Dear Friends,

The fifth issue of MURCIR’s newsletter will have reached you just before we take a break for summer holiday.

Along with information on MURCIR’s activities and academic accomplishments of the members of Department for Political Science and International Relations of Marmara University since the beginning of 2011, this issue contains two perspective papers: “2011 Elections in Turkey” by Ahmet Demirel and “From Central Asia to Northern Africa: the Long March of Color Revolutions” by Abel Polese. You will also find information about the prospective international conference MURCIR is organizing on the topic of “Alternative Approaches to International Relations: Turkey and Beyond” to be held in Istanbul on November 24-25, 2011.

We wish you all a pleasant summer holiday!

2011 ELECTIONS IN TURKEY
Ahmet Demirel*

Last month the Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the general election for the third time. This was not the first three successive election victory of a governing party in Turkey. The Democrat Party (DP) which had been in power between 1950 and 1960 had also consecutively won the general elections in 1950, 1954 and 1957. But there is an important difference. The DP’s vote percentage had decreased about 10 points in 1957 compared to the previous election held in 1954. Contrary to this, the AKP’s vote percentage steadily increased. While it was 34.3% in 2002, it increased to 46.6 in 2007 and to 49.8 in 2011. This impressive election victory was generally explained in terms of stability, and improvement of services and economy during the last nine years. These explanations are, of course, reasonable. However there is another important reason: The opposition parties could not be able to develop a strong alternative to this governing party within the last nine years and the political agenda was always determined by the AKP.

If the votes cast for the provincial councils in local elections held in 2009 had been ignored, the comparison of 2007 and 2011 elections would have been straight forward. The AKP which increased its percentage from 46.6 to 49.8 and the Republican People’s Party (CHP) which increased its percentage from 20.9 to 26.0 percent between 2007 and 2011 would have been regarded as the winners. The 3.2 point
THURSDAY SCREENING

(Coordinator: Nurşen Gürboğa)

Women’s Rebellion (İsyan-ı Nisvan)
March 08, 2011
Director: Melek Özman
(Turkey / 2008 / 58’)

In the 1970’s while the second wave of Feminism has influenced the whole world, right after the announcement of 1975 as the ‘Year of Women’ in the world, women and feminity becomes issues of conversation and debate in Turkey, too. Hence YAZKO (The Cooperation of Writers and Translators) wants to translate several books on women to Turkish with the suggestion and initiative of women again. Women, who come together intending to do these translations, but whose roads have intersected already while looking for solution to the very question of woman condition, give up on doing those translations since, from that point onwards, their new objective becomes ‘starting a feminist movement’.

The documentary gives an account of the women’s experiences of discovery, action and rebellion together, hence it tells the story of the first year of the formation of the feminist movement in Turkey.

Please send us your suggestions:
murcir@marmara.edu.tr

increase in the AKP’s votes and the 5.1 increase in the CHP’s votes would have been explained by the 4.8 point decrease in the votes of DP and 3.0 point decrease in the votes of Young Party (GP). The conclusion would have been something like this: “The DP and GP lost their popular support completely in 2011 and the AKP and the CHP shared their former votes. The secular supporters of DP and GP voted for the CHP and the others voted for the AKP. As there are no significant differences between the 2007 and the 2011 vote percentages of all the other parties, nothing else of significance was observed in 2011 compared to 2007”.

In fact the reality is far away from this and the 2009 local elections challenge such conclusions.

As it is known, the AKP had lost its public support to a certain extent in the local elections and its vote percentage had decreased to 38.4 %. This meant an 8.2 point decrease in its votes. The 3.0 % votes of GP which did not take part in the local elections had gone to the other parties and there had been a 1.6 point decrease in DP’s votes. Thus the sum of loses of the AKP, the GP and the DP had been reaching to 12.8 points. However these votes had not gone to a specific party. None of the parties had increased its votes above 3.0 points.

While the Felicity Party’s votes (SP) had increased 2.8 points, the CHP’s 2.2 points, the National Action Party’s (MHP) 1.7 points; the Democratic Left Party (DSP) which had not taken part in the 2007 elections had received 2.9 percent and the Great Union Party (BBP) which competed with independent candidates in 2007 had received 2.3 percent in 2009. In other words there was not a considerable vote shift from the AKP to the strongest opposition parties - namely the CHP and the MHP.

What Changed between 2009 and 2011?

First of all, the AKP took back more than what it lost in 2009. There is an impressive increase of 11.4 points in its vote percentage in 2011 compared to 2009. The only other party whose vote percentage increased in 2011 is the CHP - however it is only 2.9 points - and all the other parties lost their support to a certain extent within these two years.

Let’s start with the CHP. The 2.9 point increase in the CHP’s votes can simply be explained by the 2.7 point decrease in DSP’s votes. While the DSP completely became an insignificant party, almost all its supporters shifted to the CHP. The outcome has two important meanings: First, today CHP remained as the sole party of “the central left voters”. At last, the voters realized “the unity of the central left” - which has been sought since the military coup in 1980 - in the polling box. However the second outcome is disappointing for the CHP:
Despite to all efforts and sayings of “the new CHP”, the party cannot succeed to attract the voters other than those who locate themselves in the “classical central left”. Moreover it seems that the upper limit of the “central left” is around 30 % and unfortunately it is not enough for a political party aiming at being the winner of a general election.

On the other hand, it is clearly seen that the AKP was successful in attracting the former supporters of the SP, the DP, the MHP and the BBP. The sum of the decreases of these four parties is 11.6 points (3.9 points for SP, 3.2 for DP, 3.0 for MHP, and 1.5 for BBP), and the total increase in AKP is 11.4 points. This shows that the increase in the AKP can easily be explained by the decrease in these four parties. It is clear that, today, one voter out of every two voters is voting for the AKP.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AKP</td>
<td>46,6</td>
<td>38,4</td>
<td>49,8</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>-8,2</td>
<td>11,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHP</td>
<td>20,9</td>
<td>23,1</td>
<td>26,0</td>
<td>5,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,9</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHP</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>16,0</td>
<td>13,0</td>
<td>-1,3</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>-3,0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independents and / DTP-BDP</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>6,6</td>
<td>1,4</td>
<td>0,9</td>
<td>0,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>-1,1</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>-3,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>0,8</td>
<td>0,8</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>-1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>5,4</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>-4,8</td>
<td>-1,6</td>
<td>-3,2</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,9</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>2,9</td>
<td>-2,7</td>
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<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-3,0</td>
<td>-3,0</td>
<td>-3,0</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others (Less than 1 % in these three consequent elections)</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>-0,5</td>
<td>0,0</td>
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Finally, one needs to discuss the effect of the 10 % threshold which was added to the electoral system after the military coup in 1980. For the first time this antidemocratic threshold did not have any significant effect on the election results. Among the political parties which took part in the election under their emblems, the strongest party following the AKP, the CHP and the MHP is SP which only received 1.3 % of the total votes. The threshold only took back two or three deputyships which might go to this party with an electoral system without any threshold. There are almost no losses for the other parties. However the situation is different for pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) which took part in the elections by its independent candidates in order to eliminate the effects of the 10 % threshold. This party which won 22 seats in the parliament in 2007 as Democratic Society Party (DTP) won 36 seats in 2011 thanks to its better organization in several provinces and towns. However it should also be added that with an electoral system without a threshold this party would have won more seats in the parliament. So, as it was the case in the previous elections, the only disadvantaged party of the threshold was again this party.

* Ahmet Demirel is an associate professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Marmara University. He analyzed the 1919 and 1920 elections in his latest book titled İlk Meclisin Vekilleri (The Deputies of the First Turkish Assembly) and recently wrote an article on the representation of the eastern and southeastern provinces in the Turkish Parliament during the National Struggle and Single-Party Era in New Perspectives on Turkey, Spring 2011.

(E-Mail:ademirel@gmx.net)
FROM CENTRAL ASIA TO NORTHERN AFRICA: THE LONG MARCH OF COLOR REVOLUTIONS

Abel Polese*

Since the end of 2010 we receive regular updates about revolutionary movements in Egypt, Libya, and Bahrain or in any other country of which the newspapers spoke little or nothing before the “Arab Spring”. We read of unarmed protesters who face tanks in Syria, street riots and protests repressed by force in Libya or Saudi Arabia, and it seems unreal that it all started a few months ago. Of course, we had read of the protests in Iran in 2009 and 2010, and in 2005 the “Cedar Revolution” had attracted attention on Lebanon. But the rest of the Middle East did not seem mature enough to be the scene of a new wave of popular revolutions.

Yet, for those who have read, and written, about the color revolutions in other regions, the regimes’ rhetoric, the West’s attitude, changes in the opposition and the people taking the streets do not sound so novel as news. It is true that the recent events in Africa and the Middle East are of historical importance, but in order to understand how we got there, it is perhaps the case to remember the sequence of events in other regions, where similar strategies have been tested and perfected before falling into disgrace to reappear a few years later from their ashes like the phoenix in Egypt.

In Serbia in October 2000 the bulldozers broke through the barricades outside Belgrade and protesters invaded the parliament, forcing President Milosevic to resign. Not many had understood the geopolitical significance of those protests. Yet, a glance at what had happened in neighboring countries in previous years has confirmed the unusual nature of the events and their potential dangerousness for many other regimes. In 1998 Slovakia had held elections that many saw as the last train to EU membership. The OK’98 civic campaign, designed to ensure proper developments of the electoral campaign, had two components: one negative and one positive. On the one hand they wanted to make voters aware of the true nature of the populist government that had a damaging impact, on the other they wanted to motivate voters to go to the polls. A low electoral turnout, as the one witnessed in 1994, would probably give the victory to Vladimir Meciar. For this reason, the civic campaign aimed primarily young people and to encourage them to vote (“voting is cool”) and the message was not transmitted through rallies, but rock concerts (the campaign “rocking the vote”).

In the space of few years, the world witnessed a geopolitical change of intensity without precedents. In December 2003 hundreds of thousands of people occupied the center of Tbilisi, Georgia, protesting against the falsification of elections. After days of negotiations the protesters went into parliament, with a rose in their hand to show they were not carrying weapons, and convinced president Shevardnadze to resign. Slovakia was a candidate for EU membership, Serbia was still “in Europe”, but the fact that the color revolutions had crossed the border of the former USSR showed their innovative nature.

Street protests are a main feature of color revolutions. However, once people take out the streets, one must ensure that the crowd will not disperse, coordinate the actions of protest and keep alive the atmosphere that cold weather or the police could spoil anytime. Civil society leaders, with the goal or learning about crowd management, are often invited to participate in training courses organized abroad (training for leaders in Budapest for Serbian Otpor activists) or within the country (training in Evpatoria for Ukrainian PORA activists). An extremely important aspect is the use of techniques of civil disobedience, featuring non-violence. Inspired by the 198 methods of nonviolent action classified by Gene Sharp, leaders of civic organizations seek to avoid any use of violence in order to attract international sympathy, to show the ideological character of the protests, but also to minimize the number of pretexts for the violent suppression of protests.
The spread of the color revolutions worried a number of post-Soviet regimes. In 2004 the Open Society was asked to leave Uzbekistan, controls on NGOs intensified throughout the region and there ensued lists of unwanted or dangerous individuals including activists from Otpor and Kmara. All this did not stop the civic campaign PORA in Ukraine and the events leading to the Orange Revolution in November 2004. The fact that a strategically important country like Ukraine had left Moscow’s sphere of influence was troubling for many post-Soviet regimes. In March 2005, as a result of electoral falsification riots occurred in southern Kyrgyzstan, spread to Bishkek and forced the president to resign and flee. In May the same year a group of protesters took the streets in Andijan, East Uzbekistan, to protest against jailing of some local businessmen. The local leaders opted for a radical solution of the problem and opened fire on the crowd, showing a new way to limit the action of non-violent protests by responding with violence. Subsequent protests in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus were also stopped in a similar way.

Notwithstanding all this, color revolutions had begun to migrate from the post-Soviet space. In March 2005, following the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, a series of protests led to the resignation of the current Lebanese Prime Minister. Lebanon is not the only case; other movements have been recorded elsewhere in Asia and the Middle East. The very activists of PORA, Kmara, Otpor have never denied the existence of international networks for the “training of revolutionaries”, of which we can become aware also by looking at various translations of Gene Sharp’s book From Dictatorship to Democracy (in Arabic, Russian, Serbian, etc.)

In light of all this, what we are seeing in the Muslim world is historically important but not necessarily unexpected or new. History seems to repeat and leaders from Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco use the words presidents of Georgia and Kyrgyzstan used to blame the West, the international forces, or the NATO. Western politicians try to highlight the popular and democratic component of such events “forgetting” that they have often been supported financially and diplomatically. The picture is more complex than one might think and the truth probably lies in the middle: no individual player, but their synergy, can generate social and political change. Color revolutions have changed their skin and geographical region, but their diffusion is proving more difficult to control, even though they are no longer a surprise. They have moved from Serbia to Kyrgyzstan to be exported to Myanmar, and switch back to upset the geopolitics of the Middle East. As of now, few will be able to predict their next evolution; the only thing certain is that they will not stop in Syria.

* Abel Polese is Research Fellow at the Institute of Geography of the University of Edinburgh. Since 2009 he is research associate at MURCIR.

(E-Mail: abel.polese@gmail.com)
MURCIR has organized the first Wednesday Panel of 2011 for the International Women’s Day, 8th of March. In this first panel at Anadoluhisarı Campus, the legal and political dimensions of women’s right to live were discussed by the panelists. In her opening speech, Büşra Ersanlı mentioned that women are under-represented not only in the parliament but also in the bureaucracy and local administrations in Turkey. The president of the Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates (KA.DER), Çiğdem Aydın elaborated the issue of under-representation of women in politics and explained the main strategy they will pursue for the general elections in June 2011. By highlighting that increasing women’s representation in politics is only possible through the transformation of the approaches towards “power” in Turkish society, she stated that the power must be shared by women and men. She underlined that whereas the political parties are reluctant in achieving this transformation, the Turkish constituency has a positive look on it. The volunteer of Van Women Association (VA-KAD), Zozan Özgökçe shared her experiences about women who suffered from domestic and sexual violence, and their encounters with the judicial institutions. The president of Şefkat-Der, Ayfer Erel, stated that domestic violence against women is increasing day by day. She claimed that the Law No. 4320 for the Protection of Family is insufficient by giving details on the subject. The student of the department of Political Science and International Relations, Ilgın Kınık, indicated that the present gender inequality damages men as well as women. She argued that existing social institutions including traditions and media contribute to gender inequality and prevent the emancipation of women.

Understanding the Latest Developments in the Middle East
May 24, 2011
Moderator:
Ayşegül Sever (Assoc. Prof., Marmara University, Department of Political Science and International Relations): sever@superonline.com
Panelists:
Fulya Atacan (Prof. Dr., Yıldız Technical University, Department of Political Science and International Relations): atacan@yildiz.edu.tr
Seda Altuğ (Dr., Utrecht University): altugsed@yahoo.com
Yüksel Taşkı̇n (Assoc. Prof., Marmara University, Department of Political Science and International Relations): yuxelina@yahoo.com

The second MURCIR Panel of 2011 was organized timely on the latest developments in the Middle East. The first speaker, Fulya Atacan, started her presentation by emphasizing the necessity to pay attention to the peculiar conditions of the individual countries in assessing the dynamics of the recent uprisings in the Middle East. In addition to the internal dynamics, she put emphasis on the significance of the roles played and wanted to be played by such international actors as the USA. According to the U.S. policy of “orderly transition” is imposed on the countries to control the latest transitions while paving the way for provisional military governments in Tunisia and Egypt, and various military interventions in Bahrain and Libya. Atacan particularly focused on the recent uprising in Egypt. She introduced the social background of those active and passive groups in the process. She reminded the curious absence of the most impoverished sectors of Egypt in the uprising. Atacan also focused on the
internal dynamics of the Muslim Brotherhood and the possible actions that the organization can assume in the near future which seem to be crucial for a genuine democratization in Egypt.

Seda Altuğ discussed the reasons of the belated arrival of the wave of uprising to Syria. She presented a historical background that helped for the comprehension of the latest developments in Syria. She shared her argument that it is not ideologically and practically possible for the Asad regime to start any genuine democratization in Syria. She also reminded the strategy of the regime that tries to terrify the people with the risk of sectarian and ethnic conflict if they are overthrown. She highlighted on the organizational deficits of the democratic movement that could pose difficulties in creating a clear and unifying program for the opposition groups with diverse interests and backgrounds.

Yüksel Taşkın discussed the latest developments in the Middle East from a theoretical perspective. In the light of the latest events, he examined and criticized the prevailing idea that the Middle East is an exception in the worldwide waves of democratization. He introduced several structural factors that could be put forward to understand the belatedness of the democratization in the region. He argued that strategic choices of such great powers as the USA and the UK have played significant roles in the weakening and destruction of the social and political actors that could have, otherwise, initiated genuine democratization. He then elaborated on a related phenomenon, the process of post-Islamism in the 2000s and the ongoing debates on the process. Finally, he presented some scenarios and projections about the possible ways of transition in the region.

™ Podcast of the Panel (in Turkish) »»

**WEDNESDAY TALKS**

Ahmet Demirel  
The Profile of the Deputies Elected in the Single-Party Era  
January 26, 2011

“The presentation examined the socio-economic background of the parliamentary deputies serving during the years of the national struggle (1920-1922) and the single-party era (1923-1946) and provided new statistical data collated from recently published, detailed biographical information. It provided a critical analysis of the socio-economic background of the deputies elected to represent the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey. Demirel’s analysis drew on “localism” — defined as representation of the constituency one was born in — as a key concept to allow a better understanding of the nature of the electoral process at that time.

Although localism—which can be regarded as one of the important indicators of authentic representation—was extensive during the years of the national struggle, it was replaced by bureaucratic representation during the single-party era, especially starting with the 1927 elections held right after the Sheikh Sait Rebellion. Demirel showed that in the rebellions’ aftermath, the number of the local representatives rapidly decreased. He further documented that with the introduction of multi-party politics and democratic, free, competitive elections after the World War II, a return to localism was to be observed for the eastern and southeastern provinces of Turkey.”

(E-Mail:ademirel@gmx.net)
Sefer Güvenç

Organization of Emigrants in Turkey and Greece: Example of the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants

April 6, 2011

Great masses of civilian people were left no choice but to immigrate as the result of constant wars on the Ottoman territory since the end of the 18th century. One of the most important massive migrations was the compulsory migration as a result of the Population Exchange Agreement signed between Turkey and Greece on January 30, 1923 in Lausanne. Nearly two million people were forced to leave their homes and to settle in new locations according to the Agreement. Emigrants faced hardships in their process of adjustment due to difference of language, climate and social routines in both countries. Whereas the drama of Greek emigrants was studied by historians, social scientists, artists and authors widely, an advanced literature on Turkish emigrants did not emerge until today. Greek emigrants established associations in Greece right after the population exchange. The first organization of Turkish emigrants in Turkey was established on September 24, 1923 through the merger of the Community of Macedonia and Community of East Macedonia. There was no organization until the Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants (LMV). LMV was founded in 2001 to contribute to the friendly atmosphere established between Turkish and Greek people after the earthquakes in Turkey and Greece. The intention of LMV is the protection of cultural values of emigrants, doing scientific research on recent history and population exchange, working for the protection of cultural heritage which was left behind in Greece and contributing to the friendship between Turkish and Greek people. LMV’s recent successful projects are “Longing for Istanbul” (2010) which includes in-depth interviews with 47 people who left Istanbul at various dates and settled in Greece; Population Exchange Museum (2010) which is Turkey’s first museum with theme on migration; an atlas indicating the former and current names of the settlements in North Greece: Mübadele Öncesi ve Sonrası Eski ve Yeni Adları ile Kuzey Yunanistan Yer Adları Atlası (2010).

(E-Mail: seferguvenc@ttmail.com)

Yunus Sözen

Populism, Anti-Populism and Democracy: Argentine Peronism in Comparative Perspective

April 20, 2011

“O’Donnell describes the 1955-1966 period of Argentinean politics as an ‘impossible game’. In fact, this concept is useful to make sense of Argentina’s oscillating political regime patterns all the way to the country’s last transition to democracy in 1983. This talk focuses on the reasons that transformed Argentinean politics into an impossible game through an ideological-institutional framework. To make such an explanation, first the fundamentals of the populism literature and that of the Peronist ideology will be delineated, and then the conditions of emergence of Peronist populism and the socio-political actors that this populism formed/shaped will be determined. Finally, how Peronist actors could not craft consensus in Argentine politics, while at the same time they did not allow other actors to dominate after the so-called ‘liberating revolution’ (military intervention) of 1955, will be analyzed. This last analysis will be carried within a comparative framework, contrasting the consensus generated by the Kemalist actors, albeit precariously, after the 1960 military intervention that ended the Democrat Party populism in Turkey.”

(E-Mail: yunus.sozen@bahcesehir.edu.tr)
Tuba Demirci

Ottoman Muslim Families and Reform of the Private Domain in the Late Ottoman Empire
May 4, 2011

“With the proclamation of the Reform Edict of Tanzimat (Re-Organization), also known as Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu, in 1839 an institutionalized process of modernization officially began in the Ottoman Empire. The period between 1839 and 1908 was characterized by “purposive modernizations” through which basic institutions could be reformed in Ottoman society to withstand the economic and social challenges posed by the West. These purposively oriented reforms were chiefly centered on the critique and transformation of the key institutions not only in state apparatus, but also in the wider social realm. In the second half of the nineteenth century, “Ottoman Muslim family” and its reform became one of the most important components of this contemporary reform project, and commencing from the Tanzimat period onwards a modern discourse on family, which included the critical appraisal of intra-family relations, gender relationships, procreation and sexuality, morality, hygiene and purity, was formed. This talk will examine the nineteenth century reforms, reform debates and subsequent regulations pertaining to the private domain, i.e., constitution of families, marriage, sexuality/procreation and child discipline. While historicizing the emergence of these reforms, contemporaneous literary accounts, polemical works, commentaries and advice literature which were produced to address and opt for change on ‘private issues’ such as marital accord, sexuality, purity, child rearing and discipline will also be conveyed. Finally, the emergence and potential of Ottoman bureaucratic state as a modern interventionist one, and the making of the new Ottoman intellectual will be examined in the medium of these reform debates, policies and polemical literature to reveal how Ottoman society was re-conceptualized through a new form of power-repression axis, and a new economy of power and discipline.”

Podcast of the Talk (in Turkish) >>
(E-Mail: demirci.tuba@gmail.com)

Özgür Sevgi Göral

Looking at the Experiences of the Kurds through the Urban Context: Cases of Yakacık and Ayazma
May 18, 2011

“‘Kurdish question’, which is one of the most important historical and political issues of Turkey, became an urban and metropolitan issue. This fact changed all the urban imaginations on the one hand and the perceptions of the Kurds and the Kurdish question on the other hand, and it specifically altered Istanbul's metropolitan area. The new Kurdish migrants, who came mostly to Istanbul's squatter neighbourhoods, precipitated the emergence of a new discussion and a new set of practices. The discussion is quite old actually and it is about determining who belongs to the urban space and who does not. The abrupt (forced or voluntary) migration of the Kurds to the bigger cities of Turkey including Istanbul ethnicised this old discussion to an important extent. Besides, the Kurds are not merely passive subjects but rather active agents. They transformed the urban space as well as the political and social experience that they are in. This presentation focuses on two squatter neighbourhoods of Istanbul, Ayazma and Yakacık and tries to understand this transformation through these two cases.”

Podcast of the Talk (in Turkish) >>
(E-Mail: ozgursevgigoral@gmail.com)
Murat Koraltürk  
Turkification of Attorneyship and Purge of 1924 at the Istanbul Bar Association  
June 1, 2011

Attorneyship Code, Muhamat Kanunu, which was adopted on April 3, 1924 of the Turkish Assembly was the first legal regulation of the Republican period related to attorneys and bar associations as their professional organizations. The Code is a significant document because it was not only the first regulation on attorneyship but also an important document which paved the way for broad-scale purge at the Istanbul Bar Association due to its provisional article. According to the provisional article, the commission of elimination, meclis-i tefrik, which was composed of five members assigned by the Minister of Justice, was entitled to investigate whether members of the bar association met necessary qualifications to practice the profession or not, and to expel the ones who did not meet the conditions from the bar. It is also mentioned in the provisional article that the ones who were expelled from the bar association had the right to present their objection to the Ministry of Justice in 15 days. It is seen that some of the attorneys who were registered to the Turkish bar associations were eliminated. A purge took place among the attorneys who were registered to Istanbul Bar Association at this mentioned process. In the presentation, the Code and nationalist discourse which the purge of 1924 at the Istanbul Bar Association was based on will be examined in the context of prevention of non-Muslims to practice attorneyship and Turkification of Istanbul Bar Association.

Podcast of the Talk (in Turkish) >>
(E-Mail: mkoralturk@marmara.edu.tr)

Francesc Serra Massansalvador  
Minority Policies in Different European States: The Case of Spain and Turkey  
June 8, 2011

“Very often, minority policies are the ultimate test for modern states to show their commitment to democracy. Traditionally, in Europe, the acceptation of minorities of different kinds in the State has been a major challenge to adapt the State to a genuine rule of law. In recent years, moreover, we have seen how the fundamental liberties of citizens are questioned through an anger response of the State to the claims of minorities. Different states have responded to these claims according to their own tradition, to the pressures of their societies and to the evolution of their policies; in any case, the issue has opened a deep and intense debate about the limits of democracy in its relations with minority populations. Spain and Turkey share a modern history in which the demands of their ethnic and cultural groups have threatened their territorial and social cohesion. But above all those demands have questioned the state's ability to maintain a genuine rule of law guaranteeing the rights of minorities. Both states have strong international commitments, especially with the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and each of them has tried to solve this issue according to the general concepts accepted by the different European institutions. The evolution of democratic rights in both countries demands a strong commitment to these rights, but that often clashes with the self-conception and the national principles of most of the societies, as well as the identity roots of the nation-state. Territorial autonomy, the expansion of cultural rights and the acceptance of the multiculturalism of the state appear to be the best accepted solutions, but they are not the only, and, apparently, none of them seems to be the final solution for an issue so closely related to fundamental human rights.”

Podcast of the Talk >>
(E-Mail: francesc.serra@uab.cat)
MURCIR NEWS

Prospective International Conference

MURCIR is preparing to host an international conference titled “Alternative Approaches to International Relations: Turkey and Beyond” in Istanbul by November 24-25, 2011. Due to its distinct geographical and cultural location in between Asia, Middle East and Europe, Turkey provides an excellent example for those who observe the regional and global transformations in the 21st century. As previously stated in its call for papers, MURCIR aims to provide a forum for scholars who employ critical perspectives (among them Marxism, post-structuralism, constructivism, political economy, feminism, etc.) in their analysis of regional and world politics.

MURCIR’s conference organizing committee is pleased to have received over fifty paper proposals from both distinguished scholars and junior academics around the world by its extended July 1 deadline. The selected papers to be presented and the tentative conference program are announced at the conference website of MURCIR (http://murcir.marmara.edu.tr/conference2011).

The conference will be organized around four thematic sessions, each of which will be chaired by a prominent scholar in his/her respective field. The session titles, which were chosen by MURCIR due to their representative character concerning the changing actors, issues and the practices in contemporary international politics are as follows: “Transnational Social Actors and Processes” which will be chaired by Prof. Ayhan Kaya (Bilgi University) focuses on the impact of transnational actors, organizations, networks and practices that challenge the traditional role of the nation-state in the international arena. “Beyond Traditional Diplomacy?” session which will be chaired by Prof. Chris Brown (London School of Economics) focuses on the new actors, issues and methods of exchange that lie beyond the boundaries of classical diplomacy. The third session, “New Themes and Perspectives in Security” to be chaired by Assoc. Prof. Pınar Bilgin (Bilkent University) focuses on the broadened security agenda, including discursive aspects of security, counter-terrorism measures, human security, bio-security, etc. The fourth session will cover papers and discussion on “Alternative Perspectives in Turkish Foreign Policy”, the discussant of which is to be announced later.

One of the highlights of the conference will be the keynote address delivered by Prof Ken Booth, who is the director of David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies at the Department of International Politics, Aberystwyth University.

Visiting Researchers at MURCIR

Dr. Abel Polese:

Abel Polese is Research Fellow at the Institute of Geography of the University of Edinburgh. Since 2009 he is research associate at MURCIR and taught on Eastern European political transformation at the Department of Political Science and International Relations in 2009-2010. He is editor, together with Donnacha O’Beachain, of The Colour Revolutions in the Former Soviet Republics (London and New York: Routledge, 2010) and has recently prepared, with MURCIR, a Marie Curie IRSES project on democratisation and civil society that will start in 2012.

(E-Mail: abel.polese@gmail.com)

Janja Vukasinovic:

Janja Vukasinovic, who has been affiliated with MURCIR since March 2011 as a graduate research student working on her PhD dissertation titled "Illegal Migration in Turkey and Turkey’s EU Accession Process", is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Ljubljana (in the Ethnic and Migration Studies of the Interdisciplinary Program in Humanities and Social Sciences). She is awarded with the
Scholarship of the Government of the Republic of Turkey and has also received a grant from the Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund of Slovenia to conduct her research in Turkey. In the academic year of 2008-2009, she had participated in an Erasmus graduate exchange programme at Marmara University and completed her traineeship at MURCIR. She has a B.A. in Geography and Political Science and M.A. in Political Science (American and World Studies) from University of Ljubljana. Previously her research concentrated on indigenous people, international human rights law and environmental issues in Amazonia. Currently her research interests focus on migration, European integration and regional geography.

(E-Mail: janja.vukasinovic@gmail.com)

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Recent Ph.D. Dissertation:


Abstract:

This thesis problematizes the relationship between humanity and socio-political community that underlies the international. It investigates promises of Critical Theory and Immanuel Kant’s cosmopolitan political orientations to go beyond the particularistic ontology by which the conventional conception of the international defines the relationship between humanity and socio-political community on the basis of the sovereign-state. A historical, unsocial and mechanical definition of the international, which is conceptualized by mainstream international relations theories through the dichotomy of anarchy and sovereignty, in fact draws upon a particular conception of the subject, humanity and socio-political community within certain historical-social conditions. Problematising these concepts, critical international relations theory defends the ideas of intersubjectively constructed subject, just and inclusive political community and cosmopolitan political thought that recognizes difference and multiplicity. However due to its modernist bias in relation to humanity, morality and politics it is inadequate to develop a global political theory that recognizes differences, particularities and historical-cultural traditions and experiences. While Kant’s idea of the international perceives humanity as the moral law to realize a global legal and political order that determines transcendental conditions of the peaceful co-existence of multiple socio-political communities, it likely covers multiplicity and difference in global politics under the name of universality and humanity. This thesis argues that if the first condition of the possibility of the international is to take humanity as the moral law and thereby ethical universality, the second condition is to recognize all particularities, historical-cultural forms and concrete others.

(E-mail: m.a.agcan@gmail.com)

ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Recently Published and Forthcoming Books:


Sezgi Durgun, Memalik-i Şahane’den Vatan’a (From Ottoman Patriomunium to Turkish Homeland), Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011.
Recently Published and Forthcoming Articles:
___, “History Plays Hide and Seek in Turkey” to be published by Georg-Eckert-Institut, Braunschweig in a reference book reflecting worldwide conflicts in history education with the participation of academics from 40 different countries, 2012 (forthcoming).
___, “De la rivalité historique et idéologique à un rapprochement pragmatique et civilisationnel: Ankara et Téhéran à un tournant géopolitique nouvel” (From historical and ideological rivalry to a pragmatic and civilisational rapprochement: Ankara and Tehran at a new geopolitical turning point”), Revue française de géopolitique Outre-Terre, Paris, Editions Erès, No. 28, May 2011.
___, Book Review on Memalik’i Şahane’den Vatan’a (From Ottoman Patriomunium to Turkish Homeland) by Sezgi Durgun, Radikal (Turkish Daily) (forthcoming).
“Turkey and Russia: An Emerging ‘Strategic Axis’ in Eurasia?” EurOrient (French Journal), September 2011 (forthcoming).


Günay Göksu Özdoğan, “Osmanlı İktisadi ve Sosyal Tarihçiliğinde Bir Emekçi Donald Quataert’in Ardından” (“A Worker in the Economic and Social Historiography: The Late Donald Quataert”), Toplumsal Tarih, 208, April 2011 (in Turkish).


Conference & Seminars:
Ayşegül Sever, “Regionalism in Turkish Foreign Policy and the Middle East”, 2nd Annual Gulf Research Meeting, Workshop 15 - The EU and the GCC in the Mediterranean, University of Cambridge, July 6-8, 2011.

___, “Turkey’s Regional Security Initiatives in Comparative Perspective during the Early Cold War”, Conference on Balkans in the Cold War, jointly organised by LSE IDEAS-Balkan International Affairs Programme and the Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy, Athens, May 27-29, 2011.

___, “Regionalism, Middle East and Turkey”, IPSA-ECPR Joint Conference - Whatever Happened to North-South?, co-hosted by the Brazilian Political Science Association, Sao Paulo, Brazil, February 16-19, 2011.

Büşra Ersanlı, Seminar on The Changes in the Central Asian History Education in the last 20 years (Orta Asya Tarih Eğitiminde son 20 yılda gözlemlenen değişiklikler), Cyprus International University - Political Science and International Relations Department, Nicosia, May, 27, 2011.


___, Seminar on Türkiye’nin Kafkaslar Politikası (Turkey’s Policy in the Caucasus), Foundation for Sciences and Arts, Istanbul, March 11, 2011.

Erhan Doğan, “Is Turkey Drifting Apart or Reorienting Herself? Dynamics of the Changing Foreign Policy Stance of Turkey”, The Social and Political Change in Turkey and its Impact on Domestic and Foreign Policy of Turkey, Workshop at Friedrich-Schiller University of Jena, Jena, May 12, 2011.


İbrahim Mazlum, Regional Network of Strategic Studies Centers (RNSSC), Water Security Working Group Meeting, Muscat, April 10-12, 2011.


___, “Lost Ally or Model for the Region”, International Conference on Turkey and the Mediterranean Turmoil, ISPI, Milan, May 18, 2011.


___, “Similarities and Divergences in Foreign Policy Approaches”, The 4th of the Iran-Turkey Round Table Meeting on “Regional and Global Vision of Iran and Turkey”, “Shared Opportunities and Problems” and “New Paths to Follow in Bilateral Affairs”, organized by the cooperation of TASAM and Iran’s Foreign Ministry Center for Strategic Studies (IPIS), Tehran, January 17, 2011.

___, “Turkey in the Equation of European Security and Defense Policies”, The Third Europe-Turkey Forum on the Changing Roles of Europe and Turkey In Foreign Policy, with the cooperation of Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM) and the Turkey and Compliance Research Center (TAM) Foundation, Berlin, December 1-2, 2010.

___, “Iran’s Influence in post-Invasion Iraq and its Implications to Turkey”, Iraq as an International Security Problem, II. International Middle East Congress, TASAM, Hatay, November 23-25, 2011.


____, Seminar on “Uluslararası ve Mekan” (“Nationalism and Space”), Political Science and International Relations Seminars, Maltepe University, İstanbul, May 17, 2011.

Research Projects:
Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Ohannes Kılıçdağlı, “Hearing the Armenians in Turkey: Problems, Demands, Policy Recommendations”, A research project completed for TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation), June 2011.
Please note MURCIR's address below:

Marmara Üniversitesi Uluslararası İlişkiler Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi
Anadoluhisarı Kampusu, Cuma Yolu Cad., No: 1
34820, Anadoluhisarı - Beykoz, İstanbul, Turkey
Tel: 90-216-460 09 55
Fax: 90-216-308 22 26/1205
E-mail: murcir@marmara.edu.tr