

**IAS 3950 Journey to Turkey:
A Survey of Culture, Economics and Politics of Turkey**

Course duration: May 19 – June 6, 2015

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1. Course Objective

The Anatolian Peninsula that connects Asia and Europe has been at the epicenter of many empires and civilizations for thousands of years. Any attempt to understand the culture, institutions and many of the current challenges present in modern Turkey should begin with the study of these civilizations, which have contributed immensely to the development of the Western and Asian civilizations. After all, this is the place where the words Asia and Europe were coined and where the very first monumental structures in history were built (Gobeklitepe, dating back to 10000 BC). Also, I should mention that the father of modern history, Herodotus was a native of Turkey (a title first conferred by Cicero).

This course is comparative and interdisciplinary in nature and crosses multiple disciplines including arts, sociology, cultural studies, history, urban planning, economics, and politics. We will constantly compare and contrast the past and the present, East and the West, Turkey and Europe, modern and archaic, secular and religious, democratic and authoritarian, etc. A special attention will be paid to challenge students' pre-conceived notions, opinions, perspectives and attitudes towards Western vs. Non-Western civilizations, particularly so for those involving the Middle East and Europe. During our journey, we will visit thousand + years old churches, synagogues, mosques, ancient temples, palaces, cities, monuments as well as the most exquisite examples of modern art, and perhaps not so exquisite examples of modern architecture. We will learn about Turkish cuisine, culture, religion, carpet weaving and silk trade, fig and mulberry trees (!), spice markets and Turkish bazaars, looting of ancient artifacts; cultural policy and museum controversies, tea culture (including a hands on field work by gathering tea on the mountains of Black Sea!), modern Turkish cinema; and modern arts. Part of the class will also focus on existing debates on political economy of development in the Middle East with a particular focus on Turkey.

The main objective of the course is to provide the students with a solid background in cultural, political, economic, institutional and historical issues and challenges that have shaped the development trajectories of Turkey. The course also challenges students to critically evaluate similarities and differences between the Middle East and the Islamic world, and the West, including the applicability of such regional and cultural classifications themselves. The course assignments are structured to explore these questions more in depth and include movies, photo-journals, and reading and writing assignments. Some of the questions that we will address include the following:

- a) What are the similarities and differences between the “East” and the “West”, Islam and Christianity, Turkey and Europe, Turkey and Greece?
- b) What are characteristics of Turkish and Mediterranean cuisines? What are the Yogurt and Baklava wars? Does food have a national identity and ownership?
- c) What are the differences in cultural policy between Turkey and the US? Is the looting of ancient artifacts ok.?

- d) What are the differences in urban planning in Turkey vs. the US?
- e) What are the differences in higher education policy in Turkey vs. the US?
- f) What are the sources of current economic and political challenges in the region including historical, institutional, geographical, and cultural factors?
- g) What are the existing challenges and dilemmas created by the rapid modernization, secularization, and urbanization of Turkey?
- h) What is the role of economic globalization in determining the future development paths of countries in the region?
- i) What are the effects of European Union candidacy of Turkey on the broader Middle East and Turkey?

Our Journey will start in Istanbul (Constantinople), the biggest city in Turkey, by studying the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, including their cultural, artistic and institutional legacies present in the city. Note that the history of this city dates back to the Neolithic times going as far back as 6700BC. During our journey around Turkey we will visit archeology museums, two best universities of the country (Bogazici Univ. and Middle East Technical Univ.), spice markets and Turkish bazaars, as well as dozens of ancient sites from antiquity and more modern period in our attempt to understand the continuities and breaks between past and present. After Istanbul, our Journey will take us to Izmir (Smyrna), the third biggest city of Turkey, from which we will visit some of the biggest settlements of ancient Greece and Rome along the Aegean coast, including Ephesus, Mother Mary's tomb, Didyma, Priene, and Euramos. We will next visit Fethiye (Telmessos), Olympos, Xanthos, Letoon, Patara, Mira (birth place of St. Nicolas, aka. *Santa*), and Phaselis on our way to Antalya. We will also visit one of the best museums on ancient Greek, Lycian and Ionian art in Antalya. Afterwards, we will visit the ancient region of Cappadocia, famous for its early Byzantine era churches as well as Hittite era fortresses, underground cities and open-air museums. We will then continue our way to Ankara, the capital and the second biggest city of Turkey. Ankara is important as it will allow us to explore the differences between the Ottoman past and the modern present of Turkey. In this city we will discuss the controversies and fault lines between secularists and modernists, and Islamists. In Ankara, we will also have a chance to visit Ankara archeology museum, which has the biggest and the best collection on ancient Anatolian civilizations, including Hittites, Trojans, as well as dozens of other native cultures. Our trip from Istanbul to Ankara also matches the storyline of the required book for our class, *Birds without Wings*. We will be mapping the narrative of the book with our itinerary and synchronize our class discussions accordingly. After Ankara, we will visit the Black Sea coast of Turkey, the home to ancient Amazons, and visited by Jason on his quest to recover the *Golden Fleece*. At this point, we will be at the far North Eastern point of Turkey, near the Georgian border with significant contrast to the Western part of the country. We will visit several cities and historical sites along the Black Sea coast and discuss regional disparities as well as the differences and similarities between its distant past and its present. Cultural, religious, architectural, urban, and socio-political changes will be at the center of our discussions.

2. Course Structure

The course is designed around lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions. The students are expected to do all the reading assignments prior to the departure, which will allow a more engaged and interactive class participation during our Journey in Turkey. The topics covered in the lectures will overlap the materials found in the readings. However, the lectures and discussions will, on occasion, cover some materials that are not found in the assigned readings.

3. Course Requirements and Grading

- Map Quiz 5%
- Daily Field Notes 20%

You will keep a daily journal documenting your reflections on course material, visits to museum and other cultural heritage sites, guest lectures, observations of the economic, political and cultural, and institutional challenges, opportunities, differences, dilemmas, etc., that you witness while being in Turkey. You must write at least one page a day. I will collect these notes at the end of the trip. They should be maximum 2 pages a day. The field notes are due on the last day of the *Journey*.

- One Photo-One Word 10%

Students are expected to upload 'one photo' accompanied by 'one word' to accompany their daily field notes every day. The photos are expected to guide/inspire (at least part of) the field notes assignment and can be on any subject or issue related to the politics, culture, economics, etc. of Turkey (or USA, if it is a comparison) you encounter during the day. The one-photo-one word assignment is due at the end of every day and will be used to stimulate class discussions during the trip (you have a 3-day grace period to complete the assignment). Besides her/his own posts, each student is expected to post responses to at least two other posts. There is no length requirement for your reactions to others' posts but they need to be meaningful and follow common classroom etiquette.

- Blog Entry 15%

Students will develop one of your journal entries into a longer piece (3 pages) for publication on the Journey to Turkey Blog.

- Participation 25%

Class participation means engaged, active participation every time we meet. Your ability to participate is also contingent on your having done the reading and given it some thought.

- Research Paper 25%

You will write a ten-page paper focusing on one of the issues that are discussed in the readings, lectures, or debates we will have in this class. Your paper will be due after our return, on June 22nd.

For non-econ M.A. students, in order to receive Masters-level credit from this course the research paper requirement is adjusted to include a 6,000 – 7,000 word research paper (the due date July 1st).

- Bonus: 10% for trying a min. of 10 new dishes from Turkish cuisine. Keep a list of the dishes you try (Turkish names please!) and upload it to D2L at the end of the trip.

4. Academic Ethics

Cheating on assignments and exams, or plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another) is penalized by the University of Oklahoma. A student found in such a situation will be given an F and will be brought to University of Oklahoma Honor Council for further penalties as defined under Academic Misconduct. For further information, refer to <http://www.ou.edu/honorcouncil/index.html>

5. Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. For details refer to <http://drc.ou.edu/>

6. Religious Holidays

“It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances.”

7. Required Readings (* refers to optional readings)

All readings, except Bernieres (2005) are available at D2L.

A. The background: culture, state, political borders and the “imagined other”

Louis de Bernieres (2005). *Birds Without Wings*. Vintage. (due by June 3)

B. East versus West:

Keywords: East vs. West; Us vs. Them; Imagined Others; Orientalism; Islam vs. Christianity; Mosque and Waqf System; Rise of the West; Istanbul or Constantinople; City Planning; Gender; Carpets; Hamams; Harem; Anti-Semitism; Hittites; Troy; Byzantine and Ottoman Empires; Modern Art; Food Culture, Baklava and Shish Kebab

1. Said, Edward (1978) “Introduction” and “Knowing the Oriental”, in *Orientalism*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1978), pp. 1-28 and 31-49.
2. Sharon Waxman, *The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World*, Ch.6-7. Times Books. New York.
3. *Demir, Firat and Kaboub, Fadhel (2009) “Economic Development and the Fabrication of the Middle East as a Eurocentric Project.” In R.K. Kanth (Ed.) *The Challenge of Eurocentrism* (pp.63 – 82). MacMillan.
4. Turkish cuisine: Yenal, Zafer (2010) *The Myth of Turkish Cuisine. National Appropriation of Local Food Cultures. Europe im Nahen Osten-Der Nabe Osten in Europa*, edited by Angelika Neuwirth and Günter Stock, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010.
5. Watch (Was Santa White? 6 mnts): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBn2wIQWoB8>
6. Listen (Istanbul or Constantinople, 2 mnts): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wcze7EGorOk>
7. Watch (I am listening to Istanbul, poem, 5 mnts): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlaF4-yNiWg> (read: http://www.turkishclass.com/poem_193)

C. Modernization

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, WWI; Kemalism; Modernity; Positivism; Religion; Secularism; Political System; Military; Legal System; Education; Society and Culture; Economy

8. Perry Anderson (2008) *Kemalism*. *London Review of Books* 30(17): 3-12. <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v30/n17/perry-anderson/kemalism>
9. Gole, Nilufer (1997) *Secularisms and Islamism in Modern Turkey: the Making of Elites and Counter Elites*. *Middle East Journal* 51(1): 46-58.

10. Watch: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oAV2Wv-Mf4&feature=player_embedded

D. The creation of nation states and imagined communities

Keywords: Nationalism and Nation State; Imagined Others; Borders; Ethnic Cleansing; Racism

11. Kadioglu, Ayse (1996) The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity. *Middle Eastern Studies* 32: 177-194.
12. Watch: *Whose Is This Song?*, Adela Peeva (*film*)
13. Watch: *My Grandfather's People (Dedemin Insanlari)*, Cagan Irmak (*film*)

E. Economic development

Keywords: Underdevelopment; Industrialization; Manufacturing sector; State-led Growth; Institutions and Infrastructure; Human Capital; Protectionism; Industrial Policy; Environmental Policy; Price of Oil; Green Energy; Urban Planning, Cars vs. Pedestrians; Price of Oil; Education policy and tuitions

14. Pamuk, Şevket (2008) "Economic Change in Twentieth Century. Is the Glass More than Half Full?" in R. Kasaba (ed.), *Turkey in the Modern World*.

F. Gender

Keywords: Oriental Other; Gender Equality; Veil and Headscarf

15. Gole, Nilufer (2002) Islam in Public: New Visibilities and New Imaginaries. *Public Culture* 14(1):173-190.
16. Secor, Anna (2002) The Veil and Urban Space in Istanbul: Women's dress, mobility and Islamic knowledge. *Gender, Place & Culture* 9(1): 5-22.

G. Democratization

Keywords: Human Rights; Ethnic and Religious Minorities; Kurdish Problem; AKP; Gezi Park; Corruption

17. Yegen, Mesut (1999) The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse. *Journal of Contemporary History* 34(4): 555-568.
18. Crisis Group. 30 Nov 2012. Executive Summary. Turkey's Kurdish Impasse: The View from Diyarbakır. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/222-turkeys-kurdish-impasse-the-view-from-diyarbakir.aspx>
19. Demir, Firat (2013a) Here is What You Need to Know about the Clashes in Turkey. [Foreign Policy](#), June 1.
20. Demir, Firat (2013b) Why the Protests in Turkey make me Optimistic about the Future of Democracy. [Foreign Policy](#), June 6.
21. Demir, Firat (2014) Turkey's Enemy Within. [Foreign Policy](#), January 23.
22. *Yeğen, Mesut (2004) Citizenship and Ethnicity in Turkey. *Middle Eastern Studies* 40(5): 682-708.

H. Political Islam

Keywords: AKP; Secularism; Erdogan Government

23. Sen, Mustafa (2010) Transformation of Turkish Islamism and the Rise of the Justice and Development Party. *Turkish Studies* 11(1): 59-84.

8. Recommended guide books

- Hilary Sumner-Boyd, Freely, John 2010. *Strolling Through Istanbul: The Classic Guide to the City*. Tauris Parke Paperbacks.
- Freely John 2004. *The Western Shores of Turkey: Discovering the Aegean and Mediterranean Coasts*. Tauris Parke Paperbacks.
- Also check out the Culture and Tourism Ministry's web site, has tons of good info including city guides, etc.: <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/?dil=2>; <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,36442/promotional-films-of-turkey.html>; and <http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,40700/brochures.html>
- For a snapshot of different cities and life in Turkey: <http://www.pbase.com/dosseman/root&page=all>

9. Tentative Course Schedule

May 19: Arrive in Istanbul.

May 20: Istanbul. Readings: Part B (1). Visit: the Roman Hippodrome, the Blue Mosque, the St. Sophia Museum, the underground (Yerebatan) cisterns, and the Topkapi Palace.

May 21: Istanbul. Readings: Part B (1). Visit: Taksim and Istiklal street, Galata tower and surrounding areas, Neve Shalom Synagogue; Grand Bazaar. Overnight in Istanbul

May 22: Istanbul. Readings: Part B (3). Visit: the church of St.Saviour in Chora, Suleyman the Magnificent Mosque, Spice Market.

May 23: Istanbul. Readings: Part C (4). Visit Bogazici University for lectures. Next, visit Rumeli Hisari. On the way back to the hotel stop by a major shopping center in Levent and spend one hour.

May 24: Fly to Izmir. Readings: Part C (5-6). Transfer to Ephesus. Tour of Ephesus and House of Virgin Mary. Overnight in Kusadasi.

May 25: Readings: Part D(7). Visit Priene, Miletus and Apollo temple in Didim. Stop in Milas for a visit to the Jewish cemetery and Gumuskesen. Drive to Fethiye via Gokova and see splendid views of Turquoise coast. Overnight in Fethiye

May 26: Fethiye. Readings: Part D (8-9).Lecture: Bernieres (2005). Discuss *My Grandfather's People*. Visit Kayakoy village and Oludeniz. Overnight in Fethiye.

May 27: Readings: Part E (10). Depart Fethiye for Kas. En route visit three settlements of Hellenistic world: Letoon, Xanthus and Patara. Lunch at Saklikent. Overnight in Kas.

May 28: Kas. Readings: Part F (11). Visit Myra, St Nicholas and Olympos. Overnight in Kas.

May 29: Antalya. Readings: Part F (12). Depart Kas for Antalya. Visit Phaselis on the way. Afternoon visit to Antalya Archeological Museum. Overnight in Antalya.

May 30: Cappadocia. Readings: Part F (14).Visit Kaymakli Underground City. Overnight in Cappadocia.

May 31: Cappadocia. Readings: Part G (15). Tour of Cappadocia, visit Zelve Open Air Museum, Pasabag Valley, Sinassos Village, Avanos and Goreme Open Air Museum. Overnight in Cappadocia.

June 1: Ankara. Readings: Part G (16). Visit Salt Lake and stop by one of the Kervansarays on the way. Tour of Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. Overnight in Ankara.

June 2: Ankara. Readings: Part H (17, 19). Visit the Mausoleum of Ataturk, and METU (ODTU). Overnight in Ankara.

June 3: Artvin. Readings: Part H (20-22). Fly to Trabzon. Drive to Kackar National Park for a hike. Overnight in Kackar National Park.

June 4: Trabzon. Readings: Part I (23). Lecture: Demir and Kaboub (2009); Leave Artvin for Trabzon. En route visit Sumela Monastery. Overnight in Trabzon.

June 5: Trabzon. Morning tour of Ataturk's Mansion and Basilica of Saint Sophia and Uzungol. PM flight to Istanbul. Overnight in Istanbul.

June 6: Transfer to Istanbul Ataturk Airport for international airport.