

Turkey testing the limits of its democratic roots

—By *Tristram Korten '13*

The ferry sailed from the Asian side of the Bosphorus to the European side as twilight settled over Istanbul, the city that spans two continents. Homes and restaurants began to incandesce on the city's sloping hills, while the spiky silhouettes of the mosques' minarets punctuated the skyline.

The ship approached a concrete seawall. No finger docks extended into the water to aid us. No land-based crew came out to catch lines. The ferry simply and delicately nosed up to the seawall and did a gentle shimmy to keep us close. Then a crew member opened a small gate in the bow allowing us to descend onto dry land. It was a delicate operation given the cross currents doing battle beneath us.

It seems as apt a metaphor as any for Turkey, which must gingerly navigate the two continents it is caught between and the prevailing cultures that inhabit them. It might not be the most novel take on the place, but even the Turks admit they are forever caught in this role, expected to interpret the East for the West and the West for the East, while their own identity remains in flux. Turkey, the cultural gateway, is clearly of both worlds. Ever since Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) forced secularism with a Western flourish down his countrymen's throats, Turkey has had a revered role in geopolitics—what many consider to be the one true democratic, secular government in a Muslim country.

KWF '13's depth of understanding (but not necessarily whether we retained it or not) and exposure to differing points of views and ideas—the glimpse behind the curtain as it were—was due largely to our guide through all things Turkish, Ferhat Boratav, CNN Türk's valuable editor in chief, who took an entire week off during one of the more dramatic news cycles in his country to make sure we got it right. Ferhat has been KWF's Turkish liaison for years, but his attentiveness this year earns him extra credit. As soon as we arrived on Tuesday, the newspapers and TV were abuzz with speculation that a statement from the imprisoned

leader of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), Abdullah Öcalan, scheduled to be read aloud on Thursday, might announce some kind of armistice in the 30-year conflict between the Turkish government and the PKK. If true, this would be big news—the violence has lasted 30 years and claimed more than 35,000 lives.

But before we could begin to digest such complex topics, we

needed an orientation on the Turkish psyche. This started with a visit to Bahcesehir University, where Professor Yilmaz Esmer helped us understand the current state of mind for most Turks. Turkey is an extremely “un-trusting” society, especially regarding people they don't know, according to Esmer, who earned his Ph.D. at Stanford and has worked with the University of



KWF 2013 had an especially entertaining visit to the tomb of Atatürk, “The Father of the Turks.” For more, see page 5.

Michigan's Institute on Social Research in the past. It ranks between the third and fifth lowest-trust country in the world, according to Esmer's research. Ongoing polls he has been conducting since the early 1990s also show a growing religiosity and embrace of conservative Muslim values, women wearing headscarves being the most visible manifestation. This duality would surface repeatedly through our trip; Turkey is both a European society, still eager to join the European Union after several rebuffs, and a Muslim one. It is fiercely secular, yet latently and deeply religious.

Turks may not trust others, but they are exquisite hosts. At every seminar stop along the way, no matter the institution, we were offered nuts, cookies and endless amounts of Turkish tea, served in elegant curved glasses with sugar cubes sometimes balanced delicately on a stirring stick across the top. So it was during our visit (via ferry) to a branch of one of the most controversial groups wielding power in Turkey today—The Journalists and Writers Foudation, an arm of the powerful and mercurial Gülen movement. Despite our shared professions—we're journalists,

—continued on page 8

From the Head Fellow

—By Charles R. Eisendrath '75

UNIMAGINATIVE IN ISTANBUL

Hideously unimaginative, but taking the same walk (49 times and counting over seven years) is a great way to note large changes in a manageable way. Eyeballing needs backstopping, of course, and for this KWF has Ferhat Boratav, a Turkish Toynbee/Fodor/Zagat who top edits CNN Türk. Miraculously, he spends most of a week with us, explaining the rise and fall of successive empires, the latest whirlpool in the murk of Turkish politics, the national addiction to sitcoms, the coolest restaurants with a Bosphorus view.

Some wonderings are simpler: How is it possible for a city as huge, chaotic and ancient as Istanbul to have such clean streets after centuries of indifference? Am I right that the flowers—in their millions, often planted in Islamic swirls—are new, even somehow blooming *inside* highway underpasses?

I stroll from Taksim Square down Istiklal to where this pedestrian shopping thoroughfare narrows to a curvy plunging alleyway to the Galata Bridge across the Golden Horn. Istiklal has always meant upscale shopping, but never before like this.

On the adjacent bridge, the number of fishermen has easily tripled into the hundreds, and here, too, everything has gone upscale: gear, bait (some of the “live bait” actually alive), snacks, even companionship. A few women have joined the ranks, peering over the railing in their headscarves.

The affluence results from 10 years of rule by the AKP, or Truth and Justice Party, led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his “religious-leaning” Muslim conservatives. Political stability and pro-growth policies have boosted Turkey into 16th place in the global GNP in a boom that is the envy of the European Union, which spent the same period tut-tutting Turkey

like a recalcitrant adolescent while keeping it out of the EU club for grownup economies.

Istanbul, until recently a museum city, now calls itself a construction zone and has the feel of a place determined to resume its onetime role as center of the Islamic world, guided by its former mayor, Erdoğan.



One thing that has not expanded: public discussion of huge projects. Just as Napoleon III quashed objections when remaking 19th century Paris, so has the AKP minimized public information and debate about its transformation of 21st century Istanbul, including:

- A new suspension bridge for which UNESCO threatens to withdraw its world heritage skyline designation.
- A third major airport together with an entirely new suburb for 100,000 residents, many to be affluent part-timers from unstable areas in the region.
- A huge cultural center to occupy most of Taksim Square, effectively eliminating Istanbul's equivalent to Cairo's Tahir as the traditional site for large demonstrations. Pointedly, it replicates an Ottoman army barracks. Everyone gets the message.
- On the highest hill, a mosque

specifically bigger than any other. Sultans built mosques in to their own glory, most notably Suleiman the Magnificent; will this be Erdoğan's?

His party is also remaking institutions. An army accustomed to political intervention was decapitated when AKP accused its top officers of plotting against the elected government and summarily imprisoned them.

Headscarves, sartorial dynamite with symbolism as deep as the Confederate flag in the U.S., suddenly appeared in more places, some by law, more in emulation of the new leadership. Most female AKP activists (and wives) are “covered,” symbolizing submissiveness, but the party also favors their entry into the workplace. After 30 years of intermittent guerilla warfare and 35,000 deaths, the Kurdish independence movement has been brought to heel by force.

Although nothing in Islam or AKP's platform requires a tame press, everything about a dominant style of government does. Erdoğan's Turkey is no exception. Dozens of journalists were arrested on charges of complicity with the (unproved) military plot. A tax investigation including sweeps of its home offices and the forced sale of its most influential publication intimidated the largest media group. The power of example quieted others in the opposition.

The result? Self-censorship and notable silence on sensitive subjects. On this, Turkey is long on precedents. Mustafa Kemal, or “Atatürk” (Father of the Turks), changed the look of Turkey and the Turks, themselves, westernizing both on his own say-so. Erdoğan's image hasn't replaced Atatürk's on public structures, but nobody would be surprised by an Erdoğan mosque, airport or bridge. ▶

Using failure to achieve success

Editors Note: *The author, Mary Losure '04, wrote “The Fairy Ring: Or Elsie and Frances Fool the World,” which was chosen Booklist's Editors' Choice Best Youth Nonfiction 2012, and “Wild Boy: The Real Life of the Savage of Aveyron.”*

I've had three careers: farmer, journalist and children's book writer. It was a lot harder for me to break into children's book writing, after 20 years as a reporter, than it was to make the leap from farming to reporting.

Anyone who thinks it's easy to write a children's book and get it published should try it sometime. (Exceptions apply for Madonna, politicians' wives or otherwise famous people.) There's a book about the children's publishing industry called “It's a Bunny-Eat-Bunny World”; to make any headway, you have to compete with the hordes of would-be writers who want to follow J.K. Rowling's footsteps to fame and fortune. Plus, there are lots of people who think children's writing is fun (it is) and easier than writing for adults (it's not).

I went into children's books thinking they were just another form of writing, and I knew how to write. Didn't I? So when after five years working on various children's books I still hadn't had one published, well, let's just say it was a very long, hard transition, and sometimes I used to think I'd retired by mistake. I'd never experienced the kind of rejection that is



a part of a book writer's life. In my career as a reporter, I wasn't used to failure.

And this brings me to my other transition: farmer to reporter.

As a farmer, I had known failure on a grand scale. My husband and I had a farm in Iowa that struggled for years during the Midwest farm depression of the mid-1980s. We saw neighbor after neighbor lose their farms. Then we lost ours, and with it our home and both our jobs.

With two small children to support, we took whatever talents we had and tried for whatever new careers we could think of. I'd written some articles for the local weekly papers because I needed the \$35 each article paid. Along the way, I'd discovered I liked writing and reporting. My clippings helped me get a job as an intern at a public radio station, KLSE, in Rochester, Minn.

It was a place of manual typewriters and reel-to-reel-tape players. We edited tape by marking it with grease pens, cutting it with razor blades and sticking it

back together with tape. Press releases came in the mail, since modern fax machines—let alone the Internet as we know it—had yet to be invented. No one then had the vaguest notion of the havoc that computer technology would one day wreak on the news business.

So in those

long-ago days, after three months as an intern, I was lucky enough to get a job as a full-time staff reporter. My husband got an internship in accounting at the Mayo Clinic, and in a matter of months that, too, turned into a job. We moved to the city and our old life was gone, just like that.

So, is there anything that other people facing transitions in their lives can learn from this?

Maybe it's just to remember that the times you live in—the currents sweeping around you, over which you have no control—will affect how easy any transition turns out to be, but that your own expectations and past successes and failures also play a role. Maybe after a terrible failure, it's easier to try things. After all, what have you got to lose? Some things will work, others will not. I happen to believe that if you really want to do something, you should try.

I wish there were a better roadmap. Let me know if you find one. ▶

TÜRK ÇAYI (TURKISH TEA) by Josh '13



TURKISH TEA FUN FACTS:

PROMOTED BY MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK!
 IT'S A CHEAPER ALTERNATIVE TO COFFEE!

CULTIVATED IN TURKEY'S EASTERN BLACK SEA REGION.
 Rize

SERVED IN A GLASS SHAPED LIKE TURKEY'S NATIONAL FLOWER (THE TULIP)

HOW TO DRINK TURKISH TEA

ONE CUBE OR TWO?
 TAKE TWO-- THE TEA IS STRONG.

STIR WELL -- MAKE LOTS OF NOISE.
 CLINK CLINK

DON'T BURN YOUR FINGERS-- HOLD IT BY THE RIM.

SEMINARS WITH TEA: GÜLEN MOVEMENT, TURKISH PRIME MINISTRY, AK PARTY, TURKISH AIRLINES, İHH, ISTANBUL POLICE DEPT., AGOS...

SEMINARS WITHOUT TEA: U.S. EMBASSY

Time's relentless, and dioramas are sad

—By Donovan Hohn '13

It was a weekday morning, still early, and when the busload of foreign journalists arrived, Ceremonial Plaza at the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) in Ankara was mostly empty, save for a sprinkling of tourists and a gaggle of schoolchildren on a patriotic field trip. The emptiness made the bombastic architecture feel slightly forlorn.

Guards in polished helmets and long topcoats with shiny brass buttons stood sentry on pedestals, still as toy soldiers, one gloved hand propped on a rifle, the other tucked neatly into the small of the back. The foreign journalists snapped photographs of them. Overhead the flag of Turkey made a red motion in the overcast sky.

Into the emptiness and monumental stillness there now came an excited disturbance dressed in black. He had a black ball cap on. A brown leather satchel was slung over a shoulder. He carried a pointer with a red ribbon tied to the tip. Black sneakers squeaking on the marble, he hustled into the midst of the foreign journalists, poking the sky with his pointer and wagging the red bow. "Come! Come!" he said. "We walk in a hurry way, because of time."

He went bustling up the marble steps that rose to the entrance of a building resembling a Parthenon from which the curves had been cut away, leaving only right angles and straight lines, even in the columns—Atatürk's tomb. The journalists followed him, but in a distracted, leisurely way rather than in a hurry way, as the schedule demanded.

Twenty-five minutes! The journalists had a 10:30 appointment at the prime ministry with the assistant under-secretary for foreign affairs, the tour guide had been told. It was now 9:45, which meant they had to be back on the bus by 10:10 at the latest, which meant that the tour guide had only 25 minutes in which to impress

upon the foreign journalists all the glorious sayings and accomplishments of Atatürk, founding father of the Turkish Republic. Twenty-five minutes!

At the entrance to the mausoleum, the tour guide gestured at a brass plaque affixed to the marble wall. In Turkish and English, the plaque quoted from Atatürk's Address to the Turkish Youth, delivered on Oct. 20, 1927. "Your first duty is to preserve and to defend Turkish independence and the Turkish Republic forever. This is the very foundation of your existence and your future..."

The tour guide ran his hand up and down the plaque like a saleswoman. "You may photograph!" he said. No one did.

Onward, to another brass plaque: "The Turkish Nation! We are in the fifteenth year of the start of our war of liberation. This is the greatest day marking the tenth year of our Republic..."

"You may photograph!" No one did. 9:50. The marble sarcophagus of Atatürk, adorned with a red and white seal made of flowers. "His body is buried seven meters below!" Here, the cameras finally clicked. When they stopped snapping, the tour guide pivoted squeakily and rushed back out into the sunlight where, on the steps overlooking Ceremonial Plaza, he herded the journalists onto the marble platform from which speeches were sometimes delivered.

9:56. Time for a hasty group photograph. The foreign journalists posed. On the platform beneath them, like a caption, another saying of Atatürk had been carved into the marble, Turkish for "Sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the nation."

With 14 minutes minutes to go they finally entered the Atatürk museum, where glass cases displayed Atatürk's personal effects. Squeaking down the corridor, the tour guide shouted out their contents. "Sticks of Atatürk!" as he passed

a display of canes. "Medals of Atatürk!" Between the cases, he served up biographical factoids in no particular order. "Atatürk changed the alphabet in 1928! He was successful in everything but marriage! Personal stuff of Atatürk! He never went outside the country! Suits of Atatürk!" Of a Madame Tussaud-style sculpture, the tour guide said, "The wax of Atatürk!" Then with his pointer he gestured at an antique rowing machine: "Sport!"

10:06. Dioramas from the war of independence. "No information! Just look!" the tour guide said. His expression made clear that there was in fact information, lots of it, and he wished he could share it all, but—he tapped his wristwatch with two fingers. And so without lingering, the foreign journalists looked: antique cannons, antique mortar shells, boxes of artillery, uniformed mannequins representing dead soldiers, bullets scattered about, rocks spattered with red metallic paint meant to suggest blood, an electric flame inside an antique lantern, all arranged theatrically before a painted panorama of Gallipoli, battleships burning in the distance, while a martial theme and explosive sound effects played on a hidden sound system, and Turkish schoolchildren stood at the rail pointing. On the journalists, the dioramas did not seem to have the desired effect—of bringing these historical events to life, or inspiring admiration for the battlefield heroics of Atatürk. In his notebook, one of the journalists scribbled a note: "The sadness of dioramas."

10:09. "Gift shop!" Atatürk neckties, Atatürk wristwatches, Atatürk coloring books. With his beribboned pointer, the tour guide slapped out a nervous staccato on his trouser leg. "Sorry!" he said, sounding genuinely apologetic. "But we don't have time"—for shopping, he meant. "Mr. Ferhat is waiting. You get the zip program." ▶

Our Great Geniuses



Elena Milashina '10, in March was among nine recipients of the 2013 International Women of Courage Award from the U.S. Department of State's Office of Global Women's Issues.

The presenters described her "as one of the most experienced and influential investigative journalists in Russia" who has "spent her career shining light on events others shy away from. From drug trafficking, to terrorist attacks, to military disasters, and even the killings of fellow journalists, Milashina has covered some of Russia's most controversial subjects with passion, fairness and dedication.

"She is an ardent opponent of the extrajudicial kidnappings and torture that plague areas of Russia and is outspoken against xenophobia and racism. She has received overt and thinly-veiled threats from government officials, private citizens and corporations, and she bears the scars of both physical and verbal attacks. Despite these challenges, Milashina continues to provide a voice exemplifying commitment to the highest human standards."



Jamaal Abdul-Alim '08, earned a 2013-14 Spencer Education Journalism Fellowship at Columbia University. For his project, he will examine the impact of teacher prep reform on student achievement and diversity.

Molly Ball '10 of *The Atlantic* won the 2012 Toner Prize for Excellence in Political Reporting for her coverage of the 2012 election and the campaign around gay-marriage referenda in four states. The prize carries a \$5,000 award.

Vindu Goel '06 was named a tech reporter for *The New York Times* in the San Francisco Bay Area. Previously, he was an editor for the *Times* in New York City.

Antonio Gois '11 was named national assistant editor at *O Globo*, a national newspaper in Brazil, based in Rio de Janeiro. Previously, he was an education reporter for *Folha de Sao Paulo*.

Vahe Gregorian '04, was named sports columnist for *The Kansas City Star*. Previously, he was a sports reporter at *The St. Louis Post Dispatch*.

Carol Guensburg '10S, and three partners co-founded American Food Roots, an online magazine of food and culture which received a McCormick Foundation grant for new women media entrepreneurs. Guensburg will keep her job as an editor for Scripps Howard News Service.

Amy Haimerl '13, was named entrepreneurship editor for *Crain's Detroit Business*. Previously, she was editor of *USAA Magazine*.



Miles Harvey '08, compiled a documentary play about Chicago street violence, "How Long Will I Cry? Voices of Youth Violence." The show is based on a variety of sources, including interviews with about 70 people conducted by Harvey and his creative-nonfiction students at DePaul University, where he's an assistant professor in the English department.

John Henrikson '00, was named a lead editor on Microsoft's *Bing Daily*, the preinstalled news app on Windows 8. Previously, he was digital editor at *The News Tribune* in Tacoma.

Mary Losure '04 won the Booklist Editors' Choice "Top of the List" for Youth Nonfiction, 2012, for her book, "The Fairy Ring: Or Elsie and Frances Fool the World." Her newest book, "Wild Boy: The Real Life of the Savage of Aveyron," came out this spring.

Tracie McMillan '13 won a Books for a Better Life Award for her book, "The American Way of Eating."

Phillip Morris '12, a columnist for *The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer*, won the Distinguished Writing Award for Commentary/Column Writing presented by the American Society of News Editors. The presenters said he "effectively uses ordinary people, small examples and anecdotes to illustrate larger issues of community decay and government inaction."

Tom Parfitt '10, was named Moscow bureau chief of *The Daily Telegraph*. Previously, he was a correspondent in the Moscow bureau of *The Guardian*.

Steve Titherington '06, was named senior commissioning editor at the BBC World Service. Previously, he was executive editor.



Kelly Zito '07, was appointed director of public affairs for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Pacific Southwest region, which includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the Pacific Islands and 147 tribes. Previously, she was a staff writer covering the environment for *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

Are you a former fellow who should be included among our "Great Geniuses"? Send your news and a print-resolution photo to fellownews@umich.edu. Take it one step further by joining the conversation at kwfellows.org. You never know who you might bump into online.

THE FELLOWS ARE GEMS IN CLASS

Editors Note: *The author, Dr. Andrew Hoffman, is the Holcim Professor of Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business/School of Natural Resources & Environment.*

To my mind, the Knight-Wallace Fellows program is one of the gems of the University of Michigan community, and I try to connect with the program and its fellows as much as I can.

There are a whole host of reasons why I say this—and explain to my colleagues—but I'd like to focus specifically on the benefits the fellows bring to my classroom. I am always pleased when a fellow asks to audit my classes, always say yes and have never regretted it.

Let me begin by explaining that I teach courses on business sustainability and am director of the Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise. And as a business school professor, my classes are run in a case-based, discussion-oriented style. In other words, I deal in domains that are extremely topical and my classroom format allows me ample opportunity to draw the fellows into class discussion.

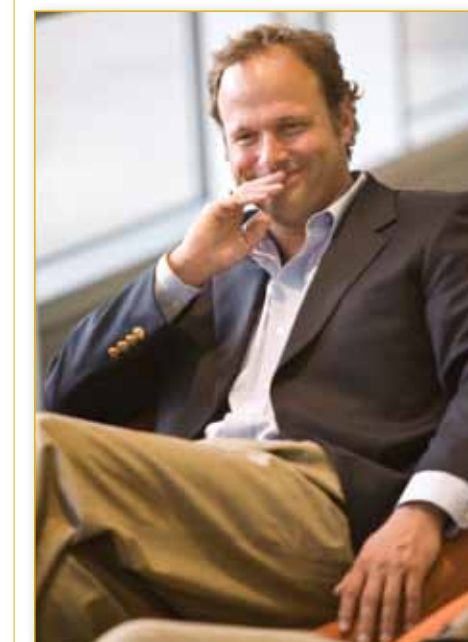
Over the years, they have never let me down, always enriching and expanding our classroom experience. Whether the topic is fracking, climate change, water scarcity, population growth, public perceptions or the political landscape, the depth, history and straightforward literacy that the fellows bring enhances my students' education; I have no doubt about that. At times, I have even asked fellows to give brief presentations on their latest project or past experience if it relates to the topic at hand. They are always gracious and generous in accepting my invitations.

I might even go so far as to say that I would be remiss if I were not to take full advantage of their presence on campus by bringing them into my classroom.

And the benefits don't stop there.

"Whether the topic is fracking, climate change, water scarcity, population growth, public perceptions or the political landscape, the depth, history and straightforward literacy that the fellows bring enhances my students' education."

Fellows have also helped me to see my teaching in new and improved ways. For example, one fellow told me that he encouraged another to take my class because I "speak in complete paragraphs." Like Moliere's "Bourgeois Gentleman" who discovers that he has been speaking prose all his life, and didn't know it, I had no idea and have never forgotten that pearl of feedback. And there are many more ways that their feedback has made me a better teacher and scholar; some revealed through the classroom, others revealed at the Knight-Wallace functions and, of course, others through my conver-



sations with Charles (who continues to ask me, with an amused smirk, if I have saved the world yet).

By getting to know the fellows, I have been invited to give talks at Wallace House. If you ever want to have your work tested in a format and environment that is far different than your average academic seminar, accept one of these invitations. The fellows are always polite (at least in my experience) and insightful, and I always leave challenged by their unique vantage point for reacting to my work. And for that I am a better scholar and communicator.

So, my advice to all my colleagues is to take advantage of this great program and the fellows it draws to Ann Arbor. You and your students will be the better for it. ▶

Publisher: Charles R. Eisendrath '75
Editor: Kyle Poplin '10
Production and Design:
Kathleen Horn, Blue Skies Studio

Views expressed in the *Journal* are not necessarily those of the Fellowship Program or the University of Michigan.

Mike and Mary Wallace House
University of Michigan, 620 Oxford Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2635
Telephone: 734-998-7666 • FAX: 734-988-7979
www.kwfellows.org

Regents of the University of Michigan

Julia Donovan Darlow, Ann Arbor; Laurence B. Deitch, Bingham Farms; Denise Ilitch, Bingham Farms; Olivia P. Maynard, Goodrich; Andrea Fischer Newman, Ann Arbor; Andrew C. Richner, Grosse Pointe Park; S. Martin Taylor, Grosse Pointe Farms; Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor; Mary Sue Coleman (*ex officio*)

University of Michigan
Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex*, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity and Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

*Includes gender identity and gender expression



Knight-Wallace Journalism Fellows
University of Michigan
Mike and Mary Wallace House
620 Oxford Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2635

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ann Arbor, MI
Permit #144

— Turkey testing the limits, continued from page 1
they're "Journalists and Writers"—conversation didn't stray too far from what exactly Fethullah Gülen, an Islamic scholar now living in the U.S., is up to.

Gülen started a decentralized movement advocating a pious life, religious tolerance and good deeds that has struck many as too good to be true. It has spread its network throughout the country, including into numerous civil institutions such as the police and government. Many worry that it's a stealth campaign to establish religious control of the country. One of the more public controversies alleges that Gülenists are consolidating their power by removing critics, most visibly in a series of indictments accusing these critics, including at least two journalists, of trying to overthrow the Islamic-friendly government of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Our seminar host, Mustafa Yeşil, chairman of The Journalists and Writers Foundation, assured us with a smile and some tea that this was not true. So, with that cleared up, maybe, we boarded our chartered ferryboat for the other side of Istanbul and a nighttime visit to the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art.

The next day was the freighted Thursday of Öcalan's announcement. As luck would have it, we would be spending it in Ferhat's lair at CNN Türk, a partnership of CNN and the Doğan Media group. Five newspapers are also housed in the complex, along with an entertainment division. As a result we were in the hum-

ming center of the country's media on the most important news day in recent memory. Öcalan did call for a ceasefire followed by disarmament, and from CNN Türk's control room we watched live footage from the southeastern city of Diyarbakir, where hundreds of thousands of Kurds gathered to celebrate.

The afternoon was spent on less lofty matters, but no less important—soap operas! This is a booming industry in Turkey, which is able to import the production values of the West but create storylines that resonate in the East.

Murat Yetkin, editor in chief of the English language *Hürriyet Daily News*, a Doğan newspaper, talked to us frankly about the repression and unspoken censorship that pervades the country's newsrooms these days. In contrast to the censorship under past military rule, today's censorship is more insidious; papers which run stories critical of Erdoğan or allege corruption see heavy harassment. Pressure is put on the business owners, who then may resort to firing journalists who have written the offensive material. Doğan's offices were raided by tax inspectors, the company was fined and Doğan was forced to sell off some of its holdings. Many journalists have been jailed. Reporters Without Borders has labeled Turkey "the world's biggest prison for journalists," ranking it 154 out of 179 in its 2013 Press Freedom Index.

KWF '03 alum Andrew Finkel, based

in Turkey, has firsthand experience. He was fired from *Today's Zaman's*, a Gülen newspaper, in 2011 after writing a column criticizing "the aggressive prosecution of people who write books." (The paper's editor has denied the firing was related to that one column.)

The government, meanwhile, maintains that most of the journalists who find themselves in trouble are charged in connection to terrorism, not because of their ideas. But others see an outright campaign of intimidation by an increasingly autocratic prime minister.

Öcalan's announcement led the news the next day as we flew to Ankara, the nation's capital. But it wouldn't last. During a seminar with Ibrahim Kalin, the foreign minister's deputy under-secretary for foreign relations, we asked about diplomatic tensions with Israel. (Turkey had recalled its ambassador after a confrontation between a Turkish aid group and Israeli soldiers left nine dead.) Kalin cryptically told us that there might be some big news in that area very soon. It was enough to make Ferhat hit the speed dial on his phone and alert his diplomatic correspondent. Sure enough, that afternoon the Turkish and Israeli governments announced that Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu had called Erdoğan and apologized, agreed to pay money into a fund for the victims' families and lifted the Gaza blockade for certain essential items. It was huge news, and a diplomatic feather in Turkey's cap. ▶