

Contemporary Turkey in Context: Culture, Power and History

A Humanities Seminar

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10 weeks
3 hrs per week

Turkey is one of the world's most populous Muslim-majority countries (with some 80 million people), is a member of NATO and has been a candidate for entry into the European Union for over ten years. Since 2002 the country has undergone rapid and profound changes under the rule of the Justice and Development Party and its leader Tayyip Erdogan. These changes include a growth-oriented economy, massive infrastructural investment, softening of the country's secularist ideology, a transformed foreign policy oriented toward economic and political engagement, and in recent years controversial steps often described as 'authoritarian' by observers both inside and outside the country. What is 'really going on' in Turkey? How might we understand where Turkey is going? This ten-week, three hours a week course explores the contemporary history, culture, economy and politics of Turkey. We will briefly look at historical developments from the late 19th century Ottoman Empire to the late 20th century Republic of Turkey, with an emphasis on recent decades and current events. Course time will consist of lectures by the course coordinator, Dr. Silverstein, as well as UA experts on Turkey (of which we are fortunate to have several). Each week will be organized around a 'theme,' explored in depth by the coordinator, and on some occasions with a special presentation by a UA faculty member whose scholarship furnishes them with considerable expertise on the topic at hand.

Required readings (additional articles will be added in some weeks)

Hanioğlu, M. Şükrü. *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*. Princeton University Press, 2013.
Öktem, Kerem. *Angry Nation: Turkey Since 1989*. London: Zed Books, 2011.

Week 1

Introduction. The politics of history and the status of the present: polarized society with fundamental disagreements about 'what happened' in the past, and 'what's happening' now. Colored by "us" and "them" standpoints, commitments, hopes, fears, desires...

Week 2

Ottoman legacies, Republican present: Atatürk, modernization and the transition from multi-ethnic Empire to nation-state
Hanioğlu, Atatürk book

Week 3

Post WWII Liberalization and the Cold War

Zürcher, Erik. *Turkey: A Modern History* (excerpt as PDF)

Week 4

Gender, masculinity and femininity, and roles

Arat, Yesim. 2000. "From Emancipation to Liberation" *Journal of International Affairs*. 54(1).

Korkman, Zeynep and Can Aciksoz. 2013. "Erdogan's Masculinity and the Language of Gezi Resistance." *Jadaliyya*.

Week 5

"Every Turk is Born a Soldier": the military and society

Altınay, Ayşe-Gül. *The Myth of the Military Nation: Militarism, Gender and Education in Turkey* (excerpt as PDF)

Week 6

Religion: Islam, secularism and minority faiths

Silverstein, "Islam and Modernity in Turkey" PDF article

Carkoglu, Ali and Binnaz Toprak, *Religion, Society and Politics in a Changing Turkey*, TESEV 2007.

Week 7

The AK Party era: social, political and economic transformation

Öktem, *Angry Nation*

Week 8

Economy: from 'national economy' to capitalist integration

Tugal, Cihan. "Occupy Gezi: The Limits of Turkey's Neoliberal Success." *Jadaliyya*, June 4, 2013.

Week 9

The state: from liberal, to centralized, then liberalizing...to authoritarian?

Öktem, *Angry Nation*

Week 10

Turkey and the world around it: East/West identity, isolation, integration, détente?

Cizre, Ümit. "Turkey in a Tailspin: The Foiled Coup Attempt of July 15," *MERIP*, Aug 2016.

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