

PS131 City, State and Justice in Turkey

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, Turkey was a candidate for EU membership, prompting debates on the nature of the union and its relationship to European and global history. In the second decade, a failed military coup sparked extensive political repression, which ranged Turkey among the populist authoritarian regimes gaining strength worldwide. During this time, Turkey has become home to a massive influx of displaced persons seeking to reach the EU from the Middle East, and has reached arrangements with its European neighbors to prevent migration across Europe's borders. It has also seen the consequences of a program of internal forced migration, from Kurdish villages to large cities. These developments appear against the backdrop of Turkey's complex modern history as a nation of migrants to Europe and elsewhere and as a country that has navigated transitions from empire to nation-state, dictatorship to democracy, as well as a negotiation between secularism and Islamism. We will focus in particular on the role of the urban transformation projects pursued by the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) in recent social and political change, and their relation to wealth distribution, internal and external forced migration, a move away from secularization, and a turn toward repression in public and intellectual life. Understanding the contradictions of modern Turkey is essential for grasping the predicament of those who find themselves within its borders as displaced people and those who belong to its diaspora.

Requirements

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2021: Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Assessment

The course assessment consists of basically attendance, participation, and engagement in the discussions and activities. See also "Grade Breakdown."

Assignments

During the semester, while the class and the discussions continue, the students should focus on a topic they initially chose right after the first classes. This method offers students an opportunity to see the entire semester's content from a particular perspective they wish.

Students will write the same essay twice during the semester.

They will submit their first draft in the form of semi-academic short essay (ca. 2500-3000 words, deadline is 15 October) with sources and research, preferably asking questions about puzzling things they found about their topic.

Then, they will submit a ready-to-publish extended essay on the same topic in the 13th week (ca. 4500-5000 words, deadline: 10 December).

Students can discuss all phases regarding their essays in the class or with me whenever they wish. In your writing process, my task will be more of a guiding assistant to you.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late.

Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Seminar Grade: Attendance, participation, engagement with the activities and reading list, and of course, assignments.

Seminar Grade: 34%

Short/draft essay: 33%

Final essay: 33%

Schedule

Week 1: 3 September, 9.00-12.15

Introduction, basic concepts and the methodology of the course

What do we know about Turkey?

What about Istanbul?

Who do live in Istanbul, and who cannot?

A city is made of endless stories compete.

Basic definitions of the terms “city,” “state,” and “justice.”

A stately mythology: They say Istanbul is a bridge between the East and the West. What if there is a guy to disrupt the bridge?

A game to get to know/feel a city:

Our game is based on two simple facts. First, Istanbul is a city shaped by migrations over the centuries. Second, justice could mean many things, also a shared/collective feeling created by/within the society and the state through several mechanisms. So in the game, we aim to try the affective landscape of Istanbul regarding migration and justice. Each of us will choose a fictional character living in Istanbul, and every week in the first lesson, we will talk about how that character feels after listening to the content of the previous week. Also, how our fictional characters feel about each other? What sort of solidarities and antagonisms could they develop? What do they feel about the state? What does citizenship mean for them?

Each of us will be a migrant from somewhere to Istanbul. Every week in the last 20 mins we will discuss our feelings and perception regarding each other and the city. We'll try to imagine ourselves in the city under the circumstances described in the class. So in the first class, we will pick our fictional characters. Don't worry there will be a very long list.

Week 2: 10 September, 9.00-12.15

The methodology of the course: Why listening to the people matter?

Ruth Behar: Ethnography

Conceptualizing Istanbul: A city, a megapol, a dead-end?

Istanbul, Chapter 19, Orhan Pamuk

Optional: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bETIzNDAVA4>

Week 3: 17 September, 9.00-12.15

Lines and waves of migration to and from Istanbul: Why and how does migration creates spacial injustice?

Mapping the migration waves

Migration, urban space and diversity: A Case from Istanbul, Kristen Sarah Biehl

“There Is an Istanbul That Belongs to Me”: Citizenship, Space, and Identity in the City, Anna Secor

Week 4: 24 September, 9.00-12.15

Gecekondu as a housing phenomenon

The transformation of the urban periphery: Once upon a time there were gecekondu in Istanbul, Şükrü Aslan and Tahire Erman

Optional: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZktNcZKwccw>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2l0XEJOI-A>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qriYRdjw3i4>

Week 5: 1 October, 9.00-12.15

Layers of commonalities and privacies: Contracts, property and citizenship

Behind the scaffolding: Manipulations of time, delays, and power in Tarlabası, Istanbul, Alize Arıcan

Political parties and grassroots clientelist strategies in urban Turkey: One Neighborhood at a Time, Ceren Ark-Yıldırım

Week 6: 8 October, 9.00-12.15

How and why to kill a city? Urban transformation

Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul: The State-led Construction of Property Markets, and the Displacement of the Urban Poor, John Lovering & Hade Türkmen

Week 7: 15 October, 9.00-12.15

Institutional transformation: TOKI and some uneasy feelings

Producing force and consent: Urban transformation and corporatism in Turkey, Erbatur Çavuşoğlu & Julia Strutz

Urban neoliberalism with Islamic characteristics, Ozan Karaman

Week 8: 29 October, 9.00-12.15

Urbanization of resistance: Until Gezi Park Revolt

The Sulukule Affair: Roma against expropriation, Hacer Foggo

Immaterial Dimensions of the right to the city: The Case of Istanbul's Derbent Neighborhood in the Urban Transformation Process, Gizem Aksümer & Hakan Yücel

Week 9: 5 November, 9.00-12.15

Gezi Park Revolt

The Gezi Protests in Turkey: On movement spirit, coalition building, and responding to authoritarianism, Elif Andaç-Jones

After the protest: Istanbul park forums and people's engagement in political action, Hande Ramazanogullari

Optional: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoURbtmG3gg>

Touching like a state, Keith Woodward and Mario Bruzzone

Week 10: 12 November, 9.00-12.15

Fa(i)ling apart: An urban apocalypse - Zoning Amnesty

The great failure: The roles of institutional conflict and social movements in the failure of regeneration initiatives in Istanbul, Tuna Kuyucu

Week 11: 19 November, 9.00-12.15

Unfitting images: Mosques in Çamlıca and Taxim

Power Geometry in Urban Memory: Reading Taksim Square through the concept of representation of space, Ceren Göğüş and Asiye Akgün Gültekin

Architectural mimicry and the politics of mosque building: negotiating Islam and Nation in Turkey, Bülent Batuman

Optional: What is in a place? Hagia Sophia in the affective topography of populism in Turkey, Spyros A. Sofos, <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/41518>

Optional: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=keDuqd-2Wnl>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nNJUEr0ZNw>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=492NyPqiC7g>

Week 12: 26 November, 9.00-12.15

Local elections: Re-inventing politics

Defeating Populists: The case of 2019 Istanbul Elections, Seda Demiralp & Evren Balta

Going beyond the divides: coalition attempts in the follow-up networks to the Gezi movement in Istanbul Gözde Pelivan

Week 13: 3 December, 9.00-12.15

Other Istanbuls and longing your city

The refugees' right to the center of the city and spatial justice: Gentrification vs commoning practices in Tarlabası-Istanbul, Charalampos Tsavdaroglou

From streets to courthouses: digital and postdigital forms of image activism in the post-occupy Turkey, Ozge Ozduzen

Optional: Istanbul: The city as an urban palimpsest, Hülya Turgut
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ttEYdbfX0E>

Week 14: 10 December, 9.00-12.15

Wrapping up Istanbul.

Reconsidering the definitions of the primary concepts of the course, “city,” “state,” and “justice.”

Note: Most of the articles could be found online, but I will also collect a reader to be sure no one misses anything.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/>