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### Language

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Authoritarianism was a major focus of the Turkish 2013 protests, which gathered momentum after brutal police reaction to a small peaceful sit-in from May 28-31 in Gezi Park, Taksim Square, Istanbul. Although the prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who had won three successive elections since 2002, could claim significant political achievements – curbing the army and (despite repression of Kurdish militants) promoting a peace process with the Kurds – his style was increasingly autocratic. Under his government artistic and media freedom were suppressed – Reporters Without Borders placed Turkey no. 154 out of 180 countries in its 2014 Press Freedom Index. Secondly, although the Turkish economy had prospered under neo-liberal policies, anger about the gap between rich and poor was a second element in the Turkish protests (as it has been in many popular uprisings). The government has fostered close links with big business, including construction and mining companies, at the expense of workers, as the deaths of 282 miners in May 2014 (against a backdrop of government refusal to impose stronger safety rules in mines, which according to the ILO are the third most dangerous in the world) dramatically illustrated. A third factor in the Turkish protests was the government's policy of rapid urban development overriding local concerns – resistance to the destruction of Gezi Park in central Istanbul began the May-June 2013 movement. The government planned to replace the park with a rebuilt Ottoman barracks and a shopping mall, and it was one of the last public parks in the city. Another concern for many demonstrators was the government's attack on secular lifestyles, for example tighter rules on sales of alcohol.

The rapidly growing demonstrations from 1 June 2013 included a much larger occupation of Gezi Park and protests across the country, mobilizing over 3 million people in 50 towns and cities. Erdogan ordered a crackdown in mid-June: in the violent police operation eight died, 104 had serious head injuries and about 8,000 were hurt; many who showed sympathy (even by tweets) lost their jobs, and a year later hundreds were still on trial. The repressive response was met initially by individuals mounting solitary 'standing' protests in public places. Although after June there was not a sustained movement, there have been frequent protests since on varied issues, including corruption, in late 2013 and in 2014. The funeral processions in March 2014 for a 14 year old boy who died after nearly months in a coma (induced by being hit by a gas canister fired by police during the Gezi Park protests) was attacked by the police, triggering new demonstrations across the country. Corruption allegations had surfaced in December 2013, there were leaks on social media, and Erdogan was being accused of removing police and prosecutors in order to delay investigations which might incriminate his family and business and political allies. The mine disaster in May 2014 (noted above) prompted angry street protests in major cities.

Although a majority of Turkey's 80 million population has continued to support Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) – for example in voting in the municipal elections in 2014 – the Gezi protests and their aftermath brought about a more critical attitude by many to government and the subservient mainstream media. In the view of some activists the protests also promoted greater tolerance among those with diverse attitudes to Islam and differing lifestyles, and brought together very diverse groups: Turks and Kurds, Kemalists and conservative Muslims, Greens, Marxists, anarchists, feminists and LGBT activists. The protesters were predominantly young – those who flocked to Gezi Park to protest against police violence included young liberals and members of the activist pro-democracy Young Civilians – but included older men and women and gained support from many white collar and professional groups, including doctors who tended the wounded. Businesses in Istanbul also offered some support.

Erdogan did receive a setback in the June 2015 parliamentary elections – despite being elected president in 2014 – when his AKP party failed for the first time in 13 years to win a majority in parliament. He had campaigned for a constitutional change to strengthen presidential powers, and some voters apparently wished to curb his authoritarian ambitions.

However, the situation in Turkey rapidly worsened in the second half of 2015. The government effectively abandoned the peace process with the Kurds when it launched air strikes against Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) bases in July in response to a car bomb attack attributed to them, and publicly bracketed the KPP with ISIS as a threat to Turkey. Erdogan appealed to popular feelings of insecurity to secure a majority in parliament in new elections on 1 November 2015, and immediately proceeded to step up his repression of political opponents and the media.

Turkish politics became more repressive and obscure after a failed military coup in mid-July 2016. Erdogan did receive widespread popular support in resisting the coup, but immediately began an extensive purge of alleged coup plotters, which extended not only to the army and police, but also to the judiciary, the civil service, university staff, dismissed from their posts, and jails were being emptied to receive new political prisoners. The accusation was that they owed allegiance to an exiled Muslim cleric (a former associate of the President), who Erdogan named as the head of a conspiratorial movement.

There have been more significant protests, for example about the new Constitution, which extends the length of time Erdogan can remain President and the scope of his powers. The referendum in April 2017 was very narrowly won and its conduct was criticised by OSCE. A march by tens of thousands from Istanbul to Ankara started on June 15, 2017 calling for the rule of law and justice against mass imprisonment as a result of state emergency.

Therefore, at some point there may be a case for further updating to cover developments in Turkey if there are solid enough sources (e.g. academic articles; whole sections in movements periodicals; well analysed .PDFs or, of course, books).

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