

## Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment



*Christianity and Islam have long coexisted, as reflected in this scene in Kars in eastern Turkey.*

THE OFFICIAL IMAGE OF TURKISH society promoted by the ruling elite since the 1920s is one of relative homogeneity. This image has been enshrined in successive constitutions of the republic, including the 1982 document, in which it is stated that "the Turkish state, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity. Its language is Turkish." In reality, however, Turkish society is a mosaic of diverse and at times contending ethnic and linguistic groups. The question, "Who is a Turk?," continued to provoke controversy in the mid-1990s.

Sociologists and other scholars, both Turkish and foreign, have noted that a majority of the population—estimated at the end of 1994 at 61.2 million—accepts as true Turks only those individuals whose native tongue is Turkish and who adhere to Sunni (see Glossary) Islam. This definition excludes a sizable minority of Turkish citizens from consideration as true Turks. The largest group within this minority is the Kurds, the overwhelming majority of whom speak Kurdish, an Indo-European language related to Persian, as their native tongue. In 1994 estimates of the size of the Kurdish minority in Turkey ranged from 10 to 20 percent of the country's total population. Since 1990 demands by Kurdish political leaders that the Kurdish minority be permitted to read, write, and speak Kurdish have created a major political issue in Turkey (see Political Interest Groups, ch. 4).

Although most adult Kurds are Sunni Muslims, perhaps as much as one-third of the total Kurdish population in Turkey belongs to a Shia Muslim sect known as Alevi (see Glossary). In addition to the Kurdish Alevi, many of the nation's estimated 700,000 to 1 million Arabs are Alevi. The Alevi Arabs—most of whom live in or near Hatay Province—also are known as Nusayri and maintain discreet ties with the Alawi (also seen as Alawites) of neighboring Syria. A significant number of Alevi are ethnic Turks.

The continued presence of linguistic and religious minorities conflicts with the elite's conception of a modern society that is Turkish-speaking and secular. This notion was an integral part of the social revolution begun after World War I by Mustafa Kemal (later known as Atatürk). Linguistic reform was essential to Atatürk's vision of the new Turkey, and the reconstituted Turkish language has been both a central symbol and a

powerful mechanism for the establishment of a new national identity. Atatürk institutionalized the secularization of the country through measures that included abolishing the caliphate, disestablishing Islam as the state religion, suppressing the unorthodox but highly influential dervish—or mystical—orders, closing the religious courts, and ending locally based religious education (see Atatürk's Reforms, ch. 1; Secularist Reforms, this ch.). Under Atatürk's leadership, the ideologically secularist and modernist urban elite ended state support and patronage of Islamic institutions and attempted to make religion a matter solely of private conscience.

The result of Atatürk's reforms was the creation of two cultures: a secularized and Westernized elite culture and a mass culture based on traditional religious values. Prior to 1950, the elite's attitude toward traditional culture tended to be contemptuous in general and specifically hostile toward religious expression. Since 1950, however, the elite generally has become more tolerant of religion, or at least of orthodox Sunni Islam, and various political parties have attempted to conciliate religious interests, albeit within the framework of Atatürk's institutional secularism. Nevertheless, in the mid-1990s the single most significant distinction in Turkish society remained the gap separating the secular elite from traditional culture.

Since the early nineteenth century, Western-oriented secular education has been a major factor distinguishing the elite and traditional cultures. By 1908 a substantial portion of the governing stratum, particularly the military officers and higher-ranking members of the bureaucracy, had received a secular education in their youth. Their values, knowledge, and viewpoints separated them sharply from the illiterate, religiously observant, and socially traditional masses. The cultural difference between the educated and the uneducated, the urban and the rural, the modernist and the traditionalist, has continued to affect Turkish society in multiple, intertwined ways. The views of Atatürk, who articulated the values of the secular elite in the 1920s and 1930s, remain central in Turkey more than fifty years after his death. Atatürk identified "civilization" with the culture of Europe, contrasting it with what he said was the backwardness, ignorance, and obscurantism of the common people of Turkey. He actively promoted a "modern" Turkey that embraced the civilization of Europe as its inspiration and model. Since Atatürk's time, mediation between Turkey's two

cultures has been and remains politically problematic. The emergence in the late 1980s and early 1990s of a relatively popular political party appealing to what it defined as Islamic values has tended to increase the polarization of the elite and nonelite cultures. In the mid-1990s, the Turkish government was attempting to reconcile this heretofore divisive trend.

In the early republican period of the 1920s and 1930s, civil and military officials occupied the unchallenged pinnacle of the social structure. Since that time, however, competing elements, especially businesspeople, industrialists, professionals, and employees of private organizations, have challenged the supremacy of the officials. As a result, the social complexion of the political elite has been in transition since the early 1980s, not just in Ankara and Istanbul but in other cities as well. In rural areas, however, and for the vast majority of the population, traditional forms and values, such as the centrality of family life and adherence to an ethical blueprint of behavior perceived in religious terms, have survived, although in altered form. Consequently, the balance between traditional and "modern" values remains uneasy.

## Geography

Turkey is a large, roughly rectangular peninsula situated bridge-like between southeastern Europe and Asia. Indeed, the country has functioned as a bridge for human movement throughout history. Turkey extends more than 1,600 kilometers from west to east but generally less than 800 kilometers from north to south. Total land area is about 779,452 square kilometers, of which 755,688 square kilometers are in Asia and 23,764 square kilometers in Europe.

The European portion of Turkey, known as Thrace (Trakya), encompasses 3 percent of the total area but is home to more than 10 percent of the total population. Thrace is separated from the Asian portion of Turkey by the Bosphorus Strait (Istanbul Bogazi or Karadeniz Bogazi), the Sea of Marmara (Marmara Denizi), and the Dardanelles Strait (Çanakkale Bogazi). The Asian part of the country is known by a variety of names—Asia Minor, Asiatic Turkey, the Anatolian Plateau, and Anatolia (Anadolu). The term *Anatolia* is most frequently used in specific reference to the large, semiarid central plateau, which is rimmed by hills and mountains that in many places limit access to the fertile, densely settled coastal regions. Astride the straits separating the two continents, Istanbul is the country's primary

industrial, commercial, and intellectual center. However, the Anatolian city of Ankara, which Atatürk and his associates picked as the capital of the new republic, is the political center of the country and has emerged as an important industrial and cultural center in its own right (see fig. 1).

### **External Boundaries**

Turkey is bounded by eight countries and six bodies of water. Surrounded by water on three sides and protected by high mountains along its eastern border, the country generally has well-defined natural borders. Its demarcated land frontiers were settled by treaty early in the twentieth century and have since remained stable. The boundary with Greece—206 kilometers—was confirmed by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which resolved persistent boundary and territorial claims involving areas in Thrace and provided for a population exchange (see *War of Independence*, ch. 1). Under the agreement, most members of the sizable Greek-speaking community of western Turkey were forced to resettle in Greece, and the majority of the Turkish-speaking residents of Greek Thrace were removed to Turkey. The 1923 treaty also confirmed Turkey's 240-kilometer boundary with Bulgaria.

Since 1991 the more than 500-kilometer boundary with the former Soviet Union, which was defined in the 1921 treaties of Moscow and Kars, has formed Turkey's borders with the independent countries of Armenia (268 kilometers), Azerbaijan (nine kilometers), and Georgia (252 kilometers). The 499-kilometer boundary with Iran was confirmed by treaty in 1937. Turkey's two southern neighbors, Iraq and Syria, had been part of the Ottoman Empire up to 1918. According to the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey ceded all its claims to these two countries, which had been organized as League of Nations mandates under the governing responsibility of Britain and France, respectively. Turkey and Britain agreed on the 331-kilometer boundary between Turkish and Iraqi territory in the 1926 Treaty of Angora (Ankara). Turkey's boundary with Syria—822 kilometers long—has not been accepted by Syria. As a result of the Treaty of Lausanne, the former Ottoman Sanjak (province) of Alexandretta (present-day Hatay Province) was ceded to Syria. However, France agreed in June 1939 to transfer Hatay Province to Turkish sovereignty, despite the strong objections of Syria's political leaders. Since achieving independence in 1946, Syria has harbored a lingering resent-

ment over the loss of the province and its principal towns of Antakya and Iskenderun (formerly Antioch and Alexandretta). This issue has continued to be an irritant in Syrian-Turkish relations.

## **Geology**

Turkey's varied landscapes are the product of complex earth movements that have shaped Anatolia over thousands of years and still manifest themselves in fairly frequent earthquakes and occasional volcanic eruptions. Except for a relatively small portion of its territory along the Syrian border that is a continuation of the Arabian Platform, Turkey geologically is part of the great Alpine belt that extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Himalaya Mountains. This belt was formed during the Tertiary Period (about 65 million to 1.6 million B.C.), as the Arabian, African, and Indian continental plates began to collide with the Eurasian plate, and the sedimentary layers laid down by the prehistoric Tethyan Sea buckled, folded, and contorted. The intensive folding and uplifting of this mountain belt was accompanied by strong volcanic activity and intrusions of igneous rock material, followed by extensive faulting during the Quaternary Period, which began about 1.6 million B.C. This folding and faulting process is still at work, as the Turkish and Aegean plates, moving south and southwest, respectively, continue to collide. As a result, Turkey is one of the world's more active earthquake and volcano regions.

Earthquakes range from barely perceptible tremors to major movements measuring five or higher on the open-ended Richter scale. Earthquakes measuring more than six can cause massive damage to buildings and, especially if they occur on winter nights, numerous deaths and injuries. Turkey's most severe earthquake in the twentieth century occurred in Erzincan on the night of December 28–29, 1939; it devastated most of the city and caused an estimated 160,000 deaths. Earthquakes of moderate intensity often continue with sporadic aftershocks over periods of several days or even weeks. The most earthquake-prone part of Turkey is an arc-shaped region stretching from the general vicinity of Kocaeli to the area north of Lake Van on the border with Armenia and Georgia (see fig. 7).

Turkey's terrain is structurally complex. A central massif composed of uplifted blocks and downfolded troughs, covered by recent deposits and giving the appearance of a plateau with

rough terrain, is wedged between two folded mountain ranges that converge in the east. True lowland is confined to the Ergene Plain in Thrace, extending along rivers that discharge into the Aegean Sea or the Sea of Marmara, and to a few narrow coastal strips along the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea coasts. Nearly 85 percent of the land is at an elevation of at least 450 meters; the median altitude of the country is 1,128 meters. In Asiatic Turkey, flat or gently sloping land is rare and largely confined to the deltas of the Kızılırmak River, the coastal plains of Antalya and Adana, and the valley floors of the Gediz River and the Büyükmenderes River, and some interior high plains in Anatolia, mainly around Tuz Gölü (Salt Lake) and Konya Ovası (Konya Basin). Moderately sloping terrain is limited almost entirely outside Thrace to the hills of the Arabian Platform along the border with Syria.

More than 80 percent of the land surface is rough, broken, and mountainous, and therefore is of limited agricultural value (see *Agriculture*, ch. 3). The terrain's ruggedness is accentuated in the eastern part of the country, where the two mountain ranges converge into a lofty region with a median elevation of more than 1,500 meters, which reaches its highest point along the borders with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran. Turkey's highest peak, Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı)—about 5,166 meters high—is situated near the point where the boundaries of the four countries meet.

## **Landform Regions**

Distinct contrasts between the interior and periphery of Turkey are manifested in its landform regions, climate, soils, and vegetation. The periphery is divided into the Black Sea region, the Aegean region, and the Mediterranean region. The interior is also divided into three regions: the Pontus and Taurus mountain ranges, the Anatolian Plateau, and the eastern highlands. The seventh region of the country is the Arabian Platform in the southeast, adjacent to the Syrian border.

### ***Black Sea Region***

The Black Sea region has a steep, rocky coast with rivers that cascade through the gorges of the coastal ranges. A few larger rivers, those cutting back through the Pontus Mountains (Dogukaradeniz Dağları), have tributaries that flow in broad, elevated basins. Access inland from the coast is limited to a few narrow valleys because mountain ridges, with elevations of





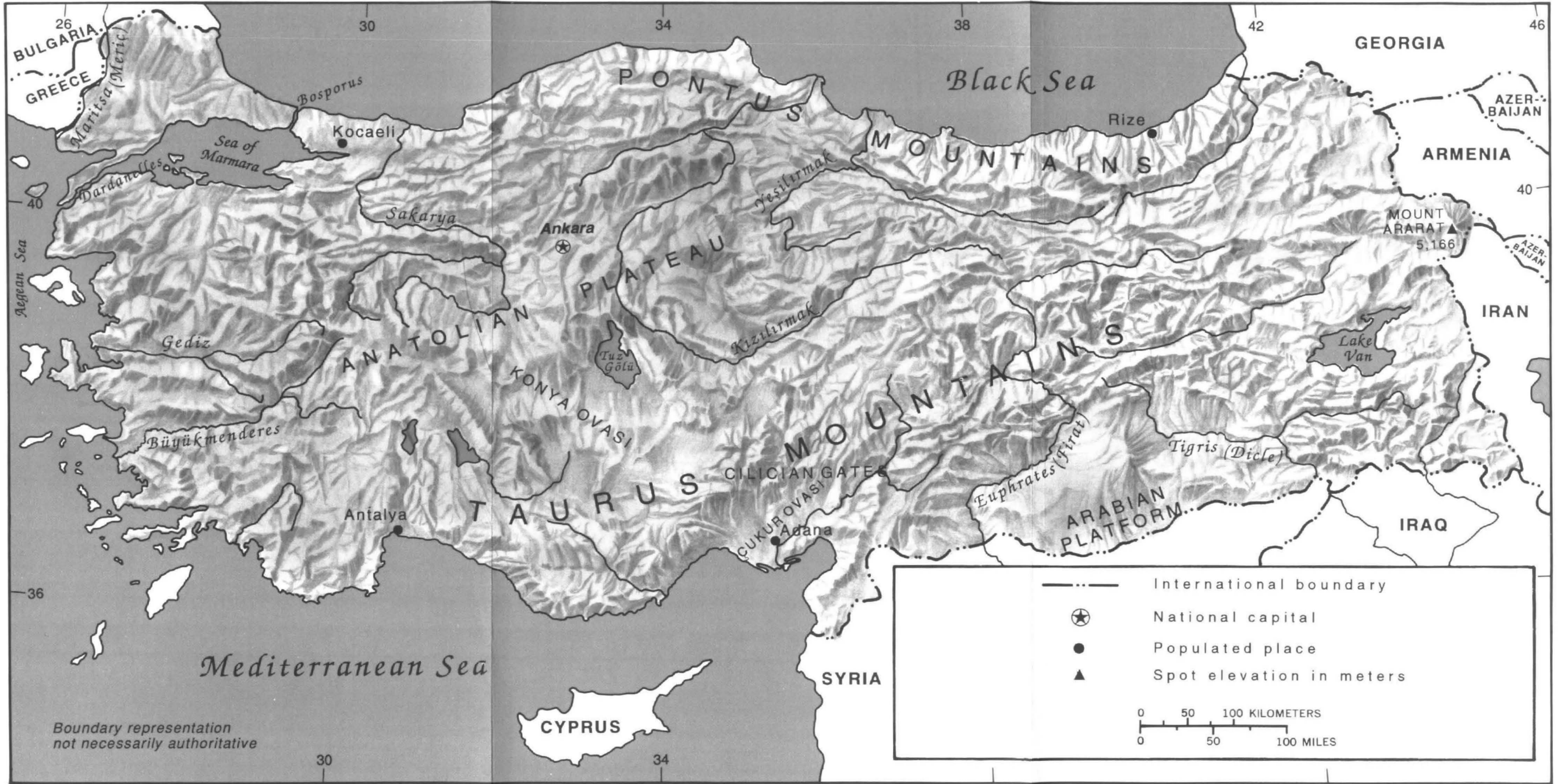


Figure 7. Topography and Drainage

1,525 to 1,800 meters in the west and 3,000 to 4,000 meters in the east, form an almost unbroken wall separating the coast from the interior. The higher slopes facing northwest tend to be densely forested. Because of these natural conditions, the Black Sea coast historically has been isolated from Anatolia.

Running from Zonguldak in the west to Rize in the east, the narrow coastal strip widens at several places into fertile, intensely cultivated deltas. The Samsun area, close to the midpoint, is a major tobacco-growing region; east of it are numerous citrus groves. East of Samsun, the area around Trabzon is world-renowned for the production of hazelnuts, and farther east the Rize region has numerous tea plantations. All cultivable areas, including mountain slopes wherever they are not too steep, are sown or used as pasture. The mild, damp climate of the Black Sea coast makes commercial farming profitable. The western part of the Black Sea region, especially the Zonguldak area, is a center of coal mining and heavy industry.

### *Aegean Region*

The European portion of the Aegean region consists mainly of rolling plateau country well suited to agriculture. It receives about 520 millimeters of rainfall annually. Densely populated, this area includes the cities of Istanbul and Edirne. The Bosphorus, which links the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea, is about twenty-five kilometers long and averages 1.5 kilometers in width but narrows in places to less than 500 meters. Both its Asian and European banks rise steeply from the water and form a succession of cliffs, coves, and nearly landlocked bays. Most of the shores are densely wooded and are marked by numerous small towns and villages. The Dardanelles Strait, which links the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean Sea, is approximately forty kilometers long and increases in width toward the south. Unlike the Bosphorus, the Dardanelles has few settlements along its shores.

On its Asian side, the Aegean region has fertile soils and a typically Mediterranean climate with mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The broad, cultivated valley lowlands contain about half of the country's richest farmland. Major crops are olives, citrus, nuts (especially almonds), and tobacco. The most important valleys are the Kocaeli Valley, the Bursa Ovası (Bursa Basin), and the Plains of Troy. The valley lowlands are densely populated, particularly around Bursa and Izmir, the country's third largest city and a major manufacturing center.

### ***Mediterranean Region***

The narrow coastal plains of the Mediterranean region, separated from Anatolia by the Taurus Mountains, which reach elevations of 2,000 to 2,750 meters, are cultivated intensively. Fertile soils and a warm climate make the Mediterranean coast ideal for growing citrus fruits, grapes, figs, bananas, various vegetables, barley, wheat, and, in irrigated areas, rice and cotton. The Cukur Ova in the east is a plain that is the most developed agricultural area of the Mediterranean region. It is a significant cotton-growing center and also supports a major cotton-based textile industry. In general, summers are hot and dry in the Mediterranean region. The weather in combination with the region's numerous sandy beaches has encouraged the development of a tourist industry.

Toward the east, the extensive plains around Adana, Turkey's fourth largest city, consist largely of reclaimed flood lands. In general, rivers have not cut valleys to the sea in the western part of the region. Historically, movement inland from the western Mediterranean coast was difficult. East of Adana, much of the coastal plain has limestone features such as collapsed caverns and sinkholes. Between Adana and Antalya, the Taurus Mountains rise sharply from the coast to high elevations. Other than Adana, Antalya, and Mersin, the Mediterranean coast has few major cities, although it has numerous farming villages.

### ***Pontus and Taurus Mountains***

The Pontus Mountains (also called the North Anatolian Mountains) in the north are an interrupted chain of folded highlands that generally parallel the Black Sea coast. In the west, the mountains tend to be low, with elevations rarely exceeding 1,500 meters, but they rise in an easterly direction to heights greater than 3,000 meters south of Rize. Lengthy, troughlike valleys and basins characterize the mountains. Rivers flow from the mountains toward the Black Sea. The southern slopes—facing the Anatolian Plateau—are mostly unwooded, but the northern slopes contain dense growths of both deciduous and evergreen trees.

Paralleling the Mediterranean coast, the Taurus (Toros Dağları) is Turkey's second chain of folded mountains. The range rises just inland from the coast and trends generally in an easterly direction until it reaches the Arabian Platform, where it arcs around the northern side of the platform. The Taurus Mountains are more rugged and less dissected by rivers than

the Pontus Mountains and historically have served as a barrier to human movement inland from the Mediterranean coast except where there are mountain passes such as the Cilician Gates (Gülek Bogazı), northwest of Adana.

Frequently interspersed throughout the folded mountains, and also situated on the Anatolian Plateau, are well-defined basins, which the Turks call *ova*. Some are no more than a widening of a stream valley; others, such as the Konya Ovası, are large basins of inland drainage or are the result of limestone erosion. Most of the basins take their names from cities or towns located at their rims. Where a lake has formed within the basin, the water body is usually saline as a result of the internal drainage—the water has no outlet to the sea.

### *Anatolian Plateau*

Stretching inland from the Aegean coastal plain, the Anatolian Plateau occupies the area between the two zones of the folded mountains, extending east to the point where the two ranges converge. The plateau-like, semiarid highlands of Anatolia are considered the heartland of the country. The region varies in elevation from 600 to 1,200 meters from west to east. The two largest basins on the plateau are the Konya Ovası and the basin occupied by the large salt lake, Tuz Gölü. Both basins are characterized by inland drainage. Wooded areas are confined to the northwest and northeast of the plateau. Rain-fed cultivation is widespread, with wheat being the principal crop. Irrigated agriculture is restricted to the areas surrounding rivers and wherever sufficient underground water is available. Important irrigated crops include barley, corn, cotton, various fruits, grapes, opium poppies, sugar beets, roses, and tobacco. There also is extensive grazing throughout the plateau.

The Anatolian Plateau receives little annual rainfall. For instance, the semiarid center of the plateau receives an average yearly precipitation of only 300 millimeters. However, actual rainfall from year to year is irregular and occasionally may be less than 200 millimeters, leading to severe reductions in crop yields for both rain-fed and irrigated agriculture. In years of low rainfall, stock losses also can be high. Overgrazing has contributed to soil erosion on the plateau. During the summers, frequent dust storms blow a fine yellow powder across the plateau. Locusts occasionally ravage the eastern area in April and May. In general, the plateau experiences extreme heat, with

almost no rainfall in summer and cold weather with heavy snow in winter.

### ***Eastern Highlands***

Eastern Anatolia, where the Pontus and Taurus mountain ranges converge, is rugged country with higher elevations, a more severe climate, and greater precipitation than are found on the Anatolian Plateau. The region is known as the Anti-Taurus, and the average elevation of its peaks exceeds 3,000 meters. Mount Ararat, at 5,166 meters the highest point in Turkey, is located in the Anti-Taurus. Many of the Anti-Taurus peaks apparently are recently extinct volcanoes, to judge from extensive lava flows. Turkey's largest lake, Lake Van, is situated in the mountains at an elevation of 1,546 meters. The headwaters of three major rivers arise in the Anti-Taurus: the east-flowing Aras, which empties into the Caspian Sea; the south-flowing Euphrates; and the south-flowing Tigris, which eventually joins the Euphrates in Iraq before emptying into the Persian Gulf. Several small streams that empty into the Black Sea or landlocked Lake Van also originate in these mountains.

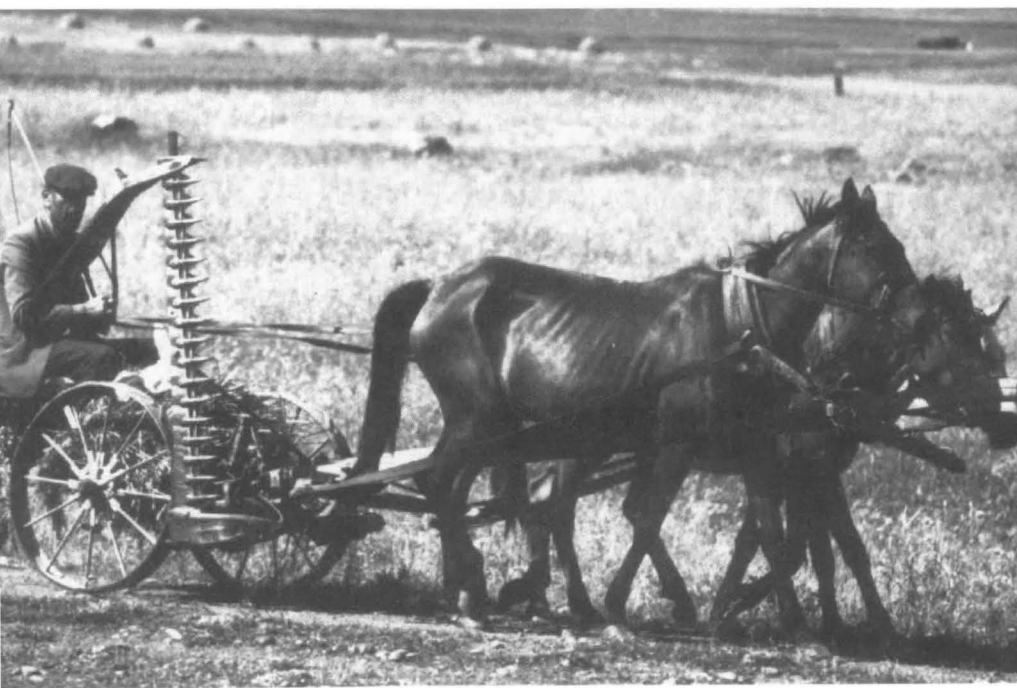
Most of eastern Anatolia comprises the area known historically as Kurdistan. In addition to its rugged mountains, the area is known for severe winters with heavy snowfalls. The few valleys and plains in these mountains tend to be fertile and to support diverse agriculture. The main basin is the Mus Valley, west of Lake Van. Narrow valleys also lie at the foot of the lofty peaks along river corridors.

### ***Arabian Platform***

The Arabian Platform is in southeast Anatolia south of the Anti-Taurus Mountains. It is a region of rolling hills and a broad plateau surface that extends into Syria. Elevations decrease gradually, from about 800 meters in the north to about 500 meters in the south. Traditionally, wheat and barley were the main crops of the region, but the inauguration of major new irrigation projects in the 1980s has led to greater agricultural diversity and development.

### **Climate**

Turkey's diverse regions have different climates, with the weather system on the coasts contrasting with that prevailing in the interior. The Aegean and Mediterranean coasts have cool, rainy winters and hot, moderately dry summers. Annual precip-



*Land formations once used for dwellings in central Anatolia  
Farmer in eastern Turkey  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*

itation in those areas varies from 580 to 1,300 millimeters, depending on location. Generally, rainfall is less to the east. The Black Sea coast receives the greatest amount of rainfall. The eastern part of that coast averages 1,400 millimeters annually and is the only region of Turkey that receives rainfall throughout the year.

Mountains close to the coast prevent Mediterranean influences from extending inland, giving the interior of Turkey a continental climate with distinct seasons. The Anatolian Plateau is much more subject to extremes than are the coastal areas. Winters on the plateau are especially severe. Temperatures of  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  can occur in the mountainous areas in the east, and snow may lie on the ground 120 days of the year. In the west, winter temperatures average below  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Summers are hot and dry, with temperatures above  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Annual precipitation averages about 400 millimeters, with actual amounts determined by elevation. The driest regions are the Konya Ovası and the Malatya Ovası, where annual rainfall frequently is less than 300 millimeters. May is generally the wettest month and July and August the driest.

The climate of the Anti-Taurus Mountain region of eastern Turkey can be inhospitable. Summers tend to be hot and extremely dry. Winters are bitterly cold with frequent, heavy snowfall. Villages can be isolated for several days during winter storms. Spring and autumn are generally mild, but during both seasons sudden hot and cold spells frequently occur.

## **Population**

Turkey's population at the end of 1994 was estimated at 61.2 million. This number represented an 8.4 percent increase over the 56.5 million enumerated in the twelfth quinquennial census, conducted in October 1990. The State Institute of Statistics (SIS) has estimated that since 1990 the country's population has been growing at an average annual rate of 2.1 percent, a decrease from the 2.5 percent average annual rate recorded during the 1980s. Turkey's population in 1985 was about 50.7 million, and in 1980 about 44.7 million. In the fourteen years from 1980 to 1994, the population increased nearly 37 percent.

Turkey's first census of the republican era was taken in 1927 and counted a total population of about 13.6 million. Less than seventy years later, the country's population had more than quadrupled. Between 1927 and 1945, growth was slow; in certain years during the 1930s, the population actually declined.



Significant growth occurred between 1945 and 1980, when the population increased almost 2.5 times. Although the rate of growth has been slowing gradually since 1980, Turkey's average annual population increase is relatively high in comparison to that of European countries. In fact, member states of the European Union (EU—see Glossary) have cited this high population growth rate as justification for delaying a decision on Turkey's long-pending application to join the EU.

The 1990 census is the most recent one for which detailed statistical data are available. That census revealed the relative youth of the population, with 20 percent being ten years of age or under (see table 4, Appendix A). About 50.5 percent of the population was male, and 49.5 percent female. The average life expectancy for females of seventy-two years was greater than the corresponding figure for men of sixty-eight years. The birth rate was twenty-eight per 1,000 population; the death rate was six per 1,000.

### **Population Density, Distribution, and Settlement**

Population density has increased along with the relatively rapid growth rate. For example, although Turkey had an average of only twenty-seven inhabitants per square kilometer in 1950, this figure had nearly tripled, to 72.5 persons per square kilometer, by 1990. Population density was estimated at 78.5 people per square kilometer at the end of 1994. According to the 1990 census, the most densely populated provinces included Istanbul, with 1,330 persons per square kilometer; Kocaeli, with 260; and Izmir, with 220. The most lightly populated provinces included Tunceli and Karaman, with seventeen and twenty-four persons, respectively, per square kilometer. Turkey's overall population density was less than one-half the densities in major EU countries such as Britain, Germany, and Italy.

Although overall population density is low, some regions of Turkey, especially Thrace and the Aegean and Black Sea coasts, are densely populated. The uneven population distribution is most obvious in the coastal area stretching from Zonguldak westward to Istanbul, then around the Sea of Marmara and south along the Aegean coast to Izmir. Although this area includes less than 25 percent of Turkey's total land, more than 45 percent of the total population lived there in 1990. In contrast, the Anatolian Plateau and mountainous east account for 62 percent of the total land, but only 40 percent of the popula-

tion resided there in 1990. The remaining 15 percent of the population lived along the southern Mediterranean coast, which makes up 13 percent of Turkey's territory.

In 1990 about 50 percent of the population was classified as rural. This figure represented a decline of more than 30 percent since 1950, when the rural population accounted for 82 percent of the country's total. The rural population lived in more than 36,000 villages in 1990, most of which had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants (see *Village Life*, this ch.). For administrative purposes, a village can be a small settlement or a number of scattered rural households, jointly administered by a village headman (*muhtar*).

By 1995 more than 65 percent of Turkey's population lived in cities, defined as built-up areas with 10,000 or more inhabitants. The urban population has been growing at a rapid rate since 1950, when it accounted for only 18 percent of Turkey's total. The main factor in the growth of the cities has been the steady migration of villagers to urban areas, a process that was continuing in the 1990s. The trend toward urbanization was revealed in the 1990 census, which enumerated more than 17.6 million people—more than 30 percent of the total population—as living in nineteen cities with populations then of more than 200,000. The largest was Istanbul, with a population then of about 6.6 million, approximately 12 percent of Turkey's overall population. Two other cities also had populations in excess of 1 million: Ankara, the capital (about 2.6 million), and Izmir, a major port and industrial center on the Aegean Sea (about 1.8 million). Turkey's fourth and fifth largest cities, Adana (about 916,000 in 1990) and Bursa (about 835,000), have been growing at rates in excess of 3 percent per year, and each is expected to have more than 1 million inhabitants before 2000. Gaziantep in the southeast and Konya on the Anatolian Plateau were the only other cities with populations in excess of 500,000 in 1990. The ten largest cities also included Mersin (about 422,000), Kayseri (about 421,000), and Eskisehir (about 413,000).

## **Migration**

During the decade 1915 to 1925, the country experienced large population transfers—a substantial movement outward of minority groups and an influx of refugees and immigrants. The first major population shift began in 1915, when the Ottoman government, for a variety of complex and in some instances

contradictory reasons, decided to deport an estimated 2 million Armenians from their historical homeland in eastern Anatolia (see Armenians, this ch.; World War I, ch. 1). The movement of Greeks out of Turkey, which began during the 1912–13 Balkan Wars, climaxed in the 1920s with an internationally sanctioned exchange of population between Turkey and the Balkan states, primarily. In accordance with the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey accepted approximately 500,000 Muslims, who were forced to leave their homes in the Balkans, in exchange for nearly 2 million Greeks, who were forced to leave Anatolia. By special arrangement, Greeks living in Istanbul and Turks living in the Greek part of Thrace were exempted from the compulsory exchanges.

After 1925 Turkey continued to accept Muslims speaking Turkic languages as immigrants and did not discourage the emigration of members of non-Turkic minorities. More than 90 percent of all immigrants arrived from the Balkan countries. Between 1935 and 1940, for example, approximately 124,000 Bulgarians and Romanians of Turkish origin immigrated to Turkey, and between 1954 and 1956 about 35,000 Muslim Slavs immigrated from Yugoslavia. In the fifty-five-year period ending in 1980, Turkey admitted approximately 1.3 million immigrants; 36 percent came from Bulgaria, 30 percent from Greece, 22.1 percent from Yugoslavia, and 8.9 percent from Romania. These Balkan immigrants, as well as smaller numbers of Turkic immigrants from Cyprus and the Soviet Union, were granted full citizenship upon their arrival in Turkey. The immigrants were settled primarily in the Marmara and Aegean regions (78 percent) and in central Anatolia (11.7 percent).

The most recent immigration influx was that of Bulgarian Turks and Bosnian Muslims. In 1989 an estimated 320,000 Bulgarian Turks fled to Turkey to escape a campaign of forced assimilation. Following the collapse of Bulgaria's communist government that same year, the number of Bulgarian Turks seeking refuge in Turkey declined to under 1,000 per month. In fact, the number of Bulgarian Turks who voluntarily repatriated—125,000—exceeded new arrivals. By March 1994, a total of 245,000 Bulgarian Turks had been granted Turkish citizenship. However, Turkey no longer regards Bulgarian Turks as refugees. Beginning in 1994, new entrants to Turkey have been detained and deported. As of December 31, 1994, an estimated 20,000 Bosnians were living in Turkey, mostly in the Istanbul

area. About 2,600 were living in camps; the rest were dispersed in private residences.

In 1994 the government claimed that as many as 2 million Iranians were living in Turkey, a figure that most international organizations consider to be grossly exaggerated. Turkey is one of the few countries that Iranians may enter without first obtaining a visa; authorities believe that the relative ease of travel from Iran to Turkey encourages many Iranians to visit Turkey as tourists, or to use Turkey as a way station to obtain visas for the countries of Europe and North America. Consequently, as many as 2 million Iranians actually may transit Turkey—including multiple reentries for many individuals—in a given year. Specialized agencies of the European Union and the United Nations that deal with issues of migrants and refugees believe a more realistic figure of the number of Iranians who live in Turkey, and do not have a residence in Iran or elsewhere, is closer to 50,000.

In the 1960s, working-age Turks, primarily men, began migrating to Western Europe to find employment as guest workers. Many of these Turkish workers eventually brought their families to Europe. An estimated 2 million Turkish workers and their dependents resided in Western Europe in the early 1980s, before the onset of an economic recession that led to severe job losses. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) initiated the program of accepting Turkish guest workers. In the 1990s, however, Germany adopted a policy of economic incentives to encourage the voluntary repatriation of Turkish workers. At the end of 1994, an estimated 1.1 million Turks continued to reside in Western Europe as semipermanent aliens. About two-thirds of these Turkish migrants lived in Germany, and another 10 percent in France. Other European countries with sizable Turkish communities included Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland. In addition, at least 150,000 Turks were working in Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil-exporting countries of the Persian Gulf.

### **Government Population Policies**

For almost forty years after the establishment of the republic in 1923, the government of Turkey encouraged population growth. Use of contraceptives and distribution of information about them were prohibited by law, and the state provided financial incentives to encourage large families. During the 1950s, however, members of the political elite gradually

became concerned that the country's relatively high population growth rate of nearly 3 percent was hurting economic development. Following the military coup of May 1960, population planning became a major government objective. A 1965 family planning law provided for the establishment of the Family Planning Division within the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance to extend birth control information and services to as many couples as possible. A 1967 law decriminalized abortion and authorized use of this procedure for a broad range of medical causes. Access to abortion was liberalized further by legislation in 1983 stipulating that a pregnancy could be terminated lawfully upon request in a public hospital up to ten weeks after conception. A married woman seeking an abortion was required to obtain her husband's permission or submit a formal statement of assumption of all responsibility prior to the procedure.

Family planning services have expanded considerably since the mid-1960s. A primary focus has been on educating couples about the material and health benefits of both limiting and spacing births. The Ministry of Health adopted the 1978 International Congress on Primary Health Care recommendations that family planning be combined with maternal and child health services and undertaken in cooperation with state hospitals, maternity hospitals, health centers, and clinics in both urban and rural areas. In addition to its support of public education about family planning, the ministry has solicited the cooperation of volunteer associations and international organizations to promote its programs. But despite concerted government efforts to encourage smaller families, Turkey's birth rate between 1965 and 1994 declined at a relatively slow pace, falling only from thirty-three to twenty-eight births per 1,000 population.

Concern about the continuing high birth rate prompted the Ministry of Health in 1986 to launch a new population control campaign that concentrated on rural areas, where the fertility rate was highest. The campaign included the construction of new health clinics, the expansion of centers training medical professionals in family planning counseling, and the enlistment of private-sector cooperation in the distribution of birth control information and materials in factories. Private businesses established the Turkish Family Health and Planning Foundation, which has supplemented the state's population control efforts since 1986 through its financial support for spe-

cial training programs and nationwide television advertisements.

Religion has not been an impediment to birth control. Turkey's Sunni Muslim religious leaders, who have addressed the subject of birth control in religious publications, have stated that Islam does not prohibit married couples from trying to space births or limit the size of their families. The use of specific birth control devices generally has not been addressed in religious literature. However, during the early 1990s there appeared to be a consensus among religious leaders that the resort to sterilization or abortion as a means of birth control was not permissible under Islam.

## **Language Reform: From Ottoman to Turkish**

Within the Ottoman Empire, the Turks had constituted merely one of many linguistic and ethnic groups. In fact, for the ruling elite, the word *Türk* connoted crudeness and boorishness. Members of the civil, military, and religious elites conversed and conducted their business in Ottoman Turkish, which was a mixture of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Arabic remained the primary language of religion and religious law (see *Religious Life*, this ch.). Persian was the language of art, refined literature, and diplomacy. At an official level, Ottoman Turkish usually was used only for matters pertaining to the administration of the empire. Ottoman Turkish not only borrowed vocabulary from Arabic and Persian but also lifted entire expressions and syntactic structures out of these languages and incorporated them into the Ottoman idiom.

The multiple linguistic influences on Ottoman Turkish caused difficulties in spelling and writing. The constituent parts—Turkish, Persian, and Arabic—belong to three different language families—Ural-Altaiic, Indo-European, and Semitic, respectively—and the writing system fits only Semitic. Phonological, grammatical, and etymological principles are quite different among the three families. For these reasons, modernist intellectuals during the nineteenth century began to call for a reform of the language. They advocated a language that would be easier to read and write and contain more purely Turkish words. The principle of Turkish language reform thus was tied intimately to the reforms of the 1839–78 period (see *External Threats and Internal Transformations*, ch. 1). Later in the nineteenth century, language reform became a political issue. Turkish nationalists sought a language that would unite rather

than divide the people. In the writings of Ziya Gökalp (d. 1924), Turkish nationalism was presented as the force uniting all those who were Turks by language and ethnic background.

With the establishment of the republic, Atatürk made language reform an important part of the nationalist program. The goal was to produce a language that was more Turkish and less Arabic, Persian, and Islamic; one that was more modern, practical, and precise, and less difficult to learn. The republican language reform called for a drastic alteration of both the spoken and the written language. This process was to be accomplished through two basic strategies—adoption of a new alphabet and purification of the vocabulary.

The language revolution (*dil devrimi*) officially began in May 1928, when numbers written in Arabic were replaced with their Western equivalents. In November the Grand National Assembly approved a new Latin alphabet that had been devised by a committee of scholars. Many members of the assembly favored gradually introducing the new letters over a period lasting up to five years. Atatürk, however, insisted that the transition last only a few months, and his opinion prevailed. With chalk and a portable blackboard, he traveled throughout the country giving writing lessons in the new Latin alphabet in schools, village squares, and other public places to a people whose illiteracy rate was suddenly 100 percent. On January 1, 1929, it became unlawful to use the Arabic alphabet to write Turkish.

The new Latin alphabet represented the Turkish vowels and consonants more clearly than had the Arabic alphabet. One symbol was used for each sound of standard Turkish, which was identified as the educated speech of Istanbul. By replacing the Arabic with the Latin alphabet, Turkey turned consciously toward the West and effectively severed a major link with a part of its Islamic heritage. By providing the new generation no need or opportunity to learn Arabic letters, the alphabet reform cut it off from Turkey's Ottoman past, culture, and value system, as well as from religion (see Atatürk's Reforms, ch. 1).

Atatürk and his language reformers viewed non-Turkish words as symbols of the past. They encouraged a national campaign, supported by government policies, to purify the language. Lexicographers began to drop Arabic and Persian words from dictionaries, substituting for them resurrected archaic terms or words from Turkish dialects or new words coined from old stems and roots. The Turkish Language Soci-

ety (Türk Dil Kurumu), founded in 1932, supervised the collection and dissemination of Turkish folk vocabulary and folk phrases to be used in place of foreign words. The citizenry at large was invited to suggest alternatives to words and expressions of non-Turkish origin, and many responded. In 1934 lists of new Turkish words began to be published, and in 1935 they began to appear in newspapers.

Enthusiasm for language reform reached its height in the mid-1930s. Some of the suggested reforms were so extreme as to endanger the comprehension of the language. Although purists and zealots favored the complete banishment of all words of non-Turkish origin, many officials realized that some of the suggested reforms verged on the ridiculous. Atatürk resolved the problem with an ingenious political invention that, although embarrassing to language experts, appealed to the nationalists. He suggested the historically inaccurate but politically efficacious Sun-Language Theory, which asserted that Turkish was the "mother of all languages," and that therefore all foreign words originally were Turkish. Thus, if a suitable Turkish equivalent for a foreign word could not be found, the loanword could be retained without violating the "purity" of the Turkish language.

By the late 1940s, considerable opposition to the purification movement had emerged. Teachers, writers, poets, journalists, editors, and others began to complain publicly about the instability and arbitrariness of the officially sanctioned vocabulary. In 1950 the Turkish Language Society lost its semi-official status. Eventually, some Arabic and Persian loanwords began to reappear in government publications.

The language reform's long-term effects have been mixed. The phonetically designed alphabet based on the Latin script facilitated the quick acquisition of literacy. In addition, the developers of modern Turkish consciously incorporated scientific and technological terms. By making possible a uniform mass language that soon acquired its own literature, the reform also helped to lessen the linguistic gap between the classes, a legacy of Ottoman society. Although the newly created works lacked some of the rich connotations of the older lexicon, modern Turkish developed as a fertile literary language as prose writers and poets created powerful works in this new idiom, especially after 1950. The cost of language reform, however, has been a drastic and permanent estrangement from the literary and linguistic heritage of the Ottomans. Although



some prerepublican writings have been transliterated into the new alphabet, the vocabulary and syntax are barely understandable to a speaker of modern Turkish.

Language and language reform continue to be political issues in Turkey. Each decade since Atatürk's death has been characterized by its own particular stance vis-à-vis language reform: whether to support a more traditional lexicon or a modern, Turkified one abounding in Western loanwords and indigenous coinages. Language reform and modern usage have pushed forward during periods of liberal governments and been deemphasized under conservative governments such as those of the 1980s. Meanwhile, religious publications have not been as affected by language reforms as secular literature. Religious publications have continued to use an idiom that is heavily Arabic or Persian in vocabulary and Persian in syntax. The emergence of a popular religious-oriented political movement in the 1990s has resulted in the reintroduction of many Islamic terms into spoken Turkish.

## **Linguistic and Ethnic Groups**

Since the founding of the Republic of Turkey, the government has sought to diminish the significance of ethnic, linguistic, and religious distinctions. For instance, the 1965 census was the last one to list linguistic minorities. The country's largest minority, the Kurds, has posed the most serious and most persistent challenge to the official image of a homogeneous society. During the 1930s and 1940s, the government had disguised the presence of the Kurds statistically by categorizing them as "Mountain Turks." With official encouragement, some scholars even suggested that Kurdish, an Indo-European language closely related to Persian, was a dialect of Turkish. By the 1980s, the Mountain Turks' label had been dropped in favor of a new euphemism for Kurds: "Eastern Turks" (*dogulu*). Officials of the SIS were prosecuted after preparing guidelines for the 1985 census that instructed enumerators to list Kurdish, when appropriate, as a language spoken in addition to Turkish. The same official and popular confusion exists in the application of the term *Laz*, which sometimes is used erroneously to refer to the inhabitants of the eastern end of Turkey's Black Sea coastal region. In actuality, the Laz constitute a small ethnic group (26,007 according to the 1965 census), speaking Lazi, a Caucasian language that is neither Indo-European nor Altaic.

The 1982 constitution includes a seemingly contradictory policy on the use of non-Turkish languages. Whereas one article prohibits discrimination on the basis of language, other articles ban the public use of languages "prohibited by law." Although legislation forbidding the use of specific languages has never been enacted, many Kurdish citizens were arrested prior to 1991 on charges relating to the public use of Kurdish. Although speaking or reading Kurdish no longer is cause for arrest, at an official level there remains an entrenched bias against the use of Kurdish. At the end of 1994, for example, imprisoned Kurds still were required to communicate with their lawyers and visiting family members in Turkish, even if they did not speak or understand that language.

In a holdover from the Ottoman system of *millets* (see Glossary), Turks traditionally have tended to consider all Sunni Muslims as Turks and to regard non-Sunni speakers of Turkish as non-Turks. The revival of popular interest in religion since the early 1980s has reinvigorated popular prejudices against religious minorities, especially the adherents of the Shia Muslim sect, the Alevi, most of whom are ethnic Kurds or Arabs. Also, since 1984 the extensive migration of Kurds from the predominantly Kurdish and rural provinces of the southeast to the cities of western Turkey has resulted at the popular level in the emergence of a relatively strong, urban-based Kurdish ethnic consciousness and popular resentment of the Kurds' presence among ethnic Turks.

## **Turks**

People identified as ethnic Turks comprise 80 to 88 percent of Turkey's population. The Turks include a number of regional groups who differ from one another in dialect, dress, customs, and outlook. In most cases, these differences reflect variations in historical and environmental circumstances. In general, regional differences are beginning to decrease while differences arising from urbanization and social class stratification are assuming greater importance. The three most important Turkish groups are the Anatolian Turks, the Rumelian Turks (primarily immigrants from former Ottoman territories in the Balkans and their descendants), and the Central Asian Turks (Turkic-speaking immigrants from the Caucasus region, southern Russia, and Central Asia and their descendants).

The Anatolian Turks historically lived on the central Anatolian Plateau in isolated villages and small towns. Following the

implementation of the Ottoman Land Code in the late 1860s, rural Anatolian Turks were likely to own their own land, cultivating wheat and other cereal grains in addition to herding sheep and goats. During the early republican period, the Anatolian Turks' reputation for physical toughness and obstinate patience was applied to all Turks, and the Anatolians' culture, albeit as interpreted by the urban elite, became part of the foundation of Turkish nationalism. The Turks who lived in the coastal stretches along the Black, Aegean, and Mediterranean seas also were considered Anatolian Turks, although the more diverse and agreeable climate of the coastal areas encouraged the evolution of cultural patterns different from those predominating on the interior plateau. However, extensive industrialization, urbanization, and village-to-city migration since 1960 have tended to minimize regional differences, creating instead new class and occupational distinctions. Despite the social and economic changes, transhumance has remained an efficient means of raising livestock on the Anatolian Plateau, and as many as 1 million Turks were seminomadic herders of sheep and goats in the early 1990s. Included in this population were an estimated 600,000 Yürüks, Turks of Asiatic origin, whom the government has not officially recognized as a separate group.

The Rumelian Turks are descended from Turks who settled in the Balkans when, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, that region of southern Europe was part of the Ottoman Empire. They were stranded when imperial territories began acquiring national independence in the nineteenth century (see Migration, this ch.). Most of the Rumelian Turks resettled in Turkey between 1878 and 1924. In rural areas, Rumelian Turks tended to become farmers or artisans in the coastal villages evacuated by Greeks during the 1920s population exchanges. Rumelian Turks also settled in urban centers, especially Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirklareli, Nigde, Bilecik, and Bursa.

The Central Asian Turks include Crimean Tartars and Turkomans. They live in scattered communities in various parts of the country; for example, there are several Crimean Tartar villages in the vicinity of Eskisehir. In 1945 an estimated 10,000 people spoke Tartar as their first language; since then several thousand additional Crimean Tartars have resettled in Turkey. The Turkomans, who speak a Turkic dialect distinct from Anatolian Turkish, have lived in eastern Turkey for several centuries. Historically, Turkomans were organized by tribe; tribal affiliations still retained importance for some Turkomans in

1995. Since the establishment of the republic, no reliable estimate of the number of Turkomans has been published. Traditionally, Turkomans have been Shia Muslims; scholars believe that most still adhere to Shia Islam.

## **Kurds**

Turkey's largest non-Turkish ethnic group, the Kurds, are concentrated in eleven provinces of the southeast, the same area that their ancestors inhabited when Xenophon mentioned the Kurds in the fifth century B.C. There also are isolated Kurdish villages in other parts of Turkey. Kurds have been migrating to Istanbul for centuries, and since 1960 they have migrated to almost all other urban centers as well. There are Kurdish neighborhoods, for example, in many of the *gecekondu*s (see Glossary) or shantytowns, which have grown up around large cities in western Turkey. About half of all Kurds worldwide live in Turkey. Most of the rest live in adjacent regions of Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Turkey's censuses do not list Kurds as a separate ethnic group. Consequently, there are no reliable data on their total numbers. In 1995 estimates of the number of Kurds in Turkey ranged from 6 million to 12 million.

Because of the size of the Kurdish population, the Kurds are perceived as the only minority that could pose a threat to Turkish national unity. Indeed, there has been an active Kurdish separatist movement in southeastern Turkey since 1984 (see Political Parties, ch. 4). The government's main strategy for assimilating the Kurds has been language suppression. Yet, despite official attempts over several decades to spread Turkish among them, most Kurds have retained their native language. In Turkey two major Kurdish dialects are spoken: Kermanji, which is used by the majority of Kurds, as well as by some of the Kurds in Iran and Iraq; and Zaza, spoken mainly in a triangular region in southeastern Turkey between Diyarbakır, Ezurum, and Sivas, as well as in parts of Iran. Literate Kurds in Turkey have used Kermanji as the written form of Kurdish since the seventeenth century. However, almost all literary development of the language since 1924 has occurred outside Turkey. In 1932 Kurds in exile developed a Latin script for Kermanji, and this alphabet continued to be used in the mid-1990s.

Prior to the 1980 military coup, government authorities considered Kurdish one of the unnamed languages banned by law. Use of Kurdish was strictly prohibited in all government institutions, including the courts and schools. Nevertheless, during



*Kurdish village on Mount Ararat (Agn Dagi)  
Kurdish village in the mountains near Lake Van, eastern Turkey  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*

the 1960s and again in the mid-1970s, Kurdish intellectuals attempted to start Kurdish-language journals and newspapers. None of these publications survived for more than a few issues because state prosecutors inevitably found legal pretexts for closing them down. Between 1980 and 1983, the military government passed several laws expressly banning the use of Kurdish and the possession of written or audio materials in Kurdish.

The initiation of armed insurrection by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkere Kurdistan—PKK) in 1984, along with the increasing international media interest in the Kurds of Iraq beginning in the mid-1980s, compelled some members of Turkey's political elite to question government policy toward the country's Kurdish population. Turgut Özal, who became prime minister in 1983 and president in 1989, broke the official taboo on using the term *Kurd* by referring publicly to the people of eastern Anatolia as Kurds. Subsequently, independent Turkish newspapers began using the term and discussing the political and economic problems in the eleven predominantly Kurdish provinces. In 1991 Özal supported a bill that revoked the ban on the use of Kurdish and possession of materials in Kurdish. However, as of 1995, the use of Kurdish in government institutions such as the courts and schools still was prohibited.

Although the Kurds comprise a distinct ethnic group, they are divided by class, regional, and sectarian differences similar to those affecting ethnic Turks. Religious divisions often have been a source of conflict among the Kurds. Although the government of Turkey does not compile official data on religious affiliation, scholars estimate that at least two-thirds of the Kurds in Turkey nominally are Sunni Muslims, and that as many as one-third are Shia Muslims of the Alevi sect. Unlike the Sunni Turks, who follow the Hanafi school of Islamic law, the Sunni Kurds follow the Shafii school. Like their Turkish counterparts, adult male Kurds with religious inclinations tend to join Sufi brotherhoods. The Naksibendi and Kadiri orders, both of which predate the republic, have large Kurdish followings in Turkey although their greatest strength is among the Kurds of Iran. The Nurcular, a brotherhood that came to prominence during the early republican years, also has many Kurdish adherents in Turkey.

Whereas the number of Kurds belonging to the Alevi sect of Shia Islam is uncertain, the majority of Alevi are either Arabs or Turks. Historically, the Alevi lived in isolated mountain com-

munities in southeastern Turkey and western Syria. The Kurdish Alevi have been migrating from their villages to the cities of central Anatolia since the 1950s. Whereas Kurdish and Turkish Alevi generally have good relations, the competition between Alevi and Sunni Turks for urban jobs led to a revival of traditional sectarian tensions by the mid-1970s. These intertwined economic and religious tensions culminated in a series of violent sectarian clashes in Kahramanmaraş, Corum, and other cities in 1978–79 in which hundreds of Alevi died.

A small but unknown number of Kurds also adhere to the secretive Yazidi sect, which historically has been persecuted by both Sunni and Shia Muslims. Small communities of Yazidi live in Mardin, Siirt, and Sanli Urfa provinces. Yazidi are also found among Kurds in Armenia, Iran, and Iraq. In Turkey the Yazidi believe that the government does not protect them from religious persecution. Consequently, as many as 50 percent of all Yazidi have immigrated to Germany, where they feel free to practice their heterodox form of Islam.

Class differences also divide the Kurds. Wealthy landowners in rural areas and entrepreneurs in urban areas tend to cooperate with the government and espouse assimilation. Many of these Kurds are bilingual or even speak Turkish more comfortably than Kurdish, which they disparage as the language of the uneducated. The economic changes that began in the 1960s have exacerbated the differences between the minority of assimilated Kurds and the majority who have retained a Kurdish identity. Militant Kurdish political groups such as the PKK have exploited these class differences since 1984.

## **Arabs**

In 1995 Turkey's ethnic Arab population was estimated at 800,000 to 1 million. The Arabs are heavily concentrated along the Syrian border, especially in Hatay Province, which France, having at that time had mandatory power in Syria, ceded to Turkey in 1939. Arabs then constituted about two-thirds of the population of Hatay (known to the Arabs as Alexandretta), and the province has remained predominantly Arab. Almost all of the Arabs in Turkey are Alevi Muslims, and most have family ties with the Alevi (also seen as Alawi or Alawite) living in Syria. As Alevi, the Arabs of Turkey believe they are subjected to state-condoned discrimination. Fear of persecution actually prompted several thousand Arab Alevi to seek refuge in Syria following Hatay's incorporation into Turkey. The kinship rela-

tions established as a result of the 1939–40 emigration have been continually reinforced by marriages and the practice of sending Arab youths from Hatay to colleges in Syria. Since the mid-1960s, the Syrian government has tended to encourage educated Alevi to resettle in Syria, especially if they seem likely to join the ruling Baath Party.

### **Peoples from the Caucasus**

Three small but distinct ethnic groups (aside from the more numerous Armenians) have their origins in the Caucasus Mountains: the Circassians, the Georgians (including the Abkhaz), and the Laz. Approximately 70,000 Circassian Muslim immigrants, most originally from Russia, gradually settled, beginning in the late eighteenth century, in the Adana region, where they and their descendants continue to live as farmers and farm laborers.

The Muslim Georgians and Laz are concentrated in the northeastern provinces. The Laz, who are primarily Black Sea fisherfolk, live in villages near the coastal city of Rize. The term *Georgian* actually refers to several different peoples who speak similar but mutually unintelligible languages. One distinct group of Georgians are the Abkhaz, who are primarily cultivators and herders. Most Georgians live in Artvin Province, particularly east of the Çoruh River and along the border with Georgia.

### **Dönme**

The Dönme are descendants of the Jewish followers of a self-proclaimed messiah, Sabbatai Sebi (or Zevi, 1626–76), who was forced by the sultan to convert to Islam in 1666. Their doctrine includes Jewish and Islamic elements. They consider themselves Muslims and officially are recognized as such. Their name is the Turkish word for *convert*, but it carries overtones of *turncoat* as well.

The Dönme have been successful in business and in the professions, but historically they have not been part of the social elite because neither Jews nor Muslims fully accept them. Experience with prejudice inclines some Dönme to hide their identity to avoid discrimination and also has encouraged the Dönme to become a tightly knit, generally endogamous group. Since the early 1980s, however, overt discrimination has lessened, and intermarriage between Dönme and other Muslims has grown common.



*Men drinking tea, eastern  
Turkey*  
*Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*



## **Greeks**

In 1995 fewer than 20,000 Greeks still lived in Turkey. Most of them are Eastern or Greek Orthodox Christians and live in Istanbul or on the two islands of Gökçeada (Imroz) and Bozca Ada (Tenedos), off the western entrance to the Dardanelles. They are the remnants of the estimated 200,000 Greeks who were permitted under the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne to remain in Turkey following the 1924 population exchange, which involved the forcible resettlement of approximately 2 million Greeks from Anatolia. Since 1924 the status of the Greek minority in Turkey has been ambiguous. Most Turks do not accept the country's Greek citizens as their equals. Beginning in the 1930s, the government encouraged the Greeks to emigrate, and thousands, in particular the educated youth, did so, reducing the Greek population to about 48,000 by 1965. Although the size of the Greek minority has continued to decline, the Greek citizens of Turkey generally constitute one of the country's wealthiest communities.

## **Armenians**

The tiny Armenian minority, estimated at 40,000 in 1995, also is a remnant of a once-larger community. Before World War I, some 1.5 million Armenians lived in eastern Anatolia.

Starting in the late nineteenth century, intergroup tensions prompted the emigration of possibly as many as 100,000 Armenians in the 1890s. In 1915 the Ottoman government ordered all Armenians deported from eastern Anatolia; at least 600,000 of the Armenians, who numbered up to 2 million, died during a forced march southward during the winter of 1915–16. Armenians believe—and Turks deny—that the catastrophe that befell their community was the result of atrocities committed by Turkish soldiers following government directives. Armenians outside Turkey refer to the deaths of 1915–16 as an instance of genocide, and over the years various Armenian political groups have sought to avenge the tragedy by carrying out terrorist attacks against Turkish diplomats and officials abroad (see *Armenian Terrorism*, ch. 5).

Most Armenians living in Turkey are concentrated in and around Istanbul. Like the Greeks, they are bankers and merchants with extensive international contacts. The Armenians support their own newspapers and schools. They are intensely attached to their Christian faith and their identity as Armenians rather than Turks. In addition, they have relatives in the Armenian diaspora throughout the world. The establishment of an independent Armenia on Turkey's eastern border following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 was a source of ethnic pride for the Armenians of Turkey. However, Armenia's conflict with Turkic Azerbaijan, combined with the jingoistic support of Azerbaijan in the Turkish media, has raised apprehensions among the Armenian minority about their future status in Turkey.

## **Jews**

In 1995 an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 Jews lived in Turkey. During the first half of the twentieth century, the Jewish population remained relatively stable at around 90,000. Following the establishment of Israel in 1948, an estimated 30,000 Jews immigrated to the new state. An average of 1,000 Jews annually left for Israel during the 1950s and early 1960s. By 1965 the Jewish minority had been reduced to an estimated 44,000, most of whom lived in Istanbul, where many Jewish men operated shops and other small businesses.

Unlike the Armenians and Greeks, the Jewish minority is neither ethnically nor linguistically homogeneous. Most of its members are Sephardic Jews whose ancestors were expelled from Spain by the Roman Catholic Inquisition in 1492. They

speak Ladino, a variant of fifteenth-century Spanish with borrowings from several other languages. The Ashkenazic minority—Jews from central and northern Europe—speak Yiddish, a German-derived language. Both languages are written in the Hebrew script. Most Jews also speak Turkish. The Karaites—viewed by most other Jews as heretics—speak Greek as their native language. In general, the different Jewish communities have tended not to intermarry and thus have retained their identities.

## **Religious Life**

The institutional secularization of Turkey was the most prominent and most controversial feature of Atatürk's reforms. Under his leadership, the caliphate—office of the successors to Muhammad, the supreme politico-religious office of Islam, and symbol of the sultan's claim to world leadership of all Muslims—was abolished. The secular power of the religious authorities and functionaries was reduced and eventually eliminated. The religious foundations (*evkaf*; sing., *vakıf*) were nationalized, and religious education was restricted and for a time prohibited. The influential and popular mystical orders of the dervish brotherhoods also were suppressed.

Although Turkey was secularized at the official level, religion remained a strong force at the popular level. After 1950 some political leaders tried to benefit from popular attachment to religion by espousing support for programs and policies that appealed to the religiously inclined. Such efforts were opposed by most of the political elite, who believed that secularism was an essential principle of Kemalism. This disinclination to appreciate religious values and beliefs gradually led to a polarization of society. The polarization became especially evident in the 1980s as a new generation of educated but religiously motivated local leaders emerged to challenge the dominance of the secularized political elite. These new leaders have been assertively proud of Turkey's Islamic heritage and generally have been successful at adapting familiar religious idioms to describe dissatisfaction with various government policies. By their own example of piety, prayer, and political activism, they have helped to spark a revival of Islamic observance in Turkey. By 1994 slogans promising that a return to Islam would cure economic ills and solve the problems of bureaucratic inefficiencies had enough general appeal to enable avowed religious

candidates to win mayoral elections in Istanbul and Ankara, the country's two most secularized cities.

## **Islam**

Islam is a monotheistic religion. A believer is a Muslim, literally, "one who submits to God." Muslims believe that Allah (Arabic for God) gave revelations through the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (A.D. 570–632), a native of the Arabian Peninsula city of Mecca. Muhammad's efforts to convert people to monotheism disturbed the merchant elite, who feared that his preaching would adversely affect the pilgrims who regularly visited Mecca, which in the early seventh century had shrines to several gods and goddesses. Mecca's principal destination for pilgrims was the Kaaba, a shrine housing a venerated black rock which over the years had been surrounded by various idols. The lack of acceptance by Meccans of Muhammad's preaching caused him and his followers in A.D. 622 to migrate to Medina in response to an invitation by that city's leaders. Muhammad's migration to Medina enabled him to organize the politico-religious community—the *umma*—that marked the beginning of Islam as a political movement as well as a religious faith. Thus, the date of the migration, or *hijret* (from the Arabic *hijra*), was adopted by the Muslim community as the beginning of the Islamic era. The Islamic calendar is based on a lunar year, which averages eleven days less than a solar year. The Islamic calendar is used in Turkey for religious purposes.

By the time of the Prophet's death ten years after his migration to Medina, most of the Arabian Peninsula, including the city of Mecca, had converted to Islam. During the last two years of his life, Muhammad led fellow Muslims on pilgrimages to Mecca, where the Kaaba was relieved of its idols and dedicated to the worship of Allah. Since then, praying at the Kaaba has been the ultimate goal of the pilgrimage, or *hajj*, which every able-bodied adult Muslim is expected to make at least once in his or her lifetime.

## ***Tenets of Islam***

Muslims believe that all of Allah's revelations to the Prophet are contained in the Kuran (in Arabic, Quran), which is composed in rhymed prose. The Kuran consists of 114 chapters, called *suras*, the first of which is a short "opening" chapter. The remaining 113 segments are arranged roughly in order of

decreasing length. The short *suras* at the end of the book are early revelations, each consisting of material revealed on the same occasion. The longer *suras* toward the beginning of the book are compilations of verses revealed at different times in Muhammad's life.

The central beliefs of Islam are monotheism and Muhammad's status as the "seal of the Prophets," that is, the final prophet to whom God revealed messages for the spiritual guidance of humanity. Jesus Christ and the prophets of the Old Testament are also accepted as Islamic prophets. Muslims who profess belief in God and Muhammad's prophethood, pray regularly, and live by Islamic ethical and moral principles are assured that their souls will find eternal salvation in heaven. The profession of belief in one God and the prophethood of Muhammad is known as the *shahadet* (in Arabic, *shahada*), and is one of the five basic obligations or "pillars" of Islam. The profession of faith—"There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet"—always is recited in Arabic. It is repeated during prayer and on many other ritual occasions.

The four other pillars of Islam are prayer (*namaz*; *salat* in Arabic), giving alms to the needy (*zekat*; *zakah* in Arabic), fasting (*oruç*, *sawm* in Arabic) during the month of Ramazan (from the Arabic, *Ramadan*), and the pilgrimage (*hac*, from the Arabic *hajj*) to Mecca. The prescribed prayers are recited in Arabic and are accompanied by a series of ritual body movements meant to demonstrate submission to God: standing, bowing, kneeling, and full prostration. Muslims say the prayers at five prescribed times a day, always while facing in the direction of Mecca. Prayers are preceded by a ritual ablution, and, unless the prayer is said in a mosque, a ritual purification of the ground is achieved by the unrolling of a clean prayer rug. Although it is permissible to pray almost anywhere, men pray in congregation at mosques whenever possible, especially on Fridays. Women are not required to pray in public but may attend worship at mosques, which maintain separate sections for women. Despite more than sixty years of secularist government policies, a majority of Turkey's Muslims continue to recite prayers at least occasionally. In fact, mosque attendance in the urban areas, which formerly was significantly less than in rural areas, increased considerably during the 1980s. During the early 1990s, most city mosques were filled to capacity on Fridays and religious holidays.

The third pillar of Islam, almsgiving, is required of all Muslims. The faithful are expected to give in proportion to their wealth. In various historical periods, *zekat* assumed the status of a tithe that mosques collected and distributed for charitable purposes. In addition to *zekat*, Muslims are encouraged to make free-will gifts (*sadaka*, from the Arabic *sadaqa*).

Abstinence from dawn to dusk from all food and beverages during the Islamic month of Ramazan is the fourth pillar of the faith required of Muslims. Persons who are ill; women who are pregnant, nursing, or menstruating; soldiers on duty; travelers on necessary journeys; and young children are exempted from the fast. However, adults who are unable to fast during Ramazan are expected to observe a fast later. Ramazan is a period of spiritual renewal, and the daytime fasting is meant to help concentrate a Muslim's thoughts on religious matters. Many mosques, especially in urban areas, sponsor special prayer meetings and study groups during the month. The evening meal that breaks the fast has special religious significance and also is an occasion for sharing among families and friends. Muslims who can afford to do so often host one or more fast-breaking meals for indigents during Ramazan. The month of fasting is followed by a three-day celebration, Seker Bayramı (in Arabic, Id al Fitr), which is observed in Turkey as a national holiday.

The fifth pillar of Islam is the *hac*. Each Muslim who is financially and physically able is expected at least once in his or her lifetime to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and participate in prescribed religious rites performed at various specific sites in the holy city and its environs during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. In one of their most important rites, pilgrims pray while circumambulating the Kaaba, the sanctuary Muslims believe Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Ismail (Ishmael) built to honor the one God. During the *hac*, pilgrims sacrifice domesticated animals such as sheep and distribute the meat among the needy. Known as the Feast of Sacrifice, Kurban Bayramı (in Arabic, Id al Adha), this occasion is celebrated not only by the pilgrims but by all Muslims, and is observed in Turkey as a national holiday. The returning pilgrim is entitled to use the honorific *haci* (in Arabic, *hajji*) before his or her name, a title that indicates successful completion of the pilgrimage.

A pious Muslim strives to follow a code of ethical conduct that encourages generosity, fairness, chastity, honesty, and respect. Certain acts, including murder, cruelty, adultery, gam-

bling, and usury, are considered contrary to Islamic practice. Muslims also are enjoined not to consume carrion, blood, pork, or alcohol. Many of the precepts for appropriate behavior are specified in the Kuran. Other spiritual and ethical guidelines are found in the *hadis* (in Arabic, *hadith*), an authenticated record of the sayings and actions of Muhammad and his earliest companions. Devout Muslims regard their words, acts, and decisions—called collectively the *sunna*—as models to be emulated by later generations. Because of its normative character, the *sunna* is revered along with the Kuran as a primary source of *seriat* (in Arabic, *sharia*), or Islamic law.

Islamic law evolved between the eighth and tenth centuries. Islamic scholars reputed for their knowledge of the Kuran, *hadis*, and *sunna* were accepted as authoritative interpreters of *seriat*. Several of them compiled texts of case law that formed the basis of legal schools. Eventually, Sunni Muslims came to accept four schools of law as equally valid. Two schools of *seriat* exist in contemporary Turkey: the Hanafi, founded by Iraqi theologian Abu Hanifa (ca. 700–67), and the Shafii, founded by the Meccan jurist Muhammad ash Shafii (767–820). Most Muslim Turks follow the Hanafi school, whereas most Sunni Kurds follow the Shafii school.

### ***Early Development***

Following the death of the Prophet in 632, the Muslim community failed to reach consensus on who should succeed him as the caliph. A majority of Muhammad's close followers supported the idea of an elected caliph, but a minority believed that leadership, or the imamate, should remain within the Prophet's family, passing first to Muhammad's cousin, son-in-law, and principal deputy, Ali ibn Abu Talib, and subsequently to Ali's sons and their male descendants. The majority, who believed they were following the *sunna* of the Prophet, became known as Sunni Muslims. To them, the caliph was the symbolic religious head of the community; however, caliphs would also rule as the secular leaders of a major empire for six centuries. The first four caliphs—Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman, and Ali—were chosen by a consensus of Muslim leaders. Subsequently, however, the caliphate was converted by its holders into a hereditary office, the first two dynasties being the Umayyad, which ruled from Damascus, and the second being the Abbasid, which ruled from Baghdad. After the Mongols captured Baghdad and executed the Abbasid caliph in 1258, a period of more

than 250 years followed when no one was recognized as caliph by all Sunni Muslims. During the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Dynasty resurrected the title, and gradually even Muslims outside the Ottoman Empire came to accept the Ottoman sultan as the symbolic leader—caliph—of Sunni Islam.

The partisans of Ali—the Shiat Ali—evolved into a separate Islamic denomination that became known as the Shia. By the ninth century, however, the Shia Muslims split into numerous sects as a result of disagreements over which of several brothers was the legitimate leader, or *imam*, of the community. The major divisions occurred over the question of succession to the fourth, sixth, and twelfth imams. Consequently, the origins of almost all Shia sects can be traced to the followers of the fifth, seventh, or twelfth imam. By the fifteenth century, the sect known as the Twelve Imam Shia—a group that recognized Ali and eleven of his direct descendants as the legitimate successors to the Prophet—had emerged as the predominant Shia sect.

In addition to the orthodox Twelve Imam Shia, several sects that revered the twelve imams but otherwise subscribed to heterodox beliefs and practices emerged between the ninth and twelfth centuries. One of these heterodox sects, the Nusayri, originated in the mid-ninth century among the followers of the religious teacher Muhammad ibn Nusayr an Namiri. The Nusayri became established in what is now northern Syria and southern Turkey during the tenth century when a Shia dynasty based in Aleppo ruled the region. Because of the special devotion of the Nusayri to Ali, Sunni Muslims historically and pejoratively referred to them as Alevi (see The Alevi, this ch.).

### *Development of Islam in Turkey*

By the end of the seventh century, conversion to Islam had begun among the Turkish-speaking tribes, who were migrating westward from Central Asia. The initial wave of Turkish migrants converted to Sunni Islam and became champions of Islamic orthodoxy. As warriors of the Islamic faith, or *gazis*, they colonized and settled Anatolia in the name of Islam, especially following the defeat of the Byzantines at the Battle of Manzikert (1071). Beginning in the twelfth century, new waves of Turkic migrants became attracted to militant Sufi orders, which gradually incorporated heterodox Shia beliefs. One Sufi order that appealed to Turks in Anatolia after 1300 was the Safavi, based in northwest Iran. During the fourteenth and fif-



teenth centuries, the Safavi and similar orders such as the Bektasi became rivals of the Ottomans—who were orthodox Sunni Muslims—for political control of eastern Anatolia. Concern about the growing influence of the Safavi probably was one of the factors that prompted the Ottomans to permit unorthodox Bektasi Sufism to become the official order of the janissary soldiers (see *The Ottoman Empire*, ch. 1). Although the Bektasi became accepted as a sect of orthodox Sunni Muslims, they did not abandon their heterodox Shia beliefs. In contrast, the Safavi eventually conquered Iran, shed their heterodox religious beliefs, and became proponents of orthodox Twelve Imam Shia Islam.

The conquest of the Byzantine capital of Constantinople—which the Turks called Istanbul (from the Greek phrase *eis tin polin*, "to the city")—in 1453 enabled the Ottomans to consolidate their empire in Anatolia and Thrace. The Ottomans revived the title of caliph, based their legitimacy on Islam, and integrated religion into the government and administration. Despite the absence of a formal institutional structure, Sunni religious functionaries played an important political role. Justice was dispensed by religious courts; in theory, the codified system of *seriat* regulated all aspects of life, at least for the Muslim subjects of the empire. The head of the judiciary ranked directly below the sultan and was second in power only to the grand vizier. Early in the Ottoman period, the office of grand mufti of Istanbul evolved into that of *seyhülislam* (shaykh, or leader of Islam), which had ultimate jurisdiction over all the courts in the empire and consequently exercised authority over the interpretation and application of *seriat*. Legal opinions pronounced by the *seyhülislam* were considered definitive interpretations.

### ***Sufism and Folk Islam***

From the earliest days of Islam, some Muslims have been attracted to mystical interpretations of their religion. In Turkey, at least since the thirteenth century, Islamic mysticism has been expressed through participation in Sufi brotherhoods that serve as centers of spiritual and social life. The term *Sufi* derives from the Arabic *suf*, which means wool. Early Muslims used the term *Sufi* to refer to fellow believers who wore simple woolen garments to demonstrate their rejection of materialism and worldly temptations and their devotion to a life of asceticism and prayer. Eventually, some Sufis who had acquired repu-





*View of Istanbul and the Blue Mosque  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*

tations for their learning and piety attracted disciples who aspired to learn from and emulate these Sufi masters. Initially, Sufi followers were like students whose bonds to a Sufi teacher were based on personal loyalty. Since the twelfth century, however, most Sufis have organized themselves into orders or brotherhoods (*tarikāt*, pl., *tarikātlar*—see Glossary) that follow the teachings of a particular Sufi master.

Many Sufi *tarikātlar* established institutional bases, called *tekke* or *dergah* (lodges), that lasted for several generations and, in some instances, even for centuries. For example, two of contemporary Turkey's largest *tarikātlar*, the Naksibendi and the Kadiri, date back at least to the fourteenth century. Some *tarikātlar* carry the name of the founding Sufi master, the *seyh* (in Arabic, *shaykh*). One example is the Mevlevi brotherhood. Its members popularly are called whirling dervishes because of the rhythmic whirling they engage in as a spiritual exercise and a means to achieve ecstatic proximity to God. The brotherhood is named after its founder, Mevlana (Jalal ad Din Rumi, d. 1273). Ordinarily, a designated successor to the *seyh* inherited his position of leadership as well as the mantle of his spiritual power. Induction into a particular *tarikāt* became regulated and usually depended on the performance of prescribed initiation procedures. Initiates were placed at different levels, depending on the instruction they had mastered. Some of the larger Sufi *tarikātlar* established branches and through *evkaf* accumulated land and buildings, which functioned as *tekkes*, Kuran schools, residential monasteries, orphanages, and hospices.

The early *tarikātlar* were strongly influenced by Shia doctrines. Consequently, the political conflicts between the Sunni Ottoman and Shia Safavi dynasties affected the Sufi orders in Turkey. Sunni *tarikātlar* eventually deemphasized such practices as the veneration of Ali ibn Abu Talib and received official patronage from some Ottoman sultans. However, at least one Shia *tarikāt*, the Bektasi, supported the Ottomans and actually exercised significant political influence without changing their heterodox beliefs. The Bektasi and the Sunni *tarikātlar* also served an important social function by providing educational and social welfare services, constituting a means of social mobility, and offering spiritual guidance to the people, especially in rural areas.

Folk Islam in Turkey has derived many of its popular practices from Sufism. Particular Sufi *seyhs*—and occasionally other

individuals reputed to be pious—were regarded after death as saints having special powers to mediate between believers and God. Veneration of saints (both male and female) and pilgrimages to their shrines and graves represent an important aspect of popular Islam in both the city and the country. Folk Islam has continued to embrace such practices although the veneration of saints officially has been discouraged since the 1930s. Plaques posted in various sanctuaries forbid the lighting of candles, the offering of votive objects, and related devotional activities in these places.

### *The Alevi*

A significant Shia minority lives in Turkey. As in the Ottoman period, a census of the Shia population has never been taken in the republican period. Thus, there is no accurate information on the size of the Shia community, which has been estimated to constitute as little as 7 percent and as much as 30 percent of Turkey's total population. Sunni in Turkey tend to refer to all Shia as Alevi. In actuality, Alevi constitute but one of four Shia sects in the country. But Alevi are by far the largest Shia sect in Turkey, accounting for at least 70 percent of the country's Shia. Twelve Imam Shia and followers of the heterodox Ahl-ı Haq and Bektasi have resided in Turkey for centuries. Twelve Imam Shia comprise a majority of all Shia worldwide, although their numbers in Turkey are estimated at only 20 to 25 percent of all Shia in the country. Scholars believe that the unorthodox Ahl-ı Haq, whose adherents are almost exclusively Kurds, and the equally unorthodox Bektasi, whose followers primarily are ethnic Turks, are even fewer in number than the Twelve Imam Shia.

Even though scholars of the contemporary Middle East tend to associate Alevi with Syria, where they have played an influential political role since the 1960s, a majority of all Alevi actually live in Turkey. Alevi include almost all of Turkey's Arab minority, from 10 to 30 percent of the country's Kurds, and many ethnic Turks. In fact, a majority of Alevi may be Turks. Historically, Alevi resided predominantly in southeastern Turkey, but the mass rural-to-urban migration that has been relatively continuous since 1960 has resulted in thousands of Alevi moving to cities in central and western Anatolia. Consequently, Alevi communities of varying size were located in most of the country's major cities by the mid-1990s.

Because of centuries of persecution by Sunni Muslims, Alevi became highly secretive about the tenets of their faith and their religious practices. Consequently, almost no reliable information about Alevi Islam is available. Unsympathetic published sources reported that Alevi worshiped Ali ibn Abu Talib, observed various Christian rituals, and venerated both Christian and Muslim saints. Prior to the twentieth century, information on the sect was so sparse and distorted that even Twelve Imam Shia regarded Alevi as heretics. However, the tendency among most contemporary Twelve Imam clergy is to recognize the Alevi as a distinct legal school within the Twelve Imam tradition. In addition, major Twelve Imam Shia theological colleges in Iran and Iraq have accepted Alevi students since the 1940s.

### **Secularist Policies**

In 1922 the new nationalist regime abolished the Ottoman sultanate, and in 1924 it abolished the caliphate, the religious office that Ottoman sultans had held for four centuries. Thus, for the first time in Islamic history, no ruler claimed spiritual leadership of Islam. The withdrawal of Turkey, heir to the Ottoman Empire, as the presumptive leader of the world Muslim community was symbolic of the change in the government's relationship to Islam. Indeed, secularism or laicism (*laiklik*) became one of the "Six Arrows" of Atatürk's program for remaking Turkey. Whereas Islam had formed the identity of Muslims within the Ottoman Empire, secularism was seen as molding the new Turkish nation and its citizens.

Atatürk and his associates not only abolished certain religious practices and institutions but also questioned the value of religion, preferring to place their trust in science. They regarded organized religion as an anachronism and contrasted it unfavorably with "civilization," which to them meant a rationalist, secular culture. Establishment of secularism in Turkey was not, as it had been in the West, a gradual process of separation of church and state. In the Ottoman Empire, all spheres of life, at least theoretically, had been subject to religious law, and Sunni religious organizations had been part of the state structure. When the reformers of the early 1920s opted for a secular state, they removed religion from the sphere of public policy and restricted it exclusively to that of personal morals, behavior, and faith. Although private observance of religious rituals

could continue, religion and religious organization were excluded from public life.

The policies directly affecting religion were numerous and sweeping. In addition to the abolition of the caliphate, new laws mandated abolition of the office of *seyhülislam*; abolition of the religious hierarchy; the closing and confiscation of Sufi lodges, meeting places, and monasteries and the outlawing of their rituals and meetings; establishment of government control over the *evkaf*, which had been inalienable under *seriat*; replacement of *seriat* with adapted European legal codes; the closing of religious schools; abandonment of the Islamic calendar in favor of the Gregorian calendar used in the West; restrictions on public attire that had religious associations, with the fez outlawed for men and the veil discouraged for women; and the outlawing of the traditional garb of local religious leaders.

Atatürk and his colleagues also attempted to Turkify Islam through official encouragement of such practices as using Turkish rather than Arabic at devotions, substituting the Turkish word *Tanrı* for the Arabic word *Allah*, and introducing Turkish for the daily calls to prayer. These changes in devotional practices deeply disturbed faithful Muslims and caused widespread resentment, which led in 1933 to a return to the Arabic version of the call to prayer. Of longer-lasting effect were the regime's measures prohibiting religious education, restricting the building of new mosques, and transferring existing mosques to secular purposes. Most notably, the Hagia Sophia (Justinian's sixth-century Christian basilica, which had been converted into a mosque by Mehmet II) was made a museum in 1935. The effect of these changes was to make religion, or more correctly Sunni Islam, subject to the control of a hostile state. Muftis and imams (prayer leaders) were appointed by the government, and religious instruction was taken over by the Ministry of National Education.

### **Retreat from Secularism**

The expectation of the secular ruling elite that the policies of the 1920s and 1930s would diminish the role of religion in public life did not materialize. As early as 1925, religious grievances were one of the principal causes of the Seyh Sait rebellion, an uprising in southeastern Turkey that may have claimed as many as 30,000 lives before being suppressed. Following the relaxation of authoritarian political controls in 1946, large numbers of people began to call openly for a return to tradi-

tional religious practice. During the 1950s, even certain political leaders found it expedient to join religious leaders in advocating more state respect for religion (see *Multiparty Politics, 1946–60*, ch. 1).

A more direct manifestation of the growing reaction against secularism was the revival of the Sufi brotherhoods. Not only did suppressed *tarikatar* such as the Kadiri, Mevlevi, and Naksibendi reemerge, but new orders were formed, including the Nurcular, Süleymançı, and Ticani. The Ticani became especially militant in confronting the state. For example, Ticani damaged monuments to Atatürk to symbolize their opposition to his policy of secularization. Throughout the 1950s, there were numerous trials of Ticani and other Sufi leaders for anti-state activities. Simultaneously, however, some *tarikatar*, notably the Süleymançı and Nurcular, cooperated with those politicians perceived as supportive of pro-Islamic policies. The Nurcular eventually advocated support for Turkey's multiparty political system, and one of its offshoots, the Isikçilar, has openly supported the Motherland Party since the mid-1980s.

The demand for restoration of religious education in public schools began in the late 1940s. The government initially responded by authorizing religious instruction in state schools for those students whose parents requested it. Under Democrat Party rule during the 1950s, religious education was made compulsory in secondary schools unless parents made a specific request to have their children excused. Religious education was made compulsory for all primary and secondary school children in 1982.

Inevitably, the reintroduction of religion into the school curriculum raised the question of religious higher education. The secular elites, who tended to distrust traditional religious leaders, believed that Islam could be "reformed" if future leaders were trained in state-controlled seminaries. To further this goal, the government in 1949 established a faculty of divinity at Ankara University to train teachers of Islam and imams. In 1951 the Democrat Party government set up special secondary schools (*imam hatip okullari*) for the training of imams and preachers. Initially, the *imam hatip* schools grew very slowly, but their numbers expanded rapidly to more than 250 during the 1970s, when the pro-Islam National Salvation Party participated in coalition governments. Following the 1980 coup, the military, although secular in orientation, viewed religion as an



effective means to counter socialist ideas and thus authorized the construction of ninety more *imam hatip* high schools.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Islam experienced a kind of political rehabilitation because right-of-center secular leaders perceived religion as a potential bulwark in their ideological struggle with left-of-center secular leaders. A small advocacy group that became extremely influential was the Hearth of Intellectuals, an organization that maintains that true Turkish culture is a synthesis of the Turks' pre-Islamic traditions and Islam. According to the Hearth, Islam not only constitutes an essential aspect of Turkish culture but is a force that can be regulated by the state to help socialize the people to be obedient citizens acquiescent to the overall secular order. After the 1980 military coup, many of the Hearth's proposals for restructuring schools, colleges, and state broadcasting were adopted. The result was a purge from these state institutions of more than 2,000 intellectuals perceived as espousing leftist ideas incompatible with the Hearth's vision of Turkey's national culture.

The state's more tolerant attitude toward Islam encouraged the proliferation of private religious activities, including the construction of new mosques and Kuran schools in the cities, the establishment of Islamic centers for research on and conferences about Islam and its role in Turkey, and the establishment of religiously oriented professional and women's journals. The printing of newspapers, the publication of religious books, and the growth of innumerable religious projects ranging from health centers, child-care facilities, and youth hostels to financial institutions and consumer cooperatives flourished. When the government legalized private broadcasting after 1990, several Islamic radio stations were organized. In the summer of 1994, the first Islamic television station, Channel 7, began broadcasting, first in Istanbul and subsequently in Ankara.

Although the *tarikatlar* have played a seminal role in Turkey's religious revival and in the mid-1990s still published several of the country's most widely circulated religious journals and newspapers, a new phenomenon, *İslamçı aydın* (the Islamist intellectual) unaffiliated with the traditional Sufi orders, emerged during the 1980s. Prolific and popular writers such as Ali Bulaç, Rasim Özdenoren, and İsmet Özel have drawn upon their knowledge of Western philosophy, Marxist sociology, and radical Islamist political theory to advocate a modern Islamic perspective that does not hesitate to criticize genuine societal

ills while simultaneously remaining faithful to the ethical values and spiritual dimensions of religion. Islamist intellectuals are harshly critical of Turkey's secular intellectuals, whom they fault for trying to do in Turkey what Western intellectuals did in Europe: substitute worldly materialism, in its capitalist or socialist version, for religious values.

Although intellectual debates on the role of Islam attracted widespread interest, they did not provoke the kind of controversy that erupted over the issue of appropriate attire for Muslim women. During the early 1980s, female college students who were determined to demonstrate their commitment to Islam began to cover their heads and necks with large scarves and wear long, shape-concealing overcoats. The appearance of these women in the citadels of Turkish secularism shocked those men and women who tended to perceive such attire as a symbol of the Islamic traditionalism they rejected. Militant secularists persuaded the Higher Education Council to issue a regulation in 1987 forbidding female university students to cover their heads in class. Protests by thousands of religious students and some university professors forced several universities to waive enforcement of the dress code. The issue continued to be seriously divisive in the mid-1990s. Throughout the first half of the 1990s, highly educated, articulate, but religiously pious women have appeared in public dressed in Islamic attire that conceals all but their faces and hands. Other women, especially in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir, have demonstrated against such attire by wearing revealing fashions and Atatürk badges. The issue is discussed and debated in almost every type of forum—artistic, commercial, cultural, economic, political, and religious. For many citizens of Turkey, women's dress has become the issue—at least for the 1990s—that defines whether a Muslim is secularist or religious.

### **Non-Muslim Minorities**

Because of the absence since 1965 of census data on the ethnic background and religious affiliation of Turkish citizens, the size of non-Muslim communities in Turkey in 1995 was difficult to estimate. The 1965 census enumerated about 207,000 Christians, about 169,000 of whom resided in urban areas and about 38,000 in the countryside. The Christians included Armenian, Greek, and Syrian Orthodox; Armenian and Syrian Catholics; and members of various Protestant denominations. The Jewish population in 1965 numbered about 44,000, all but a tiny frac-



*Muslim woman with prayer  
beads, Ortahisar, central  
Anatolia  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*



*People praying on Ulu Dag  
Mountain, near Bursa, in  
northwestern Turkey  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*

tion of whom were urban residents. By 1995 it was estimated that the size of these populations had decreased substantially, the Christians to just under 140,000 and the Jews to about 20,000. The members of these religious minorities are found primarily in the coastal cities and towns, but some live in the mountainous regions of eastern Anatolia near the borders with Armenia and Georgia.

In 1995 members of religious minorities continued to occupy an anomalous position in Turkish society. Non-Muslims remain to some extent second-class citizens, although they generally are not subject to overt discrimination. A disproportionately large segment of the minority population is represented among the wealthy business and professional groups. Proselytizing by non-Muslim religions is strongly discouraged by the government. Under the law, a Muslim man or woman may marry a non-Muslim spouse, but such marriages are infrequent and usually do not entail conversion.

The Syrian Orthodox, or Jacobite, community, which numbered about 50,000 in 1995, ranks as the largest Christian denomination in Turkey. An Arabic-speaking community that uses ancient Aramaic in its liturgy, the Syrian Orthodox historically have lived in villages in the vicinity of Mardin and Midyat in southeastern Turkey. Since the late 1980s, intense fighting in this region between government forces and the PKK has threatened many villages and prompted a migration to local cities and even to Istanbul, where a community of Syrian Orthodox, initially established during the Ottoman era, was estimated to number 10,000 in 1995. The Syrian Orthodox Church has its own head, referred to as a metropolitan. The metropolitan (Timotheos Samuel Aktash in 1995) resides in an ancient mountain monastery near Midyat. Also, an estimated 2,000 Syrian Catholics, whose ancestors converted from the Syrian Orthodox rite, are scattered in small communities in the southeast. Syrian Catholics retain the distinct Syrian Orthodox rite but recognize the spiritual authority of the Roman Catholic pope.

The Armenian Orthodox (or Gregorian) community, with some 35,000 members in 1995, ranks as the second largest Christian denomination in Turkey. In addition, an estimated 7,000 other Armenians belong to an autonomous Orthodox church, to an Armenian Catholic church in union with Rome, or to various Protestant denominations. In 1995 the Armenian Orthodox Church's patriarch, Karekin Bedros Kazandjian, resided in Istanbul. In 1995 the Armenian Orthodox Church maintained more than thirty churches and chapels; seventy-five elementary and middle schools, and two orphanages. Armenian Catholics maintained ten churches in Istanbul, as well as six elementary and middle schools.

The Greek Orthodox Church, the largest Christian church in Turkey as recently as 1960, had fewer than 20,000 members in 1995. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, located in the Fener quarter of Istanbul, is the central church authority for Greek Orthodox Christians in most of Europe and beyond. Because the patriarch's authority extends to all Orthodox believers outside Greece and the Middle East, he is considered the honorary head of the church for communities of Orthodox Christians living in the United States, Canada, Central and South America, Australia, and New Zealand. From these communities, the patriarchate in Istanbul receives moral and financial support. The ecumenical patriarch's status has

been affected by the continual tension in Turkish-Greek relations. During the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of members of the Greek Orthodox community left Turkey on account of the discrimination or overt hostility they experienced following Greco-Turkish conflicts over the status of Cyprus. The diminution of the community has weakened the patriarchate and undermined its status in its dealings with the Turkish government. Nevertheless, the patriarchate's importance has remained considerable because of its ecumenical and international connections.

Other Christian communities present in Turkey include several small groups affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. Melchites (Greek Catholics) and Maronites live among the Arabs in southeast Hatay Province. Although accepted by the Vatican as part of the Roman Catholic Church, Melchites and Maronite Catholics retain their own separate liturgies. Chaldean-rite Catholics live in the Diyarbakır region, while Bulgarian, Greek, and Latin-rite Catholics live in Istanbul and Izmir. The total number of Catholics of various persuasions in early 1995 has been estimated at 25,000.

Since 1948 the Jewish population has decreased steadily. In 1995 the Jewish community, estimated at 18,000 to 20,000, consisted primarily of Sephardic Jews. At least 90 percent of Turkey's Jews live in Istanbul, where a chief rabbi presides. In 1995 the Jewish community maintained one high school and four elementary schools offering limited courses in Hebrew.

## **Structure of Society**

Contemporary Turkish society has evolved both as a consequence of and a response to the major socioeconomic changes initiated by the republican government since the early 1920s. A predominantly agrarian society with little industry and high illiteracy rates when the Ottoman Empire collapsed at the end of World War I, Turkey by the 1990s had become a predominantly urban and industrialized society in which mass public education and the ability to vote for government leaders in competitive elections are regarded as basic rights. Accompanying the changes has been the growth of new classes and interest groups, especially in the large cities, where the demands of entrepreneurs and industrial workers are championed by various political parties. A notable characteristic of many government programs aimed at inducing specific socioeconomic changes, however, has been the penchant of ruling civilian and

military elites for implementing policies without consulting those who might be affected and for using force whenever popular resistance is encountered. One consequence of this approach has been the gradual creation of two distinct cultures in Turkey: a secular, elitist culture that defines what is progressive and modern; and a mass culture that continues to be influenced by Islam, whether in its traditional, mystical, modern, or radical interpretations.

### **The Changing National Elite**

Turkey's national political elite is a self-perpetuating group; membership is based on a demonstrated commitment to secularism and the other principles of Atatürk. During the initial years of the republic, the elite was recruited from the Ottoman bureaucracy and military. Its members thus shared a sense that they knew best how to carry out policies that served the interests of the state and country. In addition, most of the early republican elite had been involved with or sympathetic to the pre-World War I Ottoman political parties that had espoused major political and economic reforms. Atatürk himself, for example, had been a member of the Unionist Party while serving as an Ottoman army officer in Macedonia (see *The Young Turks*, ch. 1). During the 1920s and 1930s, the ruling elite accepted the need for significant, even revolutionary, reforms and generally embraced Atatürk's programs enthusiastically. In effect, service to the country and higher education, rather than wealth per se, became primary qualifications for acceptance into the political elite as early as 1930.

The national political elite essentially ruled Turkey unchallenged for more than thirty years. Beginning in the 1950s, however, the socioeconomic changes resulting from government policies provided numerous and varied opportunities for the accumulation of private capital in finance, commerce, trade, and industry. The emergence of a wealthy business class inevitably led to the development of class-specific political interests and ambitions. Because of this new business elite's experience in entrepreneurial activities rather than the bureaucracy, its members' views differed sharply from those of the established ruling elite, which generally supported state intervention in the economy. Increasing competition between the two elites over appropriate state policies was one of the reasons for the polarization that characterized Turkey's national politics during the 1970s.

A nongovernment professional elite also gradually emerged after 1950, including architects, engineers, lawyers, managers, physicians, and university professors, who were not necessarily unified in their political views. Nevertheless, as a group they tended to resent what they perceived as the patronizing, even authoritarian, political attitudes of the ruling elite. This group's frustration with the political system, emerging at the same time as dissatisfaction within the business elite, highlighted the need for genuine political reform. During the 1970s, some members of the ruling elite recognized this need, but they were unable to enact remedial legislation.

The 1980 military coup symbolized the deep divisions that had emerged within the ruling elite over strategies for dealing with the political demands of diverse and competitive interest groups. The officers and their civilian supporters, who included some factions of the business elite, wanted the state to impose social order through the type of authoritarian methods they believed had worked successfully under Atatürk. They were sufficiently angry with dissenting members of the ruling elite to arrest the most prominent politicians, including two former prime ministers. The coup in effect split the ruling elite into two ideological factions that continue to coexist uneasily in the mid-1990s. One elite group believes in the efficacy of a strong government to maintain social and political stability; the other elite faction believes in accommodating interest group demands that do not threaten the national cohesion of the country and generally supports broadening political pluralism.

## **Urban Life**

By 1995 approximately two-thirds of Turkey's population lived in urban areas, which continued to grow rapidly (see *Population Density, Distribution, and Settlement*, this ch.). Urbanization and industrialization have helped to create social-class structures that are similar in all large cities (population of more than 100,000) and most smaller ones (population 20,000 to 100,000). Government officials, wealthy businesspeople, and professionals together constitute the urban upper class. The business elite in most cities is very diverse and generally includes industrialists, financiers, large-scale retailers and wholesalers, real estate developers, construction firm owners, transportation company operators, and, in Ankara and Istanbul, owners of commercial publishing and broadcasting companies. The business elite, which constitutes the largest

component of the upper class, has been expanding since the early 1980s as a result of government incentives for private investors and entrepreneurs. However, because statistics on personal income in Turkey are neither complete nor reliable, there is no accurate means of determining the composition of the upper class. Political power and education continue to be significant, albeit much less so than before the 1980 coup, as qualifications for upper-class status. The upper class makes up about 10 percent of the total population of all cities.

The urban middle class is larger and more diverse than the upper class. It includes various types of administrators; middle-level bureaucrats and public employees; engineers lacking advanced college degrees; journalists and other writers; managers of industrial enterprises, commercial offices, and social-service centers; owners of small-scale retail establishments and restaurants; technicians; self-employed artisans; professionals; and tradespeople. Education, particularly a college degree, has been key to joining the middle class. Although the middle class was continuing to expand during the early 1980s, most of its members felt threatened by persistently high inflation rates that had eroded their savings and impeded their upward social mobility. In 1995 the middle class was estimated to constitute 20 to 25 percent of the total urban population. It was larger in prosperous cities but smaller in economically depressed areas.

The phenomenal growth of cities since the 1950s has been the result of large-scale migration of lower-class people from the villages; in 1995 more than 60 percent of Turkey's urban population belonged to the lower class. Most villagers who came to the cities in search of work were unable to find affordable housing. Thus, they built temporary shelters on undeveloped land on the outskirts of Ankara and Istanbul and other large cities. These squatter settlements, or *gecekondu*s, soon became permanent neighborhoods, albeit ones that lacked urban amenities such as piped water, electricity, and paved streets. Eventually, some *gecekondu*s were incorporated into the cities and provided with electricity. By 1980 up to 60 percent of the residents of Ankara, Adana, Bursa, Istanbul, and Izmir lived in new *gecekondu*s or in city neighborhoods that had originated as *gecekondu*s. During the 1970s, researchers affiliated with government-funded institutes tried to depict the expanding *gecekondu*s as settlements that facilitated the adaptation of rural migrants to the urban environment. In actuality, all such neigh-



borhoods were urban slums where poverty and its associated social ills remained pervasive in the mid-1990s.

Obtaining work in private manufacturing or state industries is a typical goal of lower-class men because of the steady employment and wages offered. Among industrial workers, there has been a long tradition of group identification and solidarity. By 1975, when more than 79 percent of all industrial workers had been unionized, labor leaders were able to exercise political influence on behalf of legislation protecting workers' rights. This situation changed dramatically following the 1980 coup. The military government forcibly dissolved existing labor unions, arrested prominent labor leaders, and banned strikes. Subsequently, to ensure that unions remained under supervision, the civilian government of Turgut Özal encouraged the formation of tradespeople-artisan guilds. By 1995 these guilds, however, represented only 10 percent of the entire labor force and lacked the political influence of their predecessors (see Human Resources and Trade Unions, ch. 3).

In the prevailing climate of economic and political uncertainty following the coup, several factories ceased production, a situation that meant immediate job and income loss for thousands of workers. Even after the restoration of civilian rule, economic conditions for the lower class did not improve. Up to 25 percent of adult males in the *gecekondu*s were unemployed in the mid-1980s; throughout the first half of the 1990s, the level of industrial unemployment remained at the 10 to 11 percent level. An excess labor supply relative to available industrial jobs has tended to keep wages depressed.

There are more nonindustrial than industrial jobs in the cities, and as many as two-thirds of all lower-class urban families depend on nonindustrial, unskilled work for their livelihood. Such work includes crafts; automotive repair; brick masonry; butchering; carpentry; deliveries; bus and taxi driving; entertainment; equipment operation in bakeries; laundry, machine shop, and dockyard work; home painting and repairs; maintenance of grounds and buildings; personal services in public bathhouses, barbershops, beauty salons, and private homes; operation of small retail shops; service jobs in hotels, institutions, offices, restaurants, and retail establishments; street cleaning and maintenance; street vending of products and services; textile piecework in the home; and various transport and haulage jobs.

## **Towns**

In addition to large and small cities, Turkey has scores of semiurban places that officially are classified as towns. A town (*kasaba*) is defined as an incorporated settlement with a population between 2,000 and 20,000. Towns generally provide basic economic and political services to the regions in which they are located. The social structure of larger towns is similar to that of the cities. There is an elite composed of government officials, military officers, and a few wealthy landowning, mercantile, and professional families; a middle class made up of administrators, merchants, shopkeepers, soldiers, and teachers; and a lower class consisting of artisans and various categories of workers. Some of these diverse occupational groups may be absent in the smaller towns.

Traditionally, elite status in towns derived from both wealth and family descent. Political and economic influence was exercised for several generations by local landowning families that had intermarried with Ottoman officials sent by the government to administer the towns. The policies introduced by Atatürk during the 1920s and 1930s changed the composition of most town elites, however. Families unable or unwilling to adapt lost influence and power, whereas those families who embraced the new values continued to wield local influence. Since the 1960s, the educated descendants of some members of the traditional landed elite have become governors, mayors, doctors, lawyers, judges, and merchants, as well as large landowners employing modern farm technology and business practices. These individuals also have assumed leadership of the local hierarchies of the political parties.

## **Village Life**

Until the early 1950s, more than 80 percent of the inhabitants of Turkey lived in villages, which numbered more than 36,000. As defined by the government, a village (*koy*) is any settlement with a population of less than 2,000. Although Turkey's rural population has continued to grow, the percentage of the total population living in villages has declined as a result of rural-to-urban migration. In 1970 about 67 percent of the population lived in villages; five years later, this proportion had shrunk to 59 percent. In 1980 more than 54 percent still lived in villages, but by 1985 most people lived in urban areas. In 1995 less than 35 percent of the population lived in villages.

Since the 1950s, agriculture has become increasingly mechanized, and this gradual change has affected land tenure patterns and village society (see Land Tenure, ch. 3). Small landowners and landless families generally have not benefited from this change, and consequently they have been the rural residents most likely to migrate to the cities. In contrast, larger landowners have profited from the new agricultural methods by increasing their holdings and investing their increased wealth in industry. By the early 1980s, the personal and sharecropping relationships between landowners and agricultural laborers and tenants had been replaced by new and impersonal wage relations. This development prompted agricultural wage earners with grievances against landowners to seek advice and relief from labor unions or labor-oriented groups in the towns.

In the 1990s, the extended family network remains the most important social unit in village society, even though most households tend to be composed of nuclear families. The extended family serves a crucial economic function in villages by fostering cooperation among related households by way of informal arrangements concerning shared machinery, shared labor, and even shared cash income. The extended family also is expected to provide support if one of its constituent nuclear households faces an economic, political, or social crisis. An extended family may be composed of a father, his married adult sons, and their children and wives, but usually it is a broader concept embracing several generations headed by one or more senior males who can trace common descent from a male ancestor. In this sense, an extended family is a patrilineage. Although such kin groups lack status as corporate entities in custom or law, they have an important role in defining family members' rights and obligations.

There are important similarities among villages within a given region, as well as differences from one region to the next. In this sense, it is possible to distinguish among villages in three distinct geographic regions: Anatolia, the coastal area, and southern and eastern Turkey.

### *Anatolian Villages*

The family (*aile*) is the basic structure of Anatolian village life. The word lacks a single specific meaning in peasant usage, referring instead to the conceptual group of coresidents, whether in a household, lineage, village, or nomadic band. The unit functions as the primary element in any concerted group

action. The two most frequent referents of the concept are household and village community; every sedentary (i.e., non-nomadic) villager in the Anatolian countryside belongs to at least these two groups. Consequently, household and village are what the Anatolian Turk means by *ail*.

The household provides the framework for the most intimate and emotionally important social relations, as well as for most economic activities. The activities of the household, then, form the nucleus of village economic and social life. Household members are expected to work the household's fields cooperatively and reap the harvests that sustain its life. Because household members share an identity in the eyes of the village at large, every member is responsible for the actions of any other member. Wider kinship ties of the extended patrilineal family are also important.

Because of the pervasiveness and significance of kinship groups and relationships defined on the basis of kinship, non-kinship groups in Anatolian villages tend to be few in number and vague in their criteria for membership. Generally, three kinds of voluntary associations can be found in Anatolian villages: religious associations and brotherhoods headed by *derişishes*, local units of the main political parties, and gossip groups that meet in the guest rooms (*misafir odası*) of well-to-do villagers.

Prior to the 1950s, most Anatolian villagers owned the land they farmed, and within individual villages there were relatively small differences in wealth. Three criteria influenced social rank: ascribed characteristics such as age, sex, and the position of a person in his or her own household, lineage, and kinship network; economic status as indicated by landholding, occupation, and income; and moral stature as demonstrated by piety, religious learning, and moral respectability. However, by 1995 absentee landlordism and large landholdings had become common, and wealth alone tended to be the determining factor in ascribing social status. Thus, resident large landowners often dominated the political, economic, and social life of the villages.

The relationship of wealth to influence and social rank is illustrated by the institution of the guest room. It is estimated that only 10 percent of homes in Anatolian villages have guest rooms because they are very expensive to maintain. Village men gather most evenings in guest rooms and spend much of their time there during the winter months. Regular attendance

at a particular guest room implies political and social support of its owner because, by accepting his hospitality, a villager places himself in the owner's debt and acknowledges his superior status.

Every village in Anatolia, as well as elsewhere in Turkey, has an official representative of the central government, the headman (*muhtar*), who is responsible to Ankara and the provincial administrators. The headman is elected every two years by villagers (see *Provincial and Local Government*, ch. 4). The position generally is not considered a prestigious one because most villagers distrust the government. Thus, in Anatolia, it is not unusual to find relatively young men serving as village headmen.

### *Coastal Villages*

Unlike the traditionally isolated villages of Anatolia, villages in European Turkey and along the Black Sea and Aegean Sea, and to a lesser degree along the Mediterranean Sea, have been exposed to urban influences for several generations. Agriculture tends to be specialized and is generally undertaken in association with fishing and lumber production. Economic links with market towns historically have been very important. Although the extended family plays a significant role throughout a villager's life, economic considerations rather than kinship tend to shape social relations. The commercial nature of these villages has resulted in the substitution of nonkinship roles—such as employer and employee, buyer and seller, and landlord and tenant—for most interactions outside the home.

In coastal villages, the elite is primarily a landed group. Large landowners, by providing employment and—to a lesser degree—land to their laborers and tenants, and by serving as an economic link between the village and urban markets, acquire influence and power. Their personal contact with the laborers and tenants on their lands, however, has lessened since the 1950s. By the 1990s, urban businesspeople with both the resources and the inclination to serve as middlemen between village production and city markets generally wielded as much influence as local large landowners. Businesspeople's influence continues to expand as a result of increasing crop specialization and market dependency.

### *Villages in the South and East*

The villages of southeastern Turkey are predominantly Arab

and Kurdish. Tribal organization—the grouping of several patrilineages claiming a common historical ancestor—remains important in some Kurdish villages. However, the political autonomy once enjoyed by tribal leaders was usurped by the central government during the 1920s and 1930s. Tribal leaders who retain local influence do so because they are large landowners. Large landholdings are typical of the region. In most villages, one or two families own most of the arable land and pasturage; the remainder is divided into small plots owned by several families. Most of the small landowners have holdings fit only for subsistence agriculture. From 10 to 50 percent of all families may be landless. Villagers who do not own land work as agricultural laborers or herders for the large landlords. The poverty of most villagers compels them to enter into dependent economic, political, and social relations with the wealthier landlords.

The fighting between the PKK and the government in southeastern Turkey since 1984 has disrupted life in many villages. About 850 Kurdish villages have been uprooted by the government and their inhabitants forcibly removed to western Anatolia. Thousands of other villagers have migrated to cities to escape the incessant fighting. The migrants have included all types of villagers: the landless, small landowners, and large landlords. The long-term effects of these changes were difficult to assess in the mid-1990s.

## **The Individual, the Family, and Gender Relations**

Prior to the establishment of the republic, matters of personal status, including marriage, divorce, and inheritance, were regulated by Islamic law and influenced by cultural customs that had evolved during several centuries of Ottoman rule. Atatürk and his associates regarded both religious rules and traditional cultural practices as hindrances to the creation of their shared vision of a modern society. In fact, their societal ideal for Turkey was the pattern of personal and family relations that prevailed among the educated upper classes of Europe during the 1920s and 1930s. Consequently, many policies enacted during the early republican period were designed explicitly to remold Turkish society according to an urban European model. One of the most significant measures on behalf of this goal was the abolition of Islamic law. In 1926 a new civil code derived from Swiss civil laws replaced the religious legal system. The disestablishment of Islam as the state

*A dervish whirling to induce  
a trance for prayer  
Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*



religion and other measures aimed at religion reduced the influence of Islam in life-cycle rituals.

The social changes induced by state policies after 1923 failed to create a new Turkish culture. Instead, at least two distinct cultures had emerged in Turkey by the 1950s. One was an elite culture characterized by secular values and patterns of family and gender relationships similar to those found in much of urban, middle-class Europe. The majority popular culture, in contrast, was influenced by a *mélange* of secular ideas learned in the compulsory state education system (through middle school), religious values learned within the family and from community organizations such as the mosques, and traditional views about the appropriate public role of the sexes.

## **Marriage**

As part of their rejection of the symbols of Islam, Atatürk and his associates outlawed traditional marriage practices. The 1926 civil code mandated that all marriages be registered with civil authorities. Marriages contracted before a member of the religious establishment henceforth were not recognized as lawful unions, and the children of such unions were considered illegitimate. The male prerogative to have up to four wives simultaneously, enshrined in Islamic law, was prohibited. Mar-

riage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man, a practice forbidden under Islamic law, became legal.

Traditionally, marriage has been—and frequently continues to be—a contract negotiated and executed by the families of the betrothed and blessed by a member of the religious establishment. Representatives of the bride and groom negotiate the contract, which stipulates such terms as the size and nature of the bride-price paid by the family of the groom to the family of the bride and whatever conditions of conjugal life are mutually agreeable. After a series of meetings between the two families, an exchange of gifts, and the display of the trousseau, the marriage is formalized at a ceremony presided over by a religious official. The civil code requires only that the bride and groom, as individuals, swear vows before two witnesses and a representative of the state who registers the union. Despite the legal necessity for civil marriage, traditional courtship and marriage practices persist. Many couples, especially among the lower classes in cities and in rural areas, hold two ceremonies, a religious one to satisfy their families and a civil one to entitle them to government social benefits, as well as to confer legitimacy on future children.

Despite government attempts to outlaw the bride-price, during the 1990s this traditional prenuptial practice has continued in both urban and rural areas. The payment of the bride-price involves considerable expenditures and often requires financial cooperation from a number of kinfolk. The exact amount and the terms of payment form a part of the premarital negotiations. For example, the families sometimes agree to postpone payment of the full bride-price until after the wedding, stipulating that the full amount must be paid in the event of divorce, a practice that provides some protection for the bride if the match subsequently proves incompatible. Ordinarily the amount of the bride-price is directly related to the status of the families involved. However, the amount tends to be less if the two families have a close blood relationship. For these reasons, among others, most rural and urban families continue to prefer that their children marry closely related kin—first or second cousins.

Divorce also is affected by the civil code. Under Islamic law, a man can initiate divorce easily and is not required to cite any reasons; the grounds on which a woman can seek divorce, however, are tightly restricted, and she is obligated to prove fault on her husband's part. Under the civil code, divorce, like mar-



riage, is not recognized as legitimate unless registered with civil authorities. The code permits either partner to initiate divorce proceedings, but the state, which claims an interest in maintaining marriage unions, especially in cases involving children, decides whether to grant a request for divorce.

### **The Extended Family**

Although a majority of households in Turkey are nuclear family units, the larger extended family continues to play an important social role in the lives of most individuals. The extended family always includes all relatives by blood or marriage through an individual's paternal grandfather, or sometimes, great-grandfather. In addition, many individuals, especially those of middle-class and elite social status, consider the parents and siblings of their own mother to be part of the extended family. In general, the extended family functions as an emotional support network during life-cycle events such as birth, marriage, and death, or during major family crises. It often functions as an economic support network by providing loans for exceptional personal expenses, finding employment for new graduates, and caring for indigent members who are elderly or disabled. In urban areas, the extended family—especially fathers and sons or two or more brothers—can serve as a means for the formation of business partnerships. In rural areas, members of an extended family may work together to farm large acreages or raise large herds of sheep.

By expressing approval or disapproval of its members' social behavior, the extended family also functions as an effective mechanism of social control. Every individual is expected to comport himself or herself in ways that do not bring dishonor to the family. There are many types of behavior that might bring shame to a family, but sexual promiscuity, especially among women, is considered the most serious offense. Regardless of class, women are expected to avoid any activity that might raise suspicions about their sexual conduct. Thus, unmarried females are expected to abstain from all sexual activity before marriage, and married women are expected to remain faithful to their husbands. Female adultery carries heavy social sanctions; among the lower classes in cities and in villages, it still is socially—albeit not legally—acceptable for a betrayed husband to redeem his family's honor by killing his adulterous wife.

The unequal burden placed upon women to uphold family honor highlights the ambiguous role of women in society. Official state ideology extols the equality of men and women. Intellectually, men tend to accept women as equals, and elite women have been able to achieve high positions in professional careers since the 1960s. Since the mid-1980s, women also have been active in politics; one, Tansu Çiller, became prime minister in 1993. Nevertheless, men traditionally view women as emotionally and physically inferior and thus in need of male protection, which in practice means male control. Both men and women traditionally have judged a woman's social status not on the basis of her personal accomplishments but by the number of sons she has borne. Thus, women—like their husbands—customarily have prized boys over girls. Mothers have tended to socialize their sons and daughters differently, rearing boys to be assertive and girls to be obedient and passive. The relationship between a mother and a son tends to be warm and intimate throughout life.

The traditional status of women continues to be established during the early years of marriage for most lower-middle-class and lower-class women. Within the extended family, a new bride tends to be under the critical surveillance of her husband's relatives, especially his mother. Whether the new couple lives in a separate household—this often is a requirement of the bride-price—or resides temporarily in the home of the groom's parents, the bride is isolated from her own family and friends and is expected to learn from her mother-in-law how to care for her husband. Her situation is recognized in the language: the expression *gelinlik etmek*, used to refer to the status of a new bride, means to be "on call." Although a bride may establish a close personal relationship with her mother-in-law, especially if the latter is also her aunt, friction and tension are more common. In such cases, the mother-in-law expects her son to side with her against his wife. A new bride only gains status and security within a traditional extended family after she has produced a son.

The status of a wife changes as she matures because within all extended families, whether traditional or modern, considerable respect is accorded to age. Younger family members are expected to show respect toward their elders regardless of their gender. Respect has many dimensions, but usually it means not speaking in the presence of one's elders unless requested, and refraining in their presence from arguing, smoking, or behav-

ing in a casual way. Thus, a woman whose children are nearly grown is accorded respect and does not expect to be harassed by her mother-in-law. The authority of a mature wife and her opinions in family matters are important. If she also has employment outside the home, her influence increases. The migration of husbands to cities or foreign countries in search of work also changes the role of married women within families. Left at home to rear the children on remittances sent by her spouse, the wife often is forced to assume many of the daily decision-making roles previously filled by her husband. In addition, since the late 1960s, thousands of migrant workers have sent for their wives and children to join them in the foreign countries where they are employed. These prolonged residences abroad have tended to alter traditional extended-family relationships.

### **Gender Relations**

Male-female relations remain an area of some tension in Turkish society. The conflict between traditional and modern values and between patterns of socialization within the family and at school affect the social relationships that both men and women establish. Even among modernized urban dwellers, family loyalty, family obligations, and family honor remain strong considerations. Thus, even though Turks professing to have modern values may define the "ideal" family as one in which equality exists between spouses, wives who actually attempt to establish themselves as equal partners usually meet with resistance from their husbands. Among more traditional families, both men and women generally expect husbands to be dominant, especially with respect to matters involving household interactions with the public; wives are expected to be obedient. Even in traditional families, however, wives may not accept passive roles, and their efforts to assert themselves can come up against strong disapproval.

The conflicting tensions of traditional and modern values also influence social relations outside the family. The mass media and modern education popularize ideas such as social equality, openness between spouses, romantic love, and platonic friendships between the sexes, concepts that men and women with traditional values find objectionable but that their adolescent children may find appealing. Furthermore, whereas some young women have been readopting headscarves and modest dress to demonstrate their commitment to Islam, oth-

ers have been attracted to the latest Western fashions in clothes and cosmetics, which traditionalists perceive as evidence of a general decline in female morality.

Men and women generally constitute largely separate sub-societies, each with its own values, attitudes, and perceptions of the other. Even among modernized urbanites, gender roles constrain social relations. For example, friendships between men and women who are unrelated generally are not acceptable. Among elite youth, men and women do meet socially and dating is fashionable, but parents try to monitor such relationships and discourage their daughters from becoming involved with any man unless marriage is contemplated. Among more traditional families, dating would ruin the reputation of a young woman and dishonor her family.

### **The Status of Women**

Traditional views of gender roles and relations have persisted in tandem with changes in the status of women both within and outside the family. These changes began during the latter years of the Ottoman Empire, when women were given opportunities to work as teachers, clerks, and industrial workers. Change accelerated during the early republican era. The 1926 civil code granted women unprecedented legal rights, and in 1934 they received the right to vote and to stand for election. Since the 1950s, their participation in the labor force, the professions, and in politics has increased steadily but unevenly. By 1991 women made up 18 percent of the total urban labor force. But not all changes have resulted in improved conditions. In some instances, especially among rural and newly urbanized women, changes have disturbed a traditional order that has provided meaningful, guaranteed roles for women without introducing new ones.

During the 1950s, rural women who migrated to the urban *gecekondu*s generally found work as maids in private homes. Since the 1960s, employment opportunities for women in industry, especially light manufacturing, have been expanding. By 1991, the most recent year for which detailed statistics are available, almost 20 percent of employees in manufacturing were women. Nevertheless, a majority of women in the *gecekondu*s do not work outside the home. Most urban working-class women are single and hold jobs for less than five years; they tend to leave paid employment when they get married. While

working and contributing to family income, women enjoy enhanced status and respect.

Urban middle-class and upper-middle-class women tend to have more education than working-class women and generally are employed in teaching, health care, and clerical work. Since 1980 more than one-third of all bank clerks have been women. Upper-class women tend to work in the prestigious professions, such as law, medicine, and university teaching. On average about 18 percent of all professionals in Turkey were women in 1991; they were concentrated in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, and a few other large urban centers.

In 1995 the status of women in Turkey remained a multifaceted, complex issue. Although the government guarantees women equal work and pay opportunities, the traditional value system elevates gender segregation in the workplace and other public spaces as a social ideal. Even urban, educated, professional women may encounter the persistence of traditional, religiously colored values about gender roles among their putatively modern, secular husbands.

## **Education**

The contemporary Turkish education system was established in 1924 after Atatürk closed the religious schools, set up new secular schools, and made elementary school attendance compulsory. It was many years before the country had the educational infrastructure to provide universal primary education, but since the early 1980s almost all children between the ages of six and ten have been enrolled in school. The most recent data on literacy (1990) put Turkey's overall adult literacy rate around 81 percent. This statistic broke down as 90 percent literacy among males aged fifteen and over, and 71 percent among females in that age-group.

The public education system provides for five stages of education: preschool, primary school, middle school, high school, and university. Noncompulsory preschool programs established in 1953 offer education to children between the ages of four and six. The demand for preschool education has been limited, apparently because of parents' unwillingness to entrust the education of small children to institutions outside the family. Preschool programs are most common in large cities, where, since the 1980s, they have been increasing in popularity and in numbers. Primary education is coeducational as well as compulsory, and encompasses a five-year program for ages six

to eleven. Attendance at the country's estimated 46,000 primary schools was reckoned at 97 percent for the 1994–95 school year. Education officials believe school attendance is lower in villages than in urban areas because it is easier for parents to keep older children, especially girls, at home.

The two-year middle-school program, for ages twelve to fourteen, also is coeducational and has been compulsory since 1972. However, authorities generally do not enforce middle-school attendance, especially in rural areas, where middle schools are few in number and most students must travel long distances to attend. The Ministry of National Education does not publish data on middle-school attendance, but overall it probably does not exceed 60 percent of the relevant age-group. To encourage higher levels of attendance, a 1983 law prohibited the employment of youths younger than fourteen. Middle-school graduation is a prerequisite to access to general, vocational, and technical high schools, and is deemed advantageous for admission to many vocational training programs.

Secondary school education is not compulsory but is free at all of the country's estimated 1,300 public high schools. The Ministry of National Education supervises the high schools, which are divided into lycée (general) and vocational schools. The lycées are coeducational and offer three-year college preparatory programs. A select number of lycées in the largest cities are bilingual, teaching classes in Turkish and either English, French, or German. Twelve lycées are open to students from the three legally recognized minorities—Armenians, Greeks, and Jews—and teach classes on some subjects in Armenian or Greek. In contrast, many of the vocational high schools offer four-year programs. Vocational high schools include technical training schools for men; domestic science schools for women; teacher-training schools; auxiliary health care, commercial, and agricultural schools; Muslim teacher-training schools; and other specialized institutions. The Muslim teacher-training schools, called *imam hatip okulları*, have expanded dramatically since the late 1970s. During the early 1990s, they numbered about 350 and enrolled 10 percent of all high school students. Except for the emphasis on religious subjects, the curriculum of the *imam hatip okulları* resembles that of the lycées rather than the vocational schools.

Higher education is available at several hundred institutions, including professional schools and academies, institutes, and conservatories, but primarily at the twenty-seven public univer-



*Istanbul University*  
*Courtesy Hermine Dreyfuss*

sities, which enrolled more than 450,000 students in 1993–94. In the mid-1980s, when Özal was prime minister, his government authorized Turkey's first private university, Bilkent, in Ankara. The university law of 1946 granted academic autonomy to Turkey's universities. However, government policies since the 1980 coup, especially a 1981 law on higher education, have institutionalized extensive government interference in university affairs. The military leaders believed that the universities had been the center of political ideas they disliked and perceived as harmful to Turkey's stability. They thus sought through the 1981 higher education law and applicable provisions of the 1982 constitution to introduce both structural and curricular changes at the universities. For example, the constitution stipulates that the president of the republic may appoint university rectors, establishes the government's right to found new universities, and assigns duties to the Council of Higher

Education (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu—YÖK). The higher education law prohibits all teachers and matriculated students from belonging to or working for a political party and requires curricular standardization at all universities.

The YÖK consists of twenty-five members, of whom eight are appointed directly by the president, eight by the Interuniversity Council, six by the Council of Ministers, two by the Ministry of National Education, and one by the General Staff of the armed forces. The chair of the YÖK is appointed by the president of the republic. The YÖK's powers include recommending or appointing rectors, deans, and professors; selecting and assigning students; and planning new universities. The YÖK also has authority to transfer faculty members from one university to another. The YÖK effectively has reduced the faculty senates, which prior to 1980 had authority to enact academic regulations, to mere advisory bodies.

Education has continued to serve as an important means of upward social mobility. Annually since at least 1975, the number of students applying for university admission has exceeded the number of available spaces. To qualify for admission, every applicant must pass the nationwide university entrance exam, which is designed, administered, and evaluated by the Center for Selection and Placement of Students. During the early 1990s, more than 100,000 applicants sat for the entrance exam each year. Scoring is based on a complicated system that assures that the number who pass does not exceed the number of available spaces. Even if an applicant qualifies for admission, the individual's actual score determines whether he or she may study a chosen discipline or must take up a less preferred one.

In addition to the five levels of education described above, the system provides special education for some children with disabilities, as well as a wide range of adult education and vocational programs. Labor specialists consistently have cited inadequate skills as a key factor in Turkey's high level of unemployment, which during the early 1990s averaged 10 percent annually. In 1995 half of the urban unemployed had only a primary education, and an estimated 40 percent of pupils dropped out of school upon completing this level of education. Since 1980 the Ministry of National Education has conducted major literacy campaigns aimed at the population between ages fourteen and forty-four, with emphasis on women, residents of the urban *gecekondu*s, and agricultural workers. The ministry also has provided primary, middle school, and second-



ary equivalency program courses to upgrade education levels. In addition, through its Directorate of Apprenticeship and Nonformal Education, the ministry provides nonformal vocational training to people lacking required skills, such as school dropouts, seasonal agricultural workers, and people in the urban informal sector.

The World Bank (see Glossary), which has provided funds for industrial training programs since the early 1970s, has been a major source of support for nonformal vocational training programs. These programs are intended to provide skilled personnel above and beyond the supply from the formal vocational education system, which was projected to meet 86 percent of the estimated industrial demand for skilled and semiskilled workers through 1995. Government plans have provided for a major expansion of the nonformal vocational training system; 650,000 additional people are expected to receive training in employment-related trades, including 150,000 to be trained in industrial skills during 1994 and 1995. Although the government program was expected to improve the quality and availability of skill education in less-developed regions such as eastern Turkey, the intense fighting there since 1991 has disrupted training.

## **Health and Welfare**

Health care and related social welfare activities in the 1990s remain the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Legislation has directed and authorized the ministry to provide medical care and preventive health services, train health personnel, make preservice and in-service training available, establish and operate hospitals and other health care centers, supervise private health facilities, regulate the price of medical drugs, and control drug production and all pharmacies. In addition, the ministry supervises all medical and health care personnel in the public sector.

Availability of health care in the mid-1990s is significantly better than it was twenty years earlier, but its quality remains uneven. Medical facilities are concentrated in the cities and larger towns, leaving most rural areas without adequate access to medical care. This situation is especially acute in eastern Anatolia, where medical care is generally available only in the provincial capitals. The salaries paid to state-employed physicians are low compared with what doctors in private practice

earn. Consequently, most Turkish physicians prefer to work in the more highly developed urban centers or even to emigrate.

The overall ratio of inhabitants to physicians has continued to improve significantly. Whereas there was one physician for every 2,860 individuals in 1965, that ratio improved to one to 1,755 in 1976, one to 1,391 in 1985, and an estimated one to 1,200 in 1995. From 1977 to 1995, the number of all health care facilities—hospitals, health centers, clinics, and dispensaries—rose from 7,944 to 12,500. Simultaneously, the number of available hospital beds increased even more rapidly than the rate of population growth; the ratio was one bed per 400 citizens in 1995.

Turkey has achieved progress in controlling various debilitating and crippling diseases and in treating major infectious diseases. The incidence of measles, pertussis, typhoid fever, and diphtheria all declined dramatically between 1969 and 1994. The greater availability of potable water in both urban and rural areas has contributed to a general fall in the former prevalence of water-borne illnesses, especially of diarrhea among children and infants. Infant mortality, which at 120 per 1,000 live births in 1980 was among the highest rates worldwide, had declined to fifty-five per 1,000 live births by 1992. Nevertheless, this rate was still very high by European standards, being six times the rate of neighboring Greece, which had an infant mortality rate of nine per 1,000 live births.

Turkey had reported sixteen cases of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) to the World Health Organization in the first nine months of 1994. The rate of AIDS cases per 100,000 population was 0.1 for both 1992 and 1993, with twenty-nine cases reported in 1992 and thirty in 1993.

In the early 1990s, the most important underwriters of social security plans were the Government Employees' Retirement Fund, the Social Insurance Institution, and the Social Insurance Institution for the Self-Employed. In 1995 at least 15 percent of the working population participated in the social welfare system. If the agricultural sector is excluded, this percentage rises to 40 percent. Less than 1 percent of agricultural workers were part of the social security system in 1995, but the government has made efforts for at least a decade to increase their participation. Employers pay insurance premiums to cover work-related injuries, occupational diseases, and maternity leave. Both employers and employees contribute specified proportions to cover premiums for illness, disability, retire-

ment, and death benefits. Thus, in these and other instances, Turkey is moving toward a more Westernized approach to socioeconomic, educational, and health matters, and is seeking to lay a firmer basis for participation in the EU.

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Feroz Ahmad's *The Making of Modern Turkey* includes a detailed analysis of Atatürk's secularist and linguistic reforms, as well as an excellent overview of the impact of social changes from the 1930s to the end of the 1980s. With the exception of the Kurds, studies on the experience of Turkey's ethnic and religious minorities have not been published for more than two decades. Martin van Bruinessen has written extensively about the social and economic conditions of Turkey's Kurds. His book *Agha, Shaikh, and State* analyzes how state policies have induced changes in the social organization of Kurdistan during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Numerous articles about contemporary Islam in Turkey have appeared since the mid-1980s. An excellent collection that examines social and educational issues is a volume edited by Richard Tapper, *Islam in Modern Turkey*. Insight into the effect of the post-1980 economic reforms on labor relations and class structure can be obtained from articles in *The Political and Socioeconomic Transformation of Turkey*, edited by Atila Eralp, Muharrem Tünay, and Birol Yesilada. Nermin Abadan-Unat has published books and articles about the changing status of women in Turkey; see especially her *Women in the Developing World: Evidence from Turkey*, which contains a wealth of statistical data. Jenny B. White's *Money Makes Us Relatives* is a detailed study of the intertwined cultural, social, and economic aspects of the lives of women who undertake at-home contract labor in Istanbul's lower-class neighborhoods. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)



## Chapter 3. The Economy



*Ferry on the Bosphorus with Istanbul and the Galata Tower in the background*

THE TURKISH ECONOMY is being transformed in the 1990s from a state-led to a market-oriented economy. As in most economies undergoing market reforms, the process of change has caused severe internal dislocations. External economic "shocks" such as the Persian Gulf War of 1991 and the resulting United Nations (UN) embargo on Iraq have complicated the transition.

The Turkish economy's ongoing and turbulent reorientation has left the economy a study in contrasts. Modern industries coexist with pockets of subsistence agriculture. The major cities of western Anatolia are cosmopolitan centers of industry, finance, and trade, whereas the eastern part of the country is relatively underdeveloped. Several decades of state planning followed by economic liberalization have made industry Turkey's leading economic sector, even as most Turks continue to work on farms. Industry has undergone a fairly rapid transformation as a consequence of the far-reaching market reforms implemented in the 1980s and early 1990s. Despite the reforms, however, public enterprises continue to dominate raw-materials processing and the manufacture of heavy industrial and military goods. The smaller firms that dominate the private sector produce intermediate and consumer goods for domestic and foreign markets. The services sector is perhaps the most diverse, embracing large export-oriented marketing groups and world-scale banks as well as small shops and individual domestic workers.

To a large extent, the last 200 years in Turkey have been marked by its rulers' attempts to transform it into a modern European industrial nation. The Ottoman Empire encountered serious economic problems beginning in the eighteenth century with the imposition of unequal treaties, the capitulations (see Glossary), which affected trade and taxation. The *tanzimat* (reorganization) reforms of 1839–78, an important component of which was the reorientation of the economy toward development of an indigenous industrial base, led to deepening indebtedness to Western imperial powers by the end of the nineteenth century. This dependence on the West, which was seen as one of the main causes of Turkey's "backwardness," created the context for the economic policy of the new republic formed in 1923. The other important influence

on the new leaders of the republic was the example of state planning in the Soviet Union. Given these influences, state planning was the route Turkey's new leaders took to modernize the country.

From the 1930s until 1980, the state pursued import-substitution industrialization by means of public enterprises and development planning. This policy created a mixed economy in which industrial development was rapid. However, during the post-World War II period the drawbacks of excessive state intervention became ever more apparent to policy makers and the public. State enterprises, which came to account for about 40 percent of manufacturing by 1980, were often overstaffed and inefficient; their losses were a significant drain on the government budget. State planning targets were often excessively ambitious, yet they neglected such essential sectors as agriculture. Concentration on import substitution deemphasized exports, resulting in chronic trade deficits and a pattern in which periods of rapid growth, financed in part by foreign borrowing, led to balance of payments crises that necessitated austerity programs.

The rapid transition from an agricultural to an industrial society also produced distortions in the country's labor markets and led to unequal income distribution. As was the case in most developing countries, there was a high birth rate, which contributed to unemployment in the postwar period by causing the labor force to grow rapidly. In addition, the modernization of agriculture tended to make small farms economically nonviable. As a result, many rural people migrated to urban areas. Those who left farming, however, often lacked skills needed in modern industry and could find employment only in the informal sector of the urban economy. Meanwhile, industrial enterprises became more capital intensive, which increased productivity but reduced the demand for unskilled labor. At the same time, firms had trouble recruiting skilled employees.

In January 1980, the Turkish government undertook a major reform program to open the Turkish economy to international markets. Leading the reform was Turgut Özal, then deputy prime minister and minister for economic affairs. Özal became prime minister in 1983, following a three-year military regime, and served as president from 1989 until his death in 1993. Özal's reform program included a reduced state role in the economy, a realistic exchange rate and realistic monetary policies, cutbacks on subsidies and price controls, and encour-



agement of exports and foreign direct investment. During its early years, the liberalization program achieved considerable success in reducing external deficits and restoring economic growth. Despite significant foreign direct investment during the 1980s and early 1990s, however, Turkey's balance of payments remained burdened by an external debt of more than US\$65 billion at the end of 1993. A balance of payments crisis occurred in 1994 in the aftermath of a domestic political crisis in the wake of deep divisions within the administration over economic policy and a sharp decrease in exports to Turkey's beleaguered neighbors, Iraq and Iran. This situation led to a steep fall in the Turkish lira (TL; for value of the lira—see Glossary).

The success of the Özal program was predicated on developing satisfactory relationships with the country's economic partners and continued access to export markets. Rapid development required large capital imports because domestic savings were insufficient for needed investments. Foreign investors, attracted by Turkey's great economic potential and increasingly liberal economic policies, made major commitments to infrastructure projects during the mid-1980s. However, continued high inflation, as well as memories of the political instability of the late 1970s, caused investors to hesitate. These insecurities were heightened after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the rise of strong Islamist (sometimes seen as fundamentalist) parties in the early 1990s, and persistent macroeconomic problems.

Whatever short-term difficulties Turkey faces, most observers believe the country's long-term economic prospects are good. Mining and agriculture provide raw materials for industry, and the growing and resourceful population provides abundant labor. Turkey is one of the few countries that is self-sufficient in food; indeed it can export food to European and Middle Eastern markets. Economic reforms have led to increases in exports of processed foods, textiles, motor vehicles, and consumer durables. Considerable investments in tourism, the revitalization of banking, and upgraded transportation facilities should allow Turkey to compete in the international services market in the 1990s.

Turkey has made great strides toward building close economic ties with Europe, and Turkey's leaders have promoted the country as a vital link between the industrial economies of Europe and the underdeveloped economies of the Middle East

and Central Asia. On several fronts, however, Turkey suffered a number of setbacks in the early 1990s. A critical one was the embargo on Iraq. Because of it, Turkey lost a huge export market as well as fees for allowing Iraqi oil to pass through a pipeline on Turkish territory. In addition, Iran, a major trading partner in the 1980s, reoriented its trade directly with Europe and Asia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Early expectations for commerce with the Central Asian countries have gone unfulfilled because of the economic and social dislocations they have suffered in breaking away from the Soviet Union. Worst of all, Turkey's political relations with Europe have deteriorated, mainly because of human rights abuses of its Kurdish population and increasing intolerance in Europe of Turkish immigrants. As a result, Turkey's accession to the European Union (EU—see Glossary) appeared increasingly unlikely to happen as targeted in 1995, despite its having been an associate member since 1963 of the EU's predecessor body, the European Community (EC—see Glossary), and having applied for full membership in 1987.

## **Growth and Structure of the Economy**

At the time of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, the Turkish economy was underdeveloped: agriculture depended on outmoded techniques and poor-quality livestock, and the few factories producing basic products such as sugar and flour were under foreign control. Between 1923 and 1985, the economy grew at an average annual rate of 6 percent. In large part as a result of government policies, a backward economy developed into a complex economic system producing a wide range of agricultural, industrial, and service products for both domestic and export markets.

### **Economic Development**

At the birth of the republic, Turkey's industrial base was weak because Ottoman industries had been undermined by the capitulations. World War I and the War of Independence (1919–22) also had extensively disrupted the Turkish economy. The loss of Ottoman territories, for example, cut off Anatolia from traditional markets. Agricultural output—the source of income for most of the population—had dropped sharply as peasants went to war. Even the production of wheat, Turkey's main crop, was insufficient to meet domestic demand. In addi-

tion, massacres and the emigration of Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, who had dominated urban economic life, caused a shortage of skilled laborers and entrepreneurs.

Turkey's economy recovered remarkably once hostilities ceased. From 1923 to 1926, agricultural output rose by 87 percent, as agricultural production returned to prewar levels. Industry and services grew at more than 9 percent per year from 1923 to 1929; however, their share of the economy remained quite low at the end of the decade. By 1930, as a result of the world depression, external markets for Turkish agricultural exports had collapsed, causing a sharp decline in national income. The government stepped in during the early 1930s to promote economic recovery, following a doctrine known as *etatism* (see Glossary). Growth slowed during the worst years of the depression but between 1935 and 1939 reached 6 percent per year. During the 1940s, the economy stagnated, in large part because maintaining armed neutrality during World War II increased the country's military expenditures while almost entirely curtailing foreign trade.

After 1950 the country suffered economic disruptions about once a decade; the most serious crisis occurred in the late 1970s. In each case, an industry-led period of rapid expansion, marked by a sharp increase in exports, resulted in a balance of payments crisis. Devaluations of the Turkish lira and austerity programs designed to dampen domestic demand for foreign goods were implemented in accordance with International Monetary Fund (IMF—see Glossary) guidelines. These measures usually led to sufficient improvement in the country's external accounts to make possible the resumption of loans to Turkey by foreign creditors. Although the military interventions of 1960 and 1971 were prompted in part by economic difficulties, after each intervention Turkish politicians boosted government spending, causing the economy to overheat. In the absence of serious structural reforms, Turkey ran chronic current account deficits usually financed by external borrowing that made the country's external debt rise from decade to decade, reaching by 1980 about US\$16.2 billion, or more than one-quarter of annual gross domestic product (GDP—see Glossary). Debt-servicing costs in that year equaled 33 percent of exports of goods and services.

By the late 1970s, Turkey's economy had perhaps reached its worst crisis since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Turkish authorities had failed to take sufficient measures to adjust to

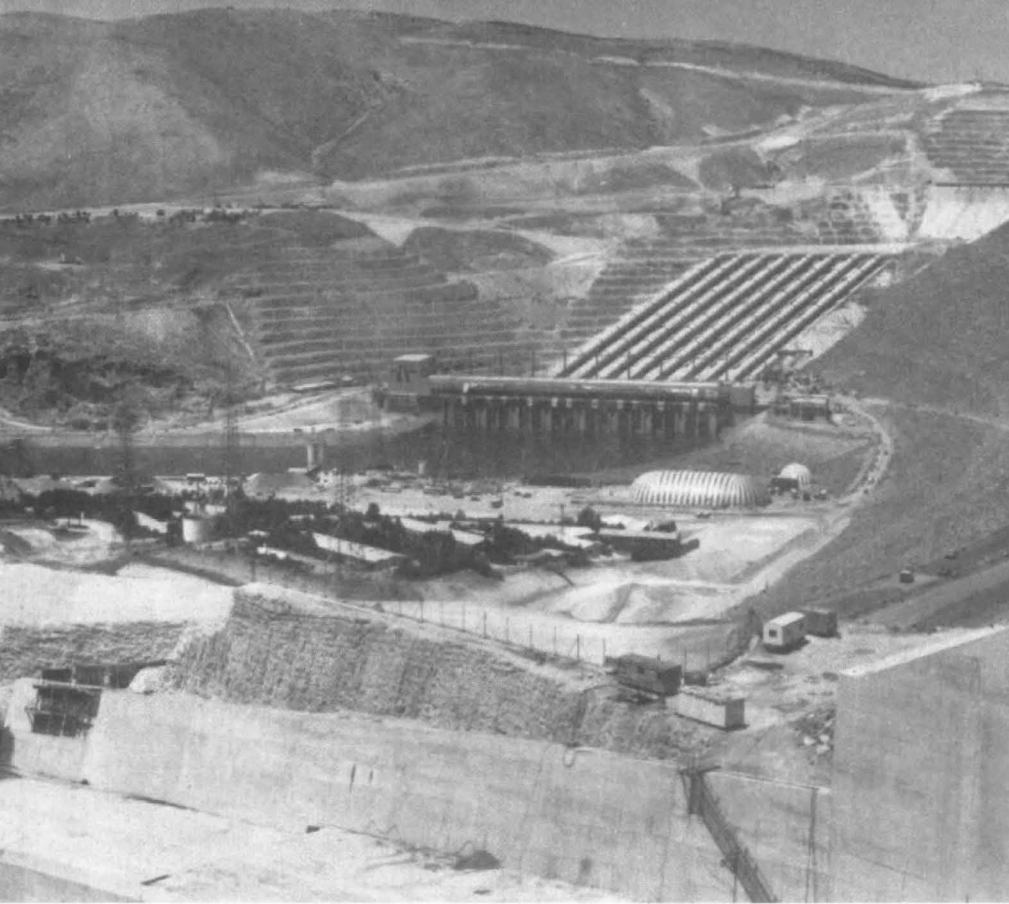
the effects of the sharp increase in world oil prices in 1973–74 and had financed the resulting deficits with short-term loans from foreign lenders. By 1979 inflation had reached triple-digit levels, unemployment had risen to about 15 percent, industry was using only half its capacity, and the government was unable to pay even the interest on foreign loans. It seemed that Turkey would be able to sustain crisis-free development only if major changes were made in the government's import-substitution approach to development. Many observers doubted the ability of Turkish politicians to carry out the needed reforms.

### **Reforms under Özal**

In January 1980, the government of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel (who had served as prime minister 1965–71, 1975–78, and 1979–80) began implementing a far-reaching reform program designed by then Deputy Prime Minister Turgut Özal to shift Turkey's economy toward export-led growth.

The Özal strategy called for import-substitution policies to be replaced with policies designed to encourage exports that could finance imports, giving Turkey a chance to break out of the postwar pattern of alternating periods of rapid growth and deflation. With this strategy, planners hoped Turkey could experience export-led growth over the long run. The government pursued these goals by means of a comprehensive package: devaluation of the Turkish lira and institution of flexible exchange rates, maintenance of positive real interest rates and tight control of the money supply and credit, elimination of most subsidies and the freeing of prices charged by state enterprises, reform of the tax system, and encouragement of foreign investment. In July 1982, when Özal left office, many of his reforms were placed on hold. Starting in November 1983, however, when he again became prime minister, he was able to extend the liberalization program.

The liberalization program overcame the balance of payments crisis, reestablished Turkey's ability to borrow in international capital markets, and led to renewed economic growth. Merchandise exports grew from US\$2.3 billion in 1979 to US\$8.3 billion in 1985. Merchandise import growth in the same period—from US\$4.8 billion to US\$11.2 billion—did not keep pace with export growth and proportionately narrowed the trade deficit, although the deficit level stabilized at around US\$2.5 billion. Özal's policies had a particularly positive impact on the services account of the current account. Despite a jump



*Atatürk Dam, major part of Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP)  
Courtesy Turkish Information Office*

in interest payments, from US\$200 million in 1979 to US\$1.4 billion in 1985, the services account accumulated a growing surplus during this period. Expanding tourist receipts and pipeline fees from Iraq were the main reasons for this improvement. Stabilizing the current account helped restore creditworthiness on international capital markets. Foreign investment, which had been negligible in the 1970s, now started to grow, although it remained modest in the mid-1980s. Also, Turkey was able to borrow on the international market, whereas in the late 1970s it could only seek assistance from the IMF and other official creditors.

The reduction in public expenditures, which was at the heart of the stabilization program, slowed the economy sharply in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Real gross national product (GNP—see Glossary) declined 1.5 percent in 1979 and 1.3 percent in 1980. The manufacturing and services sectors felt much

of the impact of this drop in income, with the manufacturing sector operating at close to 50 percent of total capacity. As the external-payments constraint eased, the economy bounced back sharply. Between 1981 and 1985, real GNP grew 3 percent per year, led by growth in the manufacturing sector. With tight controls on workers' earnings and activities, the industrial sector began drawing on unused industrial capacity and raised output by an average rate of 9.1 percent per year between 1981 and 1985. The devaluation of the lira also helped make Turkey more economically competitive. As a result, exports of manufactures increased by an average rate of 45 percent per annum during this period.

The rapid resurgence of growth and the improvement in the balance of payments were insufficient to overcome unemployment and inflation, which remained serious problems. The official jobless rate fell from 15 percent in 1979 to 11 percent in 1980, but, partly because of the rapid growth of the labor force, unemployment rose again, to 13 percent in 1985. Inflation fell to about 25 percent in the 1981–82 period, but it climbed again, to more than 30 percent in 1983 and more than 40 percent in 1984. Although inflation eased somewhat in 1985 and 1986, it remained one of the primary problems facing economic policy makers.

### **Economic Performance in the Early 1990s**

Turkey benefited economically from the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88). Both Iran and Iraq became major trading partners, and Turkish business supplied both combatants, encouraged by government export credits. With limited access to the Persian Gulf, Iraq also came to depend heavily on Turkey for export routes for its crude oil. Iraq had financed two pipelines located next to one another from its northern Kirkuk oilfields to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Çeyhan, slightly northwest of Iskenderun. The capacity of the pipelines totaled around 1.1 million barrels per day (bpd). Not only did Turkey obtain part of its domestic supplies from the pipeline, but it was paid a sizable entrepôt fee. Some sources have estimated this fee at US\$300 million to US\$500 million.

Turkey's economy was battered by the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The UN embargo on Iraq required the ending of oil exports through the Çeyhan pipelines, resulting in the loss of the pipeline fees. In addition, the economy may have lost as much as US\$3 billion in trade with Iraq. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait,

and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) moved to compensate Turkey for these losses, however, and by 1992 the economy again began to grow rapidly.

The Turkish economy again was plunged into crisis in 1994. The central government's moves in 1992 and 1993 to grant large salary increases to civil servants and to increase transfers to state enterprises enlarged the public-sector borrowing requirement to a record 17 percent of GDP in 1993. This high government spending sharply boosted domestic demand's rate of growth to 6.4 percent in 1992 and 7.6 percent in 1993. In turn, inflation rates went up, with the annual rate peaking at 73 percent in mid-1993. The resulting rise in the real exchange rate translated into increased imports and slowed the expansion of exports. The trade deficit rose in 1993 to US\$14 billion, while the current account deficit reached US\$6.3 billion, or 5.3 percent of GDP.

Turkey's impressive economic performance in the 1980s won high marks from Wall Street's credit-rating agencies. In 1992 and 1993, the government used these ratings to attract funds to cover its budget deficits. International bond issues over this period amounted to US\$7.5 billion. These capital flows helped maintain the overvalued exchange rate. In a market economy, a high level of government borrowing should translate into higher domestic interest rates and even possibly "crowd out" private-sector borrowers, thereby eventually slowing economic growth. But the government's foreign borrowing took the pressure off domestic interest rates and actually spurred more private-sector borrowing in an already overheated economy. Sensing an easy profit opportunity during this period, commercial banks borrowed at world interest rates and lent at Turkey's higher domestic rates without fear of a depreciating currency. As a result, Turkey's foreign short-term debt rose sharply. External and internal confidence in the government's ability to manage the impending balance of payments crisis waned, compounding economic difficulties.

Disputes between Prime Minister Tansu Çiller (1993–) and the Central Bank governor undermined confidence in the government. The prime minister insisted on monetizing the fiscal deficit (selling government debt instruments to the Central Bank) rather than acceding to the Central Bank's proposal to issue more public debt in the form of government securities. The Central Bank governor resigned in August 1993 over this issue. In January 1994, international credit agencies down-

graded Turkey's debt to below investment grade. At that time, a second Central Bank governor resigned.

Mounting concern over the disarray in economic policy was reflected in an accelerated "dollarization" of the economy as residents switched domestic assets into foreign-currency deposits to protect their investments. By the end of 1994, about 50 percent of the total deposit base was held in the form of foreign-currency deposits, up from 1 percent in 1993. The downgrading by credit-rating agencies and a lack of confidence in the government's budget deficit target of 14 percent of GDP for 1994 triggered large-scale capital flight and the collapse of the exchange rate. The government had to intervene by selling its foreign-currency reserves to staunch the decline of the Turkish lira. As a result, reserves fell from US\$6.3 billion at the end of 1993 to US\$3 billion by the end of March 1994. Before the end of April, when the government was forced to announce a long-overdue austerity program following the March 1994 local elections, the lira had plummeted by 76 percent from the end of 1993 to TL41,000 against the United States dollar.

The package of measures announced by the government on April 5, 1994, was also submitted to the IMF as part of its request for a US\$740 million standby facility beginning in July 1994. Measures included a sharp increase in prices the public-sector enterprises would charge the public, decreases in budgetary expenditures, a commitment to raise taxes, and a pledge to accelerate privatization of state economic enterprises (SEEs). Some observers questioned the credibility of these measures, given that the tax measures translated into a revenue increase equivalent to 4 percent of GDP and the expenditure cuts were equivalent to 6 percent of GDP.

The government actually succeeded in generating a small surplus in the budget during the second quarter of 1994, mainly as a result of higher taxes, after running a deficit of 17 percent of GDP in the first quarter. The slowdown in government spending, a sharp loss in business confidence, and the resulting decline in economic activity reduced tax revenues, however. The fiscal crisis resulted in a decline in real GDP of 5 percent in 1994 after the economy had grown briskly in 1992 and 1993. Real wages also fell in 1994: average nominal wage increases of 65 percent were about 20 percent below the rate of consumer price inflation.



Analysts pointed out that despite the fragility of the macroeconomic adjustment process and the susceptibility of fiscal policy to political pressures, the government continued to be subject to market checks and balances. Combined with a stronger private sector, particularly on the export front, the economy was expected to bounce back to a pattern of faster growth.

### **Structure of the Economy**

In the years after World War II, the economy became capable of supplying a much broader range of goods and services. By 1994 the industrial sector accounted for just under 40 percent of GDP, having surpassed agriculture (including forestry and fishing), which contributed about 16 percent of production. The rapid shift in industry's relative importance resulted from government policies in effect since the 1930s favoring industrialization (see fig. 8). In the early 1990s, the government aimed at continued increases in industry's share of the economy, especially by means of export promotion.

Services increased from a small fraction of the economy in the 1920s to just under half of GDP by 1994. Several factors accounted for the growth of the services sector. Government—already sizable under the Ottomans—expanded as defense expenditures rose; health, education, and welfare programs were implemented; and the government work force was increased to staff the numerous new public organizations. Trade, tourism, transportation, and financial services also became more important as the economy developed and diversified.

### **Human Resources and Trade Unions**

In the early 1990s, Turkey suffered from serious structural unemployment, although the country continued to lack skilled workers and managers. The number of people engaged in subsistence agriculture and in informal labor complicated efforts to make accurate estimates of unemployment and underemployment. In the absence of direct surveys, available statistical data only broadly indicated trends in labor markets (see table 5, Appendix A). In 1992 the civilian labor force totaled almost 18.5 million; the government estimated that unemployment was about 8.7 percent, but unofficial sources put it at 15 percent for 1993. In a study, the State Institute of Statistics estimated that unemployment in urban areas among those aged

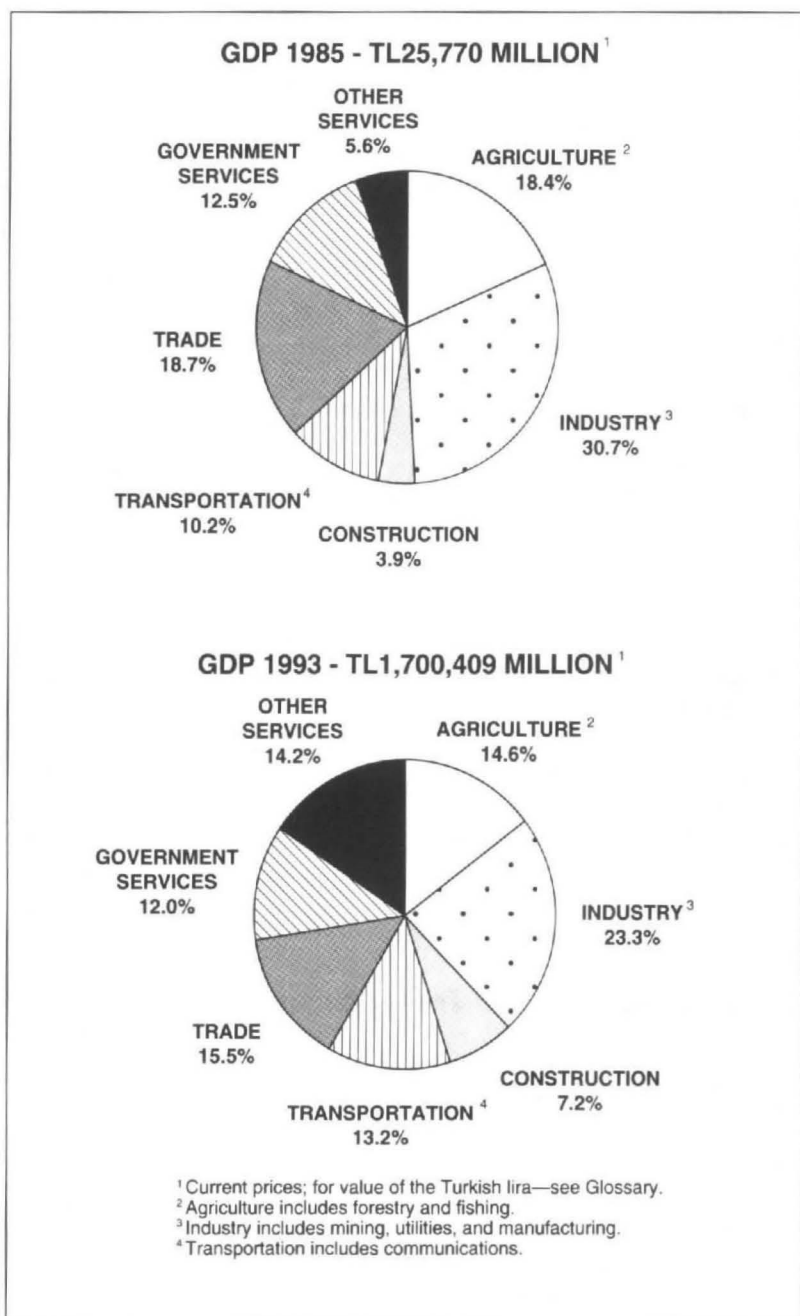


Figure 8. Structure of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 1985 and 1993

fifteen to twenty-four was 30.2 percent. According to official figures for 1992, about 44 percent of those employed worked in agriculture—down from more than 75 percent in the early 1960s. Employment in industry and construction amounted to about 20 percent in 1994, and the services sector employed about 35 percent.

During the postwar period, as agriculture modernized and grew more productive, many agricultural workers became redundant. Many now-jobless farmers, attracted by higher wages in the urban economy, migrated to the cities. Although industry and services grew rapidly after 1950, these sectors did not create enough jobs to meet the demand.

Demographic trends portend continued unemployment problems. Population growth rates declined somewhat after the 1970s, but in the mid-1990s demographers were predicting that the active population (those between fifteen and sixty-four years of age) would increase at more than 2 percent per year until at least 2000. The labor force grew at an estimated average annual rate of 2 percent during the 1960s and 1970s, at 1.5 to 2.0 percent during the early 1980s, and at 2.2 percent per year from 1985 to 1992. The several austerity programs since 1980 exacerbated the unemployment situation in the mid-1980s, with an estimated 3 million Turks unemployed in 1985. The recovery of the economy in the late 1980s appeared to improve the overall situation; manufacturing employment increased 3.4 percent per year. However, the economic crisis of early 1994 and the austerity program once again were expected to slow employment growth.

The labor force would have grown even faster during the 1970s and 1980s had it not been for a fall in the work force participation rate from about 73 percent in the 1970s to 35 percent in the early 1990s. This decline resulted from increased enrollments in secondary and postsecondary education and from the tendency of rural women who migrated to the city to refrain from entering the work force. Most demographers believed that participation rates would continue to fall as a result of higher overall school and female education rates. By 1991 the secondary school enrollment ratios, particularly for females, lagged significantly behind primary school enrollment ratios, implying room for higher future enrollment. Even if participation rates continue to fall, however, projected population growth rates will make unemployment a continuing problem.

Unemployment has caused distortions in rural and urban labor markets. Many farmers have remained on unproductive farms to avoid more uncertain fates in the cities. In addition, the large postwar increase in employment in the services sector probably reflects wide-scale underemployment, as unemployed persons resort to working as street vendors and domestic workers. The largest groups of the unemployed include educated youths from urban areas, migrants dislocated from the villages and living in shantytowns, and Turks returning from working abroad.

Emigration has provided a partial safety valve for excess labor, especially during the period between 1969 and 1973, when more than 100,000 workers left each year to seek jobs abroad. The capital-intensive, labor-short countries of northwestern Europe began recruiting workers from southern Europe and the Mediterranean basin in the 1950s. Turkish workers began emigrating to Western Europe in large numbers in the early 1960s, as the demand for labor increased in northern Europe and as the supply from southern Italy dried up because of increased domestic demand. Although Turks worked in many European countries, most went to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). Many Turkish workers also went to France, Austria, and the Netherlands. The number of Turkish workers going abroad peaked near 136,000 in 1973. The oil shock of that year and the 1974–75 recession led to restrictions on new guest workers throughout Western Europe, including a ban in West Germany. These measures caused a sharp decline in Turkish emigration to Western Europe—which averaged only 18,000 per year from 1974 to 1980—and became an important issue between Turkey and the European Community. Despite the restrictions, in 1981 there were still about 1 million Turkish workers in Western Europe, half of them in West Germany.

After the unification of Germany in 1989, pressure mounted to return so-called foreign workers to their home countries even though many had been born in Europe. High unemployment rates, especially in eastern Germany, spurred neo-Nazi political parties to agitate for forced repatriation, and some groups used violence against immigrants. In one celebrated case in Rostock, members of a Turkish family were burned to death in their own home. Other European states also witnessed a rise in hostility toward guest workers, including Turks. In

France, the National Front Party, led by Jean-Marie Le Pen, gained much support for its anti-immigrant stance.

After 1975 Turkish workers went more often to Arab oil states than to Western Europe. Each year from 1980 through 1982, more than 24,000 workers went to Libya and more than 10,000 to Saudi Arabia. During the same period, a yearly average of only 370 Turkish workers went to West Germany. By 1982 about 150,000 Turks were employed in Saudi Arabia, Libya, and the small Arabian Peninsula states. However, economic difficulties faced by oil-producing states in the mid- and late 1980s reduced opportunities for further Turkish emigration.

In general, the Turkish government has looked favorably on worker emigration, despite concerns that skilled workers are being lost because it is better-educated Turks who tend to emigrate. In 1994 an estimated 1.1 million Turkish workers were in Western Europe, of whom about 750,000 were in Germany. More than 200,000 were in Middle Eastern countries. Workers in Europe usually stay abroad several years, remitting funds to relatives in Turkey. Most eventually return with their accumulated savings to start a small business or buy a farm. Turks working in the Middle East, in contrast, tend to work for Turkish construction firms and typically return after each project is completed; these workers tend to remit a larger share of earnings to their families. The flow of workers' remittances became financially significant after 1965, when they reached the equivalent of US\$70 million. By the early 1990s, this figure had reached US\$3 billion per year.

Like most developing countries, Turkey lacks an adequate number of trained and skilled personnel. In the early 1990s, the demand for educated and skilled workers exceeded the limited number of technically and scientifically trained graduates.

Trade unions play an important role with reference to labor in the more modern sectors of the economy. Most agricultural and service workers do not belong to unions, but a substantial part of the industrial labor force in larger enterprises and some workers in other sectors, such as transportation, trade, and finance, are unionized; public-sector workers are the most likely to join a union. In the 1960s and 1970s, the wage and benefit gains of unionized workers exerted a positive influence on the income levels of nonunionized workers. After the 1980s, however, the labor movement weakened. Not only are unions

smaller in terms of membership—Ministry of Labor and Social Security figures for 1985 suggested that unions included about 1.8 million workers, or about 10 percent of the civilian work force—but severe limits on their activities have kept them politically weak. As a result, during the 1980s organized labor suffered large cuts in real earnings.

By the mid-1970s, Turkey had about 800 unions, many of which had memberships in the hundreds. Few were what might be called nationwide unions; several had extensive membership in a particular industry, which gave them a leverage that most unions lacked. Many unions joined national federations to exert more influence. Before the 1980 coup, four main trade union federations with differing political orientations dominated the labor scene. The main union organization, the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu—Türk-İs) was politically moderate, adhering to legal limits on its activities. The other major union group, the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Trade Unions of Turkey (Türkiye Devrimçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu—DISK), originated from a faction of Türk-İs in 1967. DISK was much smaller than Türk-İs but more militant. In addition, small numbers of workers belonged to the pro-Islamist Confederation of Turkish Just Workers' Unions (Türkiye Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu—Hak-İs) and the right-wing Confederation of Turkish Nationalist Workers' Unions (Türkiye Milliyetçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu—MISK). After the 1980 coup, all union federations except Türk-İs were banned for a period. Subsequently, the government allowed the other union groups to resume their activities.

Figures on trade union membership vary, but Ministry of Labor statistics at least give an idea of the relative sizes of the unions. According to this source, in 1992 Türk-İs had a membership of about 1.7 million, Hak-İs had about 330,000 members, and DISK had about 26,000 members. In addition, Turkey had twenty-four independent unions that did not belong to federations. The size of their memberships was uncertain in early 1995, but organized labor totaled almost 2.2 million workers in 1992. Workers could legally belong to more than one union, which explains some of the confusion surrounding membership statistics.

Established in 1952, Türk-İs includes many workers employed in SEEs and was the only union group actively involved in large-scale collective bargaining in the early 1990s.

Strongly centralized, Türk-Is is dominated by a few large, conservative unions; the social democratic unions that figure among its thirty affiliates have little say in federation affairs. In adherence to the law, Türk-Is has remained technically aloof from party politics but is interested in issues affecting labor. Türk-Is is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations through its membership in the Asian-American Free Labor Institute, which provides training for union leaders. Since 1980 Türk-Is has generally refrained from calling strikes, perhaps because of fears that labor conflicts might lead to layoffs of surplus SEE personnel.

Against a background of growing labor unrest in 1994, related to deepening economic problems, budget cuts, and privatization, Türk-Is coordinated wage talks with the government at the end of the year. Although accused of earlier and questionable cooperation with the government, Türk-Is faced widespread pressure from affiliated unions and their members not to agree to the increase the government was offering. Both DISK and Hak-Is had strongly opposed a pay increase of 102 percent for the Türk-Is-affiliated Teksif union at the end of 1994 on the grounds that the size of the pay increase did not meet the much higher inflation rates and the agreement was co-optive.

DISK, Türk-Is's chief rival, draws its members primarily from the private sector and from municipal workers. In the mid-1990s, it seemed that supporters of left-wing unions such as DISK were shifting to Islamist-oriented ones. Nonetheless, DISK-affiliated unions continued to exert some influence as part of overall labor pressure to maintain wage and employment levels.

Before 1980 Hak-Is was reportedly tied to the pro-Islamic National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi—MSP), whereas DISK supported the Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi—MHP). In 1980 the two federations claimed memberships of 68,000 and 290,000, respectively. After 1984 they played only a minor role in collective bargaining because they lacked sufficient membership to be considered representative under new labor legislation.

The 1980 military intervention severely restricted trade union activities. The 1982 constitution and the laws on union organization, collective bargaining, strikes, and lockouts passed in 1983 have made Turkey's unions the most tightly controlled in noncommunist Europe. To have the right to represent the

workers at a given facility, unions must prove that they have the support of at least 10 percent of union membership within the industry and a majority at the particular workplace. Political and general strikes and many forms of industrial action, including secondary strikes, work slowdowns, and picketing, are prohibited. About half of the unionized workers, including those in the gas, water, electricity, mining, and petroleum industries as well as those in banking, urban transit, garbage collection and firefighting, are allowed to strike. Strikes can be called only after a written announcement to the government, which may require a ninety-day cooling-off period followed by compulsory arbitration. Workers who strike illegally may be punished with as much as eighteen months in prison, and those who participate in such strikes can be fired, with the loss of all accumulated financial claims, including pensions.

Following the 1980 coup, the military government prohibited collective bargaining until May 1984, after which time officials continued trying to restrain wage settlements in order to limit inflation. Although private-sector wage settlements in 1984 and 1985 included increases ranging from 25 to 60 percent, pay adjustments generally continued to run behind the inflation rate, resulting in declines in real wages. The government took a more relaxed attitude in the late 1980s, but by 1994 the authorities were once again using antistrike regulations from the early 1980s to stop strikes and other job actions.

In the public sector, the government has been even more successful at holding the line against wage increases, although large increases in 1992–93 led to a sharp jump in government expenditures. With a limited endorsement by the IMF, government employees' wages were targeted as the primary means of achieving budget cuts in 1994 and early 1995. As part of this strategy, Prime Minister Çiller attempted to use illegal strikes as a pretext for liquidating certain public enterprises; unionized workers also would be notified that there were plenty of unemployed people willing to do their jobs for lower pay. In early 1995, unions for public-sector workers outside the public enterprises faced the possibility of being abolished altogether. Also, seasonal workers with part-time jobs working on village roads, irrigation projects, and other infrastructure components were to be placed under the authority of provincial authorities, an arrangement that would cost them their labor rights. People employed with "worker" status, who therefore had certain rights under the law, were reclassified as "public servants" with



no right to bargain collectively or to strike. Members of this group fared badly in the mid-1990s, with declining wages accompanying their loss of rights.

## **Role of Government in the Economy**

The Ottoman Empire established a strong tradition of government direction of the economy. Ottoman economic doctrine ascribed to the state both the right and the duty to control the economy for the common good. The state controlled a large proportion of the land and suppressed power centers, blocking the development of a landed aristocracy. One's position in the imperial hierarchy was the primary determinant of income. Because the sultan confiscated his functionaries' wealth when they died, status could be passed on only by means of education. For example, candidates for positions in the bureaucracy were required to have command of the Ottoman language. Peasants and artisans also claimed and received protection from the state, often at the expense of economic modernization. The bureaucracy had little interest in economic growth, which might lead to the rise of a new class that would challenge its dominance. To ensure control of certain urban-based production and service functions, they were reserved for minority groups.

Republican Turkey inherited attitudes and memories from the Ottomans that continue to play a key role in the country's political economy in the late twentieth century. Republican leaders believe that the state has a duty to intervene in the economy, not only to strengthen the nation against foreign intervention but ultimately to further the well-being of the people.

### **Liberal Interlude**

Scholars traditionally have stressed the significance of state intervention in the economy during the early years of the republic, but more recent research indicates that Turkish economic policy was relatively liberal until the 1930s. The government made significant investments in railroad and other infrastructure projects, but the Law for the Encouragement of Industry of 1927 and other measures encouraged private enterprise. Moreover, Turkey's economy was relatively open to international markets during the 1920s. Under the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, the capitulations were abolished,

but Turkey could not introduce protective tariffs until August 1929. As a result, tariffs remained low, and the Turkish lira was convertible and floating. Foreign interests invested in both public and private enterprises, helping to initiate industrial development. During these early years, economic growth was satisfactory, but the country ran chronic foreign trade deficits despite the continued fall in the value of the lira.

Turkish economic development reached a turning point with the Great Depression. By 1930 foreign markets for Turkish agricultural products had collapsed, causing sharp declines in the prices of agricultural goods and a corresponding decline in national income. Dissatisfied with the slow development of industry, Turkey's leaders began to look for alternative policies. During the late 1920s and the early 1930s, economic and political thinkers discussed alternative approaches to national economic development. The interventionist trend in Western economic thinking, represented by works such as John Maynard Keynes's *The End of Laissez-Faire* (1926), influenced the theoretical debate. The apparent successes of the Soviet Union's drive to develop heavy industry under its First Five-Year Plan (1928–33) also impressed Turkish thinkers, although in the end Turkish policy borrowed primarily from the West.

## **Etatism**

At its 1931 congress, the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—CHP) adopted etatism, one of Atatürk's Six Arrows, as its official economic strategy. According to this program, individual enterprise was to retain a fundamental role in the economy, but active government intervention was necessary to boost the nation's welfare and the state's prosperity. The CHP also declared that etatism was an intermediate road between capitalism and socialism. In practice, etatism entailed the promotion of industrialization by means of five-year plans and the creation of public enterprises. Comprehensive protective tariffs also were introduced during the 1930s, establishing a pattern of import-substitution industrialization that would continue for many years.

After World War II, all major parties claimed to support etatism. The sharp reorientation of Turkey's economic policies after 1980 included a repudiation of much etatist doctrine, which, however, still influenced Turkish economic thinking. Inasmuch as Atatürk had declared that once Turkey had reached a satisfactory level of development certain state enter-

prises could be returned to private control, the post-1980s economic reforms perhaps could be considered a continuation of one aspect of the original etatist program. Moreover, the government continued to use policy tools such as SEEs and development planning that had originated during the etatist period. Nonetheless, by the mid-1990s deepening government indebtedness dictated a faster reduction of the state's economic commitments. Given Turkey's high inflation, job insecurity, and unemployment, etatism could be in vogue again, but in the mid-1990s no major opposition party was calling for the wholesale renationalization of the economy. .

### **State Economic Enterprises and Privatization**

An important tool of etatism to further government economic policies, State Economic Enterprises (SEEs) are variously organized, but the government owns at least a 50 percent share in each of them. SEEs are set up by the government, and each has a board that reflects the ownership of the particular SEE, combining government representatives, who direct the enterprise, with private interests. During the etatist industrialization campaign of the 1930s, the government set up many industrial SEEs. In the mid-1990s, SEEs continue to dominate sectors considered to be of national importance or sectors where private investors have hesitated to invest because capital requirements are too great in light of expected returns. SEEs include national transportation, communications, and energy enterprises; banks that own companies, in particular branches such as textiles or refining; and conglomerates with holdings in many fields. Some SEEs control companies in which ownership is shared with private and foreign investors. In 1964 the State Investment Bank was established to provide long-term investment credits to SEEs. Credits from the Central Bank of Turkey, transfers from the Treasury, and capital markets also finance SEEs.

In the mid-1990s, SEEs accounted for more than 40 percent of value added in manufacturing and employed about 550,000 workers, or about 20 percent of the industrial work force. Until 1980 SEEs set their prices in accordance with government directives, but after the introduction of that year's reform package, they were expected to set prices independently. Nevertheless, prices of some major commodities, such as fertilizers, continue to be determined by the government. SEEs also influ-

ence markets, especially those for agricultural goods, by establishing guaranteed minimum prices for commodities.

Aside from their role in industrial development, SEEs are charged with social goals. The farm-support program stabilizes farmers' incomes, while low consumer prices for food, energy, and transportation help the urban poor. SEEs also provide training and employ surplus university graduates and constituents of influential politicians, contributing to overstaffing. Some SEEs are placed in underdeveloped regions to spur industrial development, a practice that increases transportation and infrastructure costs.

One objective of the Özal reforms was to improve SEEs' efficiency and reduce their need for subsidies. By 1982 the government had freed most SEE prices and had given SEE managers greater autonomy and responsibility. The administration favored opening state monopolies to outside competition and decided in 1983 to limit SEE investments in manufacturing. Nevertheless, in the mid-1980s the state sector had to take over several failed banks that had significant industrial holdings, and the low rate of private investment meant that the public share in industrial investment actually rose. By the mid-1990s, SEEs remained a major burden on the public exchequer. Of the fifty SEEs, only fifteen were expected to report profits in 1994. Funding the operating losses of the SEEs—TL90 trillion in 1994 alone—annually cost the Treasury around TL20 trillion (about US\$70 billion) in 1993 and 1994; the remainder was borrowed from banks. The total debt stock of the public enterprises by late 1994 was estimated at TL250 trillion, the bulk of which was owed to the Treasury and Central Bank. This debt generated an interest charge of around TL60 trillion in 1994 alone on collective sales of TL550 trillion. Deepening economic problems in the 1990s were part of the reason for the losses. This situation was exacerbated by a requirement that took effect after 1989 stipulating that SEEs borrow at high market rates.

Major plans for privatization of SEEs were supposed to go into effect as early as 1987 but as of early 1995 had not yet occurred. Prime candidates for sale include the state airline, the cement industry, and the textile industry. Almost all SEEs are considered potentially suitable for privatization except for certain infrastructure facilities such as power plants and railroads.

Some SEE managers and unions oppose privatization, fearing that, once under private management, the enterprises will eliminate unprofitable subsidiaries or aggressively reduce over-staffing. Some opposition parties also fear that public assets will be allocated among "friends" of government officials, with the result being the creation of private monopolies. Observers anticipate that certain "strategic" industries, including much mining and defense production, will remain in the public sector and that the best the administration can hope for would be to force them to approximate private-sector practices. Moreover, certain privatization moves, particularly the sale of cement mills belonging to the public enterprise Citosan, and a controlling stake in the airport management company Havas, were reversed by the Constitutional Court on administrative grounds.

After becoming prime minister, Çiller accepted the existing legislation on privatization and even sought wider powers to hasten the process. Law 3291, passed in 1986, had established the Public Participation Administration, which would control SEEs designated for privatization and prepare them for the process. In late 1994, the National Assembly passed a bill introduced by Çiller to revamp the administrative procedures dealing with privatization.

The bill established the Privatization Administration to carry out technical work and a Privatization High Board to make final decisions. The latter would control the Privatization Fund into which revenues were to be channeled. The Privatization High Board would consist of the prime minister, the minister of state "responsible for privatization," and the ministers of finance and industry and trade. The board was also to be responsible for deciding which public enterprises are of special strategic importance and in which the state should retain preference shares. Turkish Petroleum, Ziraat Bank, Halk Bank, Turkish Airlines, and the Soil Products Office Alkaloid Plant were placed in the latter category. Railroads, airports, and the General Management for Trade in Tobacco, Tobacco Products, and Alcoholic Spirits (Tütün, Tütün Mamülleri, Tuz ve Alkol İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü—TEKEL) were not designated to be privatized in the mid-1990s. Privatization of telecommunications and the electricity production and distribution board were to be dealt with in separate legislation. All other types of SEEs were again targeted for privatization in various ways, including the sale of all or parts of a company through share

offers, block sales, auctions, and the transfer of plants to private domestic and foreign entities and to companies formed by workers and local townspeople. Some of the early candidates were the Ereğli Iron and Steelworks, the Turkish Petroleum Refineries Corporation (Türkiye Petrol Refinerileri As—TÜPRAS), the state oil products distributor (Petrol Ofisi), the petrochemicals company (Petkim), the industrial interests of the state holding company, Sumerbank, the national airline (Turkish Airlines), and the airport company (Havas). The bill also set guidelines to prevent the formation of private monopolies and methods for dealing with workers who lose their jobs. Workers made redundant would continue to receive their wages for up to eight months and, depending on length of service, would get pensions or severance pay.

### **Development Planning**

Turkey first introduced five-year plans in the 1930s as part of the statist industrialization drive. The first five-year plan began in 1934. A second plan was drafted but only partially implemented because of World War II. These early plans were largely lists of desirable projects, but they provided guidance for the development of infrastructure, mining, and manufacturing. During the 1950s, the Democrat Party (DP) eliminated central economic planning, but the 1961 constitution made social and economic planning a state duty. In 1961 the government established the State Planning Organization (SPO), which was given responsibility for preparing long-term and annual plans, following up on plan implementation, and advising on current economic policy. The SPO comes under the prime minister's office and receives policy direction from the High Planning Council (also seen as the Supreme Planning Council), which is chaired by the prime minister and includes cabinet ministers. The Central Planning Organization, the secretariat of the High Planning Council, formulates the strategy and broad targets on which the SPO bases detailed plans. Plan targets are binding for the public sector but only indicative for private enterprises.

SPO plans include—in addition to investment levels—macroeconomic targets, social goals, and policy recommendations for individual subsectors of the economy. Turkey was one of the first countries to develop regional planning, a major challenge given the limited development of eastern and southeastern Anatolia. The SPO has approached planning from a long-term perspective and drew up the First Five-Year Plan (1963–67) and

the Second Five-Year Plan (1968–72) in the context of what should be accomplished by the mid-1970s. Similarly, development goals for 1995, including a customs union with the EC, were set in the Third Five-Year Plan (1973–77) and the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1979–83). Successive plans took stock of problems and previous accomplishments, but many policy suggestions were never effectively implemented.

Early plans were heavily weighted toward manufacturing, import substitution, and the intermediate goods sector. The economic and political disorder of the late 1970s, however, made it impossible to achieve plan targets. After the 1980 coup, the Fourth Five-Year Plan was modified to favor the private sector, labor-intensive and export-oriented projects, and investments that would pay for themselves relatively quickly. The Özal administration delayed the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1984–89) for one year to take account of the structural reform program introduced in 1983. Unlike earlier plans, the Fifth Five-Year Plan called for a smaller state sector. According to the plan, the state would take more of a general supervisory role than it had in the past, concentrating on encouraging private economic actors. Nevertheless, the state was to continue an aggressive program of infrastructure investments to clear bottlenecks in energy, transport, and other sectors.

In May 1989, the government published the 1990–95 Development Plan. The plan called for overall economic growth of 7 percent per year. The growth of private-sector investment was targeted at an average of 11 percent per year, whereas the aim was to increase exports 15 percent per year. The inflation rate was targeted at 10 percent per year. As it developed, although high growth rates were maintained during the 1990–95 period, they came at the cost of increased foreign and domestic borrowing, which funded an inflationary government budgetary and monetary policy. Rapid rates of growth also were boosted by foreign direct investment. Excessive borrowing and domestic political problems led to a balance of payments crisis that sharply reduced domestic investment rates and ultimately led to a decline in incomes. Whereas the development plan had called for high growth rates and macroeconomic stability, Turkey actually has experienced high growth rates and macroeconomic instability.

## **Budget**

Public-sector spending is the most important means of state