

Challenges We Have Faced, and Hopes We Have Clung To

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Abstract:

Although teaching anthropology in Turkey is not without its challenges, there are also reasons to be hopeful. To explain these adequately, however, we first need to provide background information. Thus, the article presents a brief history of Turkish anthropological research (Section 2) and teaching (Section 3). Section 4 provides background on the city of Bartın, which is the site of our discussion of challenges facing (and hopes for) the teaching of anthropology in the country. Various pedagogies can contribute to teaching-learning outcomes: project-based, problem-based, authentic, blended, and experiential learning approaches are promising. In Section 5, we discuss the future of anthropology in Turkey. Existing departments are in danger of being shut down and merged with sociology. Tensions—and potential solidarity—between anthropology and sociology are discussed.

Keywords:

Project-based and problem-based model for anthropology teaching, authentic model for anthropology teaching, blended model for anthropology teaching, experiential model for anthropology teaching, future of anthropology.

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Introduction

In this article, we discuss the history and present state of anthropology in Turkey, and provide background information about Bartın, the site of our discussion on teaching anthropology. Then we focus on problems related to anthropology teaching in Bartın, and give a set of recommendations. Finally, we briefly reflect on the future of anthropology in Turkey.

On the History and Present State of Anthropology in Turkey

Some sections of modern anthropology harbor contradictions that are the direct products of its historical development. The first contradiction is that anthropology—which aims for the highest-level generalizations about human beings and is expected to be a universalist and humanist science that aims to comprehend others—is the child of colonialism, and mostly owes its experiences of comprehending others (method, theory, and knowledge accumulation) to colonial relations between the West and others.ⁱ A second contradiction is that while anthropology takes as its ultimate goal the comprehension of universal similarities underlying identities and differences—the qualities that distinguish us from one another—the most powerful states in the world are founded on national and religious identities.ⁱⁱ This second contradiction raises ethical and ideological dilemmas for anthropologists who work under the control of governments that set national interests as their priorities, governments that tend to punish those acting against or ignoring these interests them. In some countries, anthropologists are turned into targets—the first to come to mind when a scapegoat is needed to stigmatize as unwanted, non grata, or even labeled as a spy or traitor.

In the case of Turkish Republic, new contradictions are added to those mentioned in our portrayal above. For instance, while anthropology was getting institutionalized

through the Anthropological Investigations Society, which was established as early as 1925, and which was even considered to be the first scientific institution of the new republic, currently it is a discipline that has never been heard of by a considerably high number of university students. Furthermore it is a discipline that is associated with wrong information and false images.ⁱⁱⁱ This contradictory situation can be grasped only if the institutionalization history of anthropology in Turkey is elaborated.

The period of foundation/institutionalization of anthropology overlaps with the foundation of the Turkish Republic as a nation-state. In this historical context, the last waves of racist theories that were influential in European sociology at the end of nineteenth century belatedly arrived Turkey in the 1920s, when it was time for military commanders to build a nation-state after long years of war. In the 1930s, anthropology together with archaeology was tasked with supplying the data to feed the nationalist ideology concerning the ancient history of Turks, who are the founding nation of Turkey. In the Ottoman Empire, the relationship between political power and society had taken place on a legal plane predicated on the nation system, which in turn is based on religious group memberships. Various ethnic groups had waged wars of independence under the influence of nationalist ideas, and established their own state. Turks were late to arrive at nationalistic thinking. That is why the ideologues of the new nationalistic state, which is in favor of Westernization, would promote nationalism from top to bottom, and the people would be trained with these ideas. In this period, the thesis that connected Turkish history with ancient civilizations was proposed. Science was mobilized for political purposes—a hasty response to the theses in circulation in European science.

According to the new, revisionist account, those who established and diffused civilization were the brachycephalic Central Asians. In other words, Turks had

contributed to the creation of other world civilizations of the world by leaving Central Asia, the cradle of all civilizations. Turks currently living in Turkey were therefore not kin to the Mongoloid race or the races living in the Middle East. Rather, they were members of the White and Alpine race, as white as the Europeans, of medium height, with light-colored eyes. Sumerians and Hittites are considered to be of Turkish origin. Thus, According to this thesis, Anatolia has been the Turkish motherland for thousands of years and Turks living currently in Anatolia are racially kin to these ancient civilizations (Aydm, 2000, p. 25). “This mixture of truth, half-truth and error was proclaimed as official doctrine, and teams of researchers set to work to ‘prove’ its various propositions” (Lewis, 1961, p. 353). Furthermore, the scientists who developed the racist human categorizations in Europe had classified Turks under the “yellow race.” Atatürk, the founder of the republic, was personally involved in the relevant research to counter this thesis, and had sent young scholars to Europe and the United States for anthropology education. As Toprak (2012) pointed out,

the science field that the Early Republic had clung to for theoretical support was physical anthropology. The same old fake story about the yellow race that is attributed to Turks as a symbol of a lower race could only be defeated by the findings of physical anthropology. That was why physical anthropology became the most developed science field in Turkey of between-the-world-wars period.
(p. 62)

On the other hand, ethnology had moved toward “rural studies”; that is, folklore, which was deemed the site of “authentic culture of the nation that was not spoiled,” as in the case of Germany. Rural compilations were issued, village associations were established, and folklore magazines were published with the widespread participation of teachers and other officers working in villages.^{iv} In the Cold War era after World

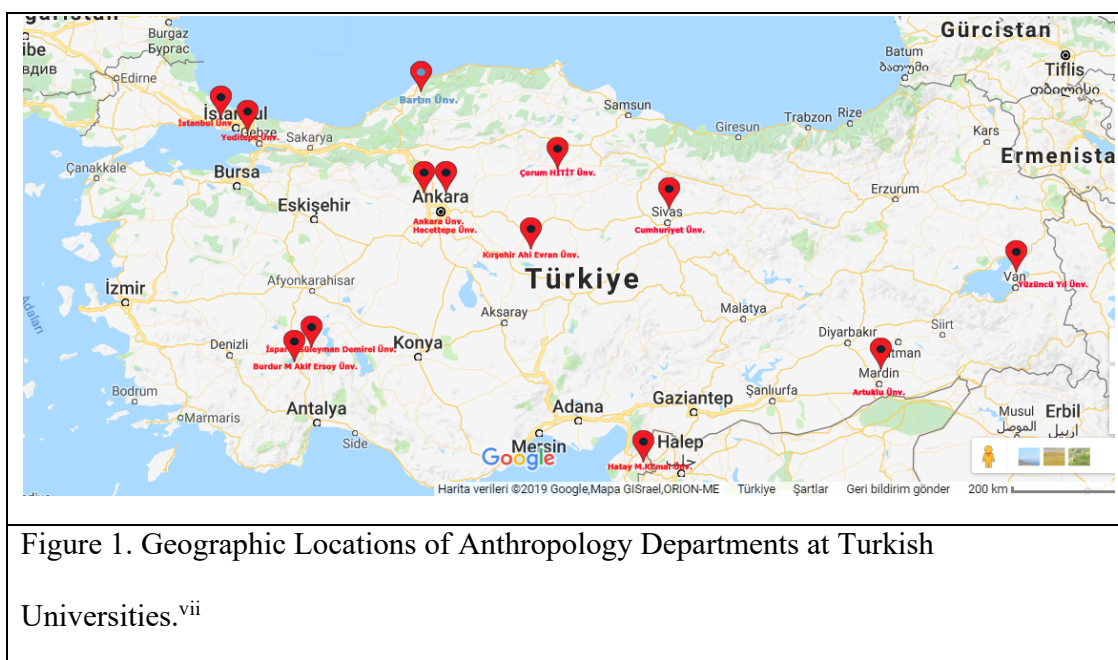
War II, the racist thesis of the pre-war times was discarded, replaced by a program that can be called “early McCarthyism,” a concept proposed by Karaömerlioğlu (2017). For example, Village Institutes—the important educational projects established with the expectation that they would enlighten the villagers and graduate conscious citizens—were shut down after 1945 due to the fear that the villager-turned-teachers would become communists. A limited number of anthropological field studies were conducted by scientists such as Behice Boran and Niyazi Berkes, affiliated with Turkish sociology departments. This work was framed by the founding ideology (the nation-building project). However, those who conducted research that directly contacted society were expelled from universities in 1946. Some of these scholars continued their research in the United States and France, including Muzafer Sherif, a pioneer in social psychology, and Pertev Naili Boratav, a leading ethnologist (Aydın, 2002).

This contradictory history we have described so far is the main reason for the current ignorance about anthropology. The widespread ignorance about cultural anthropology in particular is a serious problem complained about by the anthropology faculty and writers alike:

Anthropology, which has determined its subject matter as the physical and cultural diversity of the human species is, nevertheless continued to be perceived and recognized as “the science of the races” (referring to the “biological elements” of the physical and cultural diversity of the human species) in various countries; whereas in Turkey, in addition to the ignorance of its less well-known properties, the number of people who define and recognize it as a science involved with the human races is very high. (Gültekin, 2015, p. 96)^v

Anthropology at Turkish Universities

Currently there are 206 universities including higher institutes of education offering two-year-vocational programs in Turkey. Among these, 129 are public universities. Of the 206 universities, only twelve host an anthropology program (see Figure 1).^{vi} Of these, all but one, Yeditepe University, are public. Of eighty-one Turkish cities, only ten have a university with an anthropology department. All register students at the undergraduate level through an entrance exam common to all programs. Anthropology departments are structured as two main branches: (a) physical/biological anthropology and (b) cultural anthropology. This is the same as in American universities, which indeed were taken as the model for the restructuring in the 1980s.



Officially, Turkey consists of seven geographic regions (see Figure 2), which exhibit cultural, geographic, and social diversity due to differences in climate, subsistence, history, cultural influences, and so on. The maps show us that each region has at least

one anthropology department, with Central Anatolia (İç Anadolu) having nearly half of them (see Table 1).



Figure 2. Geographic Regions of Turkey

Table 1 summarizes the information provided in Figures 1 and 2:

Regional Distribution of Anthropology Departments in Turkey		
Region	City	University Name
Aegean Region (Ege)	Burdur, Isparta	Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Isparta Süleyman Demirel University
Black Sea Region (Karadeniz)	Bartın	Bartın University

Central Anatolian Region (İç Anadolu)	Ankara, Çorum, Kırşehir, Sivas	Ankara University, Cumhuriyet University, Çorum Hitit University, Hacettepe University, Kırşehir Ahi Evran University
Eastern Anatolian Region (Doğu Anadolu)	Van	Yüzüncü Yıl University
Marmara Region	Istanbul	Istanbul University, Yeditepe University
Mediterranean Region (Akdeniz)	Hatay	Hatay Mustafa Kemal University
Southeast Anatolian Region (Güneydoğu Anadolu)	Mardin	Artuklu University

Table 1. Regional Distribution of Anthropology Departments in Turkey^{viii}

In the Turkish higher education system, the universities annually report how many seats are available for new students who will take the university entrance exam. Yeditepe University, the only private university on our list, is also the only university that adopts English as the academic language of study. It has the lowest number of annual seats available, fifteen, ten of which are awarded with full scholarships and the rest with a 50% fee waiver. This is rare among Turkish private universities, but it shows the value placed on anthropology by the board of trustees of Yeditepe University.^{ix} Yeditepe tops the list of university entrance exam scores: the top-scoring anthropology students register at Yeditepe. Yeditepe also has the lowest class sizes.

On the other hand, Sivas Cumhuriyet University accepts the highest number of students (sixty-five), followed by Istanbul, Hacettepe, Mehmet Akif Ersoy, and Mustafa Kemal (sixty each). However, only four out of twelve universities are able to fill all the seats; thus the average number of students annually is 47, much lower than the seats available. All four universities with a full complement of students (and the highest entrance scores) are in Istanbul or Ankara, the two largest cities.

The content of these departments' programs differs from one another.^x The major reason for the differences is faculty expertise. For example, at Mustafa Kemal University (Hatay), a course on education and culture is offered, as one faculty member conducts research in that area. Similarly, at Hitit (Çorum) and Yüzüncü Yıl University (Van), the anthropology of religion is offered, and at Ankara University, folklore studies. (Historically, at Ankara ethnology was converted to folklore and then subsumed within social anthropology.^{xi})

The physical/biological anthropology curriculum tends to be similar across universities: human biology or anatomy, Anatolian palaeoanthropology, osteometry, living and fossil primates are offered in all programs. In social/cultural programs, major topics (e.g. gender, globalization, religion, and history of anthropological thought) are covered in all, whereas more specialized topics may be taught at one or two programs. For instance, anthropology of education is offered only at Artuklu (Mardin) and Mustafa Kemal (Hatay), and ethnomusicology only at Yeditepe (Istanbul). From the names of the courses—migration, anthropology of Islam, history of Anatolian civilizations, for instance—it can be inferred that some universities are trying to establish connections among different areas, such as archaeology, history, and religion. Such programs take into consideration the cultural/social realities and needs of the region or the country.

The most full-fledged anthropology programs in terms of course variety and elective options are at Yüzüncü Yıl, Sivas Cumhuriyet, and Hacettepe Universities. The major research topics are covered in these programs. For example, important research topics in social/cultural anthropology, such as anthropology of art, anthropology of sport, and political anthropology, are not offered at other universities. This variety may be due mostly to the number of teaching faculty and their research interests, as mentioned before. It is notable that in the programs of Hacettepe University and Sivas Cumhuriyet University there are a considerable number of courses on evolution or with evolution in their titles. Evolution is not an easy topic to talk about in Turkey due to religious beliefs, and any discussion usually leads to tension. Indeed, the negative image of anthropology can be partially explained by the belief that anthropology is the science that “tries to prove the kinship of monkeys and human beings.”

Also noteworthy are the courses offered exclusively at Sivas Cumhuriyet University: industrial anthropology, urban anthropology, mythology, family anthropology, and anthropology of religion and art. Another remarkable is that courses at Sivas Cumhuriyet, Van Yüzüncü Yıl, and Hacettepe Universities are distributed in a balanced way across physical/biological and social/cultural anthropology. According to the national university ranking institute, the program at Hacettepe is considered to be the best in the country.^{xii}

The department at Istanbul University emphasizes data collection and statistical analysis in social/cultural anthropology. Statistics is not a preferred tool in other departments: approved theses tend to use qualitative methods such as participatory observation, in-depth interviews, oral history, and fieldwork. In their final year of the undergraduate program, students have to take a course in thesis preparation/application. At Istanbul University, students are normally expected to do fieldwork in villages.

While some other universities encourage students to do fieldwork in groups, generally literature reviews are acceptable as undergraduate theses.^{xiii} A graduate of Istanbul University anthropology program wrote the following on a popular forum:

The exams of this department are usually easier than the ones in other departments. Every year the same questions are asked in multiple choice form. Midterms and final exams usually take 15 minutes. However this easiness is heavily compensated with the fieldwork thesis on your final year. On the summer of the completion of the third year, they are sending you to a village with a friend. The location of this field work village changes every year, that is why it becomes impossible to receive useful information from the ex-students. One time Marmara, another time Black Sea, then Aegean Region, yet another time Central Anatolia....It is just by chance....Villagers who would treat you very friendly and genuinely on a normal occasion can make everything difficult for you when they see that you have a “mini”-interview form with 1,500 questions and when they hear that you would live with them for a month and especially when you are two men. If you are two women, then the danger is that you can get marriage proposals every day. When you get accustomed to the village, and villagers to you on those dog days, your field work ends and you return to Istanbul and move to data interpretation stage which would take a month. If you are lucky, you can first write these data on paper, then type them by a computer, interpret the findings emerging from these data, write your thesis and do your presentation. The relaxation feeling after doing the presentation can't be described by words.^{xiv}

Employment areas for anthropology graduates in Turkey are almost nonexistent: a number of units under the Ministry of Culture such as museums and public relations

departments of some of the large corporations or research companies are among the few options. Anthropologists with higher degrees usually work at universities in Turkey or abroad.^{xv} Other than anthropology departments, anthropologists are employed at sociology departments and communication faculties in Turkey.

Master's programs are of course more flexible and, as is the case for the undergraduate programs, the expertise areas and interests of the faculty are a determining factor. Master's programs consist of two years, which correspond to four semesters. The first year is dedicated to face-to-face teaching/learning and reading activities; the second year is for fieldwork. Master's programs are expected to abide with international quality standards, but at the same time the students are expected to be locally competent. Thus they are encouraged to and sometimes even forced to do fieldwork. In some universities, however, a thesis based on a literature review is also acceptable. Researchers who do research on Turkey usually select as their fieldwork site villages or suburbs of the major cities. Most of the ethnographic studies before the 1980s were based on villages or urban shantytowns. The most popular topics were the following: kinship, vendettas, ethnic identity, religious beliefs, work relations, gender, parenthood, education, social memory, and migration. These topics follow from the cultural diversity of Turkey. A few Turkish anthropologists are doing their fieldwork abroad. The number of scholars being educated in the European Union, U.S., Canada, New Zealand, and so on has increased in recent years. Accordingly, the number of non-Turkish research topics has increased as well.^{xvi}

Almost all Turkish graduate programs have courses on fieldwork methods and the history of anthropological thought. Courses such as biological anthropology, living and fossil primates, and dental and forensic anthropology may be offered as well, depending on the expertise of the department. Master's and PhD courses in physical anthropology

cover applied training mostly to be completed in labs and at excavations in Turkey and abroad. Physical/biological anthropology necessitates reading sources in foreign languages, and is therefore more internationalized than social/cultural anthropology. Research on primates requires participation in projects abroad. By contrast, social/cultural anthropology PhD programs feature courses such as the anthropology of religion; marriage and kinship systems; feminist anthropology; historical, political, economic, and educational anthropology; urbanization; and religious, cultural, and political relations in the Middle East.

The general tendencies in the world, especially the global West, are reflected in the topics selected by Turkish researchers. Since the 1980s, popular topics include postmodernism, symbolic/hermeneutic anthropology, globalization, construction of ethnic identity, popular culture, and media studies.

To become an associate professor in the Turkish higher education system, an application is submitted to the central higher education authority.^{xvii} The applicant chooses keywords from a long list covering all academic areas. As mentioned earlier, this system divides anthropology into two areas: (a) physical anthropology and palaeoanthropology and (b) social and cultural anthropology. Within social/cultural anthropology, the research keywords are the following: anthropology of science, cognitive anthropology, ecological anthropology, linguistic anthropology, anthropology of religion, ethnology, anthropology of development, visual anthropology, economic anthropology, media anthropology, political anthropology, digital anthropology, historical anthropology, conservation of cultural resources, medical anthropology, and gender.

The status of social/cultural anthropology at universities is problematic in various respects. The institutionalization of these fields started at a later date than those of western Europe and the U.S. One problem is that cultural anthropology is often confused with ethnology and sociology, and there is no consensus on how it differs from those disciplines. This situation was especially acute in the 1980s, which is why courses in ethnology, folklore, and social anthropology were offered separately. Academic activities such as establishing a departmental structure and curriculum are under the authority of the Higher Education Council, a central decision-making body formed after the 1980 military coup. After 1980, Turkish universities were redesigned on the basis of the American model, except for academic autonomy.

A more serious problem is the declining financial support for the social sciences generally in Turkey, as is the case in almost everywhere. University budgets tend to favor technological research that promises material benefits, such as techno-parks and R&D units. By contrast, the social sciences and the humanities tend to be neglected. Another problem results from the increasing number of universities and the university entrance system. The policy to have at least one university in every city, which has been in place for the last fifteen years, produces students with very low exam scores. Nevertheless, these students are eligible to register for undergraduate programs at provincial universities, and thus more graduates than needed are produced. Although establishing university programs throughout the country could be viewed as a democratic ideal, as it supports each citizen's access to education, it short-circuits the process of selection and sorting that is in the nature of science, which is an activity based on ability and effort. The smallest provincial universities are accessible to those with lowest scores, which de facto means that the central entrance exam is no longer applicable. We can interpret these as political actions to discard scientific/academic

activities in favor of political, social, and economic benefits. Thus, although the problem of unemployed graduates is common in many countries, in Turkey it became worse, and additional problems emerged to make the situation even more complicated. For instance, in private universities, where students with very low scores were accepted, the quality of law and medicine faculties deteriorated so much that a minimum exam score was imposed for these faculties. In the last two years, faculties of engineering and education adopted the same model. Not all faculties have done so, however. In faculties without the minimum score criterion, much debate centers around how to educate students who are unsuccessful in the overall education system.

In addition to the problems at provincial universities with student competence, other problems are related to selection and appointment processes for faculty. Briefly, the source of the problem is “natural selection”: the highest quality faculty members have many options worldwide, and often prefer not to work at provincial universities. It is worth mentioning that the notions of “provincial academy” and “academic provinciality” have yet to be studied from a scholarly perspective. It is also important to recognize that scientists and other faculty are considered state officers, and as such their autonomy is not tolerated. The origins of this still-powerful system predate the Turkish Republic. The history of modern Turkey—nearly a century old—is punctuated by military coups. After each military coup, those who are outside the frames set by the university, official science, and state ideology are punished.

Anthropological research and even teaching is undertaken by a handful of academics in the shadow of the fear culture, including the fear of being “tamed” by violence. This culture is deeply embedded in the state and societal consciousness. For anthropologists who are trying to understand “the other” in modern national and international contexts, problematizing political power and religion entails certain risks. In Turkey, a country

without colonies, “the other” of course refers to subcultures and subnational groups and minorities. Thus the absence of academic autonomy and freedom of thought is a significant obstacle to the development of anthropology and the popularization of anthropological points of view.

Finally, it might be useful to take a look at the number of anthropological studies conducted in Turkey. According to detailed bibliographies by Erdentuğ and Magnarella (2000) and Akşit (1986), social/cultural anthropological research published in 1940–1980 comprises fifty-two books and twenty-four articles. Fifteen of the books and five of the articles deal with ethnology.

Bozkurt Güvenç, who returned to Turkey after completing his education in the U.S., founded the anthropology department of Hacettepe University in 1971. Hacettepe became the leading institution to champion modern anthropology—one that promotes a culturally relativistic and humanist approach.^{xviii} The new generation of anthropologists became accustomed to modern anthropological theories, understanding anthropology as cultural criticism. Their number of publications skyrocketed. Additionally, the concept of globalization (increased circulation of commodities, people, and symbols) contributed to heightened interest in anthropology.^{xix}

The Anthropological and Ethnographic Properties of the Black Sea Culture and Bartın

One of the best publications to date about Black Sea is Neal Ascherson’s *Black Sea* (1996). This is a unique work with elements of ethnography, history, and political criticism. It can also be read as a travelogue. Guided by his own curiosity, in a balanced

scholarly language, Ascherson blended all these elements together. The Black Sea's geology and geography are the starting points. The author makes us feel the flow of history of various human groups that geography and time have thrown together, a history full of irony and sorrow. At times you laugh; at times you cry. Always we marvel at the creativity as well as destructiveness of human beings. Ascherson (pp. 2–3) points out that the Black Sea is mostly a dead sea: there is no life deeper than 150–200 meters as a result of the accumulation of hydrogen sulfur gas. The gas is caused by tons of waste carried by rivers flowing into the sea from Asia and Europe. Although hydrogen sulfur is accumulated in all other seas as well, the Black Sea has the distinction of being the largest body of water in the world that has no life.

The Black Sea is up to 2,200 meters deep, and consequently it is a wavy and cold sea. Its history can be traced back to ancient Greek colonies. Fishing has long been an important means of subsistence there. The sea is an ancient maritime route connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the entry gate of Asia, Crimea. This resulted in settlement sites forged by human mobility, immigration, occupations, and two-way commerce between East and West.^{xx} Remarkable cultural diversity is the outcome.

In ancient times the city of Bartın was located in Paphlagonia province, which takes its name from the Parthenios River that is mentioned in ancient Greek sources such as Homer's *Iliad*. Bartın residents say Bartın is “a city of waters,” drawing on the historical belief that the name refers to a goddess associated with waters. Bartın Stream is formed by the confluence of two rivers that collect water from the nearby mountains. The distance between Bartın and the Black Sea is 14 km. Due to the depth of the water, the wide riverbed, and the relatively weak current, Bartın is one of the few cities in Turkey with active river transportation (at least until the 1980s).

In and around Bartın traces can still be seen of ancient Greek colonies. Traces can also be seen of Venetian and Genoese merchants who, in the Middle Ages, controlled the trade routes between the Black Sea and Crimea, and even beyond, to the interior of Asia. Traditionally, subsistence was based on fishing and processing forestry products. In modern times, these have been largely replaced by mining and industry. times.

Bartın, with nearly 200,000 residents,^{xxi} is close to Amasra (Amastris, formerly Sisamos). Although it is much smaller than Bartın, Amasra is better known—a popular tourist destination with an ancient harbor. Although Bartın reflects most of the aspects typical of the Black Sea area, it has certain peculiarities owing to its active river transportation. Maritime transport and the river network are integrated.

We interviewed captains whose families have been involved in maritime transportation or trade for generations—in some cases, for more than seven generations. The seamen reported taking refuge in Bartın Stream to save their wooden ships from harmful crustaceans (“sea bugs”) found in the Black Sea. This was effective because the sea bugs can’t survive in freshwater. The river also offered a safe place to carry out the maintenance that their ships needed. Undoubtedly seamen have been aware of the river’s advantages since ancient times. In any event, Bartın’s unique geography meant that it was connected through the seamen to other cities around the Black Sea, even when it was just a market town where villagers sold fruits and vegetables.

They also sold and traded wooden products: home furniture such as the wooden spoons, barrels, and chests they made in their woodworking shops. As Xenophon noted on Anabasis 2,500 years ago when passing through the region, the trees here that are appropriate for shipbuilding. By the nineteenth century, Bartın was famous for its shipbuilding. The ship architects of the region even invented a type of a vessel called

the *çektirme* in order to cope with the wavy and dire conditions of the Black Sea from the west of Sinop Cape onwards. Those architects used to learn their profession through apprenticeships; currently no master has survived from that era. *Çektirme* ships had two distinguishing properties: they were able to carry heavier cargo and able to cope with treacherous waves due to the special design of their backs and fronts.^{xxii}

The most important agricultural source of subsistence is the production of tea and hazelnuts; kiwis are another, more recent, product. Formerly, mining was a significant source of revenue for the Western Black Sea region, but its contribution has declined (Işık, 2018). Since the 1970s, the decline of traditional patterns of subsistence based on natural resources has led to widespread migration to the region's industrial cities, especially Istanbul. Because land and weather conditions that do not allow large-scale agriculture, people in Black Sea cities are prone to migrate. In the Western Black Sea region, Bartın, Kocaeli, and Sakarya are the most important industrial cities.

As mentioned above, in the past river transportation was important in Bartın. Bartın owes its wealth to the availability of lumber. In its lumber factories were built the wooden ships that, by the end of nineteenth century, carried goods to ports such as Istanbul, Crimea, Izmir, and even Alexandria.^{xxiii} In the second half of nineteenth century, a merchant class engaged in the transport of commodities was formed. The destinations extended from Black Sea cities (e.g., those of Romania and Bulgaria) to Mediterranean ones (e.g., Alexandria). River-maritime trade and shipbuilding support each other.

By the end of nineteenth century, Bartın had all the properties that a city is expected to have. The nineteenth century was very dynamic: the Ottoman Empire was dissolving quickly; attempts at Westernization were intensified; and the empire received migrants

from different regions and sent migrants to others. With the settlers from different places such as Georgia, Peloponnese, and Romania, the cosmopolitan nature of the city was formed. This made it similar to the oldest cities, even though Bartın was a relatively small town with only 8825 inhabitants.

Some of this migration was especially important in terms of urbanization. For example, most of the Greek families that were settled in the 1820s from Central Anatolia to Bartın were well educated. Some even served as bankers for the empire. One of the migrating Greeks was Cevahircioğlu Bodosaki Konstantinidis, who invested in the region's mining, jewelry, and lumbering. It is said that he was also a banker with ties to international commerce. (Unfortunately, written sources on Konstantinidis are virtually nonexistent. Those available are usually based on oral narratives.) He pioneered the establishment of the lumber factories. Together with other merchants, Konstantinidis founded Bartın's Chamber of Industry and Commerce and served as a board member. Other Greeks were also urbanized and educated. They were pioneer photographers, bakers, tailors, and florists. They also offered foreign language courses for local residents. They contributed significantly to the enrichment and modernization of the city. Similarly, migrants from Tuna province (currently Romania), Crimea, and Caucasia contributed to the cosmopolitanism and multiethnic structure of the city.

Port cities, Bartın and Istanbul were necessarily involved in the sea trade. Thus developments in Istanbul and the world reverberated in Bartın. The upshot was that Bartın acquired a culture different from that of regions in the interior of the country that were isolated due to mountain ranges. For example, in contrast to other Turkish cities, women in Bartın actively participate in social life.

The following anecdote says a lot about Bartın's distance from Turkey's average. A female teacher narrates what happened to her at a folklore contest in the 1990s where the children were dancing in traditional local costumes:

After the performance, the jury awarded low scores due to our dress. We appealed this. They said "No." "In Anatolia traditionally women wear headscarves; we don't have no-scarf costumes in our traditional culture." We said "No, we do have." We had old black-and-white photos of women taken in 1920s. We showed them. In those old photos, the women had no scarves. They were really surprised and accepted our appeal. We won the prize.^{xxiv}

This anecdote (and many others that we won't relate) shows that multiculturalism exists in Turkey. In Bartın you frequently see peasant women driving cars to market, which is not the case in other small provincial cities. Additionally, in Bartın you encounter female shopkeepers, managers, and waitresses; female painters, who have exhibitions all over the world, and globetrotting adventurers. These are signs that the city has cultural depth. Complex human typologies emerge despite its tiny population.

Of course, there are other consequences of early capitalism. For instance, the local newspaper, published since 1924, is the third oldest paper in the country.^{xxv} In the same period, education and culture associations were established to connect the city with art and literature elsewhere.

On the other hand, Bartın residents are not immune to global anti-intellectualism. While people have fun with the internet and their smartphones, the city is trying to become a tourist vacation hotspot due to the fame of the nearby Amasra, as well as other beach towns in the vicinity.

Teaching Anthropology at a Western Black Sea City

Bartın University is the only Black Sea region university with an anthropology department. The university was established in 2008. It is a provincial university with nearly 15,000 students and 600 faculty members. In addition to the problems due to the national education and science policies as mentioned in sections 2 and 3, there are some additional problems at the local level that makes anthropology teaching, research, and practice even more difficult.

First, explaining anthropology to students who graduated from high school without hearing anything about anthropology (not even its name!) is a fundamental difficulty when teaching the subject for two hours per week. Thus introducing anthropology in its most generic sense, helping students comprehend the anthropological way of thinking, and encouraging them to view contemporary and historical matters from such a way of thinking can be too ambitious a task for the teaching staff. The teaching strategy of anthropologists can be summarized as drawing attention to cultural diversity and correcting ethnocentric stereotypes and prejudices as much as possible. In other words we are helping them resist the extremely powerful pressure that official pedagogy and ideology exerts on us all. Anthropologists here, as elsewhere in the world, are trying to help people swim against the mainstream. For students who embrace national and religious identities in response to the uneasiness of living in a global world, anthropologists promote the notion of universal humanity.

On the other hand, the deficiency that students most frequently mention on course experience surveys is the teaching method. They complain that audiovisual resources are not used enough. They complain that courses, being based on weekly readings and discussion, require literacy. Most students who come to Bartın were not previously

challenged in terms of literacy. Thus they did not develop the skills required. This makes humanities professors feel helpless and creates dilemmas: Is it ethical to fail students—deny them their diplomas and thereby their career prospects in sociology, history, etc.—in an age of wild capitalism in which the humanities are not valued in any case? Compounding the difficulty is that most students are from the lower classes, and attend university at great sacrifice by their families. Should faculty award grades that students don't deserve?

The impression exists that the social sciences in general and anthropology programs in particular are a luxury. Several factors contribute to this image: (a) the small number of anthropology departments, (b) the reluctance of PhDs to work at provincial universities, (c) graduates' difficulty in finding employment, and (d) the channeling of most resources to areas such as engineering and medicine. Under such difficult circumstances, it was a foregone conclusion that a separate department for the teaching of anthropology would not be formed at Bartın. The department continues to serve students from other departments through introduction to anthropology courses, but does not have its own students.

Currently, compulsory social anthropology courses are offered under the aegis of the faculties of Humanities (sociology programs) and Education (social science teaching and psychological counseling programs). At the intervention of the Higher Education Council, the name of the course offered in psychological counseling has been changed from social to cultural anthropology; the name of the course offered in social science teaching has been changed to history of civilization and anthropology. This course was offered in the 2018–2019 spring term for the first time.

On the plus side, a course in educational anthropology has been added to the graduate curriculum of the Faculty of Education. Given that even cultural anthropology is not very well known in Turkey, educational anthropology is a decided novelty. The country's cultural geographies differ markedly from one another, which makes learning about anthropology especially pertinent for teachers. Teachers are the only public officials working at small sites such as villages, which may be inaccessible in the winter. Sometimes teachers in remote areas encounter languages, beliefs, or ethnic and religious affiliations that are uncommon at the country level. Especially for those who were born and grew up in the West and in cities, some corners of the country are as foreign as an exotic culture. The popularization of anthropological discourse—transformation of the social scientist's knowledge to everyday, common knowledge—is an urgent need for Turkish society. To meet this need requires using tools other than academic reading and writing platforms. One of the most effective ways to do so would be by including cultural anthropology into the high school curriculum.

As for anthropology at the undergraduate level, in light of the problems discussed so far, the guiding principle should be capitalizing on students' own cultural backgrounds for pedagogical objectives. Not all students are from Bartın. In the first session of the semester, we could ask where they are from and form groups on the basis of their geographical identity. Each group should be as geographically diverse as possible. Ideally, there would be at least one member from Bartın, another from the Black Sea area, and another from regions other than Black Sea.

Every week in the first hour, we could give short lectures on the basic concepts of anthropology; the second hour could be dedicated to discussion of group work. The group work consists of weekly activities to be reported in written form. Every week, there would be a theme to explore: birth, marriage, and funeral traditions; common food

items, etc. These are examples of themes that could be explored. Within groups, the responses would be collected on the basis of different provinces; the conclusion section reflects on similarities that are over and beyond regional diversity. Students will be encouraged to contact their parents or relatives back home to receive information about local traditions. The final week will be dedicated to a cultural fair where students from various provinces are expected to cook their food and serve to classmates. This is a combination of a project-based model, authentic learning, blended learning, and experiential learning approaches. Alternatively, for small-sized classes, a problem-based approach can also be implemented whereby the order of the lecture and in-class group activity would be inverted. In other words, in this alternative design, the teaching staff would do the workshop in the first hour and the lecture in the second hour. In this way, students would form some ideas in the first hour to be evaluated and reflected on in the second.

The Future of Anthropology in Turkey

Unfortunately, due to a set of problems discussed here, the future of anthropology in Turkey is bleak. Whereas sociology departments are in more than half of the country's universities, only 6% host an anthropology department. PhD programs in anthropology are not popular either. Young scholars prefer other areas, especially sociology, mainly due to better career prospects and academic vacancies. Thus, it is highly likely that anthropology programs and PhDs will become nearly extinct.

Another reason for the unpopularity of anthropology relative to sociology is because it challenges the official ideology. Sociology, on the other hand, can be easily adapted to official discourse through tamer concepts such as balance, homeostasis, and a version

of functionalism. Although the gap between critical and mainstream sociology in highly polarized countries such as Turkey is widening, the latter offers more vacancies and resources. In its democratized form, anthropology is considered to be useless if not dangerous for official conceptualizations of culture, society, and politics.

We propose that anthropology has passed the self-criticism test and has confronted its colonialist and racist past. Currently anthropology is far from its dark history in its emphasis on diversity, respect, and human dignity. In this era of capitalism, anthropologists, critical sociologists, and researchers of other “devalued” social sciences need to organize to promote their professions. Otherwise, anthropology will become either just another sociological approach or “de-academized” to be a literary, scholarly approach with no foothold in universities.

We nevertheless close this section on a positive note: although the notion of *humanity* goes back as far as the Enlightenment, its persuasiveness boomed in the twentieth century, when the image of all humankind traveling on the same vessel (i.e., Earth) became a reality. The notion of humanity is no longer merely an expression of longing, and this is due to several factors. The current epoch has been named the Anthropocene as a result of population explosion, environmental risks, depletion of the resources, and the fact that humans have changed the material structure, geology, and biological systems of the planet.^{xxvi} Moreover, economic and cultural ties have effectively shrunk the Earth. Although many are pessimistic—or realistic—about the future, scientific forecasts are not sufficient to unite us on the basis of common values of humanity. Our differences in language, culture, and belief continue to exert a strong influence. Technologies, already powerful, improve very fast, making us think that we are capable of solving many of the problems we’re facing. Even so, credible scholars and scientists

forecast a highly unequal world in which the distribution of vital resources (especially water) increasingly favors the rich.

In this context, anthropology can help bring about a worldwide conversation that extends beyond academia and nation-states. Such a discussion is necessary if we are to save the world from destruction and ourselves from self-destruction.

Turkey is said to be a country of contradictions. This perhaps explains why, given the “underdevelopment” of academic anthropology, books about anthropology nevertheless attract considerable public interest. Let us also note that in its modern history, Turkey has closely followed developments in the global West and has tried to adapt to and adopt paradigm changes emanating from the West. Thus, paradoxically, the future of anthropology in Turkey is interdependent with scientific and political developments in the global West. It is hoped that, eventually, Turkish public opinion will catch up with global public opinion about the critical role of anthropology for our planet and our species.

Conclusion

In this article, we have provided an introduction to the history of anthropology and its teaching in Turkey. We provided some background on Bartın, and discussed problems associated with teaching anthropology there.^{xxvii} We had some suggestions on how to improve teaching and some reflections on the future of anthropology. We hope that the problems mentioned in this article will be fixed. This seems unlikely in the short term, however, unless global influences on Turkish public opinion prevail faster than expected, positively affecting attitudes toward anthropology. We hope for that.

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ⁱ See Lewis, 1973; Pels, 2008; Stauder, 1974.

ⁱⁱ See Eriksen, 1991.

ⁱⁱⁱ There is a considerably extensive literature on the problem of underdevelopment or belated development of anthropology in Turkey, and especially complex problems within the academic organization of social/cultural anthropology. See Magnerella and Türkdoğan, 1976; and Aydın, 2002. Other than these articles, Toprak (2012) is a book organized through a comprehensive review of the problem.

^{iv} Learning more about the nearby villages and reporting the collected knowledge as “village monographs” were among the main duties of these organizations. “The village visits that were done for this purpose were reported to the central agency as well, and the figures related to the aids offered for villagers such as the number of villagers vaccinated or the number of patients treated were statistically archived” (Öztürkmen 1998, p. 97).

^v Let us note that from now on, by “anthropology” we refer mostly and particularly to cultural anthropology.

^{vi} The statistics presented here are taken from the Turkish Higher Education Council website. See <http://www.yok.gov.tr/web/guest/universitelerimiz>

^{vii} In fact, Bartın is the thirteenth university hosting an anthropology program; however, as explained later, the department can no longer register students.

^{viii} Source: website of the official authority overseeing university entrance exams and other supporting websites. See <http://www.osym.gov.tr/> and

<https://www.basarisiralamalari.com/antropoloji-2019-taban-puanlari-ve-basari-siralamalari/>

^{ix} This view is based on the email exchange with Yeditepe University and the second author. The authors have no conflict of interest; this observation is based on annual seats statistics.

^x Program contents were ascertained by reviewing the thirteen university websites listed in Table 1, supplemented by phone calls to faculty members of some. In alphabetical order, departmental websites are the following:

<https://akademik.ahievran.edu.tr/birim/Fen%20Edebiyat%20Fak%C3%BCItesi/Antropoloji/0>,
<http://www.dtcf.ankara.edu.tr/antropoloji-bolumu-3/>, <http://www.artuklu.edu.tr/antropoloji>,
<https://antropoloji.bartın.edu.tr/>, <http://antropoloji.cumhuriyet.edu.tr/>,
www.antropoloji.hacettepe.edu.tr, <http://www.fef.hitit.edu.tr/tr/antropoloji>,
<http://antropoloji.edebiyat.istanbul.edu.tr/>, <https://fef.mehmetakif.edu.tr/antropoloji/>,
<http://www.mku.edu.tr/departments.aspx?birim=150>, <http://fef.sdu.edu.tr/antropoloji>,
<http://fenedebiyat.yeditepe.edu.tr/tr/antropoloji>,
<https://test.yyu.edu.tr/AkademikBirimler/Personeller.php?s=90>

^{xi} Interestingly, Ankara University is the only one to host a separate ethnology department. Four others, all in Central Anatolia, host a *Turkish* (not generic) ethnology department: Ankara, Hacettepe, and Sivas Cumhuriyet (as listed in Table 1), as well as Erciyes (Kayseri) and Hacı Bektaş Veli (Nevşehir).

^{xii} The University Ranking by Academic Performance provides comparative yardsticks at a national level. It is run by Middle East Technical University, a prestigious Turkish university in Ankara. See <http://www.urapcenter.org/2018/>

^{xiii} Information about these issues was collected through phone calls to various departments.

^{xiv} See <https://eksisozluk.com/istanbul-universitesi-antropoloji-bolumu--1156794>

^{xv} For a list of some of the prominent Turkish anthropologists see

http://www.antropoloji.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74&Itemid=472

^{xvi} E.g. Gezgin, 2004.

^{xvii} This information is from the website of the Inter-University Council which has the authority to grant associate professor titles. See <http://www.uak.gov.tr/?q=node/10>

^{xviii} Prof. Güvenç (1926-2018) was among the most influential anthropologists of the Turkish intellectual history. He educated generations of public readers about cultural anthropology with works on various cultures, including Japanese and Mexican ones. However, after the 1980 military coup, public readership rates gradually declined, which may be one of the factors associated with public ignorance about anthropology in the country.

^{xix} See Olson, 1986 and White, 2003 for anthropology works in Turkey and anthropological publications about Turkey by non-Turkish researchers.

^{xx} Ascherson mentions almost all countries and cultures surrounding the sea. Other anthropological/ethnographic work conducted in the Turkish Black Sea region are the following: Ildiko Beller-Hann and Chris Hann, 2001; Kıray, 1984; Michael E. Meeker, 2002; Sabine Strasser, 1993; Sylvia Wing Önder, 2007; Michael E. Meeker, 2002; and Sabine Strasser, 1993.

A more recent but not necessarily anthropological work on Black Sea cultures is Grinevetsky et al., 2015.

^{xxi} Source: TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/UstMenu.do?metod=temelist>

^{xxii} For more details about *çekirme* ships see Damianidis, 2010; Davulcu, 2013; Turna and Pirim, 2015.

^{xxiii} In a document published by Zonguldak Chamber of Industry and Commerce in 1933, the following information was provided: “There were 315 sails in 1923 and currently [in 1933] 521 sails in Bartın. The idea of doing transportation business by wooden sails disappeared and instead modern trade idea that involves engines with the modern machines is put in place. Consequently, within a decade, 986 engine-powered ships were produced. Bartın’s merchants are engaging in trade activities with all the ports of Black Sea and Marmara and some of the Mediterranean ports (Zonguldak Chamber of Industry and Commerce, 1933, pp. 208-209). Samancıoğlu (1999 [1942]) states that the population of the city centre was 8825 in 1935, the number of workplaces, shops, and stores was 1066, the sum of all structures were 3010, and there were 730 merchants and tradesmen (documents of Bartın Chamber of Industry and Commerce; Samancıoğlu, 1999, pp. 5-10).

^{xxiv} This no-scarf local dance costumes for women can be seen in the following performances:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zak_gz4ns1Q;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8QDPOTN4x0>

^{xxv} This is ‘Bartın Gazetesi’ meaning ‘Bartın Newspaper’. See <http://www.bartın.gov.tr/bartın-gazetesi-94-yili-geride-birakti>

^{xxvi} For a well-known discussion of the notion of ‘Anthropocene’ and its implications for social sciences, see Chakrabarty, 2009.

^{xxvii} As a final footnote, we should mention that as this article was being written, Bartın University’s anthropology department was closed and merged with sociology. The first author was asked to move to the Sociology Department. (Likewise, the archaeology department was incorporated in History of Art Department.

