

**ATA 588**  
**Selected Topics in Turkish Political Thought:**  
**The Politics of Population in Turkey**

ATA 588 (3 cr)  
Spring 2025  
ATA Seminar Room  
Thursday 678

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The interest in population issues has never been a contemporary issue of our times. From around the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the interwar years, deep concern for population issues can widely be observed in many parts of the world. Indeed, these issues became almost an obsession of public, political and academic debates all around the world. In the age of nationalist rivalry, imperialism, alarming decline of women's fertility in certain countries and the population catastrophe that World War I imposed made elites all over the world took up population issues and integrated them as essential parts of their social and political projects. During the war, some 15 million people, mostly men, perished. In France, for example, one in ten males died during the war. In the crisis atmosphere of the postwar era when revolutions, insurrections, civil wars, forced migrations, labor unrests and, above all, the dissolution of state authorities swept most parts of the globe while disease, epidemics, famine, the increasing rate of male suicides led to unprecedented social catastrophes, not to mention the Spanish influenza of 1918 killing around 50 million people, more than three times caused by the war.

Until the 1980s, the fear of population growth dominated global concern. However, a dramatic shift has occurred, with global discourse now dominated by fears of "population collapse." Outside of sub-Saharan Africa, many nations are experiencing exceptionally low fertility rates, placing immense pressure on various aspects of social life.

This course focuses on population related issues in early Republican Turkey within a comparative perspective. Just like the cases elsewhere, by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Turkish elites were obsessed with the improvement of the quality and quantity of their populations. In this respect, we will focus on policies both on quantitative (demographic) and qualitative (Eugenics) levels.

Students with Ottoman reading skills are especially encouraged.

The grade in this course will be based equally on the participation (30 points), quizzes (40 points) and the final paper (30 points).

LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
Week 1 Feb. 13	Introduction	An overview of Turkey's population trends.
Week 2 Feb. 20	Malthusianism	Thomas R. Malthus, <i>An Essay on the Principle of Population</i> (London, 1798): 1-11, 23-31, 49-68, 110-125. Paul Ehrlich, <i>The Population Bomb</i> , New York, 1978, 1-39; 179-80. Nicholas Eberstadt, "The Demographic Future: What Population

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		<p>Growth—and Decline—Means for the Global Economy,” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, December 2010, v. 89, no.6, 54-64.</p> <p><i>The Economist</i>, “Global fertility has collapsed, with profound economic consequences,” June 1, 2023.</p> <p><i>The Economist</i>, “Malthus, the false prophet,” May 15, 2008.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> <i>How Many People Can Live on Planet Earth</i>, BBC 2009.</p>
Week 3 Feb. 27	Population Politics I	<p>Matthew Connelly, <i>Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population</i> (Harvard, 2008): 1-114.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> Interview with Margaret Sanger (1957) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4pwJas4En0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4pwJas4En0</a></p>
Week 4 March 6	Population Politics II	<p>Maria Sophie Quine, <i>Population Politics in Twentieth Century Europe: Fascist Dictatorships and Liberal Democracies</i> (London, 2003), 1-51.</p> <p>Mark Mazower, “Healthy Bodies, Sick Bodies,” in <i>Dark Continent: Europe’s 20<sup>th</sup> Century</i> (London, 1998): 77-105.</p> <p>M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, “Nüfus Mühendisliğinden Gezi Parkı Direnişine,” <i>T24</i>, July 19, 2013.</p>
Week 5 March 13	Rise of Eugenics I	<p>Daniel J. Kevles, <i>In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Hereditary</i> (New York, 1985): 3-147.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> <i>A Science Odyssey: Origins</i>, PBS, 2005.</p>
Week 6 March 20	Rise of Eugenics II	<p>Mark B. Adams, “Eugenics in the History of Science,” &amp; “Toward a Comparative History of Eugenics,” in <i>The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia</i> (New York: 1990): 3-7; 217-226.</p> <p>Roger Griffin, “Tunnel Visions and Mysterious Trees: Modernist Projects of National and Racial Degeneration, 1880-1939,” in <i>Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe</i>: 417-456.</p> <p>Franz Boas “Eugenics,” <i>The Scientific Monthly</i>, V. 3, No. 5 (Nov., 1916): 471-478.</p> <p>Diane Paul, “Eugenics and the Left,” <i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>, V. 45, No. 4 (Oct. - Dec., 1984): 567-590.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> <i>Racism, A History: Fatal Impacts</i>, BBC, 2007</p> <p><b>Video:</b> <i>A Science Odyssey: Origins</i>, PBS, 2005.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> <i>What Darwin Didn’t Know</i>, BBC, 2009.</p>
Week 7	Population in Turkey I	Adnan Güriz, <i>Türkiye’de Nüfus Politikası ve Hukuk Düzeni</i>

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March 27		(Ankara, 1975):1-87, 141-187.
Week 8 April 3	Population in Turkey II	<p>C., "İstatistik İhtiyacını Tatminde Gecikiyoruz," <i>Hayat</i>, vol. 1, no 25, Ankara 19 May 1927: 486-487.</p> <p>Camille Jakar, "Tahrir-i Nüfus Servet-i Umumiyyenin Muhâsbesidir," <i>İstanbul Şehremaneti Mecmuası</i>, no. 32, April 1927: 463-465.</p> <p><i>Nüfus Meselesi ve Nüfus Sayımı Hakkında Fikirler</i> (Ankara, 1941): 1-53,62-89,97-115,156-164,199-203,218-232,241-254,263-267.</p> <p>Kamil, Jakar, "Nüfus Tahriri Hakkında," <i>Hayat</i>, vol 1, no 12, 17 February 1927, 13-14.</p> <p>Kamil Jakar, "Tahrir-i Nüfus ve İçtimaiyat," <i>Felsefe ve İçtimâiyât Mecmuası</i>, vol. 1, no 5, October 1927.</p> <p>Aytül Tamer &amp; Alanur Cavlin Bozbeyoglu, "1927 Nüfus Sayımının Türkiye'de Ulus Devlet İnşasındaki Yeri: Basında Yansımaları," <i>Nüfusbilim Dergisi</i>, 26 (2004): 73-88.</p> <p>Ömer Celal Saraç, "Avrupa'nın ve Türkiye'nin Nüfus Meseleleri," 1939, CHP Konferanslar Serisi, Kitap 9, Ankara: 51-68.</p> <p><b>Video:</b> Türkiye'de 1945 Nüfus Sayımı  <a href="https://www.trt2.com.tr/tarih/tarih-in-ruhu/tarih-in-ruhu-or-nufus-sayimi-or-49-bolum-1400001">https://www.trt2.com.tr/tarih/tarih-in-ruhu/tarih-in-ruhu-or-nufus-sayimi-or-49-bolum-1400001</a></p>
Week 9 April 10	Darwinism in Turkey	<p>Mehmet Ö. Alkan, "Osmanlı Darwinizmi," <i>Cogito: Darwin Devrimi: Evrim</i>, no.60, Winter 2009: 333-358.</p> <p>Baha Tevfik, "Mukaddime" in <i>İnsan'ın Menşei Nesli Beşer</i> by E. Haeckel, translated by Ahmet Nebil, (İstanbul: 1911), in Ottoman Turkish.</p> <p>M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Turkish Nationalism and the Evolutionary Idea (1923-1938), (With Dr. Murat Tolun), <i>Nations and Nationalism</i>, 26:3, July 2020: 743-758.</p> <p>M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Darwin ve Sosyal Bilimler," <i>Birikim</i>, no. 251, April 2010.</p> <p>Atıla Doğan, <i>Osmanlı Aydınları ve Sosyal Darwinizm</i> (İstanbul, 2006): 147-337.</p>
Week 10 April 17	Social Darwinism	<p>Gregory Claeys, "The 'Survival of the Fittest' and the Origins of Social Darwinism," <i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), pp. 223-240.</p> <p>Diane B. Paul, "Darwin, Social Darwinism and Eugenics," <i>Cambridge Companion to Darwin</i> (Londra, 2003) ed. Jonathan Hodge and Gregory Radick: 214-239.</p> <p>Nazan Maksudyan, "Türkiye'de Irkçılığın "Bilimsel" Temelleri, Türklüğü Ölçmek ve Cumhuriyet Tarihçiliğinin Türkiye Tarihindeki Irkçılığı İnkâr Saplantısı," <i>Cogito</i>, no. 101, 2021: 195-</p>

LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
		209.
Week 11 April 24	Eugenics in Turkey I	<p>Dr. Perihan Çambel, <i>Ögenik (Eugenics) Hakkında Düşünceler</i> (İstanbul: 1946).</p> <p>Yücel Yanıkdağ, <i>Healing the Nation</i> (chapter: “Degenerationist Pathway to Eugenics”) Edinburgh, 2013: 208-242.</p> <p>Ayça Alemdaroğlu, “Eugenics, Modernity and Nationalism”, in <i>Social Histories of Disability and Deformity</i>, ed. by David Turner and Kevin Stagg (London, 2006): 126-141.</p> <p>Murat Ergin, “Biometrics and Anthropometrics: the Twins of Turkish Modernity,” <i>Patterns of Prejudice</i> 42(3), 2008: 281-304.</p>
Week 12 May 8	Eugenics in Turkey II	<p>Mustafa Rahmi, <i>Islah-ı Irk</i> (İstanbul: 1339), in Ottoman Turkish.</p> <p>Mustafa Rahmi, “Öjenin Aslı Hayat İlminin Esasları,” <i>Fikirler</i> 18, 15 March 1918, no. 7: 9-12.</p> <p>Sabiha Zekeriya, “Çocuk Yapmak Kanunen Men’ Edilebilir mi ?” (in Ottoman Turkish) <i>Resimli Ay</i>, v. 5, no.57/9, Kasım 1928.</p> <p>Dr. Tefik Remzi, “Türk Irkının Hıfzıssıhası ve Milli Şuur,” (Ottoman Turkish) <i>Hayat</i>, v.3, no. 75, 3 May 1928: 19.</p> <p>Mahzar Osman Uzman, “Öjenik,” <i>CHP Konferanslar Serisi</i>, 2. Kitap. (Ankara: 1939), pp.3-12.</p> <p>Sadi Irmak, “Milletlerin "Terreddi" ve "İstifa" sı,” CHP Konferanslar Serisi, 12. Kitap. : 19-35.</p> <p>Sadi Irmak, <i>Kendimize Doğru, Memleketimizin Bazı Meseleleri</i> (İstanbul: Foto Magazin Basımevi, 1943): 60-99.</p> <p>Mahzar Osman Uzman, “Cumhuriyetin Sıhhat Siyaseti,” <i>Sıhhat Almanığı</i>, İstanbul, 1933: 35-45.</p> <p>Fahreddin Kerim Gökay, “İrk Hıfzıssıhhasında İrsiyetin Rolü ve Nesli Terreddiden Korumak Çareleri”, CHP Konferanslar Dizisi, Kitap: 12, 1940: 11-15.</p>
Week 13 May 15	An Overview	Global Trends in 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Demographics in Turkey