

DISCUSSION IN THE MEMORY OF HRANT DINK

THE TURKISH AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES DEPARTMENT
INVITES YOU TO THE DISCUSSION:



Hrant Dink (1954-2007)

Hrant Dink was an Armenian editor, journalist and columnist in Turkey. As editor-in-chief of the bilingual Turkish-Armenian newspaper Agos, Dink was a prominent member of the Armenian minority in Turkey. Dink was best known for advocating Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and human and minority rights in Turkey; he was often critical of both Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide, and of the diasporas' campaign for its international recognition. Dink was prosecuted three times for denigrating Turkishness, while receiving numerous death threats from Turkish nationalists. Hrant Dink was assassinated in Istanbul in January 2007 by a 17-year old Turkish nationalist. This was shortly after the premiere of the genocide documentary "Screamers" in which he is interviewed about Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 and the case against him under article 301.

"My Nation will Give the Right Answer!" The Construction of a
Core Nationalism in Contemporary Turkey

Speaker:

ERIC-JAN ZÜRCHER

Professor of Turkish History, Leiden University



From Deviant Subjects of the Empire to Undesirables of the
Republic: Heterodox Communities, Coexistence and Citizenship

Speaker:

ZEYNEP TÜRKYILMAZ

Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Koç University

Welcome Address: Vartkes Mahdessian,
*Representative of the Armenian Religious Group in the House of
Representatives*

Coordinator: Professor Niyazi Kızılyürek
Department of Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cyprus

FRIDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2017

6:30 P.M.

**ROOM B108, LEVENTIS BUILDING
NEW CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS**



+ 357 22893950



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ERIC-JAN ZÜRCHER

Professor, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Leiden University

"My Nation will Give the Right Answer!" The Construction of a Core Nationalism in Contemporary Turkey



Abstract:

A fundamental problem underlying Turkey's seemingly perennial crisis is that of the deep fault lines that run through the country and that caused Samuel Huntington to describe Turkey as a "torn country" in his much debated 1996 "Clash of Civilisations." Turkey is a multi-ethnic and multicultural country in which legally all inhabitants hold equal rights as citizens of the republic. Yet, the ruling coalition, which can very well be understood in terms of a historic bloc in the Gramscian sense, maintains power through consolidating the support of a "core nation" of conservative and nationalist Sunni Muslims. The constant claim that this core constituency of "real Turks" equals the nation as such (even though the election results show that it makes up barely half the population) and that the ruling party expresses the national will, lead to the exclusion of an increasing number of groups in Turkish society. Although this development has been particularly striking over the past decade, when Turkey was led by the AKP of, first, prime minister and then president Erdogan, it has older roots. In many ways the exclusivist nationalism of the AKP should be read as a further development, or perhaps perversion, of earlier Kemalist nationalism, with which it shares many characteristic in spite of the seeming opposition between the two.

Short CV:

Ph.D. at Leiden University (1984); assistant and associate professor at Catholic University Nijmegen (1977-1997); professor at University of Amsterdam (1993-1997); senior researcher (1990-1999) and general director (2008-2012) at International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; full professor of Turkish Studies and chair of the Middle East programme at Leiden University (since 1997); member of Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (since 2008). Affiliate professor Stockholm University (2012-16). Published fourteen books on Ottoman and Turkish history, with a special interest in the period of transition from empire to republic. His book *Turkey: A Modern History* has been translated into ten languages.

ZEYNEP TÜRKYILMAZ

Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Koç University

From Deviant Subjects of the Empire to Undesirables of the Republic: Heterodox Communities, Coexistence and Citizenship



Abstract:

This presentation dwells on how the anxiety over the conversion of the religiously non-compliant communities that were situated at the margins of the idealized Millet Model and the Ottoman State transformed the categories of religious identity and technologies of statecraft in the late Ottoman Empire. In the course of the nineteenth century both the Ottoman state and Evangelical Protestant missionaries vied for the hearts and minds of Kizilbash- Alevi, and Ezidi. The policies of conversion into an orthodox form, be it Christianity, or Islam also entailed alternative modernity projects. Far from being pawns, these communities saw the clash of these two modernity projects as a moment of opportunity for redefining the terms of their socio-political and religious subjectivity. In this presentation, using Ottoman, British, American and missionary archival documents, I will specifically explore the religious mobility among these communities, in interaction with local Armenians and Protestant missionaries. In so doing, I will first demonstrate how these experiences not only led to further stigmatization of individual heterodox communities as religiously heretical, morally promiscuous, and also politically dangerous as the co-conspirators of Armenians and pawns of foreign powers. Secondly, I will argue that stigmatization and accompanying official policies demarcated the ethno-religious boundaries of desirable and permissible citizenship not only in the empire but also post-imperial Turkish Republic.

Short CV:

She received her Ph.D. from the Department of History at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 2009. Her dissertation, "Anxieties of Conversion: Missionaries, State and Heterodox Communities in the Late Ottoman Empire," is based on intensive research conducted in Ottoman, British, and several American missionary archives. She was an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar Postdoctoral at UNC-Chapel Hill between 2009-2010 and Europe in the Middle East/ The Middle East in Europe Seminar Postdoctoral Fellow at Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin between 2010-2011. She worked at the Dartmouth College as an assistant professor of history between 2011 and 2016. She worked as program coordinator and research fellow at Koc University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations and finishing her book project based on her dissertation. Her research and teaching interests include state-formation, gender, nationalism, colonialism religion with a focus on heterodoxy and missionary work in the Middle East from 1800 to the present.