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## CHAPTER 3

### GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

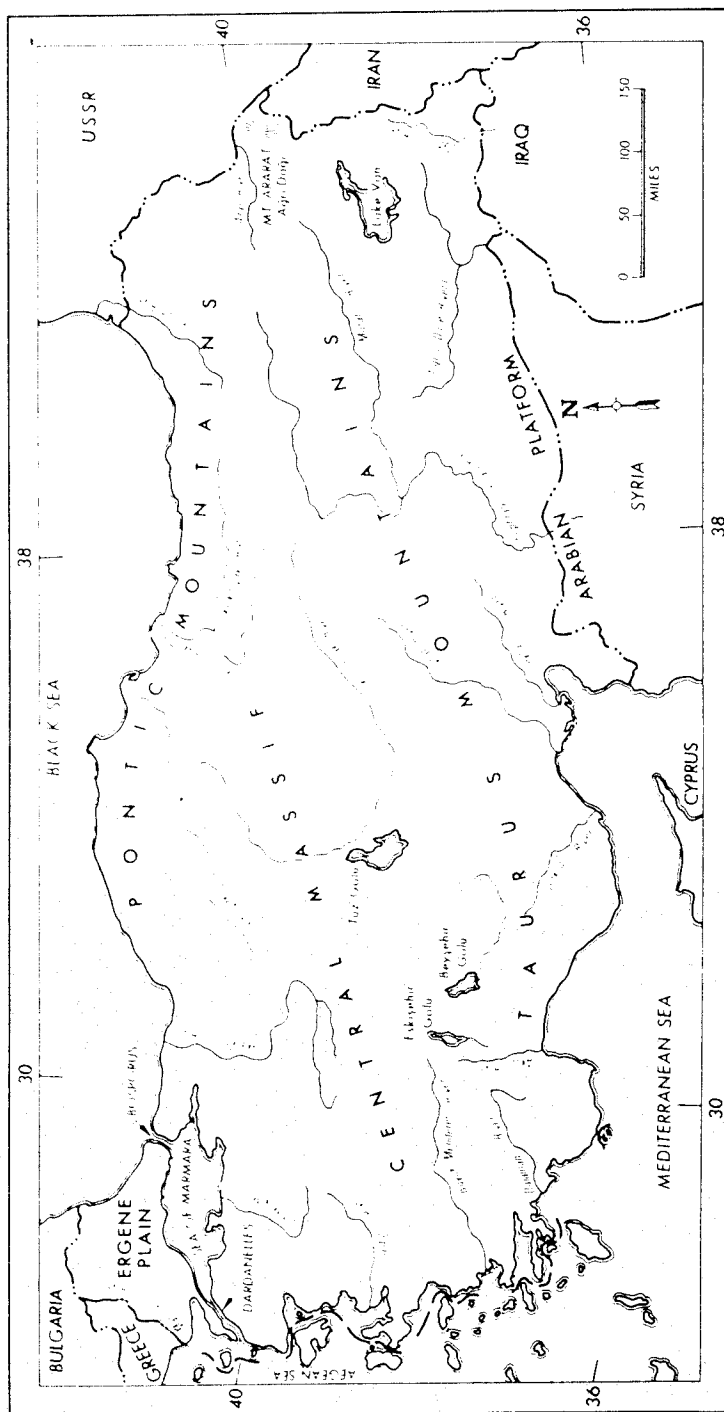
The Republic of Turkey is situated in the eastern Mediterranean region. About 3 percent of the area, with about 8 percent of the population, is in Europe; this region, known as Thrace (Trakya), is separated from the Asian portion of Turkey by the Bosphorus Strait (İstanbul Boğazı or Karadeniz Boğazı), the Sea of Marmara (Marmara Denizi), and the Dardanelles Strait (Çanakkale Boğazı) (see fig. 3). With a total of about 302,169 square miles, Turkey is slightly larger than the states of Washington, Idaho, and Montana combined. Turkey's mid-1972 population of about 37.2 million was almost eight times as large as the total population of the three American states.

The Asian part of the country is known by a variety of names—Asia Minor, Asiatic Turkey, the Anatolian Plateau, and Anatolia (Anadolu). The term *Anatolia* is more frequently used, however, in specific reference to the large, semiarid heartland plateau. The plateau is rimmed by hills and mountains that in many places form a barrier limiting access to the fertile, densely settled coastal regions. In 1973 İstanbul remained the primary industrial, commercial, and intellectual center, but the Anatolian city of Ankara, which Mustafa Kemal and his associates picked as the capital of the new republic, and the whole Anatolian region continue to be viewed as quintessentially Turkish.

The country is located in a major earthquake region. The structural line, or fault, of major importance runs inland from the Sea of Marmara in the general direction of Ankara; the fault underlies a densely populated region that is also a major transportation and communication corridor. The most devastating earthquakes in recent years, however, occurred in the eastern part of the country.

Turkey is reasonably well endowed with a variety of minerals. Coal, lignite, and copper are mined extensively, and chrome ores account for about one-fifth of world production. Systematic prospecting for new deposits was in progress in 1972, mostly under government auspices (see ch. 14).

According to the census of 1970 the population in that year totaled about 35.7 million with an annual growth rate of between 2.6 percent and 2.7 percent; based on this rate, the population was expected to double within twenty-five years. The relatively high growth rate is reflected in the age structure of the population, nearly 80 percent of



Source: Adapted from J. C. Dewdney, *Turkey: An Introductory Geography*, New York, 1971, pp. 30, 31.

Figure 3. Turkey. Relief and Drainage

which is under forty years of age and almost 42 percent under fifteen years of age.

Concerned by the rapid population growth, the government officially endorsed birth control and in 1965 launched a family-planning program. The plan was only moderately successful; during the late 1960s an estimated 27 percent of the women of child-bearing age practiced birth control. In 1972 birth control was one of the goals of official development planning; a reduction of the high birth rate from an estimated 39.6 per 1,000 to 26 per 1,000 was one of the official goals of the Third Five Year Plan (1973-77).

Population density averaged 119 per square mile in 1970, but most of the people were concentrated in the coastal towns where climate and soil conditions are favorable to agriculture, which is the occupation of more than half of the population. The most sparsely populated areas were the central highlands and the eastern and southeastern mountain regions.

Growing industrialization has stimulated massive migrations from the rural areas. The annual growth rate of the urban population rose from about 4 percent in 1965 to over 6 percent in 1970, reflecting the influx of rural migrants.

The working force was largely male except in agriculture where women accounted for about half of the workers. In terms of sectoral distribution more than 60 percent of the workers were engaged in agriculture; 12 percent were in government, social, and personal services; and about 10 percent were in industry. The rest were employed in construction, commerce, communication, utilities, and finance.

The working force increased at an estimated rate of 2.9 percent between 1965 and 1970. Despite vigorous expansion of the industrial sector, the economy absorbed only about 60 percent of the additional workers; the rest remained unemployed or immigrated to Western Europe. Unemployment was particularly severe in the urban areas. Worker immigration to Western European countries has helped to relieve pressure on the domestic labor market. It was therefore officially encouraged, and a special government agency was established to assist the approximately 700,000 Turkish workers employed abroad.

Living standards reflect the contrasts of the country's physical geography and its settlement patterns. In many rural areas of the central and eastern highlands the population lives on or near a subsistence level. The living standards of many people in the coastal areas and in the modern cities, however, approach those of highly developed countries in Western Europe. In 1972, however, the pressures and problems created by population growth, rapid urbanization, rural underdevelopment, and urban unemployment were felt by virtually all groups of the society. Many villages lacked electricity and a sanitary water supply and were isolated by poor communication. In the cities overtaxed public utilities and sprawling shantytowns threatened the welfare and

health of nearly all residents. Waterborne and other diseases related to poor sanitation were widespread, although some of the major infectious diseases, including trachoma and tuberculosis, had been brought under control in most, but not all, parts of the country.

The government has consistently affirmed its responsibility in matters of public health and welfare. Official development plans in the early 1970s were designed to stimulate rural development, ameliorate the urban housing shortage, and increase the per capita income. Housing was the second largest item among the investment target of the Second Five Year Plan (1968-72), but other items related to public welfare received relatively modest allocations (see ch. 13).

## LAND, CLIMATE, RESOURCES

### Boundaries and Administrative Subdivisions

#### External Boundaries

Turkey is bounded by six countries and six bodies of water. In Europe, the country has frontiers with Greece and Bulgaria; in Asia, its frontiers are with the Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. The Greek boundary was confirmed by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. To end persistent boundary and territorial claims involving the areas near this border, the treaty provided for a population exchange, under the terms of which the sizable Greek-speaking community of western Turkey was returned to Greece, and the Turkish-speaking population from Greek Thrace was repatriated to Turkey. No active disputes on the boundary have since occurred (see ch. 2).

The boundary with Bulgaria, also confirmed by the treaty, begins at the mouth of the Rezve Deresi River on the Black Sea (Karadeniz), follows that river for forty-one miles, and then follows the Deliva River for about ten miles. The boundary continues along ridges and is demarcated by boundary pillars. For short stretches, the boundary follows three other rivers to the Greek tripoint at the Maritsa River. There were no active disputes regarding the specific alignment of the boundary in early 1973.

The boundary with the Soviet Union was defined in the 1921 treaties of Moscow and Kars. It was the subject of controversy after World War II, but there were no boundary disputes in early 1973.

The boundary with Iran traverses an isolated region that is inhabited by seminomadic Kurds (Kürds), who have tended to resist assimilation into either Iran or Turkey, and who seasonally cross the frontier with their animals (see ch. 4). The boundary was determined in 1937 and has not since been disputed by either country.

The boundary with Iraq begins in the west along the Tigris (Dicle) River before starting a meandering course across the Kurdish Alps and foothills to its junction with the boundary with Iran. Kurds also inhabit this region and have on occasion pressed the Iraqi and Turkish

governments for political independence. The establishment of the boundary line by the 1926 Treaty of Angora (Ankara), which was signed by Turkey, Great Britain, and Iraq, ended contention over the former Mosul Province, which now lies almost entirely in Iraq.

The boundary with Syria crosses the southern foothills of the Taurus Mountains and other hilly terrain from the Iraq border to the Mediterranean Sea. The frontier was defined by the Treaty of Lausanne, which allocated the province of Alexandretta (now known as Hatay Province) to Syria. A Franco-Turkish agreement in June 1939 provided for the transfer of Hatay Province to the Turkish Republic. Syria's lingering resentment over the loss of the towns of Antakya and Iskenderun (formerly Antioch and Alexandretta) continued to be an irritating factor in Syrian-Turkish relations during the early 1970s (see ch. 12).

#### Internal Divisions

Since the promulgation of the Organic Law in January 1921, the country has been divided into geographically defined provinces, known as the *vilayet* or *il* (pl., *iller*). The preferred official designation is *il* but the more traditional term *vilayet* was still extensively used in 1973. The number of provinces varies from time to time, depending on the results of the most recent census; there were sixty-seven in 1973 (see ch. 10). With a few exceptions, a province has the same name as its administrative capital. Each province is divided into districts, called *kaza* (pl., *kazalar*) or *ilce* (pl., *ilceler*), of which there were about 600 in 1972.

### Natural Regions

#### The Aegean Coastlands

The western portion of the region consists mainly of rolling hill-land that is well suited for agriculture, receiving twenty-five inches of rainfall annually. The region includes the cities of Istanbul and Edirne and is densely populated. Its land frontier is an artificial one that has varied considerably over the last century.

The Bosphorus is sixteen miles long and averages one mile in width but narrows in places to less than 500 yards. Both banks—one side of which lies in Asia; the other, in Europe—rise steeply from the water and form a succession of cliffs, coves, and nearly landlocked bays. Most of the shores are densely wooded and are marked by numerous small towns and villages. The Dardanelles Strait is twenty-five miles long and increases in width toward the south. Unlike the Bosphorus, there are few settlements of any kind along the shores of the Dardanelles, the region being used primarily for grazing.

The Aegean region in Asia has fertile soils and a typically Mediterranean climate with mild, rainy winters and hot, dry summers. The lowlands contain about half of the country's agricultural wealth in the broad, cultivated valleys, the most important of which are the Ismit Valley, the Bursa Plains, and the Plains of Troy. Cotton, tobacco, sugar

beets, figs, olives, and various fruit crops thrive in this region, as does the widely grown mulberry tree, providing the basis for a long tradition of silk manufacture. The area is densely populated, particularly around Bursa and Izmir. Chrome ores are mined in the southwest corner of the region.

#### **The Black Sea Region**

The region has a steep and rocky coast, and rivers cascade through gorges of the coastal ranges. A few larger rivers that have cut back through the Pontic Mountains have tributaries that flow in broad elevated basins. Access inland from the coast is limited to a few narrow valleys, and the coast has therefore always been isolated from the interior. The eastern part of the region is heavily forested.

The narrow coastal ribbon running between Zonguldak and Rize, widening here and there into a fertile delta, is an area of concentrated cultivation. All available areas, including mountain slopes wherever they are not too steep, are put to use. The mild, damp climate favors commercial farming, the chief crops being hazelnuts, fruits, tea, tobacco, and maize (corn).

#### **The Mediterranean Coastland**

The plains of the Mediterranean Coast are rich in agricultural resources. The fertile, humid soils and the warm climate make these areas ideal for growing citrus fruits and grapes, olives, cereals, and, in irrigated areas, rice and cotton. Summers are hot, and droughts are not uncommon.

The plains around Adana are largely reclaimed floodlands. In the western part of the Mediterranean coastal region, rivers have not cut valleys to the sea; movement inland is therefore restricted. The backland is mainly karst and rises suddenly along the coast to elevations of 9,000 feet. There are few major cities along this coast, but the triangular plain of Antalya is extensive enough to support the rapidly growing city and port of the same name, which is an important trading center in cotton as well as in chrome ores from the western part of the district of Antalya.

#### **Anatolia**

The plateau-like highlands of Anatolia are considered the heartland of the country. Akin to the steppes of the Soviet Union, the region varies in altitude from 2,000 to 4,000 feet west to east; it is arid and supports little plant or animal life. Wooded areas are confined to the northwest and northeast, and cultivation is restricted to the river valleys that are sufficiently wide. Irrigation is practiced wherever water is available; the deeply entrenched river courses make it difficult to raise water to the surrounding agricultural land, however. For the most part, the region is bare and monotonous and used for grazing.

Rainfall is limited and in Ankara amounts to less than ten inches annually. Wheat and barley are the most important crops, but the

yields are irregular; in years of drought, crops fail entirely. Stockraising also is important, but overgrazing has caused soil erosion in the plateau, and during the frequent duststorms of summer a fine yellow powder blows across the plains. In bad years there are severe losses of stock. Locusts may ravage the eastern area in April and May. An area of extreme heat and virtually no rainfall in summer, the central plateau is cold in winter, with heavy, lasting snows, and villages may be isolated by severe snowstorms.

#### **The Eastern Highlands**

Eastern Turkey is rugged country with higher elevations, a more severe climate, but more precipitation than the central plateau. In the extreme east at Kars, winter temperatures have been known to fall as low as minus 40° F.

From the highlands in the north, sometimes called "Turkey's Siberia," to the mountains of Kurdistan in the south that descend toward the Mesopotamian Plain in Iraq, vast stretches of this eastern region consist only of wild or barren wasteland. Many of the peaks are extinct volcanoes reaching 10,000 to 14,500 feet in height. Fertile basins, such as the Muş Valley west of Lake Van and the Murat and Aras river corridors, lie at the foot of the lofty ranges. Here are the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates (Firat). In the easternmost part of this region, the surface consists of lava deposits, and the soil cover is often thin or absent. Government efforts in the 1940s to resettle sections of the thinly inhabited eastern highland region resulted in significant population increases in some agricultural areas. Along the Murat and Tigris river valleys, rich alluvial soils containing decomposed lava make possible intensive crop cultivation. The entire eastern third of Turkey, however, remains sparsely settled; its southeastern segment is inhabited largely by nomadic and seminomadic tribesmen.

The northern mountains are covered with deciduous and coniferous forests up to the timberline. In many areas of this region, the villagers have cleared substantial tracts of forest land and have thus added to the erosion problem. The government has sought to prevent further destruction by resettling some of the mountain villages in the Çoruh, Yeşil Irmak, and Aras valleys.

#### **Topography and Drainage**

Except for a relatively small segment along the Syrian border, which is a continuation of the Arabian Platform, Turkey is part of the great Alpine-Himalayan mountain belt. The intensive folding and uplifting of this mountain belt during the Tertiary period was accompanied by strong volcanic activity and intrusions of igneous rock material, followed by extensive faulting in the Quaternary period. This faulting is still in progress, and Turkey is one of the ranking earthquake regions of the world.

The structural complexity is strikingly reflected in relief as well as in drainage. Wedged between two folded mountain ranges that converge in the east—the Pontic Mountains along the Black Sea and the Taurus Mountains bounding the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Platform—the Central Massif is structurally a very complex region. It is composed of uplifted blocks and downfolded troughs, covered by recent deposits, giving the appearance of a plateau with rough terrain.

True lowland is confined to the Ergene Plain in Thrace, extending along rivers that discharge into the Aegean Sea or the Sea of Marmara, and to a few narrow coastal strips along the Black Sea and Mediterranean coasts. Nearly 85 percent of the land lies above 1,500 feet, and the median altitude of the country is 3,700 feet. Even more important is the fact that in Asian Turkey flat or gently sloping land is very rare and is confined to the deltas of the Kızıl Irmak River, the coastal plains of Antalya and Adana, and the valley floors of the Gediz and the two Menderes rivers, as well as to some interior high plains in Anatolia, mainly around Tuz Gölü (Salt Lake) and the basin of Konya. Moderately sloping land surface is limited almost entirely to Thrace and to the hill-land of the Arabian Platform along the border with Syria.

Over 80 percent of the land surface is rough, broken, and mountainous and is therefore of limited agricultural value. These features are more accentuated in the eastern part of the country where the Taurus and Pontic ranges converge into a lofty mountain region with a median altitude of over 5,000 feet, reaching its highest altitude along the border with the Soviet Union and Iran. Turkey's highest mountain peak, Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı)—19,966 feet—is situated near the tripoint where the boundaries of the three countries meet.

Nearly two-thirds of the land surface drains into the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, either directly or through the Black Sea via the Bosphorus-Marmara Sea-Dardanelles straits. A fairly large area in the east is drained by the Euphrates and its tributaries, the Murat Çayı and the Tigris, into the Persian Gulf. The Aras River drainage area north of Mount Ararat feeds into the Caspian Sea. Of the two sizable inland drainage areas, the eastern is the smaller; a few rivers empty here into Lake Van, which is said to be connected underground with the Tigris River. The other inland drainage area lies south of Ankara and includes the southern part of Anatolia and a portion of the Taurus Mountains. Here small streams feed the saline lakes, largest among which are the Tuz Gölü, Beyşehir Gölü, and the Eğirdir Gölü.

Major streams draining extensive areas of the Pontic Mountains and northern Anatolia, all feeding the Black Sea, are (from east to west), the Çoruh, with its estuary at Batumi (in the Soviet Union); the Yeşil Irmak and the Kızıl Irmak, discharging their waters east and west of Samsun, respectively; and the Sakarya, leading from Adapazarı. In addition to a number of smaller streams, one larger river, the Simav Çayı, discharges into the Sea of Marmara. The Aegean Sea collects the

waters of the Maritsa, which drains the Ergene Plain of Thrace; the Gediz River, which discharges into the Gulf of İzmir; the Küçük Menderes River; and the Büyük Menderes River. A great number of streams run down the southern slopes of the Taurus Mountains into the Mediterranean Sea, but only four of these are of any size.

All rivers discharging into the Black Sea and into the Mediterranean Sea from the southern slopes of the Taurus Mountains have steep gradients along most sections of their courses and are usually deeply incised. The steep gradients provide a large hydroelectric potential; because of seasonal fluctuations in rainfall, however, the rivers have irregular flow volumes, and many smaller streams are dry beds during the hot summer months.

### Climate

Turkey is a focal point of contrasting climates. The pressure systems of all the adjacent regions affect the climate of the country, yet the landforms are high enough to minimize these outside influences. The climate, therefore, is temperate continental, with some Mediterranean influences. The western coastal areas do not experience frost, but in the east snow may remain on the ground for as long as four months of the year.

In the interior plateau, there is a wide range of temperature. Winters are cold—January temperatures average 30°F—and frost may occur more than 100 days during the year. Summers are warm, with high daytime temperatures and cool nights. The mean for July, the hottest month, lies between 68°F and 73°F. Between ten and seventeen inches of rainfall are received annually on the plateau, the precise amount depending on altitude (see fig. 4). May is generally the wettest month, and July and August are the driest months.

Along the coastal regions, winters are mild, and summers moderately hot. Along the Black Sea, August is the hottest month with a mean temperature of 72°F. Along the Aegean, August temperatures often exceed 90°F. Winters are generally the wettest months on this coast. Rainfall averages from 20 to 30 inches per annum along the Aegean and Mediterranean seas to over 100 inches along the Black Sea, which is the only region of Turkey with a moisture surplus throughout the year. Along the southern coasts the summers are very hot.

The climate of eastern Turkey is most inhospitable. Summers are hot and extremely dry; winters are bitterly cold. Spring and autumn are both subject to sudden hot and cold spells.

### Vegetation and Soils

Both the natural vegetation and the cultivated crops are closely related to the climate. The constantly warm and moist coastal regions, especially on the north coast, are forested unless they have been cleared for cultivation. The coastal forests, which cover over 13 percent

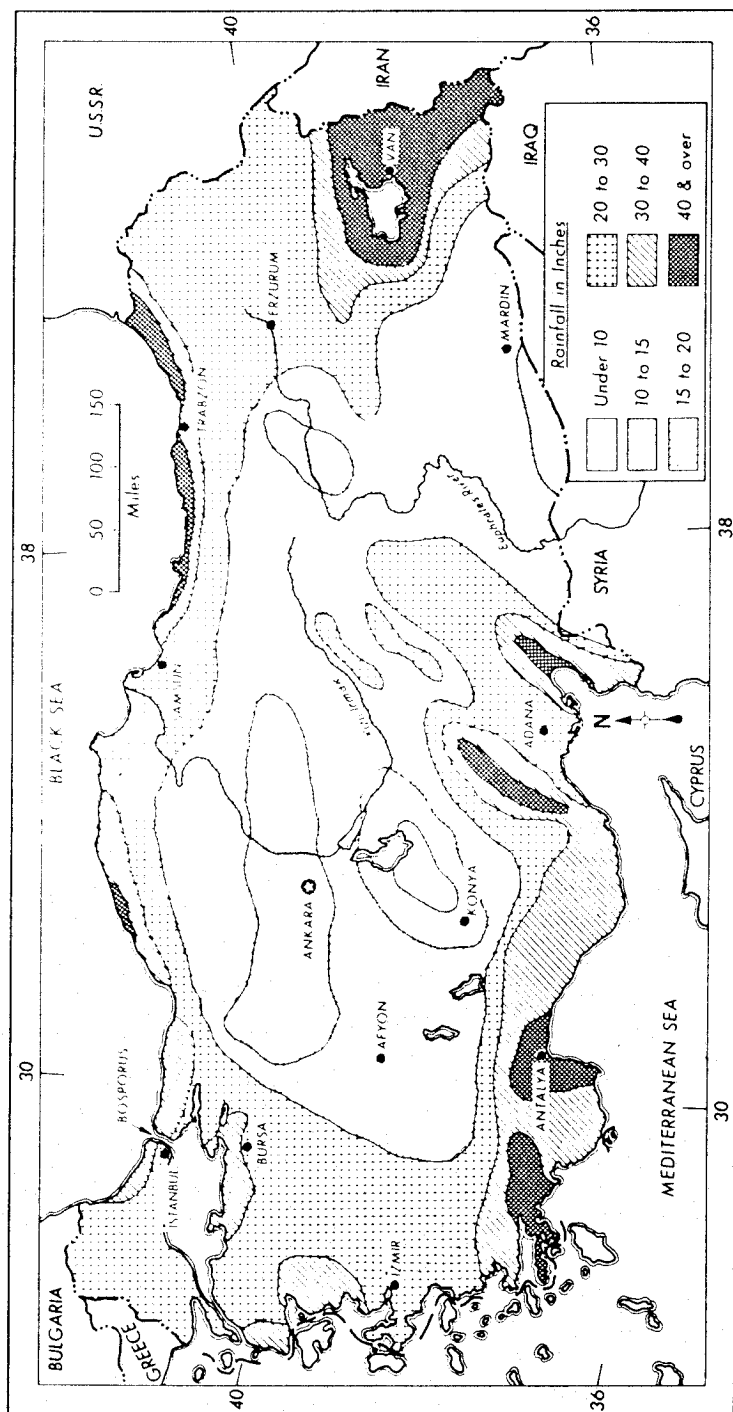


Figure 4. Turkey, Mean Annual Rainfall

of the land, are mainly on the mountain slopes facing the seas. Because of the climate, mixed evergreen, coniferous, and deciduous woodlands cover the slopes along the north and southeast. Evergreen oaks generally grow on the lower slopes up to 3,000 feet; cedars, maple, juniper, fir, and valonia oak are found at the higher levels.

The mountain peaks near the Sea of Marmara and Izmir in the west have a humid grassland near the snowline. The landscape below the snowline is covered by conifers, and below this the slopes are covered with broadleaf trees that remain green year round. Broadleaf trees include the poplar, sycamore, and mulberry. Along the west and southwest coastal regions, shrubs and evergreens flourish, particularly on the thinner soils. During the spring, flowers make a brilliant color display in this area. Walnut and poplar trees grow extensively in the damper areas, and cactus plants flourish in the more arid areas of the coast. In the eastern highlands mixed forests predominate, but the higher ridges and peaks have alpine vegetation.

In the drier interior of the plateau, steppe vegetation is common. Typical vegetation is a combination of short grasses and bush, with lines of stunted willow trees along the watercourses.

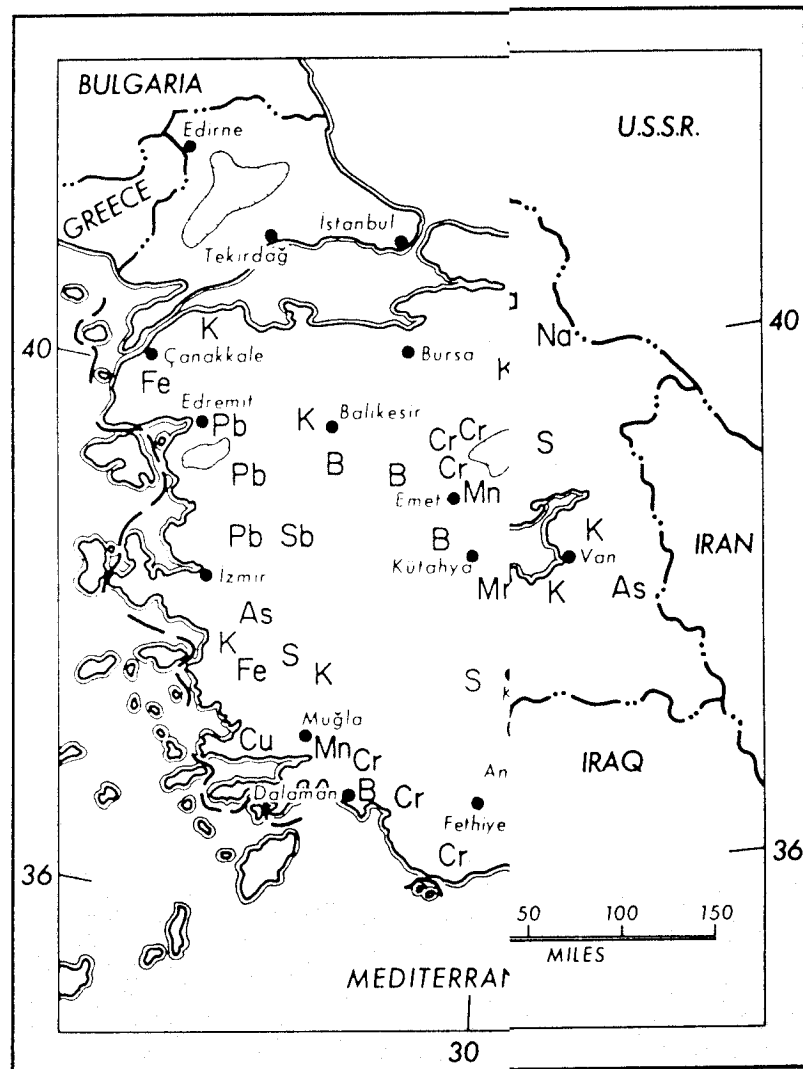
There are wide differences in the kinds of soils. In the narrow coastal regions of the west, north, and south, the soil, known as *terra rossa*, is characteristic of Mediterranean areas. Formed from limestone, it is strongly weathered and leached. Although this kind of soil is low in humus content, it is enriched by iron and silica and is fertile and suitable for vines and citrus crops. The high iron content gives the *terra rossa* a red color that becomes yellowish in areas of higher rainfall. Rich alluvium, with marl and clay, and some swampy or saline patches prevail in the few delta areas.

Vast areas of the country are covered by gray-brown acidic soil, occurring primarily in the mountain regions, which are stony and generally lack cropping possibilities. Dense stands of deciduous and coniferous trees grow on these soils in the higher elevations. Large areas of the east and some parts of the central plateau are covered with hardened lava and are almost entirely devoid of vegetation.

The interior plateau regions, with semiarid climate, have brown and reddish-brown soils that are deficient in nitrogen and phosphorus. Where the grass areas have been removed, erosion has stripped off the hillside soils.

### Mineral Resources

The country has a diversity of rich mineral resources, some of which are of significance in foreign trade (see fig. 5). The most important areas of mineral deposits are along the foothills of the Pontic and Taurus mountains. Medium and small deposits are scattered throughout the country, but many are in remote areas, and production and



Source: Adapted from J. C. Dewdney, *Turkey: An Intr*

transportation costs tend to limit their economic usefulness (see ch. 14).

The largest coal field is located between Ereğli and Zonguldak on the Black Sea Coast. The deposits occur in rocks of the Carboniferous period and include several high-grade coking varieties. Lignite is found in several scattered locations, with the main deposits in Thrace and in Kütahya Province in West Anatolia.

Oil was discovered in 1940 in the Ramandağ district of Siirt Province in Southeast Anatolia. Other strikes have been made since in the same region, notably west and north of Batman.

There are widely dispersed iron ore deposits, but the main source is at Divriği in the eastern portion of Sivas Province in Central Anatolia; this ore is of high quality, having a 60 to 65 percent metal content. Extensive but lower grade iron ore deposits are found near Edremit on the Aegean Coast. Magnesite ore fields covering an area of about 1.9 million acres have been discovered in Eskişehir Province.

The chief source of chrome ore, heretofore the country's most economically valuable mineral, had been at Guleman in Elazığ Province in Eastern Anatolia. These deposits, however, were near exhaustion in 1973, and production at Guleman was exceeded by that of several smaller mines in Fethiye district in West Anatolia. Copper is mined in the vicinity of Ergani in Diyarbakır Province and in East Anatolia and at Murgul in the northeast. These once major sources were near depletion in 1973, but another copper-bearing area had been located in Kastamonu Province in the Black Sea region.

Minerals of relatively minor economic significance include manganese, which is mined near Devrek in Zonguldak Province on the Black Sea Coast, near Kütahya in West Anatolia and, in small amounts, in Gaziantep Province. Lead and zinc ores are found in the mountain areas; the major deposits are located near Keban in Elazığ Province. New explorations for these minerals were in progress in the early 1970s in the Central Anatolian province of Kayseri. Turkey is the world's second largest producer of boron. The main deposits in the form of colemanite are located in the West Anatolian province of Eskişehir. Antimony and manganese are mined in Konya Province in Central Anatolia. Pyrite, molybdenum, tungsten, bauxite, mercury, sulfur, barite, emery, asbestos, meerschaum, and various mineral salts occur in small deposits.

## MANMADE FEATURES

### Dams

The government since the early 1960s has been making efforts to harness the rivers, to decrease soil erosion, to double the country's irrigated areas from approximately 5 million to 10 million acres, and

thereby to improve agricultural output. Irrigation for the rich agricultural Aegean coastland is provided by the waters of the Demirköprü Dam reservoir on the Gediz River near İzmir, the Kemer Dam on one of the tributaries of the Büyük Menderes River, the Sariyar Dam on the Sakarya River, and the Kesikköprü and Hirfanlı dams on the Kızıl Irmak River. A major irrigation dam on the Şeyhan River near Adana waters about 39,000 acres (see fig. 6).

On the Mediterranean Coast near the town of Silifke, west of Adana, about 12,500 acres are under irrigation served by the Yerköprü diversion dam on the Göksu River. The irrigation system headed by a diversion dam on the Köprü River waters some 22,000 acres. On the Anatolian Plateau some 30,000 acres are under irrigation, drawing water from the Gümenek, Almus, and Tokmakkaya dams, all on the Yeşil Irmak River. Official plans were under study in 1972 to increase this irrigated area to 56,000 acres and to modernize the diversion canals at Silifke.

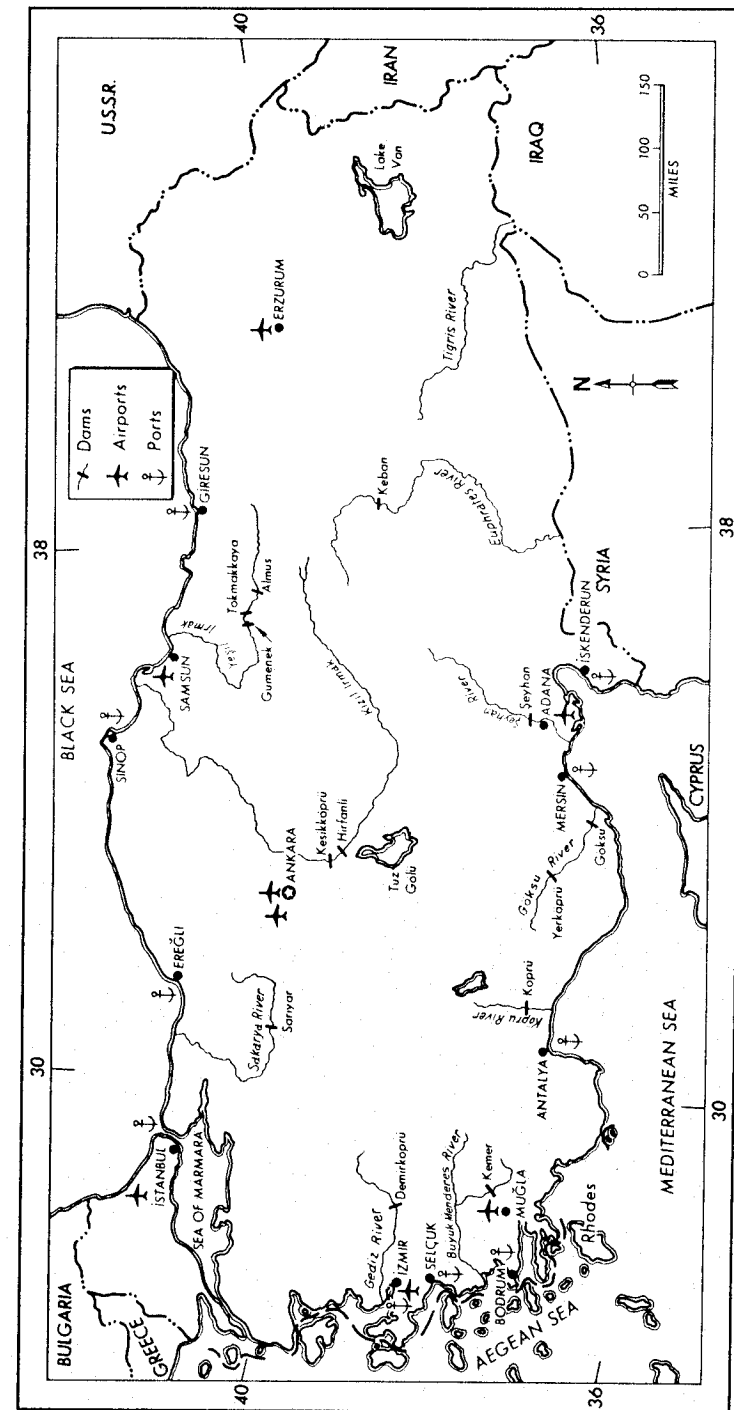
During the 1950s and 1960s, more than a score of dams were built to serve the power needs of the expanding industries and of urban and rural populations. The outstanding power development was the Keban multipurpose dam on the Euphrates River in Elazığ Province, with a planned capacity of 3,500 million kilowatts. When operations began in 1975, the dam will about double the country's present electrical capacity. In late 1972 plans were announced for the construction of the 500,000-kilowatt capacity Hasan Uğurlu Dam, southwest of Samsun, on the banks of the Yeşil Irmak River.

### Railroads and Roads

When the republic was established there were about 2,500 miles of railroad track, primarily in Anatolia. One of the major concerns of the government was to establish railroad connections between towns of the central and peripheral areas and to provide access to areas rich in mineral resources and in agricultural products (see fig. 7). New railroads were built, including the line from Ereğli and Zonguldak to Ankara, Kayseri, and Adana, and a series of lines that linked Samsun on the Black Sea with Kayseri, Malatya, Erzurum, and Adana.

One of the more important mineral access lines was completed in 1944. It starts at Malatya, branching off before it reaches Elazığ and runs via Ergani and Diyarbakır to Kurtalan to facilitate copper and chrome shipments from the area; the line also serves the oil fields near Batman. In East Anatolia a line runs from Elazığ to Lake Van; it crosses the lake by ferry and continues to the Iranian border. The final stretch of this line east of Lake Van was completed during the late 1960s within the framework of a general plan to establish rail links among the Asian members of the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) (see ch. 12).

In 1972 the state-owned railroad system included about 5,000 miles



Source: Adapted from J. C. Dewdney, *Turkey: An Introductory Geography*, New York, 1971, pp. 140, 144.

Figure 6. Dams, Ports, and Airports in Turkey, 1972



## THE PEOPLES OF TURKEY

some suggested reforms verged on the ridiculous. Atatürk resolved the problem with an ingenious bit of political invention that managed to deflect the most ferocious purifiers while appealing to the nationalism that justified the purge. He suggested the historically preposterous but politically efficacious Sun-Language Theory, which stated that since Turkish was the "mother of all languages," all foreign words were basically Turkish in any case. Therefore, if no obvious Turkish equivalent for a foreign word could be found, the nationalist could desist from his search secure in the knowledge that Turkish linguistic purity had not been violated. Despite these attempts, however, enthusiasm for purification continued. In 1945 the parliament adopted a new version of the constitution, identical in content to the original but "purer" in vocabulary.

By the late 1940s considerable opposition to the purity movement had begun to surface. Teachers, writers, journalists, poets, editors, and others began to complain publicly about the instability and arbitrariness of the officially sanctioned vocabulary. A new gap had begun to open between the masses and the educated elite; the former retained many assimilated foreign words while the latter tended to use "purer" equivalents. In addition, a new trend had developed toward borrowing Western words, especially from French. Although some items of the new vocabulary found their way into common usage, they were neither immediately nor completely accepted.

In the 1950s the official position began to moderate. The Turkish Linguistic Society stated that it did not seek purity for ideological reasons but rather that "the goal is to make Turkish a reasonably homogeneous language, free from the hegemony of both Eastern and Western languages." In 1950 the society lost its semiofficial status, and in 1952 the original text of the constitution was officially re-adopted. Some Arabic words began to reappear in governmental use.

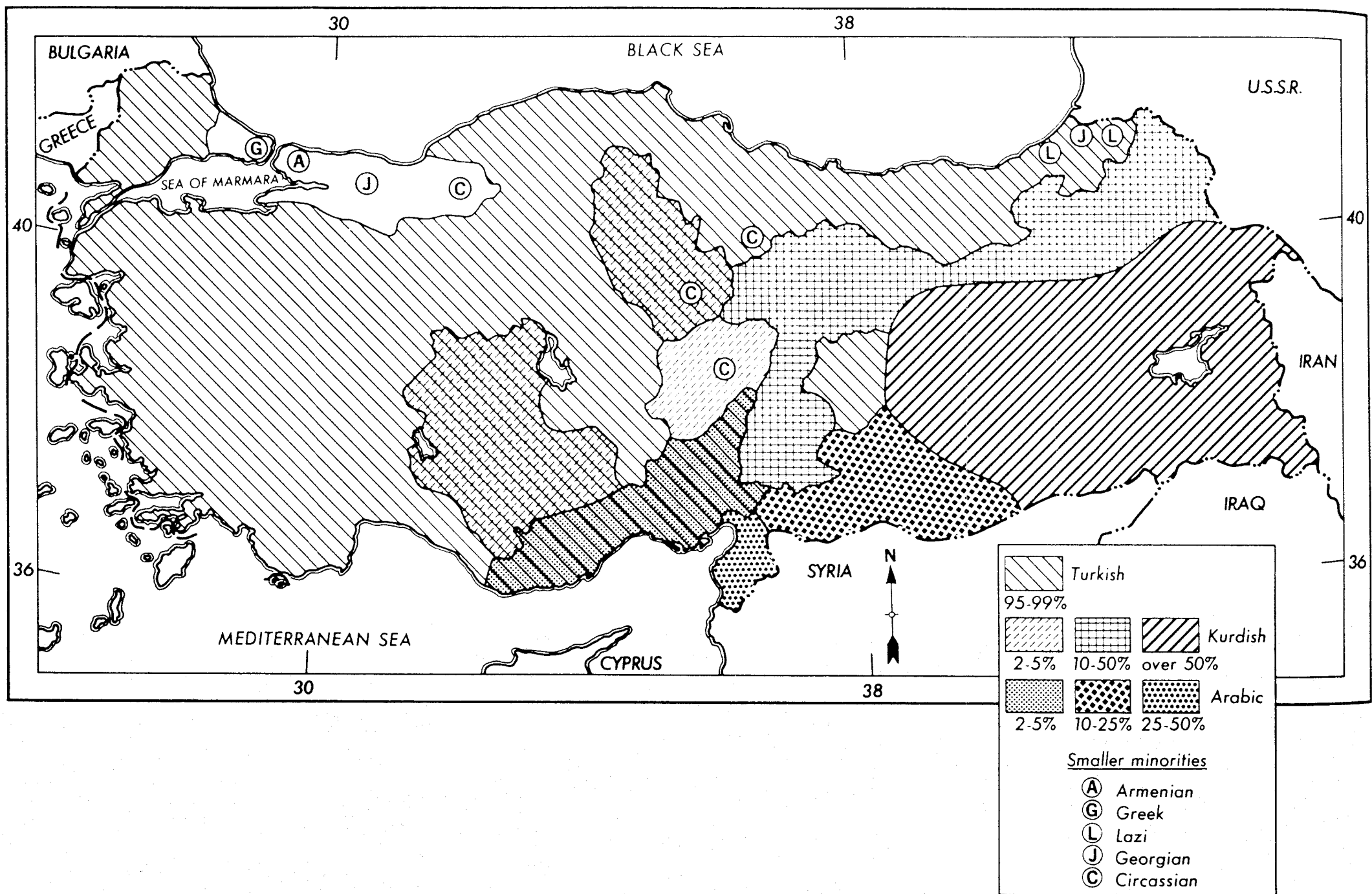
The long-term effects of language reform have been mixed. Modern Turkish greatly simplified reading and orthography but put a tremendous burden on those who had to undergo the change. It has helped in the spread of literacy but has disappointed the expectations of those who expected it to make illiteracy obsolete (see ch. 7). It has closed to some extent the literary gap between the classes of Turkish society but at the cost of permanent estrangement from the prerepublican heritage. Evolution of style and vocabulary since reform have been extraordinarily rapid as compared with other languages. Turkish has no classic work such as the Kuran, which has provided a model for the development of Arabic since the beginning of Islam, and the evolution of style has been rather undirected. Modern Turkish is nevertheless incomparably more concise and direct than Ottoman Turkish and far better adapted to the requirements of modern technology, science, and bureaucracy.

Despite decades of nationalist rhetoric about the language and culture of the Turkish peasantry, the ethnic structure of rural Turkey is not at present well understood. It is known that regional differences exist within the Turkish population and between the Turks and the non-Turkish groups, but their nature and extent are not clearly known. Few studies of this nature have been undertaken, and government policy tends to discourage them.

Under the Ottoman *millet* system, minorities occupied an accepted, if inferior, position in society, fulfilling certain economic and social functions that were deemed inappropriate for Muslims (see ch. 6). Modern geographic nationalism of the type adopted by Atatürk, on the other hand, finds minorities a good deal more inconvenient; they are anomalies threatening the unity and stability of the nation as a whole. Therefore, rather than accepting their indefinite presence, the government must attempt to assimilate or remove them. In the words of C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuijze, "From minorities in the Middle Eastern sense (permanently distinct components of a multiverse), they became minorities in the modern European or North American sense (special groups whose adjustment to overall society is incomplete and whose participation is therefore as yet problematic in a number of ways)."

Census figures break the population down by language; respondents are asked to name their mother tongue. Some observers have questioned the reliability of these figures, however, noting that, although probably no Turkish speakers give Kurdish or Arabic as their native tongue, some Kurdish or Arabic speakers probably give Turkish as theirs. Also, an unknown number of Kurds and Arabs have adopted the Turkish language and culture. Apart from this census question, the government appears to take no official notice of the existence of at least 2.2 million Kurds and several hundred thousand Arabs in the southern and southeastern portions of the country (see fig. 10). Although the Kurds speak a language unrelated to Turkish, they are officially called mountain Turks.

Ethnic terms generally tend to be applied imprecisely in Turkey; people often combine elements of religious and linguistic identification in assessments of ethnic identity. For example, many consider all Sunni Muslims to be Turks, regardless of their language, and regard non-Sunni speakers of Turkish as non-Turks. The term *Kurd* is used by many to refer to all residents, both Kurdish- and Turkish-speaking, of the predominantly Kurdish regions; for this reason many people maintain that Kurdish is only a dialect of Turkish. The term *Laz* is used with similar imprecision to refer both to all residents of the eastern end of Turkey's Black Sea shore and to the specific small group speaking Lazi, a Caucasian language. The latter people are more properly known as the Lazi.



Source: Adapted from Hassan Arfa, *The Kurds: An Historical and Political Study*, London, 1966, p. ii; and J. C. Dewdney, *Turkey: An Introductory Geography*, New York, 1971, p. 89.

Figure 10. Native Languages Spoken in Turkey, by Geographic Regions, 1966

For several decades a trend toward increasing homogeneity has existed (see table 5). The educational and military systems have replaced past coercion in the assimilation of minorities, with the result that a much more gradual, but smoother and probably more stable, absorption is taking place. Formal education, however inadequate, has served to diminish linguistic diversity, to increase individual aspirations, and to broaden individual and village horizons. The military, which takes peasants and even seminomads out of their traditional environments, has accelerated the process of assimilation (see ch. 17).

Table 5. Native Languages of the Population of Turkey

Languages	Percentage of Population	
	1965	1960
Turkish .....	86.0	90.1
Kurdish .....	9.3	7.1
Arabic .....	1.0	1.2
Greek .....	0.7	0.2
Circassian .....	0.6	0.2
Armenian .....	0.4	0.1
Georgian .....	0.4	0.1
Ladino and Yiddish* .....	0.3	n a.
Lazi .....	0.4	0.1
Other .....	1.1	1.0
Total* .....	100.0	100.0

n a. —not available.

\*Percentages do not total because of rounding.

Source: Adapted from J. C. Dewdney, *Turkey: An Introductory Geography*. New York, 1971, p. 88.

All of these means tend to create a feeling of Turkishness. Nevertheless, the existence of distinct minority groups is a social reality, a knowledge of which is essential for an understanding of the country's life. Many people, including political leaders, betray their own desire for unity in the country by implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, establishing rigid requirements for the definition of a true Turk. Thus, a person must speak Turkish as his primary language, be a Muslim, and identify with the Republic of Turkey before he may be considered a true Turk. Because of these criteria most members of ethnic minorities are excluded from full participation and acceptance in Turkish life. Considerable assimilation is taking place among the Kurds and some smaller minorities, but Arabs, Jews, Greeks, and Armenians will no doubt remain distinct at least as long as they retain their emotional ties to their own peoples outside Turkey.

In modern Turkey education and skills generally outweigh ethnic origin in determining an individual's career opportunities and life chances but not his social contacts. Self-conscious ethnic communities

are maintained primarily through personal identification rather than through extreme discrimination or hostility from the outside. Among younger university-educated people, ethnic origin carries less weight than with the older generation. Some observers also foresee an increase in intermarriage. At present, however, ethnic identity is influential in determining personal social ties and friendships.

### The Turks

Official estimates place the percentage of native speakers of Turkish in 1973 at close to 92 percent and of native plus non-native speakers of Turkish at close to 98 percent. Among the Turks may be distinguished a number of regional variants that do not function as ethnic groups but merely reflect differing historical and ecological circumstances. To some extent, differences of accent, customs, and outlook distinguish the regions and are popularly expressed in regional stereotypes. Three of the most important of these variants are Anatolian Turks, the peasantry of the central core of Asiatic Turkey, whose culture is said to underlie Turkish nationalism; Rumelian Turks, primarily immigrants from the Balkan territories of the empire or their descendants; and central Asian Turks, the assorted Turkic tribesmen from Asia who have come to Turkey. Others, such as the Black Sea Turks, whose speech largely lacks the vowel harmony valued elsewhere and whose natural predilections are thought to be toward extremely devout religion and the sea, are also distinguished.

The Anatolian Turks are mainly peasant cultivators whose ancestors have lived in Anatolia for centuries (see ch. 2). Included in this population are the Yuruks, who are not officially recognized but who were unofficially estimated to number anywhere from 50,000 to 1 million during the 1960s. Nomads and seminomads, they are believed to be descended from Turkic tribesmen.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire left millions of Turks stranded and stateless in former imperial territories. Those in the Balkans, often descended from elite colonialists or Ottoman officials, eagerly fled to Turkey. Between 1935 and 1940, 100,000 came from Bulgaria and 70,000 from Romania. Other Balkan Turks include 20,000 from Yugoslavia and 500,000 from Greece who arrived under the 1923 exchange of population, which excluded the Greeks of Istanbul and the Turks of Western Thrace (see ch. 3). Generally industrious, literate, and Western-oriented, the Balkan Turks have smoothly assimilated into the Republic of Turkey, many of them as peasant cultivators.

Central Asian Turks included Crimean Tatars and Turkomans, who live scattered in various parts of the country. In 1945 an estimated 10,000 persons spoke Tatar as their primary language. Since that time several thousand more have settled in Turkey. Small numbers of Turkoman tribesmen retain their traditional tribal social structure.

## Muslim Minorities

### Kurds

Informed estimates placed the number of Kurds in Turkey between 2 million and 2.5 million in 1973. Speakers of an Indo-European language related to Persian, Kurds also live in significant numbers in adjacent regions of Iran and Iraq, where nationalist sentiment has existed for some decades. The extent of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey is unclear. Armed uprisings by Kurdish tribes occurred during the 1920s and 1930s and were brutally repressed. Many authorities, however, attributed these uprisings to religious, rather than strictly separatist, motives (see ch. 2). Turkish government policy favors the assimilation of the Kurds into Turkish society, and the government has gradually disarmed the tribes and attempted to dismantle tribal organization and strip clan and tribal leaders of their authority. Often being religious leaders as well, tribal leaders have exercised tremendous influence in the past and will probably continue to do so.

The government has abandoned earlier efforts to assimilate the Kurdish tribes by force, relying instead on the gradual effects of education. Despite continuing governmental attempts to spread the Turkish language among them, however, the Kurds retain their own speech. Of the three major Kurdish dialects, two are spoken in Turkey: Kermānji, in Hakkari Province, in the southeastern corner of the country; and Zaza, throughout the rest of the Kurdish areas. Gurani, the third dialect, does not appear in Turkey. The dialects, although related, are mutually intelligible only with difficulty, and their geographic distribution has tended to isolate Turkey's Kurds from the main currents of Kurdish separatist thought. Kermānji, spoken by 50 percent of the world's Kurds, is the literary form of the language; the other dialects are not written.

Religion remains an important influence among the tribes. They have a national reputation for extreme, though somewhat unorthodox, devoutness. Despite government attempts to suppress them, dervish orders are large and significant (see ch. 5). Although figures are inexact, two-thirds of Turkey's Kurds are thought to be Sunni Muslims, and the remainder Alevis. Shia Islam dominates certain Kurdish areas in Iran as well. Small numbers of Kurdish Yazidis, adherents of an eclectic and secretive faith combining elements of paganism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism, have been reported in Turkey in the past, but their present number is not known.

In the heavily Alevi sections of the country, religion rather than language appears to function as the main factor of loyalty and social cleavage (see ch. 5). The religious communities appear to form units cutting across language. Personal loyalty to a particular religious leader or lineage far outweighs loyalty to a linguistic group.

The Kurds are a varied people. Many are seminomadic herdsmen, but

some are farmers, nomads, and city dwellers pursuing a variety of occupations. Generally, nomadic tribes summer on the upland meadows and migrate to the lowlands in the fall. They winter on the stubble of the fields of farmers who till land on the border of the Tigris plain and on the grass that blooms on the desert border during the winter rains. This winter pasture is generally leased, whereas the upland summer pasture is owned by the Kurds.

This annual move has long been a stumbling block to Kurdish assimilation because as herdsmen they have consistently refused to recognize national boundaries in winter migrations to the plains of Iran and Iraq. Most tribal Kurds have systematically flouted outside authority, often serving as smugglers and bandits. They retain their tribal kin-based sociopolitical structure, and tribal councils function as the primary non-kin authority structure, assigning grazing rights and overseeing the annual migration. They also retain the regular tribal mechanism of a division between nobles and commoners, chiefs and retainers.

In 1960 the government tried to dilute the power of the tribes by transporting approximately fifty clan leaders to West Anatolia and attempting to settle them there. The Kurds generally objected to the military government, which they opposed primarily on religious grounds. Persistent agitation at home caused the return of the leaders. Despite their continuing influence among their fellow tribesmen, some of the Kurdish nobility have moved into towns and cities as absentee landlords, have become university educated, and have even attempted to conceal their Kurdish ancestry.

#### Arabs

In the early 1970s there were approximately 300,000 Arabs in Turkey, heavily concentrated along the Syrian border, especially in the province of Hatay. Native speakers of Arabic constituted less than 1 percent of the total Turkish population.

The introduction of cotton farming in the Çukurova Plain, coupled with the resistance of the migratory tribesmen to settlement programs, forced the governments of both the empire and the republic to look abroad for farm laborers, and thousands of Arabs were invited from Egypt and North Africa. Arabs in the Çukurova Plain include large landowners, small farmers, tenant farmers, shopkeepers, and businessmen. Paradoxically, this invitation to Arab farmers has been coupled with attempts to assimilate the Arabs by force, resulting in a flood of Arab refugees from Turkey to Syria in early republican times.

In the Hatay area Arab tribal organization remains strong. Despite the transition from seminomadism to farming, whole villages or village complexes may be organized along tribal lines, with a strong lineage structure (see ch. 6).

Both Arabs and Kurds participate in the lucrative commerce of smuggling across the easily negotiable Syrian border. The herdsman is no more disposed to notice national boundaries than are his animals.

Lineage ties are paramount, and those who continue their migrations into Syria and Iraq and back probably consider themselves as much Syrian or Iraqi as Turkish, if they consider nationality at all.

#### Caucasian Peoples

Three distinct ethnic groups fall into the category of Caucasian peoples: Circassian Muslims, Georgians, and Lazis. None is well known. Approximately 70,000 Circassian Muslim immigrants, mostly from the Soviet Union, settled in the northwest after World War II and after the defeat of the Germans, with whom they had sided against the Soviet Union. These refugees settled in the Adapazari region, where they remained in the early 1970s as farmers and farm laborers.

The 55,000 Georgians and 30,000 Lazis, both Muslim, are concentrated in the northeast provinces—the Lazis in Rize, the Georgians in Çoruh, particularly east of the Çoruh River and along the border with the Soviet Union. The term *Georgian* actually refers to several different peoples who speak similar and yet mutually unintelligible languages, such as the 8,000 Abkaz cultivators and herders. The Caucasus is one of the most linguistically complex regions of the world, and the relationships between its various languages are not well understood. Caucasian cultural and linguistic influence is particularly pronounced at the far eastern bend of the Black Sea, where coastal mountains impede communication with the Anatolian interior yet open a path to the neighboring Soviet territories.

#### Dönme

The Dönme are descendants of the Jewish followers of a false messiah, Sabbatai Sebi (1632–75), who converted to Islam when his pretensions were exposed. Their religion includes Jewish, Muslim, and idiosyncratic elements, and they practice endogamy. They consider themselves Muslim and are so recognized officially. Their name Dönme is Turkish for *convert* but carries overtones of *turncoat* as well.

The Dönme have enjoyed spectacular success in business and in the professions, but they have suffered from some prejudice in the past because neither the Turks nor the Jews really accepted them. They have hidden their identity at times to avoid discrimination. In modern times, however, this problem seems to have lessened. Their community has begun to break up, and assimilation into the general Muslim community has begun.

#### Non-Muslim Minorities

As is true throughout the territories of the former Ottoman Empire, religion is probably the most important dimension of group cleavage in Turkey. The *millet* system, by encouraging separate education of the various religious communities, preserved their linguistic and cultural differences. As a result non-Muslims who were educated during the early republican and prerepublican periods did not, as a rule, speak

perfect Turkish. Jews, for example, educated mainly in French in the schools of the Universal Jewish Alliance (Alliance Israélite Universelle), tended to use French as their language of literacy. Although this situation has to some extent moderated in succeeding generations, the feeling of separateness endures.

#### Greeks

The approximately 70,000 Greeks form the largest non-Muslim minority in the country. Before World War I Greek-speaking inhabitants of the territories now in Turkey numbered over 2.5 million. The massive population exchange with Greece in 1923, as well as a continuing exodus of Greeks, drastically reduced their numbers. Largely Eastern Orthodox, the Greeks are found almost exclusively in or near Istanbul, where they dominate business and finance and give parts of the city a decided Greek flavor.

#### Armenians

Like the Greeks, the 69,000 Armenians are heavily concentrated in Istanbul. Before World War I, however, large numbers lived in the eastern portion of the country near the borders of the short-lived Republic of Armenia (see ch. 2).

Fiercely nationalistic, devoted to their Christian religion, and outstandingly successful in commerce, the Armenians have for many years suffered a special persecution. From the late nineteenth century they have undergone periodic massacres at the hands of the Ottomans. At Christmas 1895 a reported 1,200 perished in a cathedral fire at Urfa, which Armenian writers claim was deliberately set. Numerous other massacres occurred during that same period, resulting in the emigration of possibly as many as 100,000 people.

The worst sufferings in Armenian history came during the fearsome slaughter of 1915 and 1916, when the Ottoman government, suspecting treason and collaboration on their eastern border, undertook the forcible removal or extermination of the entire Armenian population of Turkey. Approximately 600,000 were deported, many by a terrible forced march into Syria, and an equal number reportedly were slaughtered. The survivors in Turkey left soon afterward or suffered from renewed massacres in 1920. Before World War I the worldwide membership of the Armenian Orthodox (Gregorian) Church had numbered 3,722,000, of whom about one-third died later or were forcibly converted to Islam. World membership did not again reach this level until 1954.

In the early 1970s the Armenians in Istanbul were second only to the Greeks of that city in wealth. Like the Greeks they exploit their commercial talents as merchants, bankers, and investors and support their own newspapers and schools. They are intensely and bitterly attached to their identity as Armenians, and they maintain contact and ties with their scattered compatriots throughout the Middle East, Soviet Armenia, and elsewhere. Although they refuse to identify with the

Republic of Turkey and choose instead to perpetuate their own ethnic identity, unlike the Greeks they can look to no independent country as a source of nationalistic pride. Since the establishment of an independent Armenian state within Turkish borders is no longer within the wildest hope of even the most optimistic Armenians, many have probably looked to Soviet Armenia as a source of such pride.

#### Jews

By the early 1970s there were only about 30,000 Jews left in Turkey—almost 10,000 fewer than in 1955. The loss occurred primarily because some Jews preferred to seek a new home in Israel. Immediately after the establishment of Israel in 1948, about 30,000 Jews left Turkey for Israel. The Jewish population in Turkey in 1973 may have reached a point of relative stability.

Like the other non-Muslim minorities, the Jews are primarily concentrated in cities, mainly Istanbul, where they are mostly small businessmen and shopkeepers. The Jewish minority is a complicated one, which lacks homogeneity in language and history. Most are Sephardic, or Spanish and Portuguese Jews, descendants of refugees from the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal in 1492. They speak Ladino, a variety of fifteenth-century Spanish with borrowings from several eastern Mediterranean languages as well as French. German-derived Yiddish is spoken by the Ashkenazi minority—Jews from central and northern Europe.

The situation is further complicated by the Dönme, whom most Turks consider to be Jewish but who are considered heretics by the Jews; by the fact that many Istanbul Jews speak French or Turkish as their mother tongue; and by the heretical Jewish sect of Karaites (Sons of the Scriptures), who speak Greek as their native language. Usually each of these various Jewish groups retains its identity by not intermarrying or intermingling. Each forms a tightly knit group that looks to other Jews of the same kind for primary association and assistance.