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TURKEY REVISITED: REFLECTIONS ON TURKISH SOCIETY AND
CULTURE AFTER 20 YEARS OF ABSENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Graham Fuller joined RAND in late 1987 after a long career in the U.S. government, most of which was spent in Foreign Service assignments in distant parts of the world. During the 1960s, he lived and worked in Turkey for several years and became deeply interested in its politics and culture. He read dozens of Turkish novels of the time and became acquainted with many of their authors. As a result, he wrote a book-length analysis of the modern Turkish novel as a mirror of the concerns and preoccupations of a society poised between tradition and modernization. He is currently updating this study for publication as a book. Leaving Turkey toward the end of the 1960s, Graham had no opportunity to visit the country again for almost 20 years. I suggested a return visit in the spring of 1988 and this was arranged under the aegis of my RAND program for the study of terrorism and political destabilization in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s, which has been supported by the Smith Richardson Foundation. The purpose was to test some of the assumptions and hypotheses my Turkish research associates and I have developed by giving a keen and perceptive observer the opportunity to experience some of the changes that have occurred in this dynamic and rapidly developing country. I also encouraged Graham to write down his impressions of today's Turkey as rapidly as possible after his return so that they would be as fresh and spontaneous as possible.

This paper is the result. It is not intended to be a scholarly research product and makes no pretense of providing a comprehensive or balanced evaluation of Turkish society and politics during the past 20 years, or at present. Many of the judgments contained in it are debatable and, in fact, are the subject of intense current debate in Turkey and among specialists working on the country. The paper omits consideration of many areas of Turkish life. It is not concerned with foreign policy or security issues. It is essentially a series of sociopolitical reflections on the Turkish experience since the 1920s,

when Mustafa Kemal Ataturk set the country firmly on the path toward Western-style modernization, and on the results of this process, which has now accelerated to an unprecedented degree while generating countercurrents and a wide range of reactions.

If the paper has value as an assessment of Turkey today, it lies primarily in the topics and issues it identifies as significant for judging Turkey's future political, social, and economic evolution: the role of religion in society, the parameters of democracy, the implications of integration into Europe, the importance of minority and extremist political forces. These and many other questions have been receiving systematic study in the framework of RAND's program for research on terrorism and political destabilization. A RAND project for study of trends in Islam in several important countries, has also recently been activated.

With a population now approaching 55 million, Turkey is projected by the World Bank to have at least 67 million people by the end of the century. That will put it abreast, or slightly ahead, of all the major countries forming the European Economic Community. It is firmly committed to joining this community by that time. This paper underscores the relevance of the Turkish experience as a subject of serious and systematic study. It demonstrates how important it is for both Americans and Europeans to get to know the country better and develop a basis for deeper understanding of it. Having immersed himself in Turkey again for a few weeks in 1988, Graham Fuller intends to continue to revisit it frequently and examine in greater depth the sociopolitical trends there.

Paul Henze

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TURKEY REVISITED: REFLECTIONS ON TURKISH SOCIETY AND CULTURE AFTER 20 YEARS OF ABSENCE

Graham E. Fuller

There is much merit in abandoning an intellectual discipline for lengthy periods of time. After having been deeply steeped in Turkish culture, politics, and life for several years in the mid-1960s, I had not really had a chance to revisit that remarkable and fascinating country for nearly 20 years. Rip Van Winkle-like, I found my very innocence of Turkish life and culture over that long intervening period to be of immense help in allowing me to see with fresh eyes the interesting evolution of that country over the period of a generation.

Turkey's historical experience has been considerably different from that of most other countries struggling toward modernization, democratization, and economic development. Its unique historical path renders it one of the key countries of the world in setting modern patterns of experience in several critical areas:

- Turkey, for nearly five hundred years the seat of the Islamic Caliphate and thus center of the entire Muslim world, abolished that institution entirely in the Ataturkist Revolution of the 1920s to the deep chagrin and anger of many Muslims, both inside and outside of Turkey. How has the Turkish experiment with secularism--it is the first Muslim country ever to take that decision--fared in light of the resurgence of Islam all over the rest of the Muslim World?
- Under Ataturk, Turkey also made the decision to "face West" in charting the future course of its political, cultural, strategic, and economic ties. How has that decision developed over the past 20 years, and what are its implications for other Third World countries that are interested in moving in the same direction?

- Turkey underwent a period of severe political and ideological warfare, which degenerated into terrorism in the late 1960s and 1970s. Are the ideological fires spent? How has ideology evolved in a world in which socialism as a whole has not fared well in the last decade?

Turkey, in effect, made momentous decisions under Ataturk that nearly overnight entirely reoriented a defeated and dying Middle Eastern Muslim Empire into a nationalist, secular, and Westernized modern nation state. But the human personality does not undergo sharp transformation without considerable trauma. Turkey has been experiencing the trauma of personality change continuously for nearly 60 years. Many would argue that the country still needs to assuage a crisis of personality through continuing psychic therapy.

Indeed, if the psychic scars on the Turkish collective personality are still visible, Turkey may now be well into the process of treating these scars more openly and willingly than ever before. A debate about what Turkey was in the past, what it is today, how Islamic it is or should be, how close it should be to the West, what the nature of its ties are with the "old" Middle East, and what kind of a political system it should adopt to get where many of its citizens seem to want to go--all these questions are still alive and under discussion. Turkey's success or failure will be of much importance to other countries also undergoing their own "trauma of modernization."

My wanderings around the cities and countryside of Turkey for several weeks helped crystallize a lot of new thoughts, many of them admittedly impressionistic, about the direction of change over the past two decades.

PEOPLE AND CARS

Istanbul now boasts a new efficient Ataturk airport--the feeling is very much like arriving in any other European country. Gone is the "Eastern quaintness," the slow pace of a quiet airport, where one had to run the gauntlet of baksheesh-seekers to negotiate one's way in or out.

New sights greet the eyes once one sets out from the airport in a taxi towards the city. Istanbul has grown immensely, sprawling out over hills and valleys in all directions, making all but the old core of the city virtually unrecognizable. I lost my bearings repeatedly.

Cars choke every single thoroughfare, making a former 15-minutes taxi ride three times as long. The old access routes and bridges across the Golden Horn are now in turmoil as plans for new bridges are implemented. The old car ferry--the only way to cross from European to Asiatic Turkey--is now largely supplanted by the massive Ataturk suspension bridge spanning the broad Bosphorus. And yet a second Bosphorus suspension bridge is now nearing completion.¹ It is called "Fatih" bridge, after the great Ottoman sultan, Mehmet the conqueror, who seized Constantinople from the Byzantines in 1453 and turned it into the Ottoman capital of Istanbul. But more is involved. Some modern secularizers are aghast at the name. It suggests that the newest--and biggest--bridge bears an Islamic name in a deliberate design to overshadow Ataturk. Even engineering is not completely immune to ideological symbolism.

The great bridges are necessary to accommodate the massive flow of people and goods now streaming into Istanbul from the provinces. The sprawl is not deterred by the waters of the Bosphorus, for "Greater Istanbul"--the newly adopted Turkish term--also extends for mile after mile onto the Asian side. The night train to Ankara takes an hour to make its way through these vast, new, brightly lit settlements with their factories and apartments in Turkish Asia.

People are everywhere. It is harder to weave my way down the sidewalks than ever before. And the faces and clothing on the street reflect a great deal more than before the presence of villagers and Turks from Asian Turkey. Some of the features reflect the Mongoloid origins of the Turkish race several millenia ago. The population of Istanbul is now well over six million, perhaps a fivefold growth since the days when I knew it. This trend marks Istanbul as one of the coming

¹It was opened in July 1988.

great megalopolises of the world, along with Seoul, Manila, Cairo, Lagos, and others. Will it be able to cope with the demands? So far, yes. But without care, they can potentially become the urban conditions that have helped spawn politico-religious extremist movements in other Middle Eastern cities, such as Cairo and Tehran.

The traffic does not simply reflect more people. In my day, Istanbul traffic was dominated by the old American gas-guzzlers of the 1950s--complete with tail fins--purchased from American servicemen and civilians stationed in Turkey. Importation of new foreign-made vehicles was then virtually impossible for Turks, unless they went abroad and had the hard currency to buy them. But today Turkey is manufacturing its own cars at various assembly plants linked with Ford, Fiat, Renault, and others. A car is now within reach of millions of Turks for the first time. A cab driver tells me that the jammed arteries of the city are absorbing an additional 300 newly registered cars every day.

FOOD

One of the great delights of Turkey has always been the food, a true imperial cuisine that drew on the best the Empire had to offer. The menu in Turkey has always reflected the seasons--fruits and vegetables coming in and out of season, determining the offerings of the chef. Today one finds that seasons have less sway upon the menu. *Patlican* (Turkish eggplant), queen of the Turkish kitchen, is now available much earlier than ever before, as is other agricultural produce. Clearly the new roads and transportation system, along with newer growing techniques, are bringing produce to the market from the Turkish south earlier than ever before.

THE NEW OPEN TURKISH ECONOMY

The most visible change of all in Turkey is the opening of the Turkish economy to the outside. Turkey was once one of the most rigorously closed economies anywhere, with tight statist policies that left most major enterprises in the hands of the state, with no free currency exchange and an autarkic, produce-it-yourself industrial protection policy that insulated the country from outside competition

and products. In 1980 the Turkish economy had virtually reached the point of collapse; and the military took over power again after the nearly 12 years of intermittent anarchy, which degenerated into near-civil war, with dozens of citizens dying in terrorist attacks every day. Among the changes of the new military government was the acceptance of the reform measures of Turgut Ozal, then deputy prime minister for economic affairs, since 1983 elected prime minister. Ozal's changes were sweeping, involving Thatcher-like programs of privatization, the opening of a free economy, loosening investment laws, and placing the Turkish lira on a realistic exchange basis.

To the outsider the changes are dramatic. Private businesses, especially in the service sector, are booming. Rent-a-car systems abound--free of the fine Ottoman bureaucratic hand that had so long dominated the economy. Turkey, for better or for worse, now imports a full range of Western commodities freely--at a price--and has embarked on an export-led strategy for economic recovery. The country is astonishingly efficient, in marked contrast to the bureaucracy of past years.

INFLATION

The mixed blessings that come from casting the economy loose upon the world market have included fearsome inflation--somewhere near 50 percent.² But five minutes in any cab ride will produce a long dissertation from the cabbie about the punishing effects of inflation upon daily life. Most cabbies I talked to--once apparently high on the economic improvements--were negative about Ozal. The cost of living is too high with increases in basic items like gasoline and food coming every few months. Never mind that gasoline still seems cheaper than almost anywhere in Europe, it is high compared with what it was in the old, heavily subsidized system of before. Much more of this, most cabbies believe, and Ozal will never win another election.

It is fascinating to see the extent to which cab drivers now seem to be highly literate on the subject of economics. Nearly every driver

²It ran to 80 percent in late 1988.

I spoke to had a sophisticated understanding of what the government was trying to do--whether they agreed or not--and had some recognition of the kinds of tradeoffs involved in government choices. Nearly all saw the need for Turkey to "join the world" and compete on European markets. They understand that the old system of state subsidies for everything brought the country to bankruptcy and could not go on.

This kind of economic sophistication suggests that a great deal has happened in Turkey to bring the population into the debate on Turkish policy. Indeed, during one of the days of my stay, Turkish television broadcast the Parliamentary debate to the nation on the next budget. The degree of popular understanding of the issues and participation in the process was impressive.

Perhaps one out of five cab drivers favored Ozal. "When you got into my cab, you knew exactly where you wanted to go, didn't you? Did you change your mind as you went along? Well, that's like Ozal. He knows where he wants to go, says where he wants to go, and he goes there." People are better off than they have ever been: "We have goods available on the market now, even if they are expensive. Before, weeks would go by and you couldn't even buy gas."

Inflation is biting very deeply and raises potential issues of worker discontent, which could lead to politically damaging strikes. One hears the charge that the new open economy is advantageous only to the rich, that a new plutocracy has been formed. Egalitarian economics have long been a problem for states in transition from heavily socialistic policies to greater degrees of free enterprise, which inevitably produce greater gaps among various income groups. China, the USSR, and even the UK have passed through the throes of this problem, and the former two are far from convincing the population about how safe it is to allow income disparity in the name of productivity and freedom of enterprise.

Indeed, all is not well with the new open economy in any case. Conservative critics of Ozal's policies are fearful of what they believe are serious mistakes in the implementation of the new policies. One economist stated that Turkey cannot pay its debts and that the economy is not in fact as free as it should be. Ozal allegedly intervenes

personally in all facets of the economy with arbitrary decisions on the prices of a vast array of state-produced goods. Corruption is considered rampant even in the Prime Minister's family, and the government is seen by many as too insensitive to social problems. Indeed, social problems run rampant can easily destroy much of the progress Turkey has made in the direction of economic liberalization.

GERMANY, GERMANY...

In the mid-1960s Turkey began to export a new commodity: workers. Germany especially was anxious to use Turkish *Gastarbeiter* to cover underemployment in Germany's industries. Over two million Turks departed for Germany and other European countries over the next decade. The social consequences were to be considerable. I met a number of people, especially cab drivers, who had been to Germany, worked for five to ten years, and then returned. All of them had bought their own cabs, sometimes the Turkish-made Murats but often Mercedes. Their families had gone with them.

One driver told me his kids had gone to a German school and learned perfect German. One now works in Turkey as a translator. Another told me his daughter could have stayed on in Germany to earn good money as a worker, but with her German education she had now come back to Turkey where she could get a job as a civil servant. He was proud of the rise in social status. Nearly all praised Germany as a good, clean, organized, disciplined place--qualities Turks seem to admire, perhaps from their own days of Empire. Their only complaint was the "xenophobia," which they said the Germans evidenced toward foreign workers.

It is worth focusing on the German experience because it touches upon so many different aspects of Turkish life and modernization: the economic, the social, the political, the religious--indeed, the whole question of values.

Various studies have been made on the social phenomenon of Turks migrating, if only temporarily, to Germany. In most cases the workers who went were not the desperately poor, but town or village people with real ambition for social betterment. They did not view themselves as

oppressed, but as open to opportunity for self-betterment and advancement in both income and social status. They earned a salary vastly higher than anything they could have imagined in Turkey and came back wealthy. Many invested their money, sometimes wisely, sometimes not, in Turkey. All greatly affected their own family's standard of living and education and often were able to help out relatives in the villages and towns.

Indeed, a new process of acculturation has emerged from the German experience. One academic mentioned that whereas the returned worker has had only minimal effect on Turkish big city life, in the small towns the influence has been considerable as workers have brought back new values about themselves, their rights, the way societies should work, government programs for the people, self-help, etc. It will probably be a long time before anyone understands the full extent of the German experience upon Turkey.

It was striking to note in Konya, for example, a bus load of German tourists being shepherded through the tomb and shrine of the Turkish holy man and mystical poet Celalettin Rumi--by a tour guide who was obviously Turkish, yet speaking perfect German, holding forth on the artistic and philosophical aspects of the shrine in native German fluency. Elsewhere, too, I encountered younger Turks heading tour groups of Germans whereas in years past some professorial German would be fulfilling the function.

Turkish-German ties, of course, are not new. Ever since the 19th century Germany has enjoyed good ties with the Ottoman Empire and the Turks fought with Germany in World War I. Germans have always traveled in great numbers to Turkey. Most tourists in the 1960s were used to being greeted in Turkish provincial towns by Turkish children yelling "Alman, Alman" (German, German) in the firm expectation that all visitors are German. The Turks have also always admired Germans for their order, discipline, and accomplishments as a people.

Now the influence is going the other way. Although West Germans want fewer Turks and other foreigners in their country, there are still large numbers in most big German cities. Many Turks, especially children of Turkish workers in Germany, are choosing to stay and are integrating into German society, marrying Germans.

GERMANY IN LITERATURE

I had long been interested in Turkish literature and the realities of Turkish life expressed in Turkish novels and short stories. They have produced fascinating portraits of life in the Turkish village and in the city. Now there are novels about the Turkish worker in Germany. A few prominent Turkish writers live there. I heard that one Turkish writer now writes in German. This is an incredible odyssey for Turkey in its quest to enter European civilization.

And yet, many Turkish writers have chosen to see the German experience in negative terms. Turkish writers for the most part have always held a leftist vision of life. Their sensitivity to social issues has often impelled them to view Turks as oppressed and down-trodden, whether in the village or the city. A long line of interesting literary works over the past 30 years have sung of the benighted Turkish peasant, exploited by the big landlords and the share-crop bosses of the big commercial farms, or ignored by the government and insensitive regional administrators. That vision undoubtedly contains a considerable element of truth. But the vision has also been unrelieved, stereotyped, and ideological, and has rarely shown the Turkish peasant to be anything other than the helpless victim of an oppressive and brutal society. Only rarely has he been portrayed even as capable of rebelling. Class hostility is emphasized in often didactic, polemical literature.

Other novels have written of the villager come to the city, seeking work, but again nearly always falling victim to the exploitation of city work-bosses, corrupt officials, or grasping fellow-villagers or townsmen exploiting the newly arrived. This literary tradition has continued on into the new era. The worker in Germany is now similarly portrayed as oppressed, exploited, and alienated, rendered helpless in deprivation of his own culture and values, or conversely seized with sleazy feelings of self-importance based on his material acquisitions. The portrait is black. Almost no writers--perhaps by ideological predisposition--are interested in discovering any phenomenon of self-choice, self-assertion, self-betterment, social improvement, educational and professional

opportunity and training, the ability to make conscious choices about their own future and family in undertaking the German odyssey.

The German phenomenon is a complex one in its social implications for Turkey. How will those Turkish workers who have been to Germany act in the Turkish social scene upon their return? Many are fairly well imbued with the idea of self-betterment and that the German experience, however mixed, served them very well indeed. It has contributed to a sense that one can change one's own life, come to understand the world, seek opportunities, and work for improvement.

Yet undoubtedly there are other aspects to the experience as well--darker facets. The Turkish villager in the city has sometimes felt a similar sense of alienation in his isolation from the village, some loss of his own sense of identity and being, to the point where he may refer to life in Istanbul or Ankara as *gurbet* or exile. Life in Germany can be the ultimate, literal *gurbet*. Turkish sociologists have written of problems of social dislocation abroad, especially generational tensions as children grow up split between two sharply different ways of life.

RELIGION AND VALUES

Political movements have historically drawn their strength from the alienated. Islamic resurgence and fundamentalism have demonstrated their power of attraction in Cairo, Tehran, and elsewhere in the Middle East. Istanbul is no exception. Nor is Germany. The Turkish government is well aware that religious activists have been busy among Turkish workers in Germany--not depending solely upon the alienated, but upon those experiencing some sense of loss at their isolation in a foreign culture, and particularly at the loss of values. How do Turkish parents view the potential effect of the ambient social and cultural mores of Germany upon their own families? Should their daughters be dating German boys? And what of the sexual mores, profoundly more liberal in Germany than in nonurban Turkey? What of the more sharply authoritarian vision of how to bring up children? What of material values and the "acquisitive society?" Where do the traditions of Islam fit in?

These questions have bothered Turks, and indeed the Turkish government itself has been concerned at the reported growth of religious activism on the part of radical religious groups in various German cities. Many mosques reportedly have been established that are under the control of radical Islamic activists. They find ready audiences among Turkish workers who are unsure about questions of identity, values, and politics.

The Turkish government has reacted by sending a number of "orthodox" or establishment religious leaders to Germany to preach and tend to the needs of the faithful. For all of that, Germany is still reputed to be the center of the most powerful Turkish Islamic activism. No one knows what direction it might take.

Life "in exile" can also bring other anomalies as well, including the area of ethnic politics. In Sweden, another country with many Turkish "guest-workers," the law requires that education be provided in the native language of those working in Sweden. Thus, apart from Turks, a considerable number of Turkish Kurds, who are forbidden education in their own language in Turkey, are receiving Kurdish-language education for their children in Sweden. What will be the effect of such an experience upon the Kurds in the future--especially upon their children, who may become much more powerfully impelled toward a Kurdish nationalist outlook as a result? For that matter, Kurds from Turkey are now able to mix with Kurds from Iraq and Iran in Europe, which will unquestionably heighten their sense of nationalist consciousness in a place where they can freely express these nationalist sentiments. European values have just begun to start playing themselves out in Turkey at the working class level; the result is unpredictable.

What if Turkey enters the European Community? Closely related to this issue is the question of Turkish membership in the European Community (EC). Turkey has long sought this privilege, but final acceptance of the membership is still several years off and tied up with a variety of complex European economic and political interests--and it still faces considerable Greek opposition. Ozal has staked Turkey's future on membership and is already attempting to bring about changes in the country to accommodate European requirements.

For Turkey, the issue involves far more than the question of economic benefits. Membership is laden with deeper questions of Turkey's very economic system, the nature of its politics, questions of human rights, cultural identification, and religious fate. On the economic level there would be major advantages to Turkey in its ability to export to the EC market. Turkish workers would have freer rights of emigration from Turkey as well, one of the sticky points in negotiations. Membership would also require that democratic procedures govern Turkish political life on a permanent and effective basis, with political rights exceeding those currently permissible, such as the legalization, perhaps, of the still-banned Communist Party. Greater freedom of speech and publication might also be required. At present the constitution expressly forbids writings that advocate either communist or Islamic fundamentalist beliefs.

It is in the religious realm that the controversy is at its greatest, for those of strong Islamic persuasion oppose the concept of entry into the EC. They see it as imposing the capstone upon the Westernization process, rendering the ultimate and total Westernization of Turkey inevitable. In their opposition they are joined by the left, which also sees negative consequences in EC membership. For the left membership embodies permanent bourgeoisification of the Turkish political and economic system, wedding it irrevocably to bourgeois democracy and free enterprise. Both groups, for different reasons, oppose what they claim would be the imposition of foreign values.

EXAMINING THE OTTOMAN NO-NO

This debate over Turkey's soul runs still deeper. More than ever before Turkey has developed a profound interest in the deeper implications of its own history--especially the Ottoman period--and is addressing the issue more openly. He who controls the past, after all, controls the present--as the Marxist-Leninists are so well aware. But such debate was not really possible earlier. Ataturk and his vision of Turkey dominated the political scene. Not only did Ataturk introduce major political and cultural changes into Turkey, he was also the savior

of Turkey from the foreign imperialist forces of Greece, Italy, France, and England, all of whom saw possible gain as they moved to the banquet table to help divide up the spoils of the dead Ottoman Empire.

To challenge Ataturk's vision has been unpatriotic, indeed it bordered on the treasonous. Turkey had struggled to reassert itself, to save its land and recreate a new dignity and identity on the ruins of the old Empire. Such a change of necessity had to involve massive reorientation of national entity, symbolism, and myth. The Ottoman Empire, the "sick man of Europe" for so many years, was not a healthy forebear for the new Turkish state. So the Empire, its multinational character, and its position as seat of Islam were all repudiated for the sake of the new national secular state that was to be part of Europe.

Now some Turks are beginning to reexamine their own history more thoughtfully. Ataturk's greatness is not in question and never should be. But glorification of the Ottoman Empire has been a cultural no-no. The Empire was largely perceived as the source of weakness, backwardness, obscurantism, fanaticism, and collapse. Yet over the past decade novels have been springing forth that have begun to treat the Empire in different terms. Here again we find a fascinating ideological coalescence of positions between extreme left and right.

The Islamists see the Ottoman period as one of the great glories of Islamic history when Muslims ruled more of the world than at almost any time since the initial Arab conquest. It was the Turks who saved the Islamic world from the Mongols, and it was the Turks who carried Islam right up to the gates of Vienna. It was indeed Western reforms in the 19th century that, in the view of the Islamists, led to the debilitation and collapse of the Empire. In their view the Empire did have strong values--Islamic ones--that were displaced by the secular reformist values of the West. It is little wonder in the eyes of the Islamists that the Empire rapidly lost its moral orientation and tried to ape the West, becoming only a weak shell of what European power represented.

Interestingly enough, Arab Islamic radicals have also helped revise the view of Turkey in Islamic history. Modern Arab nationalists have long reviled Turkey's role in dominating and ruling so much of the Arab world for many hundreds of years. It was from Turkish authority

that Arab nationalists had to win their independence. But to the Islamists, nationalism and Islam are contradictory forces. The Islamists treat the Ottoman period as one of great glory for Islam and believe that Arab nationalism has crudely and incorrectly excluded the great Turkish contribution from the annals of Islam, in the name of narrow Arab nationalist sentiment. It is not surprising that Turkish Islamists increasingly share in that vision of the Turkish past against the extreme secularizers and Turkish nationalists.

Parts of the Turkish left also share this view. An interesting novel by a prominent leftist writer, Kemal Tahir, also writes of the time when European imperialism began to insinuate itself into the Empire, weaken it, and render it defenseless against the West. Thus, the process of westernization from this point of view exerted negative effects upon Ottoman--hence Turkish--nationalist development. Yet another Turkish nationalist writer, Tarik Bugra, has written warmly of the founder of the Ottoman Dynasty suggesting that the very concept of the Empire was patriotic and Turkish at heart.

Historical revisionism is at work. Although the leftist, the religious, and the nationalist admiration of the Empire occupies a very limited range at this point on the Turkish intellectual spectrum, it is significant that these ideas are emerging. Turkish history is loosening up. Complex and sensitive topics are now more freely accessible outside the strictures of Atatürkist orthodoxy. Perhaps Turkey is just beginning to feel comfortable enough about itself to start investigating these important intellectual and conceptual questions that go to the heart of the Turkish soul.

SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE NEW ISTANBUL

Istanbul has been deeply affected by its extraordinary explosion in population over the past two decades. Sheer demographics alone have made the city dirtier, smoggier, more crowded, and strangled in its traffic. Demands for social services are growing. The "Özal revolution" in particular has accelerated the pace of change in commerce and the economy, stimulating greater roles for free enterprise and the opening of the country to the external market. To anyone used to the

old and inflexible etatism of earlier days, the current openness and flexibility of the economy is extraordinary.

Not surprisingly, the economic opening has expanded the entrepreneurial classes--indeed new classes. The urban culture has been changing. Greater economic activity has given many more people the opportunity to make money--new money. Power has become more diffused, with the old economic and industrial elite no longer enjoying the same monopoly. Inevitably the educated and elite classes view these developments with mixed feelings. Although most believe that the economy does need to be revivified and welcome the appearance of entrepreneurial instincts, the classic tradeoffs emerge: Do the newly moneyed elements, often from the heartland of smaller Anatolian towns, share the same social values as the older elite? Do they carry any of the same civic virtues and even sense of social responsibility? A certain rawness to the new economic life worries many of the more established business circles divided not so much by generation as by class.

How "permanent" is Turkey's swing to open markets, privatization, and the encouragement of greatly expanded private enterprise? Nearly a decade has passed, and many of these changes have already sunk into the new Turkish existence. The critical question--indeed not just for the future of free enterprise but for democracy and the stability of the country as a whole--is the degree of social discontent. If new economic policies do not distribute wealth sufficiently broadly, more extremist ideologies, right and left, may emerge. The whole question of economic integration with Europe involves these same issues.

URBAN STRESSES

Urban discontent and the psychological dislocations that come with rapid urbanization lie at the heart of the Islamic challenge. Will integration with Europe and "western" free enterprise systems come to be identified in the popular mind with rising or falling standards of living? What will be the cost to the lower classes of falling subsidies and the need to hustle a lot harder to survive? More socialism can always be the government's ultimate political and social fallback, or

"safety net"--at least over the short term. Many may prefer being integrated into a known and secure system of egalitarian benefits and guarantees, however low and dreary: Surprise and uncertainty are then largely eliminated. In the end, the Turkish populace may not yet have fully made up its mind about the tradeoffs between the old system and the new. It is unlikely that Turkey can ever go back to the old self-contained economy simply because nearly everyone recognizes that times have changed and the world is increasingly integrated.

AND THE ISLAMIC RESPONSE

These very social issues are the natural arena for Islamic activism to have the greatest social effect. Already many religious "Sufi" (mystical) orders are deeply engaged in social activities in the poorer areas of the city, organizing social programs around the mosque. These *tarikats* include such orders as the Nurcus, the Suleymancis, the Nakshibendis, and others. They seek to integrate students from the countryside into their programs upon arrival in the city, and to organize medical, financial, and other social services. Implicit in their work is the inculcation of Islamic religious values, which run sharply counter to the state doctrine of secularism. Indeed, nearly all of these orders are dedicated to the ultimate reversal of the secular order and the creation of an Islamic government designed to implement the Shari'a, or traditional corpus of Islamic law.

One of these orders had a long-term plan for the penetration of the inner sanctum of Ataturkism, the Turkish military, and actually succeeded in introducing several members into the officer corps until their existence was uncovered. The power of these orders is such that most politicians consider it desirable to maintain ties with one or another of them to help gain strength at the ballot box. Such a trend could, in fact, be quite encouraging if it leads to the gradual acceptance and integration of these movements into the mainstream of Turkish politics.

Islamic activists concentrate not only upon areas of social work, but the more vital issues of values and goals. The Islamists perceive Western secularism as embodying a value-neutral and materialist society,

capitalist in orientation, implying that no firm value system exists to rein in forces of greed, individualism, and self-gratification in economic life. Many of these Islamic thinkers oppose westernization and secularism simply because they destroy Islamic values and weaken moral principles in society. Some others are more conspiracy-minded: They see the foisting of westernization on Turkey and the Muslim world as part of a larger design to keep the Muslim world weak and supine in the face of Western economic, political, and strategic interests.

THE ISLAMIC MEDIA

Islamic-oriented literature is now far more current in Turkey than it was two decades ago. Across from Istanbul University a whole area is devoted to nearly 40 different Islamic bookstores, all selling books on Islam, Korans, Islamic magazines, books on the Islamic past, and books on how cope with modern society and still live a moral life.

Dozens of Islamic magazines are now on the market, many with very glossy pages and attractive graphics, indicating considerable financial support. They range from a magazine simply entitled *Islam*, which deals with Islamic politics, often quite hostile to the West, to more apolitical publications, such as *Kadın ve Aile* (Women and the Family) or *Cocuk* (The Child), which treat family problems, how to cope with various moral dilemmas, issues of Islamic values and how to implement them in daily life. Others offer advice on practical living, some almost resembling the kind of inspirational articles one finds in the *Readers Digest*. All have columns of letters from readers asking questions about moral issues, how to handle personal problems, etc.

Another interesting phenomenon is the emergence of a number of prominent thinkers and intellectuals treating in more serious fashion major issues of contemporary Islamic thought and Islamic apologetics. I had somewhat expected these books would be written in old-style Turkish and filled with religious imprecations. On the contrary, most of these books are written in very contemporary language in a straightforward style. Many of the writers demonstrate a broad conceptual grasp of world history, the interplay of Western and Islamic history and the relationships or differences among Marxism, socialism, democracy,

Islamic government, capitalism, individualism, Christianity, etc. The quality of thinking, whether one agrees with it or not, is serious and the intellectual arguments adduced are intriguing.

Indeed, at least two of the most prominent of these Islamic thinkers (Cemal Meric and Ismet Ozel) are former leftists who converted to Islam. They are well equipped to deliver sharp critiques of the bankruptcy of the left and discuss questions of Islamic ideology in the contemporary world. Many of the issues touched upon by these and other writers are not simply philosophic in nature, but deal with existentialist questions of concern to anyone living in the modern world: Where are values derived from? How does one raise a child in a materialist and individualistic world? What is the responsibility of the state toward questions of moral values? What is the nature of the relationship between the individual and the state? How can an economic system be designed to work "justly?" etc. These are broad social issues going well beyond narrow Islamic theology or questions of how to pray or go on the pilgrimage. They are modern works treating contemporary questions.

These are works that must exert considerable influence on students who are searching for answers to existential questions, and who will not find the answers in traditional secular Ataturkism. Morals and Ataturkism do not have to be at cross purposes, but Ataturkism as a nationalist ideology simply does not treat existentialist and moral questions. I noted a high proportion of young people meeting or browsing in these book stores. The Arabic-Islamic greeting of "Assalamu aleykum" commonly heard in this environment is rarely used otherwise by most urban Turks.

I also noted a number of inspirational, religiously oriented novels written about contemporary urban life and its dilemmas, or about historical Islamic events. Material of this sort stands out as a notable exception in the field of modern Turkish literature, which is heavily dominated by writers of essentially leftist outlook.

ATATURK AND THE RED-LINES OF CRITICISM

The issue of Ataturk lies at the very heart of the contemporary Turkish dilemma. The man was quite literally the creator, savior, and inspiration of modern Turkey. Creating a new national state out of the ashes of the old, he was compelled to confront those forces then most hostile to him--the old Ottoman elite whose own "ideology" rested on the multinational Islamic state and its religious institutions. Ataturk turned his back on Turkish history in order to face forward toward a new, secular, nationalist, European-oriented order.

Yet the past cannot be chopped off without trauma. Nearly all thoughtful Turks recognize that violence was done to the Turkish past and national psyche. More writers, both leftist and Islamic, are now beginning to delve into that past more closely. But such historical review must ultimately examine the phenomenon of Ataturk himself. To date the field of Ataturk studies has largely been limited to hagiography. To subject the historical figure of Ataturk to rigorous historical, intellectual, political, and social analysis was off-limits--smacking at least of gross disrespect and verging on the treasonous. Now, some fifty years after Ataturk's death, an increasing number of Turkish intellectuals recognize that the time is closer for such a historical treatment of the revered leader. Turkey, they say, should be mature enough now to be able to handle this topic in a more "objective" fashion.

Here is where Islam again is the rub. For to explore the roots of Turkish Islam and the violence done to the Islamic part of the Turkish psyche by the Ataturkist revolution is to strike at the very heart of the national ethos and myth. Secularism is an article of faith at least as profound to the old Ataturkist generation as Islam might be to others. Islam to them reeks of corruption, weakness, obscurantism, backwardness, despotism, ignorance, and reaction. The old Ataturkists are obsessed with the peril of Islam. Some maintain that Islam is more dangerous to Turkey even than Communism.

During my stay the press was angrily debating the resurgence of the wearing of symbolic Islamic head-coverings by female students in university classrooms. Many Ataturkists were urging the state to suppress any reversion to such reactionary Islamic practices and to deny entry to exams to any student so garbed. One professor asked me how he could ask Islamic female students wearing a head covering to leave his class while other female students sat there in miniskirts and heavy makeup.

Yet, despite the visceral anti-Islamic sentiments among the Ataturkist intellectuals, most of them were not aware of the names or the writings of the best known contemporary Islamic thinkers and intellectuals today. For many, Islam is a black force, beyond the pale.

HOW LIKELY IS AN ISLAMIC TURKEY?

Most Westerners would probably agree that an Islamic Republic in Turkey is hardly desirable, nor indeed is it very likely. But Islam will have to be faced more realistically by the Turkish elite if the more extreme facets of the Islamic movement is to be "disarmed." And Turkish policymakers will have to do further thinking about the place of Islam in a secular society populated by Muslim Turks who have played a grand historical role in the annals of Islam.

MENDERES: A PREEMPTIVE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION?

A reconsideration of the role of Islam in Turkish life is not of course a new issue. The first major breakthrough occurred in the 1950s with the election of Adnan Menderes as Prime Minister. Menderes's election at the head of the Democrat Party represented the first truly free elections since the Republic was founded. Menderes was a populist. His resounding election represented the victory of the majority of the population that was fed up with the paternalism, despotism, and economic stagnation under the one-party rule of the founding Ataturkist party. Among Menderes's early acts was to allow Islam to be mentioned in political speeches, to restore the use of Arabic in the call to prayer (banned in the 1920s in favor of Turkish), and the building of many more

mosques all over Turkey. New forces of free enterprise were encouraged. The election actually carried overtones of a social and even class revolution.

In fact, one could argue that the Menderes "revolution" might have been the Turkish peaceful, democratic equivalent of a Khomeini type of Revolution, restoring religion into Turkish life, powerfully backed by the public at large, giving voice to the dispossessed--but without the violent upheaval and rabid anti-westernism that marked Iran's experience. Even left-wing critics of the Democrat Party recognize the powerful populist roots that brought the party to power, rejecting the old elitist Republican People's Party system that had been in place since the 1920s, and protesting the grim economic realities of life in Turkey. Deep, concrete economic and social grievances developing under a repressive one-party bureaucratic regime had become identified with the ruling party's program of westernization and secularism. It would be a mistake to compare Menderes with Khomeini in any sense. But the Menderes period, rather than encouraging religious reaction, can be seen as releasing pent up feelings, which well could have taken on more revolutionary and ultimately anti-western direction if they were not assuaged at an early phase. The Menderes period may have served unwittingly as a preemptive political movement that side-tracked a potentially serious explosion if kept under indefinite suppression.

Ten exciting years after he came to power, Menderes was overthrown in 1960 by the army, which sees itself as the protector of the Ataturk revolution and its principles. Menderes was condemned for corruption and violation of democratic principles in suppressing opposition. I was therefore more than a little astonished when I found myself flying into Izmir's new Adnan Menderes airport. Turkey's only major political figure to be executed has now, like Bukharin in the USSR, been rehabilitated. I asked the cab driver why he had been restored to honor. "The government made a mistake in hanging him," he said.

THE RISE OF THE LEFT

Most observers see the radical Turkish left as emerging out of the new political freedoms of the 1960s and 1970s when radical left-wing publications, organizations, and parties were able to flourish. Radicalized student activity moved rapidly from violent demonstrations to acts of terror by the end of the 1960s. A partial military intervention in 1971 to restore order eliminated the first round of violence, only to lead to an even greater wave of terrorism, bombings, and assassinations in the late 1970s, sparking a more definitive military intervention and martial law in 1980.

I recalled the late 1960s as a time when politics were painted in stark tones of black and white. Political dialogue was reduced largely to *ilerici* and *gerici*, literally "forward-looking" or "backward-looking" factions, suggesting that all politics was reducible to either "progressive or "reactionary" elements. Gone were the older Arabic-derived political terms covering a broad spectrum of political belief ranging from conservative to liberal, reactionary to progressive, even radical and extremist. Indeed the left had very deliberately set out to capture the political vocabulary.

LINGUISTIC WAR

Language was one of the arenas of the struggle. Ataturk had founded a Turkish Language Society whose aim was to reform the Turkish language, to rid it of its excessively heavy borrowings of not just Arabic and Persian vocabulary, but from the grammatical use of those words according to Persian and Arabic grammar rules. Such linguistic reform, along with the abolition of the Arabic alphabet--grossly unsuited to the radically different character of the Turkish language--was an essential prerequisite to the achievement of broad literacy in the country. Nationalist instincts were involved too, as scholars sought to create neologisms from native Turkish roots to replace Arabic and Persian loan words. Pride in ancient pre-Islamic Turkish roots and the new nationalist state helped motivate the movement.

By the 1960s, however, the Turkish left had seized the lead in pushing language reform, insisting on Turkish neologisms for every Arabic or Persian loan word. Newly coined Turkish neologisms became the hallmark of leftist writing; the vocabulary became part of the message. Extreme nationalist and xenophobic instincts were the driving force. Marxist terminology was introduced through this vehicle.

Thus, on all fronts guerrilla warfare was in the air, on both left and right. Many observers trace the emergence of Islamic radicalism from this period, rising in defense against the leftist/communist/Maoist challenge. The tone of politics was vicious and political battle lines were drawn. The press had become a vehicle for ideological treatment of the world. Most of the intellectual class and the media were strongly leftist. The arts were too. Political dialogue was primitive and deeply aggressive. Equally fanatic and violent right-wing, extreme nationalist groups also emerged and participated in the guerrilla wars on the streets and campuses.

WHAT HAS THE LEFT LEARNED?

On this visit I was struck by the measured character of the Turkish press. Papers like the left-establishment *Cumhuriyet* are vastly more objective, maintaining a viewpoint, but also reporting the news instead of engaging in polemics. The world is now written about in the grays that truly characterize human affairs instead of strident black and white terminology.

The Turkish language has visibly changed in 20 years. Language reform has taken firm hold. A vast range of neologisms are now widely accepted and used in most forms of educated, and even a lot of popular writing. Indeed I had to buy an up-to-date dictionary just to be sure I understood all the new coinages I encountered. Language use now expresses generational and educational more than political affiliation. A sure sign of this is the use of most of these terms now even by Islamic writers whose agenda is to communicate rather than to try to resuscitate old Arabic and Persian terms.

Most observers feel that there is a "new maturity" to the conduct of Turkish politics. Having passed through the inferno of the late 1960s and 1970s, indeed, moving to the brink of civil war, Turkey seems ready for a less confrontational era. Most people I talked to believed that there was a much greater degree of tolerance to be found. Religious groups and parties, while not welcomed by the left and the Ataturkist elite, are recognized as a reality to be dealt with. There is more recognition that the religious groups must have their fingers on the pulse of society on at least some basic issues to have gained such significant following. The phenomenon cannot be legislated or repressed out of existence.

Similarly, the left itself recognizes that much of the Marxist thinking of the 1960s and 1970s was crude and "infantile." A number of Marxist intellectuals thinkers are now attempting to think more freshly, more in classic Marxist categories, than in terms of revolution, violence, or even power through military coup. Much subtler leftist analysis is looking back at the deeper historical roots of the Turkish evolutionary process, taking a more sympathetic view of the Ottoman period. Indeed, some Marxists are now examining Ataturk with a slightly more critical eye--as much as is politically acceptable--with recognition that this extraordinary leader, for all his accomplishments, had also helped create a system that after his death became increasingly paternalistic and potentially repressive in character.

But has the left really learned anything from nearly two decades of extreme violence, anarchy, and military crackdown? Difficult to say. Some observers suggested that Turkish radicalism in the 1960s merely paralleled a whole generation of international political activism like the youthful leftist riots in France and America. Turkish society and politics being less developed, the Turkish form of these riots inevitably led to terrorism and anarchy and even sparked something like civil war in the country, right against left. But, chastened by the two military takeovers and periods of martial law--and now 10 to 20 years older and perhaps wiser--extremism has lost its appeal. Political problems are more complex and are not conducive to simplistic solution.

Yet other observers suggest that the repression itself has been the major factor causing extremists--especially the left--to retreat. It is simply too costly to engage in that kind of politics. Large numbers of professors have been expelled from the universities because they were viewed, rightly or wrongly, as having contributed to the creation of radical youth movements. Indeed, the universities have now been yoked with YOK, the new Turkish Higher Education Council that by everyone's account is a disaster--the gagging medicine applied to treat the disease of extremism.

Turkey probably has matured in its politics as a result of the trauma of the 1960s and 1970s. The experience of massive violence, terror and guerrilla warfare has probably changed many minds. The Turkish press daily ran small boxes entitled "In Memoriam," complete with youthful photographs, of various students who clearly died violent deaths during that period. Some of the boxes were commemorations by fellow students speaking of the bravery, patriotism, and idealism of the victim--probably signs that they were involved in extremist activity. Others, commemorated by parents and family, suggested they may have been victims of terror on campus themselves. In any case, the memories are still vivid and alive. The newspaper *Cumhuriyet* also ran a series for over a week interviewing prominent members--still living--of the 1960s demonstrations. Few of the interviews suggested that it had all been a mistake: Most stated that those were seminal events in the development and evolution of Turkish politics.

Indeed, the question is not only of what the left thinks of itself, but of what society thinks of the left. The left seemingly has been deeply discredited by its recourse to violence--which touched the lives of everyone. In fact the left drew extremely limited popular support during the period of anarchy; on the contrary, it was the very violence that led to army intervention and martial law--a development broadly popular among the population. Most people were quite happy to forgo intellectual freedoms if only the killing and guerrilla war could be brought to an end. Has the left learned more about the consequences of violence, or have the people learned more about the left?

In either case the left has had to retrench. The old YON movement (essentially advocating socialism through military coup and a pro-Soviet, "anti-imperialist" agenda) or the old Turkish Workers Party (non-violent, legal political party activism) are both now seen as "impure Marxism." Much of the left now at least claims that it must pay greater attention to democratic procedures, that Marxism cannot be rushed, and that the class structure must be truly ripe for a turn to socialism. One Marxist, however, pointed out that the left is also shattered and splintered, with fringe groups still supporting Maoism or even "the Albanian road" to socialism. Very few observers believed that the turn of events in the USSR or China--the repudiation of ideological socialism--has really had any effect yet on the Turkish left. As always with communist parties, each one is convinced that it can "do it right."

One commentator said that the Turkish Communist Party leadership had recently been to Moscow to lobby with Gorbachev for help with the Turkish government about legalizing the party in Turkey. Gorbachev reportedly told the party that they should go back home and follow the path of political legality. We have heard this before from Moscow, but never under such conditions of dramatic reform and restructuring in the USSR. It may well be that the Turkish Communist Party will be yet another disappointed Third World party that feels the new Soviet Union is abandoning the hands-on approach to helping guide party leaderships to victory around the world.

THE NEW AGENDA OF THE LEFT

Turkish society must in fact be more mature as a result of these experiences. Numerous intellectuals now in prominent positions in the universities or the media, perhaps once communist or Maoist in outlook, have a soberer vision of Turkish reality. "Tolerance" was the word I heard most often: a greater willingness to recognize at least the de facto existence and even validity of other political views that make up the reality of modern Turkish politics. Greater stress on democratic procedure is common. European social democracy is the new model for the more serious leftists.

What are the issues that concern the left most now? Most people believed that many of the classic rallying cries of the left have been abandoned in the face of the new realities now accepted as faits accomplis: Ozal's opening up of the economy, the existence of greater religious activism, membership in NATO, and the desire to join the EC. Leftists are more concerned now with issues that touch them personally: problems of restoration of rights to teach at university, rights to organize left-wing parties, including a communist party (legally banned), and the repeal of articles 141 and 142 of the constitution, which forbids advocacy of policies based on class antagonisms.

Yet some of the left also oppose the entry of Turkey into the EC, precisely because it will commit it to principles of bourgeois democracy, free market capitalism, and NATO. In this they share a position with the radical Islamists who see the EC as locking Turkey into a secular, westernized future. Reportedly some leftists have made tentative moves toward the Islamists to make common cause on this and other issues, such as expansion of the right of political expression. If the left is saddled with the clearly anti-Marxist character of articles 141 and 142, the Islamists are hobbled by article 165, which expressly prohibits political activity in the name of anti-secular, religious principles. The Islamists have so far resisted cooperation with leftists, reasoning that even if the tactical goals are the same, the ideological vision of the left is total anathema to Islam.

WHAT MIGHT SPARK RESURGENCE OF EXTREMISM?

Can the left reemerge either as a potent intellectual force or even as the spark for violence once again in Turkey? The country has been through too many cycles of political chaos and military restoration of order for anyone to be sanguine about the chances of peaceful political evolution in the future. Yet these cycles have not simply reflected mindless repetition of the same events. In nearly every case new social issues were at stake, and new social forces came to the fore. Turkish society and social structure is more complex than ever before. Many different and conflicting interests exist. Only extreme hardship or

common threat could unite such disparate elements into a common radical coalition.

As in many Islamic and Third World countries, xenophobia has been one of the driving forces of violent politics. Turkey passed through a particularly virulent minority-led anti-imperialist, anti-Western period during the late 1960s and 1970s--perhaps enough to have absorbed some lessons from it. Perhaps the NATO tie is now in fact more accepted and the EC issue less apocalyptic than it might have been before. But other social issues are still on the horizon.

If the government cannot get a handle on inflation and standard of living questions in particular, or on issues of social alienation in the new urban sprawls, democratic and free enterprise values will be at risk. Some of the sharpest criticism leveled against Ozal is that he may be permanently "tainting" Turkey's attitude toward free enterprise and economic liberalism through his own flawed policies. These conservative critics fault Ozal for ill-conceived implementation of his own goals that will discredit those very principles if others should want to try to apply them more successfully. Indeed, the major opposition to Ozal now springs from the "True Path Party" (Dogru Yol Partisi) under the leadership of former conservative Prime Minister Demirel. Perhaps this is the good news--that the most successful opposition springs from a group philosophically similar yet tactically very much at odds with Ozal.

The legitimate leftists are likely to pursue European social-democratic principles. They still have a pronounced preference for etatist approaches. Ataturkists have been profoundly influenced by the free market policies of Ozal and seem to understand that they can never be fully reversed. More extreme leftist groups could benefit from a dramatic failure of the Ozal program, however, if it results in runaway inflation and major labor disorders. But the far left has had scant success in organizing mass movements and would probably be hard put to do so again. The far left has little opportunity to gain power except by military coup by leftist officers. Such a coup is conceivable only under circumstances of extreme social dislocation. And indeed, both the conservative and Ataturkist elements of the military would probably move first to preempt any such far left attempt.

Islamic extremists probably stand to gain most from social disorder and harsh economic and social conditions. For this is the soil that produces much of the psychological impetus for a turn to Islam as a political panacea. If association with the West proves to be a negative experience, if the open market and limitations on etatism sharply reduce welfare programs, subsidies, etc., a considerable segment of the country would be powerfully affected. But it is worth remembering that the avowedly religious party of Erbakan did not fare all that well even during the extremism of the past decade. It is not that fundamentalist forces could seize power--they almost surely could not. But a sharp increase in Islamic influence in politics could reawaken the traditional fears of the Ataturkist elites and the military to crack down more harshly, leading to greater polarization of the political environment.

ISLAMIST GRIEVANCES

And what are the grievances of the Islamic extremists? Many interesting arguments are made, nearly all of which come back to the basic theme of the need for Islamic values, for the state to be strong and morally based. One Islamist complains that the obsession of the Turkish elite with secularism has reached the point where it is more important to them even than justice or democracy.

Japan, interestingly, is raised by Islamists as a successful model of modernization and preservation of basic national character, compared with what they consider Turkey's failed model. Turkey accepted all the unnecessary trappings of the West in order to "modernize," while Japan did not, they say. Modernization does not have to mean aping of the West. Japan continued to keep and value its ancient religion, drawing national sustenance from it. Although Japanese, like old Turkish, uses a complex borrowed writing system, Japan retained its system and managed to attain an extraordinary state of literacy; Turkey abolished its old Arabic alphabet, which helped tie it into Islamic culture--even deliberately abolishing all words Arabic origin--in order to attain a national speech for the masses. Turkey has sold its soul, whereas Japan has not. (Although many features of the analogy break down, the fact that these arguments are being drawn is interesting.)

THE IRAN SYNDROME

Turkey is currently said to be sheltering over a million Iranians, refugees from the Ayatollah. Do they pose a threat to Turkish secularism, and are they capable of stirring up fundamentalist activities? Why should they be if they find Khomeini's Iran distasteful? On the popular level, few Turks feel much affinity for Iranians. Several cab drivers I asked about the problem were contemptuous of Iranians: "Pislik! (Filth!) All they do is deal in prostitution and smuggling." Shiite Iranians have little religious appeal to staunchly Sunni Turks. Undoubtedly there are Khomeini agents among Iranians in Turkey, but there is no evidence that they have real ability to stimulate the population. The situation in Eastern Turkey, among the limited Alawite population, or the large and discontented Kurdish population, however, could be quite different.

But Khomeini's ideas could appeal to a much more limited group of Islamic extremists in Turkey, who might actively seek to draw Turkey into Islamic causes. Indeed, during my stay, the Iranian Ambassador in Ankara joined a rally organized by a religious party and helped denounce in harsh terms Israeli policy on the West Bank.

An Islamist with whom I spoke was equally negative on Iran. He saw the revolution as a sectarian Shiite affair and viewed Iran as the historic enemy of the Ottoman Empire. He was confident that Islam, if compelled to choose between the West and the USSR would choose the West every time--but emphatically did not wish to be pushed into either camp. At least the West was Christian, he felt, unlike the atheist Russians.

AND THE ARABS...

There is little Turkish popular sentiment for Arabs, but the Arab presence in Istanbul is much greater than 20 years ago. Signs in the shop windows of tourist and fancier shops are often written in Arabic, seeking Arab oil money. More Arab tourists come than ever before. The left is quite paranoid about Arab influence. Ties with Arab states are viewed as potential Trojan horses for Islamic influence in Turkey, especially Saudi Arabia. A recent book by prominent leftist Ugur Mumcu

"exposes" the Saudi Islamic League organization, which, as an instrument designed to spread Saudi-style Islam in the Muslim World is perceived by the writer as a sinister force in Turkey. Ozal is faulted for the allegedly irregular ties of his family with Saudi Arabia.

A NEW SYNTHESIS WITH ISLAM?

One of the interesting concepts developed in the Ozal period has been an attempt to fuse Islamic and Turkish nationalist ideas to create what is called a "Turkish-Islamic synthesis," aiming at filling what some feel is a spiritual void in an Ataturkism that offers little by way of moral values. Indeed, Ozal has hoped to combine the concept of a liberal economy and aspects of westernization as well into a new "Turkish-Islamic-Western" synthesis as his party's basic philosophy.

As interesting as these eclectic visions might be, they are perceived as artificial by Islamic extremists. Is the central fact that Turks are *Turks*, or that Turks are *Muslims*? Are they Muslim Turks or Turkish Muslims? While this might seem to be hairsplitting to the outsider, a ferocious debate has been under way in the Arab world where Islamist thinkers have come to view Arab *nationalism* as a deeply destructive rival to Islamic thinking; nationalism in its essence is seen as purely secular and divisive.

AND NOW GREENS, GAYS, AND WOMEN

As if the Turkish intellectual scene had not evolved enough with the increasingly complexity of the left and the emergence of a neo-Islamic religious right, the political and social spectrum has also widened to include the beginnings of an ecology oriented Green movement. A "Radical Party" espousing gay rights is now also on the scene. Lastly, a feminist movement has developed in Turkey that is a natural opponent of any of the religious trends. Educated Turkish women are among the most vociferous critics of conservative Islamic thinking since the Islamists inevitably focus on discussion of what the "proper role" for women in society should be. The problem is not going back to the veil--or even to the kitchen--so much as it is assigning to women a formalized position of dignity in society, but implying a more

circumscribed role. But not all women seeking rights are anti-Islamic. There has sprung up *within* Islam a women's movement that defines new rights for women in the Islamic context--and involving considerable activism. While not in the mainstream among women, the movement could grow.

A vivid example of the new attention paid to this phenomenon is the publication of a run-away best-seller novel by a woman writer, Duygu Asena, entitled *Woman Has No Name*. The book has sold more copies than any other recent book in Turkey and is being read by working women behind shop counters--who who might not otherwise read novels. It is a first-person narrative of a modern urban girl who becomes a fiercely independent, self-oriented professional woman whose main goal is to "belong to herself." She describes repeated encounters in her life--including a series of different lovers--in which she is basically treated as a woman rather than as a person by society around her. She is angered that women must be defined in terms of their relationships to men; she is determined to live her own life independent of everyone. This best-seller, regardless of limited literary quality, may have considerable social influence.

Whereas there were very few women writers on the scene in the 1960s, there are a number of important ones writing today. Most of them reflect the pervasive left-of-center political and social vision of male writers, but focus more on the role of women and are establishing a definite voice and position in the field of literature. Their novels are generally urban, one woman in particular writing novels of the slum districts of the big cities.

It is also a sign of the times that the "village novel," an important, almost dominant genre in Turkish literature in the 1950s and 1960s, has now almost disappeared from the literary scene. The village is no longer the social focus of literature because the village has become integrally linked with the town and city. The frozen, isolated, unchanging village existence that had dominated the Turkish countryside since time immemorial is becoming a thing of the past.

THE NEW VILLAGE

Some of the most dramatic changes in Turkey are not to be found in the cities, but in the countryside. Rural population has grown in the past two decades with many small towns now verging on small cities. Present population figures compared with those in a 1960 *Hachette Guide* indicated an average growth of town and village size by an order of seven. At least as striking as the growth is the change in physical appearance. The old mud-brick, irregular, white-washed or earthen-colored structures where peasants used to live have largely given way to new red brick structures with tile roofs and neat appearance. Virtually every home has a television antenna--not to mention of course the prerequisite electrification. In the mid-1960s Turkey had no television at all.

The road system has developed remarkably since the 1960s. Good paved roads are the rule rather than the exception in most of the Western half of the country. Surfaces are excellent. Bus service has stretched everywhere with buses coming and going along all the highways. The bus phenomenon had given rise to a new permanent feature in most towns: the "otogar" or bus station, centralizing and institutionalizing the service where once an occasional bus would just pause at a bus stop.

The prosperity and fecundity of the countryside is the overwhelming visual impression, even though I did not have opportunity to look at agricultural statistics. Tractors are now everywhere, the rule rather than the exception. In the early 1960s a novel entitled *Yellow Tractor* had chronicled the effect of a tractor in a village. It is taken for granted now. The oxen population has drastically fallen.

Although admittedly very impressionistic, I got the feeling that the amount of land under cultivation, especially in the less favored areas, has grown considerably. Nor should that be surprising. With growth in both population and tractor usage, a great deal more land can now be cultivated. "Turkey should be able to feed the entire Middle East," one foreign business specialist told me. Herds of sheep and goats also seemed far vaster than I had remembered. The growing market for Turkish produce abroad is bound to have its effect.

The ecologist should especially draw encouragement from the seeming success of reforestation projects. Never before had I seen such extensive "tree propaganda" as now in Turkey. Every few miles in the Western half of the country (the only area I visited) there were road signs extolling trees. "A country without trees is a world without sun." "A tree is the country's wealth." "Love for a tree is love for your country." The words seem to be translated into practice. Many hillsides are now reforested, obviously within the last 20 years. Real progress seems to be under way in reforestation--in a country almost entirely denuded in earlier times.

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In short, I found a country that is undergoing profound physical and intellectual change. Turkey is extremely dynamic. Its creative forces have developed and are prospering. Turkey should have all the raw materials to succeed. But, as always, politics can wreak incredible havoc on an otherwise unsuspecting social and economic system. Turkey is still in the process of deciding what a Turk is, and what his orientation is. The debate over values will influence in part what kind of a political system emerges. Turkey will have to come to terms with its past, as part of working out its national identity and sense of self-confidence.

Islam could help in the healing process, but political and economic mismanagement could turn Islam into a virulent force as well. Despite the trauma of the past two decades, one hopes that Turkey has learned something from the experience that will serve it in better stead in the decades ahead. Turkey's experience with Islam in particular will have important implications for the experiences of other Muslim countries that are engaged in the modernization process, for both the good and the bad that it brings. The process cannot be stopped--only influenced and perhaps controlled, one hopes with wisdom and foresight.