The Politics of Public Memory in

TURKEY

Modern Intellectual and Political History of the Middle East
Mehrzad Boroujerdi, *Series Editor*

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk with his then-wife Latife Hanım.
Courtesy of the Anatolian Civilization Museum.

The Politics of Public Memory in TURKEY

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The Politics of Public Memory in TURKEY

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Introduction

The Politics of Public Memory in Turkey

Esra Özyürek

In the popular 1990 novel *The Black Book* by the Nobel prize-winning Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, a middle-aged Istanbulite named Galip travels through layers of his memory as he searches for his wife, who has suddenly abandoned him. He suspects that she is playing one of their childhood games of hide-and-seek and is somewhere in Istanbul with their cousin, the journalist Celal. In the novel, every object, word, and face becomes a sign from the past for Galip to decipher in order to make sense of the present. Throughout the novel Galip searches for his wife and himself in the multilayered space and time of the city as well as in Celal's cryptic newspaper essays. Early on, Celal predicts that the Bosporus River that cuts through the city will soon dry up and reveal the thousands of years of history buried underneath:

> On the last day, when the waters suddenly recede, among the American transatlantics gone to ground and the Ionic columns covered with seaweed, there will be Celtic and Ligurian skeletons openmouthed in supplications to gods whose identities are no longer known. Amidst mussel-encrusted Byzantine treasures, forks and knives made of silver and tin, thousand-year-old barrels of wine, soda pop bottles, carcasses of pointy-prowed galleys, I can imagine a civilization whose energy needs for their antiquated stoves and lights will be derived from a dilapidated Romanian tanker propelled into a mire-pit. (Pamuk 1994, 15)

Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, citizens of Turkey, much like the determined Galip, have been sorting through the rich layers of their history, long covered by the river of a modernist, future-oriented vision. And like Pamuk's evaporating Bosporus, their belief in the future has been drying up. Today many in Turkey curiously excavate through the remnants of their past in order to find clues to help them understand or control the present. Upper-class urbanites frequent antique shops to buy pieces of furniture that their grandparents discarded or "dealers" stole from the deserted homes and churches of Greeks and Armenians. Expensive restaurants invent and serve "Ottoman" food to local customers. Memoirs, historical novels, and films become best sellers and sources of unending public discussion in newspapers and on television. Newly married couples recover the long forgotten black-and-white pictures of their grandparents in their youth and use them to decorate their homes. Middle-class women take private lessons to learn the Ottoman script.

While nostalgia and its industry are on the rise all over the world (Lowenthal 1985; Boym 2001), the shapes they take in Turkey are especially intriguing (Özyürek 2006). In 1923, the newly founded Turkish Republic committed to a modernist future by erasing the memory of its immediate Ottoman past. Now, almost eighty years after the establishment of the Republic, the grandchildren of the founders have a different relationship with history. New generations utilize every effort to remember, record, and reconcile the imagined earlier periods. The multiple and personalized representations of the past with which they engage allow contemporary Turkish citizens to create alternative identities for themselves and their communities. As opposed to its futuristic and homogenizing character at the turn of the twentieth century, Turkish nationalism today utilizes memories and generates diverse narratives for the nation as well as the minority groups.

The changing nature of Turkish relationships with the past offers a unique context to study the complex nature of public memory in Turkey. Contributors to this volume come from diverse disciplines of anthropology, comparative literature, and sociology, but they share a common understanding that in contemporary Turkey representations of the past have become metaphors through which individuals and groups define their cultural identity and political position. The contributors explore the ways people challenge,

reaffirm, or transform the concepts of history, nation, homeland, and Republic through acts of memory. The volume demonstrates that memory can be both a basis for cultural reproduction and a source of resistance to it.

Turkish society is frequently accused of being amnesiac. Many locals complain that there is no social memory in Turkey. When I mentioned to friends and acquaintances in Turkey that I was working on a book on public memory, many times they affirmed my efforts by saying: "It is really important that you are writing a book on this topic. Lack of memory is one of the most important problems we have in this country." Indeed, the Turkish Republic was originally based on forgetting. Yet, at the turn of the twenty-first century, cultural practices are replete with memory, and people relentlessly struggle over how to represent and define the past. The growing laments about amnesia attest to the shared desire to have even more memory in Turkey.

Administered Forgetting During the Early Republic

In *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting,* Milan Kundera writes: "Forgetting is a form of death ever present within life . . . but forgetting is also the great problem of politics. When a big power wants to deprive a small country of its national consciousness it uses the method of organized forgetting. . . . A nation which loses awareness of its past gradually loses its self" (Kundera 1980, 235). The kind of administered forgetting Kundera talks about has been integral to politics in Turkey, especially during the foundation of the Republic. Organized amnesia, however, was self-administered by the Republican reformers, rather than imposed by the external "big power" Kundera warns against. The founders of the new regime decided that in order to build a new identity for the new nation, they first had to erase the Ottoman legacy. After six hundred years of rule over the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe, the Ottoman Empire had been partitioned by the Allies following the end of World War I. The Turkish Republic was founded by a group of former Ottoman soldiers who organized an independent republican movement in the country. The new regime established itself as a homogenous and secular nation-state that rejected the multicultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire and its emphasis on Islam.

In the 1920s and 1930s the new Turkish government occupied itself with a series of reforms, initiating new and state-administered ways of dressing, writing, talking, and being for the new citizens of the Republic. These reforms have commonly been interpreted as measures of Westernization and secularization. Although the Republican officials did aim at establishing closer ties with Europe and placing religion under state control, another major motive for their reforms was to sever ties with the Ottoman past. Erasing the everyday habits and memories of the immediate past allowed the Turkish government to establish itself as the founder of a new era, although it was a direct inheritor of the six-hundred-year-old Ottoman Empire.

The new government exerted the first attempts of erasure on the bodies of citizens, possibly the deepest site of memory inscription. In 1925, merely two years after the Republic was established, the Parliament passed a law banning men from wearing fezes and obliging them to wear Western hats with brims.[1] The hat reform was so abrupt that when the law passed, there was not a large enough supply of male hats in the country. Family albums include pictures of men who proudly posed for the camera with any kind of hat they could find, including fedora, safari, or wicker hats, and sometimes with no hat (Baydar and Çiçekoğlu 1998). Although the law did not abolish veiling, many women took their veils off, and those who did not were subject to attacks on the streets.[2] Female students were required to wear shorts and join gymnastics demonstrations in the stadiums. The new bodies of the Republic had to learn new habits of moving to accommodate their new outfits.

The second rupture with the recent past took place in regulating time. In 1926 the new Republic adopted the Western clock and calendar and trans-

1. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk legitimized the hat reform with the following words in a speech in 1927: "Gentlemen, it was necessary to abolish the fez, which sat on the heads of our nation as an emblem of ignorance, negligence, fanaticism, and hatred of progress and civilization. [It was necessary] to accept in its place the hat, the headgear used by the whole civilized world; and in this way, to demonstrate that the Turkish nation, in its mentality as in other respects, in no way diverges from civilized social life" (in Lewis 1968, 268).

2. Many elderly retired teachers whom I interviewed for my dissertation research told me how young men in neighborhoods would rip off veiled women's clothing (Özyürek 2006).

formed the way Turkish citizens experience time in a day, month, and year.[3] The abandoned Islamic calendar was lunar and thus eleven days shorter than the solar year. Because it is very difficult to calculate how dates in the Islamic calendar correspond to the Gregorian calendar, the Ottoman past became difficult to locate on yet another level.[4] Many of the elderly citizens I interviewed still had a hard time converting dates to the Common Era calendar, even though they have been living with the new calendar for more than seventy years. Thus, events that predate 1926 appear as if they belong to a different temporal zone. The new calendar in Turkey made it possible for the Turkish Republic to move from the "Oriental" flow of time, which the reformers disdained, toward an "Occidental" one, to which they aspired.

The most powerful way in which the Republican officials disconnected with the past, however, was through administering the script reform of 1928 and the language reform of 1932. The government replaced the Arabic script with the Latin one over a period of three months. The alphabet reform did not bring the expected increase in the level of literacy to the nation, but it did make it impossible for the new generations to read anything written before 1928. In order to couple the script reform with the language reform, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk founded the Turkish Language Institute in 1932. Its members worked relentlessly for three years to replace all the foreign words in the language with "pure Turkish" words collected from Anatolia and Central Asia or at other times simply with invented words. Although the language reform slowed down after 1935, the changes were so dramatic that it is quite difficult for an educated person to understand a text written before 1928, even if it is transliterated into Latin script.

Another reform that split connections with the past was the 1934 "law of last names." At that date all Turkish citizens were required to drop their family, tribal, and location names and religious titles, and adopt a last name. The Republican officials were actively involved in the naming process. They vetoed

3. This reform is reminiscent of the way the leaders of the French Revolution adopted a new calendar to mark the beginning of a new time (Ozouf 1988).

4. Historians use books and computer programs in order to figure out the correspondence between dates in the Muslim calendar and dates in the Gregorian calendar.

many names on the basis that they were not Turkish or appropriate as last names, and they simply recorded other names in their books (Türköz 2001). The law of last names divided larger families into smaller groups and made it difficult for younger generations to follow their genealogies through official documents. The law also baptized the citizens for their new lives, purifying them of older connections with units larger than a nuclear family.

Despite the well-organized efforts to foster forgetfulness, the new Republic could not completely erase the memories. Even though past experiences conflict with the nationalist history, they coexist in individual memories. According to Martin Stokes, revoking "old ways" has a political function: "Remembering becomes both a problem and a matter of cultural elaboration. This is not because the state is incapable of making people forget but because the politics of forgetting paradoxically demands the preservation of a variety of things to demonstrate the necessity of their having been forgotten" (Stokes 2000, 240). As early as the first decade of the Republic, unpaved village roads, the old education system, and veiling practices were commonly compared in official posters to new, modern city scenes (Bozdoğan 2001). Such visual images repeatedly remind citizens of what they should leave behind and forget about desiring. At the same time, these efforts have also prevented the old ways from totally disappearing, at least from memories. In contrast to the famous French historian Pierre Nora's frequently cited concept of "sites of memory," where "a residual sense of continuity exists" (1996, 1) with the past that is lost to modern people, Turkey became awash with "sites of forgetting." Such sites are marked with a residual sense of rupture that should be constantly remembered to prove that the break actually took place.

Rise of Memory at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century

If the turn of the twentieth century is marked as an age of forgetting for Turkish citizens, the turn of the twenty-first century is one of nostalgia for people in Turkey and elsewhere. *Nostalgia,* a term that originated in the seventeenth century to name the symptoms of homesick Swiss soldiers (Lowenthal 1985), is now a widespread feeling shared by millions of people around the world. From the Taliban in Afghanistan (Roy 1994) to discontented postreform

workers in China (Rofel 1999) or postsocialist citizens of Germany (Berdahl 1999), large groups of people yearn for an imagined past. A widely held belief about nostalgia is that since modernity could not fulfill its promises for a better and freer life, nations marginalized in the global order now look back at the past fondly. In other words, modernity finished with the end of hope for tomorrow, and since then people look to the past rather than the future for their utopias (Huyssen 1995).

Another popular explanation about the new orientation toward the past holds rapid social and technological transformations of the modern age responsible. Pierre Nora, the leading figure of this approach, argues that rapid changes cut people off from their past. In the modern world people lose an embodied sense of the past, and their access to earlier periods only becomes possible through archived, alienated, or dutifully followed histories rather than orally transmitted memories. He argues, "What was left of experience, still lived in the warmth of tradition, in the silence of custom, in the repetition of the ancestral, has been swept away by a surge of deeply historical sensibility." Thus, he states, "memory is constantly on our lips because it no longer exists" (Nora 1996, 1).

Although illuminating, both explanations define memory in negative terms, seeing it as a mere replacement for something lost, a belief in tomorrow or a real tradition. Essays in this volume go beyond such a replacement approach and suggest at least three ways in which memory is constructive of new sets of relations in the Turkish context. Each contributor, in his or her own way, demonstrates that memory is both productive and a product of political struggle in the present. Some authors (Bartu, Hart, and Iğsız) point to the power of memory in turning communal objects and concepts into commodities for personal ownership. Others (Gür, Iğsız, Ökten, Özyürek, and Tuğal) discuss the ways in which memories create identities and help members of the nation come to terms with the past and with national traumas, by either highlighting or concealing them.

The Politics of Public Memory

It was the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs who in the mid-twentieth century first introduced the idea of memory as something shared by a unit

larger than the individual. According to Halbwachs, memory is collective, and it is not possible for an individual to remember something that is not already collectively inscribed. He claims, "One may say that the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group, but one may also affirm that the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories" (Halbwachs 1992, 40). Thanks to his Durkheimian approach, Halbwachs was able to see how memory serves the present goals of society, such as maintaining and strengthening group membership. The same emphasis on the cohesive nature of the group, however, also inhibited him from paying attention to differences within society in terms of the memories individuals and groups own and promote.

Halbwach's understanding of the shared aspects of memory was influential among Anglophone scholars in the 1990s. Although contemporary scholars are more reluctant to use his phrase "collective memory," other terms, such as *social memory* or, more recently, *cultural memory,* are frequently used with similar connotations. The concept of collective memory is useful in discussing how "identification and knowledge of a particular place, stories, songs or poems, and crafts or artistic forms help form a basis of common identity, a sense of community, and especially the continuity of the past into the present," as Kimberly Hart writes in this volume. Based on her research on time and identity in an Anatolian weaving village, Hart suggests that collective memory is embedded in practices, objects, and land. The idea of tradition, on the other hand, involves a conscious remembering and careful performing of past practices.

Because the terms *collective, social,* and *cultural* all emphasize the shared nature of culture and memory, the rarely used phrase *public memory* is an apt descriptor of the events analyzed by several of the contributors to this volume. My use of the term *public memory* is inspired by Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge's definition of *public culture.* In the first issue of the journal *Public Culture,* Appadurai and Breckenridge claim they chose the term *public culture* over more commonly used phrases such as *folk culture* or *mass culture* because, they argue, the term *public culture* is less embedded in Western dichotomies like high versus low, elite versus mass, or popular versus classical. Furthermore, it better expresses their desire to consider culture as a "zone of cultural debate" or "an arena where other types, forms, domains of culture are encountering,

interrogating, and contesting each other in new and unexpected ways" (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 6).

Phrases that are frequently associated with memory do not present the same problems as those coupled with culture. For example, there is no common distinction between high or low or elite or mass forms of memory. Yet, there is a generally accepted distinction between individual and social memory, and also between memory and history. Such divisions suggest that individual memories can be diverse, yet social, collective, cultural, or written memories are shared by all members of the group. The phrase *public memory,* on the other hand, connotes both the shared and the contested aspects of memory at the same time. As many of the contributors to this volume demonstrate, public memories are comprehensible for most members in the group. Yet, this does not mean that all members share these memories or agree with them. Rather, different groups and individuals in society promote their own versions of memory in order to serve their interests in the present (see chapters by Bartu, Özyürek, and Tuğal).

Chapter 6, "Public Memory as Political Battleground," for example, demonstrates that in the late 1990s Islamist and secularist politicians, intellectuals, and citizens shared the idea that the foundation of the Turkish Republic was a crucial turning point for the history of the nation. The two parties, however, contested the foundational intent of the Republic. Islamists challenged the secularist memory of the foundation by longing for what they remember as the religious nature of the founding days. They retrieved pictures of Atatürk that showed him praying with religious leaders, traveling with his veiled wife, and making statements praising Islam. As in the example of the Islamists, nostalgia creates legitimate political space in which marginalized groups can engage in critiquing the present through redefining the past.

In chapter 4 of this volume, "Remembering a Nine-Thousand-Year-Old Site," Ayfer Bartu Candan similarly demonstrates how different groups that relate to the archeological site of Çatalhöyük emphasize their unique relationship with the location to claim ownership. Her rich analysis attests to the impossibility of making a simple division between official and unofficial versions of memory, since representations of the past are much more complicated than such a dichotomous split can reveal.

Commodification of Memory

An extensive public dispute about memory arose in Turkey as politicians and citizens debated the best way to market Istanbul's global service industries and tourism companies. During the 1994 local elections, the major issue of debate among candidates revolved around how to replan the city and, more importantly, what kind of heritage to emphasize among the multiple layers of history in the city while marketing the city to global investors (Bartu 1999a; Bora 1999).

As the case of Istanbul demonstrates well, memory and nostalgia turned into effective engines of late capitalism at the turn of the twenty-first century. Kathleen Stewart once noted that nostalgia runs with the economy of which it is a part (1988, 227). Today it might be more appropriate to rephrase her words as "nostalgia runs the economy of which it is a part," particularly because nostalgia is quite successful in turning commonly shared objects, concepts, and spaces into commodities (Özyürek 2004a). In contemporary Japan, for example, nostalgia creates desire for tourism and for so-called traditional objects by keeping Japan "on the verge of vanishing, stable yet endangered" (Ivy 1995, 65). In Turkey, on the other hand, nostalgia commodities allow people to reconnect with a past that has already vanished.

Entrepreneurs have creatively used the emergent nostalgia for the Ottoman Empire to sell furniture, houses, novels, films, and food. They have invented a curious new category, "Ottoman food," to market pricey menu items consisting of commonly consumed homemade dishes such as vegetarian appetizers, meat dishes cooked with vegetables, pickles, and fruit desserts. More recently the same dishes are also sold in Istanbul as Greek food, recalling the Ottoman residents of the city, and for even higher prices (Iğsız 2001). As Aslı Iğsız points out in chapter 8, new markets are emerging for music, literature, and movies, reminding contemporary Turks of the multicultural past of the Ottoman Empire, and Cihan Tuğal describes in chapter 7 how diaspora Armenians are reminded of the homeland they lost. Another lost past, namely the pure and traditional village life, also makes urbanite Turkish and international customers willing to pay high prices for handwoven and naturally dyed rugs. Kimberly Hart notes in chapter 2 how, by purchasing rugs, Turkish and

global consumers seek to connect with pastoral village life, which they imagine as their past.

Memory, Trauma, and Identity

Memory is also productive of social relations by managing identities and helping individuals and groups come to terms with the suppressed or commemorated traumas of the past. Today many scholars agree that both individual and group identity becomes possible through claiming and remembering sameness over time and space (Boyarin 1994; Gillis 1994). Memory not only helps individuals form membership in groups but also helps them create a sense of their past, present, and future (Fentress and Wickham 1988; Tuğal 2002). This is precisely why nation-states spend so much effort on institutions of memory, such as museums (Bennett 1995; Duncan 1995; chapter 3 in this volume), monuments (Savage 1994), national history-writing projects, commemorations (Bodnar 1992; chapter 5), and founding myths (Ben-Yehuda 1995): to create a sense of imagined community for the nation. But what about events that are too painful to remember or represent in the present? How do nations and their states deal with their public traumas?

Foundation of a nation-state is commonly a traumatic experience because it brings a rupture with the past (Antze and Lambek 1996). The process that led to the foundation of the Turkish nation-state and national identity included traumatic events where religious minorities were massacred, deported, or encouraged to migrate in the name of establishing a homogenous national identity. The three major traumas of the early twentieth century involved the massacre of Armenians and other Christian groups in Anatolia in 1915 (Akçam 2004; Dadrian 1999), deportation of some two million Orthodox Christians out of their homes in exchange for a smaller Muslim population from Greece in 1923 (Hirschon 1998), and the infamous wealth tax of 1942, when Christian and Jewish citizens of the Turkish Republic were so heavily taxed that they had to sell all their belongings to pay their taxes (Akar 1999; Bali 1999; Aktar 2000). As a result of such policies, religious minorities in the country decreased dramatically. Whereas non-Muslims constituted 19.1 percent of the population at the beginning of the twentieth century, at the end of

the century that number had dropped to a mere 0.2 percent (Courbage and Fargues 1997).

The memory of such traumatic events, where people killed their neighbors and stole their property, live on in the silenced memories of the individuals who experienced them (Yalçın 1998). In the 1990s, however, those events became the center of public attention. *The Singles of Salkım Hanım* (Salkım Hanım'ın Taneleri), the novel and then the feature film depicting the tragedy of the wealth tax, received substantial public attention (Bali 2001). Likewise, the question of whether the 1915 massacres of Armenians can be defined as genocide became one of the most intensely discussed issues of public debate in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Memories of foundational traumas serve different groups in distinct ways. First, recall of earlier traumas creates a legitimate space in the present to acknowledge the ongoing suffering. Throughout the late 1980s and the 1990s, Turkey experienced a civil war between the Turkish army and guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). According to Turkish official reports, a total of thirty thousand citizens died in the fighting. At the time, individuals could get into trouble if they publicly discussed the present misery of the Kurdish people. As Aslı Iğsız notes in chapter 8, leftist publications and music houses have utilized the past traumas of the Anatolian people to talk about the present tragedy. By alluding to a pre-twentieth-century nostalgia, when different peoples of Anatolia lived peacefully side by side, they can make an indirect critique of the ongoing oppression of the Kurdish population and identity.

The memory of foundational traumas has a different role for the victimized groups. In the 1990s, the Armenian and, to a lesser extent, the Jewish community in Turkey also started to come to terms with their ordeals (Baer 2000). Such memories are utilized more effectively by the Armenian communities in diaspora than those in Turkey. In chapter 7, "Memories of Violence, Memoirs of Nation," Cihan Tuğal argues that massacre memoirs written by and for Armenians especially in the United States are crucial for them to imagine Armenians as a community. He also notes that memoirs are more successful than histories in illustrating the complexity of representing the past and the difficulty of finding a meaningful explanation for violence.

Not all traumas of the Turkish nation-state are silenced. In chapter 5, "An Endless Death and an Eternal Mourning," Nazlı Ökten analyzes a commem-

orated national trauma in Turkey: the death of the founding father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. She argues that the never-ending mourning for the leader and the relentless recall of his death makes him immortal. As such, he becomes an ever-present figure of the Turkish public sphere and defines its legitimate boundaries. Ökten argues that because the memory of Atatürk has occupied a central place in Turkish political culture for more than sixty years, it is difficult for Turkish citizens to debate and create new grounds of political legitimacy that go beyond the teachings of the leader.

Memories in and of Turkey Beyond the National Boundaries

One of the earliest aims of the new Turkish Republic was to replace the living memories of a multicultural and heterogeneous Ottoman Empire with a written history of the unified nation that is limited by the newly drawn national boundaries. In chapter 3, "Reading the Stories in Three Dimensions," Aslı Gür demonstrates how during the early Republican years, history writing and archeology aimed to establish connections with people who lived in Anatolia thousands of years earlier. Archeological excavations and displays of the 1930s fulfilled two goals. First, by defining earlier civilizations in Anatolia such as the Hittites and Sumerians as Turkish, they legitimized the Turkish state's exclusive claims on Anatolia. Moreover, the same findings established historical connections between contemporary and ancient residents of Anatolia. The "territorial kinship," to use Gür's term, that was established between Turks and the Hittites aimed to replace other kin relationships Turkish residents had established with Greeks, Armenians, Iranians, and Arabs.

Although Aslı Gür's study in chapter 3 of contemporary Turkish museum visitors demonstrates that the idea of territorial kinship with ancient civilizations is still popular, official efforts to replace lived memories with a distant history has not been fully successful. Memories about imperial territories and times when people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds lived together are still alive in Turkey and among diasporic Anatolian communities such as Armenians and Greeks. Elif Ekin Akşit (2001) argues that first-generation Republican women integrate nostalgia for the early Republic with fond memories of their Greek and Armenian neighbors, who were erased from the national narrative of early Ankara. The personal narratives of these

women do not form a conscious resistance to the nationalist narrative. But contemporary interest in music and novels from pre-population-exchange days has engendered criticism of homogenizing policies and national boundaries. Such cultural products are consumed mainly by younger generations who never personally experienced such coexistence, and thus gives these people new political identities defined in the context of the 1990s. In a similar vein, Cihan Tuğal's study in chapter 7 on massacre memoirs written by and for Armenians in diaspora demonstrates that memory-based cultural products work both to make and break territorial identities.

History of the Book

The Politics of Public Memory in Turkey already has a publicly shared past. An earlier and quite different version of it was published in Istanbul by İletişim Publication House in the summer of 2001. I was inspired to put together a volume on the politics of public memory in Turkey when I started to take note of rapidly increasing interest in the past both by lay citizens and academics. Young scholars of Turkey, such as the contributors to this book, have no doubt been influenced by the lively discussions of memory in world academic circles. I believe that such interest in the past also has something to do with being members of the third generation of the Turkish Republic. The first and second generations followed the modernist and future-oriented vision of the Turkish Republic and turned their backs to the past. For the third generation, however, the futuristic modernization project and the erasure of the past already belong to history. Like many others in Turkey, contributors to this volume define themselves through competing memories of the past instead of the predetermined narrative of the modernist vision. One way they explore some of these memories is to write about them.

The attention the original volume received motivated me to revise the book for English readers. Although the basic idea behind the two volumes is the same, the content is quite different. In its second incarnation, the book has benefited greatly from the public and private discussions that followed publication of the first volume. Moreover, it has been revised for readers who are not necessarily intimately familiar with Turkey. Some articles are substantially revised, and some others are new. A few articles published in the Turkish ver-

sion are not included in the English version. Thus, the present volume is more like a reminiscence of the original volume than its repetition.

Family and friends helped me through the process of putting the first and second versions of the book together. I owe the greatest thanks to Asena Günal, who encouraged and enabled me to publish the original book. I am also grateful to Mary Seldan Evans of Syracuse University Press for her continual support. As always, Ellen Moodie carefully combed through this introduction and my contribution to the volume. Above all, *The Politics of Public Memory in Turkey* became possible only through the enthusiasm and active engagement of the contributors during the lengthy process of book production.