes humanitarian aid to those affected by natural and man-made disasters. In 2011, Turkey was the 17th largest donor in the world, with 1.3 billion USD in aid to countries in need. In 2012, Turkey became the 4th largest donor, mainly as a result of its assistance to Syrian refugees having fled to its territory.¹

**Sema Genel**

Working in the field of humanitarian aid and international development for over 17 years, Sema Genel has carried out projects in India, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and now focuses on work inside Turkey. In 2005, she became the founding member and director of Hayata Destek/Support to Life (STL), a nongovernmental and impartial humanitarian aid organization with headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey. With a Ph.D. degree in Political Science and Public Administration, she has lectured on Cultural Anthropology and the Role of Nongovernmental Organizations in the Humanitarian System at universities in Istanbul.

Of Turkey's official development assistance in 2011, around one-fifth went to humanitarian aid. Most of this funding goes to countries in the region with which Turkey has historical ties. Most are connected by religious or regional ties and includes territories such as Pakistan, Iraq and Lebanon as well as those in Central Asia and the Balkans. Turkey was particularly visible in its humanitarian aid and development assistance to Somalia, where the funding given by Turkey was higher than funds donated by others all put together.

Funding volumes have increased tremendously in the last several years with Turkey becoming an "emerging donor." Despite the stumbling in the past several months, Turkey is on top of the list of largest growing economies. Its move towards a regional power is also giving Turkey self-confidence in becoming a global actor in humanitarian aid and technical assistance.²

Looking at the features of official development assistance from Turkey, the most striking difference compared to current major donors is that Turkey donates bilaterally. Turkey directs a very small portion of its development and aid funding to multilateral actors such as the UN agencies. In 2010, multilateral assistance was 5% of the nearly 1 billion USD, while in 2011, this figure decreased to a mere

3.5% of 1.3 billion USD donated by Turkey.

Linked to this is the transparency of how the funds are used by the recipient. Both in terms of the funds it receives and donates, Turkey does not have the culture and the mechanisms for accountability, which is very different from how the other major donors currently operate.

A third major difference between Turkey and the other major donors such as the United States and Europe is the little emphasis placed on humanitarian principles based on universal values and the way humanitarian aid is channeled.³ Even key officials at key positions within the relevant public agencies have little understanding of the humanitarian aid principles and how the international humanitarian system operates. This results in a limited humanitarian space for other actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Turkey. This is a space that is dominated by the own rules of the government of Turkey.

Civil Society in Turkey

A strong state tradition in the Ottoman Empire was inherited by the Republic of Turkey.⁴ The young bureaucrats of the new Republic were "the heirs to the old patrimonial tradition, which assumed the dominance of the state over civil society and reserved the monopoly of legitimacy and authority to state elites, at the expense of social and economic elites."⁵ In countries where nation-building is a deeply entrenched political culture, NGOs have been regarded as sources of weakening state authority and territoriality.⁶ Similarly, the state of Turkey, as the traditional provider of development practice, has regulated the presence and operation of non-state activity within its territory.

Throughout political history in Turkey, the military and bureaucracy have been the main instigators of a strong state, regulating economic and social



development efforts in the country. The state's strategies of nation-building have traditionally determined what acceptable levels of social and political participation should be from below. This, naturally, affected how civil society was organized in Turkey. Mobility at the grassroots level has been under strict state regulation up until 1995, when the law governing civil society organizations was amended. State and military elites have started loosening their grip on civil society since that date, parallel to trends of democratization in the country.⁷

Vakıf activities, as the first form of non-state activity, were historically centered around a mosque, serving the "spiritual and material welfare of the believers."⁸ This religious base of vakıfs was slowly dissolved beginning with the reforms of the Ottoman Empire, their secularization reaching a climax with the formation of the Republic of Turkey. However, values of religion and kinship, still constituting an important source of bonding within society in Turkey, play a key role in the formation of informal networks as well as formal associations. A large number of civil society organizations in Turkey today are still constructed around communal ties and networks.⁹

With the democratization packages of the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP), religious-based activity through vakıfs have found their way back in the public sphere. This includes charities and faith-based organizations involved in humanitarian work. During the past decade in particular, faith-based vakıfs in Turkey have become regional and global actors, bringing assistance to those affected by disasters and in poverty.¹⁰

This is instigated by the rise of faith-based businesses in Turkey in recent decades.¹¹ With the rise in economic welfare among the Islamic elite, spending some of that money on good deeds, especially for alleviating the suffering of Muslim communities

around the world, became a channel for alms giving. Having become very popular, the Muslim business elite are in many regards the fuel for faith-based philanthropic activity on local, national, regional and global scales.¹²

A parallel development has been the AKP's interest in reaching out to Muslim communities around the world. As stated in his own words, Prime Minister Erdogan argues his party to be "not just Turkey's party, but a world party. From Mogadishu to Sarajevo, from Damascus to Skopje, from Sanaa to Bishkek, from Abu Dhabi to Islamabad, from Gaza to Benghazi, [...] wherever there is a victim in the world, the AKP is at his side."¹³

Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

The AKP's affinity to helping Muslim victims around the world seems to have played a role in government funds being generously and single-handedly channeled to the Sunni majority suffering in the hands of Assad's regime. Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, Turkey has been hosting a large number of Syrian refugees. The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is officially estimated as 700,000, 612,826 of which have been registered with the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of the Prime Ministry, AFAD. Of those registered, 218,530 currently reside in the 22 camps in 10 southern provinces.¹⁴

Despite official estimations, unofficial figures point to nearly one million Syrian refugees in Turkey. As Syrian refugees are no longer confined to the southern provinces, an increasing number of Syrians are visible in the bigger cities of Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya and Mersin. Having said that, there is also evidence of high mobility among Syrians

Thousands of people gathered in Nusaybin with the call of BDP - Peace and Democracy Party - to protest the building of the wall between Syria and Turkey. On the Syria side of border people coming from Derik, Qamislo, Girke, Lege Dirbesiye and Tirbespiye walked to the fences BDP Mayor of Nusaybin Ayşe Gökkan stopped her death fast act lasting for 9 days.



Angelina Jolie, Hollywood actress and goodwill ambassador for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, waves as she exits a van surrounded by Syrian refugees at the Altinozu refugee camp, Turkey, near the Syrian border, Friday, June 17, 2011. U.N. envoy Angelina Jolie traveled to Turkey's border with Syria to meet some of the thousands of Syrian refugees.

within the country, thus making it a great challenge to identify exact numbers. A total of 23 mobile registration units have been procured by UNHCR to support AFAD with registration activities of Syrian refugees living in the urban areas.

The Syrians that are settled in the refugee camps in Turkey are provided with shelter, food, water, sanitation and washing facilities, non-food items, medical services, education and psycho-social activities by the public authorities. In comparison with those living outside the camps or waiting along the border areas, the basic needs of this group of refugees are being fully met with good conditions. This is often not the case for the non-camp population who have limited or no access to such goods and services.

The AKP's affinity to helping Muslim victims around the world seems to have played a role in government funds being generously and single-handedly channeled to the Sunni majority suffering in the hands of Assad's regime. Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, Turkey has been hosting a large number of Syrian refugees.

Access to the camps by non-state actors is restricted. At times, special permission is granted to enter the camps and see the conditions, but communication with the refugees is limited, which also makes monitoring in the camps a challenge. This is the case also for UN agencies whose mandate is to provide technical support to respective governments. UNHCR provides technical advice and assistance in issues related to registration and voluntary returns, mainly observing that the non-refoulement principle is not violated. The agency has controlled access into the camps to monitor the conditions and activities in the camps. Similarly, UNICEF is only able to provide indirect assistance and capacity bu-

ilding such as the training of Turkish Red Crescent workers and AFAD staff in the camps.

The ideal situation for the public officials would be for all refugees to settle in the camps where the government has full control over all Syrians fleeing into Turkey. However, despite high level conditions and standards secured in the camp sites, refugees prefer the freedom of mobility and the opportunity to restart their lives and establish their new livelihoods, especially now that hopes for peace in Syria and return to their hometowns is becoming more and more of a distant future.

In April 2012, Turkey adopted a "temporary protection" scheme for Syrians based on the principles of open door policy and no forcible returns (non-refoulement). The scheme entitles full services to those settled in camps, but there is some ambiguity related to the rights of the non-camp population. Syrians who seek aid outside the camps are told to "go to the camp" to receive goods and services. Despite this fact, Syrians have found ways of accessing non-formal work. Syrians are taking low-wage jobs, such as seasonal agricultural work in the fields and daily work in factories.

The refugee camps were set up with the plan that Syrians would be going back to their countries in a short period of time. Despite the protracted nature of the conflict in Syria, Turkey is providing only piecemeal solutions to its refugee crisis. The registration of non-camp Syrian refugees was precisely an offshoot of this approach. Registration was started only to identify those who were entitled to free medical service, which the government announced in January 2013 through a circular to all governorates in the border provinces. In that sense, registration still only signifies access to health care in the 10 border provinces in which Syrians are registered.

A similar circular was released in September 2013 on the permission for Syrian schools to be established and operated in areas where refugees are concentrated. However, there are still policies and procedures lacking for protection related needs of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey. Neither the Ministry of Education nor the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is involved in developing a holistic plan for humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees. This is partly compensated by the new Law on Foreigners and International Protection that was passed in April 2013 but will only become operational in April 2014. This new law establishes the General Directorate of Migration Management (GMM) under the Ministry of Interior. The main mandate of the GMM will be to meet the needs of non-camp migrants while AFAD will continue to focus on provision in the camps.

Regarding itself as the main and sole provider of humanitarian assistance, the government has had to accept the presence of local, national and international aid agencies and other non-state actors

related to the Syrian refugee crisis. Despite limited progress regarding government plans of “accreditation” to civil society organizations in the field of disaster management, the steady increase of Syrian refugees is resulting in flexibility on the part of the government in acknowledging and recognizing other actors as legitimate players in the humanitarian sphere in Turkey.

With the proliferation of international aid agencies in the border areas (most providing cross-border assistance), the government took a proactive role in the summer of 2013 and requested all aid agencies on the ground to complete a registration process. Despite discrepancies regarding which agencies eventually received registration, more than a dozen international NGOs are now officially recognized by the Government of Turkey as providing assistance to Syrian refugees in and through Turkey. Even though AFAD developed an electronic database to monitor the assistance delivered by registered NGOs, both national and international, the failure of the system does not allow the government full control over activities run by non-state actors.

Another important development in terms of the government’s acceptance of other actors in the humanitarian sphere is the start of UN coordination and cluster meetings in Gaziantep. Since December 2013, UN agencies have initiated a variety of meetings in the different sectors in which information is shared on humanitarian assistance being provided to Syrian refugees in Turkey and Northern Syria. This development has the potential of paving the way for a multi-stakeholder response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey.

Turkey as Changing Actor

Three years into the Syrian crisis, the government of Turkey is looking for ways of sharing responsibility in terms of meeting the needs and rights of the Syrians who have found refuge on its territory. By slowly and carefully opening up the humanitarian space to other actors, primarily humanitarian aid organizations and UN agencies, Turkey has made progress in good governance. Similarly, as the government was not prepared and had not planned for such a crisis beforehand, it has been trying to create structures and policies in the midst of a crisis. Although far from ideal, this is an indication of Turkey’s intention to improve the way it handles the needs and rights of migrants on the one hand, while recognizing the added value of other actors.

Despite these positive developments, the Government of Turkey needs to make progress in enabling public access to information and adopting a culture of accountability in terms of the actions related to humanitarian aid and official development assistance. The lack of openness with regard

to access to information in Turkey results in limited evidence-based material, making it very difficult for national and international actors to plan their humanitarian engagement in Turkey. This is also a hindrance to humanitarian advocacy for national and international NGOs.

However, there are still policies and procedures lacking for protection related needs of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey. Neither the Ministry of Education nor the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is involved in developing a holistic plan for humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees.

Last but not least, a critical change needs to take place in terms of the adoption of the humanitarian principles of humanity, non-discrimination, neutrality and accountability. Turkey needs to fully understand and accept how the international humanitarian system works and what kind of responsibilities and implications this has in relation to the other major stakeholders. This again goes back to the need for Turkey to be better involved in sharing information and coordinating its official development assistance, especially as it deals bilaterally with the recipients of its aid.

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CULTURE

Artistic expression and freedom of creativity

Turgut Tarhanlı

Artistic expression can be conceptualized as an individual form of expression, and it undoubtedly is so. However, it is not only a means of expression; it extends well beyond it. Therefore, the law aims to protect “artistic” means of expression parallel to freedom of expression at large. The fundamental parameters concerning the protection of an act of “expression” apply to this area as well. The real peculiarity lies in the ideal and societal possibility opened up by a horizon that manifests itself through artistic means of expression.



Turgut Tarhanlı

Turgut Tarhanlı is faculty of international law at Istanbul Bilgi University's Law Department, where he teaches classes on international law and human rights law. He has participated in conflict management, conflict resolution, universal jurisdiction and human rights research projects at Harvard and Princeton Universities. He has published six books, and articles in Turkish and English. In 2007, he served as a jury member in Human Rights in Film Competition, organized for the first time within the scope of Istanbul Film Festival. He is a member of ASIL, the Helsinki Citizens Foundation, the Turkey Human Rights Foundation, the Transparency Association, ILLI-Istanbul, GiF and the Istanbul Bar Association (1980).

Freedom of expression or the audibility of different voices in society is an expression of the plurality that is the *raison d'être* of democracies. On the other hand, legally, freedom of expression is not an absolute freedom, and as such it can be limited. The criteria for legitimate limitation begin with the openness and accessibility of the reasons for limitation, as clarified by laws, and can be explained as a measured intervention that legitimizes the cautious limitation of freedom. The criteria must also be cognizant of the threat of unwarranted limitation of expression as defined by law.

This legal equation is accepted as being reasonable as long as an environment of relations exists where the plurality paradigm is protected and not harmed. Whatever the reasoning might be, a repressive or disproportionate intervention that limits the freedom of expression will damage not only the realm of liberties, but also the realm of the political.

Yet, in the realm of artistic expression, the Turkish political and legal realm is one where a macro limitation (in effect restriction) equation been established, which overshadows the analysis on micro relations' dynamics. The

1982 constitution that was adopted during a military junta rule specifically provided for the expression of art as a realm of expression and research. The related Article 27 of the Constitution is entitled “Freedom of science and art.” The first paragraph of the Article reads: “Everyone has the right to study and teach freely, explain, and disseminate science and arts and to carry out research in these fields.”

It might be argued that this provision allowed for the constitutional recognition of artistic freedom. However, immediately thereafter, the second paragraph contains the following provision: “The right to disseminate [art] shall not be exercised for the purpose of changing the provisions of Articles 1, 2 and 3 of this Constitution.”

The provisions that are indicated in this Article and whose protection is emphatically emphasized concern the following: “form of the state,”¹ “characteristics of the republic,”² and “integrity of the state, official language, flag, national anthem and capital.”³

The addition of this provision to Article 27 of the constitution was deemed as necessary during the period of military rule, and by the National Security Council wing, the members of which were the Chief of Staff and Commanders of Forces of the two-partite⁴ Founding Parliament. For the last 31 years, this article has been effective not only in the realm of law, but also in the artistic and scientific realms.

In a period of ongoing constitutional debates, it might have been possible for artists from Turkey to contribute to the debates on language of freedom and participation, not considering such artistic freedom within the scope of “the freedom to disseminate.” However, such action has been excluded from the realm of politics and transformed into an



isolated “object of artistic freedom.” The product of such artistic expression becomes an object that remains in the secluded environment of the artist. I am of the conviction that the Constitutional limitations on freedom of artistic expression pose a threat to the possibility of plurality.

Limitations pertaining to art and science

Whereas the Constitution draws greater limitations around the freedom of expression and dissemination of thought when compared with international human rights standards, the aforementioned limitation reasoning on the application of the “right to dissemination” concerns the freedom of art (and science) only.

This provision that concerns artistic freedom was a part of the original Constitutional text of 1982, and it has not been amended since. How can one explain the worry that necessitates a unique limitation of “artistic freedom?” Moreover, the issues that can be defined as public benefit and which are supposedly protected by this provision (“form of the state,” “characteristics of the republic,” and “integrity of the state, official language, flag, national anthem and capital”) are under strict legal guarantee through Article 4 of the

Constitution and defined as provisions “that cannot be amended and whose amendment cannot be proposed.”

Starting with 1987, amendments or additions were made to different Articles of the Constitution 17 times. Yet, no amendment has been made with regards to the provision on artistic freedom. This indicates that for different political coalitions that reached the necessary majority for constitutional amendments, there was no legal need for such an amendment. Perhaps, indirectly, the protection of the provision was even thought to be beneficial. This observation lays out a reality that should worry us about the mobility and horizon of artistic freedom in Turkey.

Protection or curbing?

Against this argument, it may be posited that the Constitution embodies another open provision on art and artists. In fact, the title of this Article is “Protection of Arts and Artists.”⁵ Accordingly, “The state shall protect artistic activities and artists. The state shall take the necessary measures to protect, promote and support works of art and artists, and encourage the growth of appreciation for the arts.”

Isn't it a contradiction that the same text contains both the [aforementioned] provision on “artistic freedom” and also a provision

entitled “protection of arts and artists?” If the state is to protect “works of art and artists,” why does it aim to limit the right of the artist of dissemination, and moreover, to limit it by going beyond the rights’ standards on the matter? The goal of “promot[ing], evaluating, support[ing] works of art, and taking the necessary measures to encourage the growth of appreciation for the arts” begs the same question.

This provision on the protection of works of art and the artist does not stress “a right’s protection;” rather, it recalls the state’s responsibility to provide social and economic guarantees. In this context, the protection of the artist is promised alongside other groups (youth, forest villager, consumers, shopkeepers and artisans) for whom the Constitution emphasizes the provision of economic security.

In this case, we should ask yet another question? Should the provision entitled “protection of arts and artists” implicate a “class of artists” to whom the state will grant this privilege, rather than the spirit and shape of “artistic freedom?”

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This provision of the Constitution is also amongst the Articles that have not been amended since the Constitution was adopted. As it might shed light on the question above, I want to quote at length the reasoning penned by the Advisory Assembly for this Article:

“State guardianship of artistic endeavors, protection of works of art, attempts to evaluate, and support, state’s protection of artists have been a tradition of the Turkish state since the first years of the Republic. Making the State responsible on aforementioned matters is especially of the character of confirming this tradition. The fundamental goal of this article is the development of the importance ascribed to artists and art. The phrase ‘the state protects the artist’ has been included in the article to point to the most important responsibility of the Turkish state in this area for the coming years.”⁶

As this reasoning demonstrates, the “protection” that is at stake in the provision is not the protection of a right but rather the confirmation of a politics that has been a part of the “tradition of the Turkish state since the first years of the Republic.” The limitation criteria brought on by the (right of dissemination) use of the “artistic freedom” by the constitutional provision is disproportionate and atypical in comparison to human rights law. However, when one takes into consideration the scope of the limitation, it becomes clear that the desire is for the artistic behavior to remain behind the political lines drawn in the Constitution. Thus, while the “protection” foreseen in the “protection of art and artists” provision of the Constitution might appear as social and economic, it must in fact be a protection that will be expected to be gained by those who behave according to an ideologically delimited artistic manner.

A worrying portrait of Turkey

Within the United Nations human rights regime, units have been set up under the name “special protection methods” to protect certain rights’ realms worldwide towards the realization of the human rights ideal. One of the methods adopted to ensure, monitor and develop the protection of a right that has been drawn out and defined is the assignment of a Special Rapporteur with universal jurisdiction. As of today 37 rights protection areas and mechanisms have been established with the said authority to protect and monitor such rights. One such protection mechanism, first established by the UN Human Rights Commission in 2009, has been named as the “Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights.” The current Special Rapporteur is the Pakistani sociologist Farida Shaheed.

“The Right to Freedom of Artistic Expression and Creativity” report prepared by the Special Rapporteur Shaheed and published on 14 March 2013 begins by stressing that there is no proposition for a definition of art, or any need for recommendations of additional rights unique to artists, and that artistic or not, all forms of expression should be protected under freedom of expression.

However, persons, institutions or environments against which this legal and active protection will take place can vary. This is the case not only for artistic freedom, but rather for all rights. Artistic freedom is the subject of a right that defines it as a unique means of expression within the scope of freedom of

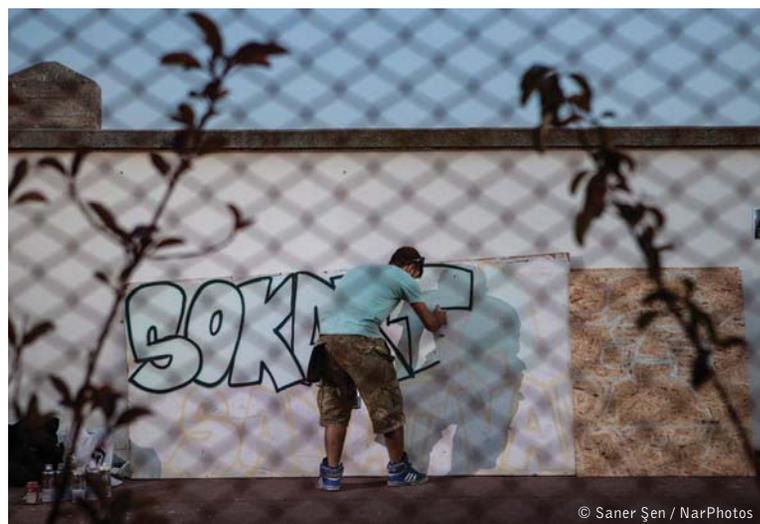
expression. Therefore, orders and policies that limit freedom of expression at large will also impact the use of artistic freedom. Threats facing this freedom might arise out of already existing laws or their implementation by state mechanisms, as well as the opinions, behaviors and actions of persons or institutions that are not parts of the state. In the terminology of human rights law, the first category of threat or interventions might result in vertical violations, whereas the latter might lead to horizontal ones.

In her report entitled “The Right to Freedom of Artistic Expression and Creativity,” Special Rapporteur Farida Shaheed presents her opinion on implementation and general limitations that will negatively impact the use of the right to freedom of artistic expression under two headlines: 1) Laws and regulations; 2) Economic and financial problems.

Under the heading “Laws and regulations,” the main items that can make an impact are listed as follows: 1) vague regulations; 2) pre-censorship; 3) classification and degrees; 4) regulations on the use of public space; and 5) travel restrictions. Under the “Economic and Financial Problems” heading attention is drawn to: 1) restriction of access to state support and interruptions in financial support; 2) marketplace censorship; 3) the protection of artists’ and authors’ moral and financial benefits.

An observation that is stressed in the report, and which I think is of significance for the case of Turkey, is that it objects to defining art and artistic expression not only as something that creates pleasant feelings or pleasure, but also as something that carries value in a democratic, open society. Farida Shaheed is of the following opinion: “Artists may entertain people, but they also contribute to social debates, sometimes bringing counter-discourses and potential counterweights to existing power centers. The vitality of artistic creativity is necessary for the development of vibrant cultures and the functioning of democratic societies. (...) The crucial task of implementation of universal human rights norms is to prevent the arbitrary privileging of certain perspectives on account of their traditional authority, institutional or economic power, or demographic supremacy in society. This principle lies at the heart of every issue raised in the debate over the right to freedom of artistic expression and creativity and possible limitations on that right.”⁷

This principled view can be understood as a response to the picture that emerges in the case of Turkey, my analysis of which shows it



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as being far from free.

The picture that emerges is as follows: Rather than searching for and trying to find the definition of a public good in the human, and in his/her rights, an attempt is made to shape this good in the stalemate of an ideology that identifies good with the state. Simultaneously, the Articles are also not able to avoid language that feels the need to proclaim its own rights.

In the relationship between a realm of right and the counter-discourse that will “balance,” “limit” and “curb” it, a legal design or political priorities, whose criteria will repress the effectiveness of the right are influential, do not coagulate with the values of an open, democratic society. Equally, they violate the international standards of human rights law. And this is the real picture of Turkey in this matter.

1 Constitutional Article 1 - Form of the State
The Turkish State is a Republic.

2 Constitutional Article 2 - Characteristics of the Republic

The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular and social state governed by the rule of law; bearing in mind the concepts of public peace, national solidarity and justice; respecting human rights; loyal to the nationalism of Atatürk, and based on the fundamental tenets set forth in the Preamble.

3 Constitutional Article 3 - Integrity of the State, Official Language, Flag, National Anthem, and Capital

The Turkish state, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish. Its flag, the form of which is prescribed by the relevant law, is composed of a white crescent and star on a red background. Its national anthem is the “Independence March.” Its capital is Ankara.

4 Advisory Assembly and the National Security Council

5 Article 64

6 Constitution of the Turkish Republic, Turkish Grand National Assembly https://yeniayasa.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/gerekceli_1982_anayasasi.pdf (accessed: 18.11.2013).

7 A/HRC/23/34, 14 March 2013, paragraph 3

CULTURE

The privatization of art or the sphere of legitimacy of capital

Nurdan Durmaz

The strong impact of the global neoliberal economy on art began to be felt in art circles in Turkey especially after the 1990s. After the single party period when the state invested in art and culture in order to create a national culture, the weakening of the state power and the impact of globalization in the sphere of arts and culture began to become a part of the free market economy.

With the increased workings of the free market economy in the post-80s period, the “downsizing of the state” and privatizations started to impact the arts as well. In this period when the public museums were not strong, especially in the areas of plastic arts and contemporary art, art became vulnerable to the intervention of companies. On the other hand, state support for the private sector is amongst the reasons for the big capital orienting itself in the direction of arts and culture. In fact, following the separation of the Ministry of Culture from the Ministry of National Education in 1971, it was announced in 1973 that the Ministry would support investments for arts and culture.¹ During the same year, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İstanbul Kültür Sanat Vakfı - İKSV), which can be considered as the beginning of the transition of culture and arts from the control of the state to big capital groups, was established by seventeen businessmen and art enthusiasts under the leadership of the industrialist Nejat Eczacıbaşı.²

As a result of the investments to arts and culture, private museums began to appear in the 1970s and again in the 2000s. The increased investment in arts after the 1970s is connected to state incentives and privatization policies whereas the development in 2000s is related to the adoption of tax incentive laws in 2004 pertaining

to donations and cultural sponsorship: No. 5225, 5226, and 5228. Accordingly, “spending on the construction, repair or modernization works on facilities where art and cultural events such as cinema, theater, opera, ballet and concerts are exhibited, donations and aid made in return for a receipt will be able to be deducted at 100 percent upon the examination of the institutional tax basis. The Council of Ministers is authorized with decreasing this amount to half or the legal level depending on the regions and kinds of activity.”³ In other words, it is important for the project to be supported by the Ministry of Culture. This made the production of culture and art, which had already been entrusted to the socio-economic interests of big capital groups, a part of the political power’s interests on account of tax incentives. This is an economic and political investment partnership, and one can no longer talk about pro-Enlightenment state practices and cultural development plans. The production of arts and culture has become a commercial sphere where the hand of capital as well as the political power is felt at all times.

Why does capital invest in culture and arts?

Towards the end of the 20th century, similar to the USA and Britain, Turkey also witnessed the birth of museums from the collections of well-established families based on their culture and arts investments. While an argument may be made that the underlying reasons were tax investments, privatizations and policies such as reduction in the size of the state, the orientation of these groups (most of which were industrialists) towards culture and arts after the 1980s can instead be explained by the more complicated relations of capital. We can understand why



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“non-profit civil society organizations” invest in art through sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of cultural and symbolic capital.” “Bourdieu demonstrates that areas that seemingly do not care about or are indifferent to economic interests (such as art, literature and science) in fact function according to capital accumulation and the logic of capital (re)production.”⁴ Accordingly, the reproduction of capital is in fact the transformation of the cultural, social and economic capital into one another. Bourdieu uses the concept of cultural capital in two senses: “Sometimes he uses it to refer to information and familiarity with certain styles of art and products, and at other times to refer to the prestige and social value accorded to those who possess these attributes.”⁵ It is only through the neoliberal economic system that we can understand how the cultural capital in its second meaning is transformed into an economic gain for big capital groups. On the other hand, thinking that the arts and culture initiatives of capital groups are a genuine contribution to the sphere of art production is at best naïveté.

In his analysis of the examples of Britain and the USA, art historian Chin-tao Wu demonstrates how art became a material as well as symbolic tool of contestation for companies starting with the end of the 20th century. Companies who see art as a commercial or public relations strategy use it to capture their target audience. “By sending the signal that they adopt the tastes of a sophisticated social group, they wish to appeal to this group. The effort to gain cultural capital as a means of reaching economic aims adopts its most transparent, and sometimes the

most politically harmful form from this established axis of profits: In other words, the axis where cultural capital is transformed into economic capital.”⁶ At this point where companies solidify their cultural reputation, where art becomes a material or symbolic value, we can no longer talk about art – it is instead an arts market that freely floats within neoliberal relations.

Towards the end of the 20th century, similar to the USA and Britain, Turkey also witnessed the birth of museums from the collections of well-established families based on their culture and arts investments. While an argument may be made that the underlying reasons were tax investments, privatizations and policies such as reduction in the size of the state, the orientation of these groups (most of which were industrialists) towards culture and arts after the 1980s can instead be explained by the more complicated relations of capital.

It is possible to trace this concept in Turkey through the IKSv. IKSv has both been a vanguard in this area, and it is the common locale that organizes events sponsored by all other art institutions. The Eczacıbaşı Group has acted through strong relations with both the state’s culture policies and private cultural institutions, and it is effective on cultural policies. IKSv is the guarantee for the existence of other companies in the sphere of arts and culture, and these companies who set aside large budgets for event sponsorship have to collaborate with IKSv, which

*OccupyDocumenta
action in 2012.*



organizes most of the events in this area.⁷ On the other hand, capital groups have set aside the second largest investment share to accumulate collections. The opening of İstanbul Modern, the Koç Museum, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, the Pera Museum and many others in the 2000s is a result of increasing collectors. Collectorship leads to cultural capital in two senses – it increases the social status of the collectors, and it establishes institutional prestige through the museum. Collections of oil paintings are important private property that especially increases social prestige as paintings are the symbol of sophisticated taste and it is the art form that is most easily marketable. Aside from sponsoring events and collectorship, donations made to museums are not only tax exempt, but can also be considered an important source of cultural capital.

Bourdieu demonstrates that areas that seemingly do not care about or are indifferent to economic interests (such as art, literature and science) in fact function according to capital accumulation and the logic of capital (re) production. Accordingly, the reproduction of capital is in fact the transformation of the cultural, social and economic capital into one another.

With the goal of increasing its public support, IKSIV's 2011 report on the economic impact of its arts and culture activities throughout the year presents important data which helps us to understand the transformation of cultural capital into economic capital through the information regarding the media: In 2011, when the sum total paid by sponsors was 15 million TL, the commercial value of the news on national written and visual media on IKSIV events was reported as being 180 million dollars.⁸ When the international media value is taken into account, it is clear that these commercials equal a significant cultural and economic capital gain for both the sponsoring firms and state sector, and IKSIV. However, whereas the text emphasizes that for local and central governments, cultural events are “one of the main tools of strengthening their image as well as their socio-economic performance” within a global economy,⁹ the socio-economic gains of the companies are not mentioned. In 2011, IKSIV gained most (52 percent) of its resources from sponsors, while state support corresponded to only 5 percent.¹⁰ This does not include tax exemptions. State support is low in comparison to other European countries, yet the investment share of sponsoring companies warrants our attention. The said companies are happy to be sponsoring these events as it accu-

es social prestige and refreshes the institutional identity on the one hand, and it can transform the cultural/symbolic capital into exponential economic capital on the other hand.¹¹

From cultural capital accumulation to company immunity

Today, the sphere of culture and arts has become a market where big capital groups and politicians that act on institutional and individual image concerns meet their public relations needs. İstanbul Museum of Modern Art was opened in December 2004, before it finalized its collection, because it was thought that a museum opening attended by the Prime Minister prior to European Union (EU) accession negotiations would bode well in the eyes of the EU. On their own, neither privatizations nor increased state investment in art is for the public good. These are at the same time spheres of power struggles. Cultural policies are a reflection of the state's neoliberal policies and all events that it contributes to can undoubtedly be transformed into a tool of reputation and legitimacy. For big capital groups, art investments create political power alongside cultural and economic capital. In the words of Wu, “The intervention of the business world into the art world must be understood in the contest of having political power in the modern state. There are multiple ways of acquiring and using political power; having cultural authority is one of the easiest and fastest means of reaching this power. The interest shown by companies in cultural events must be seen as part of an overall strategy aimed at combining private economic power with the power of public cultural authority – especially if these events are openly encouraged by the state. The motivation that lies beyond companies' interest in cultural events is the following: In this way, they can transform the cultural capital they create into political power in an appropriate conjecture, and use this power for their benefit, openly or discretely.”¹²

Political power guarantees the stability of capital groups. The state and capitalists that seemingly come together in culture and arts events often act together in economic collaboration. Thus, companies need the legitimacy and political power they derive from art investments to carry out their economic activities. In a world where commercial boundaries are removed, they do not want to be stuck at political ones. At the same time, they use the sphere of art to correct for their negative political and economic reputations. However, the rising social prestige and political power of institutions closes them

off to criticism. These “non-profit” institutions carry out their culture and arts activities as a “social responsibility project” for societal development. Thus, these organizations that act as “civil society organizations” or adopt the responsibility of carrying our national culture and art to the international arena deserve our support, not criticism. The creation of this perception and the symbolic/cultural capital acquired undoubtedly provides socio-economic immunity for the institutions as well as their managers.

The sphere of art production under siege of capital

So how is this compulsory economic and political collaboration (because neoliberalism includes everything it can subsume) on which modern art institutions are based organized within practices of art and culture? How do art discussions and new practices of art nurture these institutions? An answer is possible only if the two questions are posed simultaneously. As Bourdieu argues, the existing socio-economic order can organize itself in even the most distant spheres. Modern art, which was born as an alternative to high art, became the state for the birth of its own “great artists” as its various artifacts (Duchamp’s Fountain is reproduced and sold in certain intervals) began to gain economic value starting with the first artifacts in the 1960s.

This phenomenon can be witnessed in Turkey with the impact of globalization in the 1990s. Artists who produced the leading modern art artifacts were noticed by the art market during these years. At this time, modern art was beginning its institutionalization and the value placed on the peripheral and the local by globalization made modern art more noteworthy. The problem, however, lies in the logic of neoliberal economics, which reduce modern art artifacts that should be open to conceptual criticism and instead bring them together as objects of the art market. This transforms the sphere of arts into a microcosm of the sphere of the economic. In the words of historian and curator Julian Stallabrass, “the most in demand modern art is the art that serves the interests of neoliberal economics – the art that strengthens economy by destroying the obstacles to trade, local solidarities and cultural loyalties through an uninterrupted hybridization process.”¹³ It is the local differences and misfits that have begun to draw the attention of the class of modern art consumers. As neoliberal capitalist economy feeds on and grows through economic crises, the sphere of arts that is commercialized through neoliberalization feeds on these misfits and arts’ moments

of crisis. The discovery in Turkey after the 1990s and even 2000s of art forms such as installation, video-art and performance that emerged as alternatives to the existing concept and marketing of art in the 1960s can only be thought of in this regard. Art that split its approach to content from mass culture reached its peak with technological development, and could give spectators the possibility of seeing it only through art forms unique to the venue.¹⁴ Therefore, exhibiting a unique art artifact that the consumer could experience in only that venue, or allowing them to live this aesthetic experience was a novelty that provided galleries and museums the possibility of increasing the socio-cultural capital of both the institution and the consumers.

In the words of the art historian Chin-tao Wu, the attention shown by the companies in cultural events must be seen as art of a general strategy that aims to combine private economic forces with the force of public cultural authority. The motivation that lies beyond companies interest in cultural events is the following: In this way, they can transform the cultural capital they create into political power in an appropriate conjecture, and use this power for their benefit, openly or discretely.

Two phenomena witnessed in art in these periods of crisis are noteworthy. The first one is the increase in the demand for oil painting, which is the most easily marketed form. However, this is seen mostly in the art centers of the world and cities and appeals to the core art purchaser. The second better allows us to measure the impact of neoliberal economy on art markets (which we can call constant crisis management): These are the inclusion of (conceptual or action based) counter-culture work by the arts sphere or the extending out of the arts institutions. This materializes through the inclusion and taming of anti-market counter culture and arts practices by the institutions owned by large capital groups, or through institutions “playing games with images, materials or venues taken from other places.”¹⁵ The second phenomenon can provide us with means of understanding the current stakes of the complicated relationship between capital and art.

Modern art is rooted in the strong relationship between the attention shown by neoliberal economics seeking new markets for itself in neighboring geographies and cultures, and postmodernism that emphasizes local elements, differences, and co-temporality against modernism’s internationalist historicity – in other words that organizes the spatial against

the temporal. Modern art thereby opens up to locality and life that is home to culture. "Modern art" as we understand it today has become an adjective used by arts managers since the second half of the 20th century to name museum departments or define a new sales department in auction houses.¹⁶ Therefore, the opening up of neoliberal arts institutions to the local, different and Other is not "democratic." On the contrary, it is in the area of arts, yet inherent to the speculative logic of neoliberalism.

As things stand, neoliberal arts institutions continue to increase their accumulation of cultural/symbolic capital that can absorb all elements entering its sphere. Yet, in all instances that it is compelled by its expansionary logic to enter into the public space and the impoverished city space through a so-called democratic attitude, it is bound to crash into societal truth.

The exhibition of local and exotic cultural materials in big museums, the transportation of cultural materials gathered from the public space in the name of institutions to art centers, the organization of the city space as spectator spaces for festivals or biennials are products of the neoliberal arts institutions expansionary logic towards the outside (and the other). This functioning is so widespread that it can co-opt and include outside and even counter-formations and actions. In fact, the group OccupyDocumenta occupied the garden of the building where Documenta was held in 2012, however the action was accepted by managers of Documenta and the activists were allowed to stay in the space throughout the event. The visitors thought that the group protesting the international arts event, which is a microcosmos of neoliberal economics and which turns the dirty economic-political past of the sponsors into prestige, was a part of the event. It is precisely at this point that neoliberalism renders the other (the counter) obsolete, makes it a part of its mechanism and thereby continues to function.

At the opening of the 12th Istanbul Biennial organized by IKSv, the Public Arts Laboratory carried out a performance and distributed to the guests at the opening reception a letter symbolizing the dirty collaboration between capital and politics through a letter written by Koç Holding Company's founder Vehbi Koç to Kenan Evren.¹⁷ Yet, the decades long investment of capital groups and politicians to art have born their fruits, and the exposition of this already known relationship by the Laboratory at the biennial through an "aesthetic-political" intervention

did not produce the desired results. In fact, the select guests even thought of it as a "political work" that was a part of the biennial.

As things stand, neoliberal arts institutions continue to increase their accumulation of cultural/symbolic capital that can absorb all elements entering its sphere. Yet, in all instances that it is compelled by its expansionary logic to enter into the public space and the impoverished city space through a so-called democratic attitude; it is bound to crash into societal truth. This is because the arts institutions themselves are a "legitimate" and "naive" part of the neoliberal political economy that is responsible for urban poverty and the weakening of the public. Therefore, we must think about contemporary art and the investment companies that construct its material universe through this web that poses a constant threat to life.

1 See State Planning Organization, 3rd Five Year Development Plan (1973-1977).

2 See. <http://www.iksv.org/tr> 22.02.2014

3 <http://www.gib.gov.tr/> => 10. Other exemptions.

4 Calhoun, C. (2007): "Main Contours of Bourdieu's Sociology" (Bourdieu Sosyolojisinin Ana Hatları), translated by Güney Çeğin, in *Hearth and Artzenry: Pierre Bourdieu Compilation (Ocak ve Zanaat: Pierre Bourdieu Derlemesi)*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p. 107.

5 Wu, Chin-Tao (2005): *The Privatization of Culture: The Intervention of Companies to Art after 1980 (Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi: 1980 Sonrasında Şirketlerin Sanata Müdahalesi)*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p. 23.

6 Ibid., p.25.

7 Kösemen, İ. Begüm(2012): "The Increasing Visibility of Private Sector in the Sphere of Culture and Arts in Turkey (Türkiye'de Özel Sektörün Kültür ve Sanat Alanında Artan Görünürlüğü)", *Marmara University Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences Department*, No: 2(145-172), p. 159.

8 "İstanbul Foundation of Culture and Arts Economic Impact Research (İstanbul Kültür Sanat Vakfı Ekonomik Etki Araştırması)"(December 2012), p.37: http://cdn.iksv.org/media/content/files/IKSV_Ekonomik_Etki_Arastirmasi.pdf

9 Ibid., p. 12.

10 Ibid., p. 15.

11 According to the interviews with managers that run the cultural and arts activities of companies (foundations or holdings): "91.6 percent of managers have stated that with culture and arts investments their prestige rose, whereas 81.1 stated that both their prestige rose and the brand/institutional identity was positively effected." Kösemen, İ. Begüm (2012), p. 165.

12 Wu, Chin-Tao (2005), p. 36.

13 Stallabrass, J. (2009), p. 165.

14 Ibid., p. 32.

15 Ibid., p. 139.

16 Octavian Esanu (19.09.2013) "Organizing Modern Art in the Neoliberal Period I/IV: Modern Against the Postmodern" (Neoliberal Dönemde Çağdaş Sanatın Örgütlenmesi I/IV: 'Postmodern'e Karşı 'Çağdaş'"), Translated by Nursu Öрге, E-skop: <http://www.e-skop.com>

17 Public Art Laboratory: <http://kamusalsanatlaboratuvari.blogspot.com.tr/p/isimsiz-mektup-bienal.html>

HUMAN LANDSCAPE

Raif Türk: A Kurdish businessman

İrfan Aktan

Raif Türk is not only one of Turkey's leading marble manufacturers, but also an ex-journalist. Beginning with his very surname, he embodies numerous conflicts specific to the Kurdish region; likewise, his journalism career is far from ordinary. In the 1980s, while serving as Director of the Southeastern Region at the state-owned news agency Anadolu Ajansı, he was considered to be politically dangerous by the military junta and appointed to the Western province of Bursa.

In reaction, he resigned from the agency, returned to Diyarbakır in 1987 and established the first marble quarry in the city of Kulp. Since the marble business was not so lucrative back then, he also started to work at the newspaper Cumhuriyet. In 1989, he took office as press consultant at Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and published a magazine entitled GAP'ta Diyarbakır (Diyarbakır under the Southeastern Anatolia Project). In 1992, he became the Diyarbakır representative of the newspaper Özgür Gündem. In 1995, while working as a journalist at the newspaper Evrensel, he revived his company DİMER (Diyarbakır Mermer İnşaat Sanayi ve Ticaret, or Diyarbakır Marble Construction, Industry and Commerce Co.). Since then, he has capitalized on the region's marble reserves and has made considerable headway in the world of business. During his years at Özgür Gündem, many of his colleagues were killed by the state. Raif Türk's story is a good example of the paradoxical relationship between the Kurdish movement and Kurdish capitalists.

After turning from a modest journalist into one of Turkey's leading marble manufacturers, Türk became well-known among the broader public due to an incident during the referendum of September 12, 2010. A group of busi-

nessmen and NGO activists from Diyarbakır, including Türk, announced their intention to vote 'yes' for the referendum, despite the Kurdish movement's decision to boycott it. Türk tried to justify this decision with the following words in the September 5, 2010 edition of the newspaper Vatan: "I don't want to live in a country with two flags. Once equality is established, a single flag will be sufficient for all of us! The people do not want to separate from Turkey, and no one is demanding a second flag. Such demands are formulated only by Kurdish politicians... Voting 'yes' or 'no' is meaningful, but a boycott is not. I think a boycott will not serve peace. Today we can run a business in the region, but tomorrow we may be unable to do so. Tomorrow our industrial facilities may not exist any more. If the conflict escalates, everyone will naturally flee the region."

One day prior to the referendum, Türk's marble quarry located between Diyarbakır's Hani and Kocaköy districts was attacked—allegedly—by three PKK militants, who burnt down some construction equipment. In reaction, Türk closed down his quarry in Bingöl and gave the following statement to the media: "I had declared my intention to vote 'yes' in the referendum since I approved of certain articles. I am a person ready to do everything to ensure



Opening ceremony of Dimer Yaytaş Primary School. Türk is sixth from the left in the front row.



that peace is established. After the incident, many political figures, including members of BDP (the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party), called to say that they were sorry to hear what had happened.”

One of the most ardent defenders of Türk was Osman Baydemir, the then mayor of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. His take on the attack was the following: “Attacking the marble quarry of a businessman and destroying his equipment is unacceptable, whatever the reason might be. This must stop immediately.”

After Baydemir’s declaration, no other negative reaction was expressed against Türk; however, this incident sufficed to show the delicate situation in which Kurdish capitalists find themselves. They perform a tough political and commercial balancing act, trying to maintain good relations with both the state and the

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Kurdish movement.

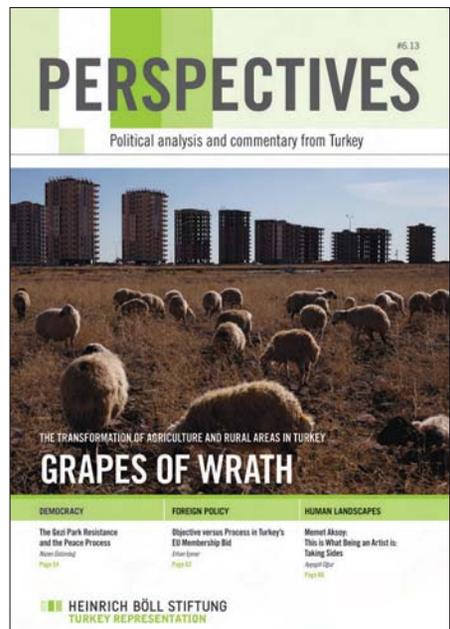
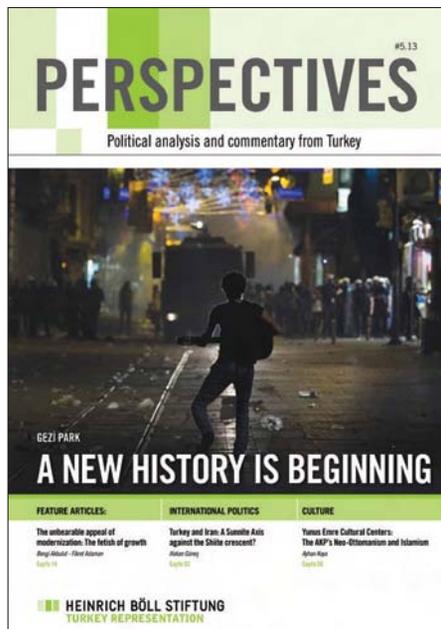
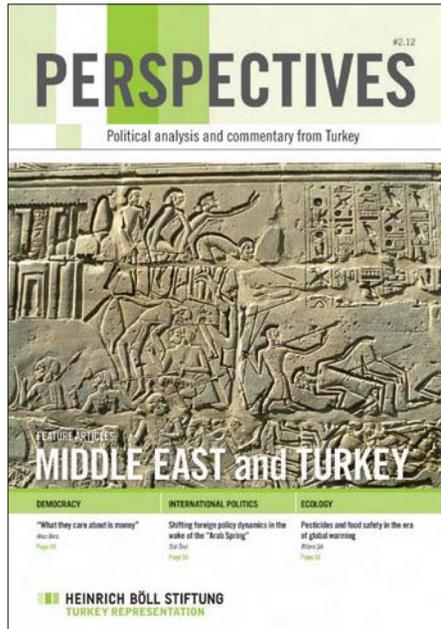
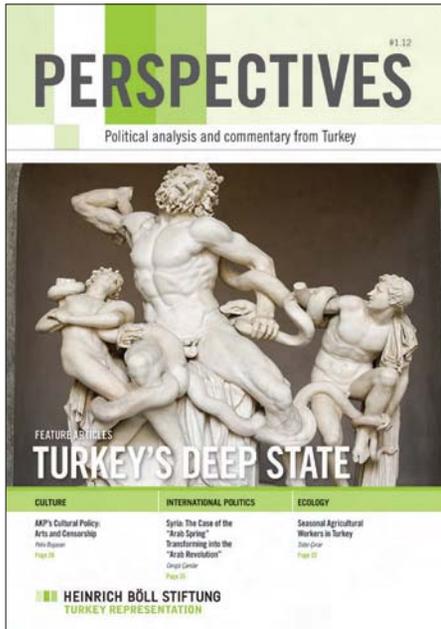
Three meals a day

On May 27, 2008, I was in Diyarbakır to observe how Prime Minister Erdoğan’s “GAP Action Plan” was received in the region (GAP: South-eastern Anatolia Project). Erdoğan’s visit overlapped with the 8th Annual Diyarbakır Culture and Arts Festival. I went to the train station to meet a few seasonal workers, and ran into a young man named Bayram, who asked “Are you here for the festival or for Erdoğan?” Before I could respond, another youngster named Musa said: “What festival? Of course they are here for Erdoğan. And now they are holding a microphone to the poor.” Bayram smiled and said: “There are many poor people here; you should instead lend an ear to the rich. Ask the rich, who want to get their hands on everything, how many meals a day they enjoy?”

After having a discussion with Bayram, I went on to visit Raif Türk at his villa in the city’s new posh district Dicle Kent. We posed Bayram’s question to Türk, who responded with a smile: “We, too, have three meals a day. We are also suffering. Our wish is to see everyone come out of poverty. However, this cannot be achieved with the efforts of a handful of businessmen. The state should also play its part in solving this problem. Erdoğan’s newly announced project to revive GAP will not suffice for this.” In 1994, when he still was a journalist, he had indeed covered the inauguration ceremony of GAP: “I must say that I was not at all impressed by the GAP scheme announced by Erdoğan. In 1994, I had written an article that underlined this problem. Back then, the PM Süleyman Demirel, had promised that they would resolve the problem for good...”

It is well known that GAP Action Plan has offered no remedy to the poverty in the region. After our conversation with Türk, I came across an elderly man while wandering through Diyarbakır’s villages. He told me the following story: “Özal, Bush and Gorbachev were at a cafe when Satan happened to pass by. Bush called to Satan and asked ‘When will the USA rule the world?’ Satan answered ‘In a hundred years’, upon which Bush started to weep, saying ‘Then I won’t see it in.’ Gorbachev asked the same question for SSCB and got the same answer. He, too, started to cry. Then Özal asked: ‘When will Turkey get out of this mess?’ It was Satan’s turn to burst into tears: ‘My lifespan will not suffice to see that day!’”

Well, do you think Raif Türk’s lifespan will suffice to see the region in prosperity one day?



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