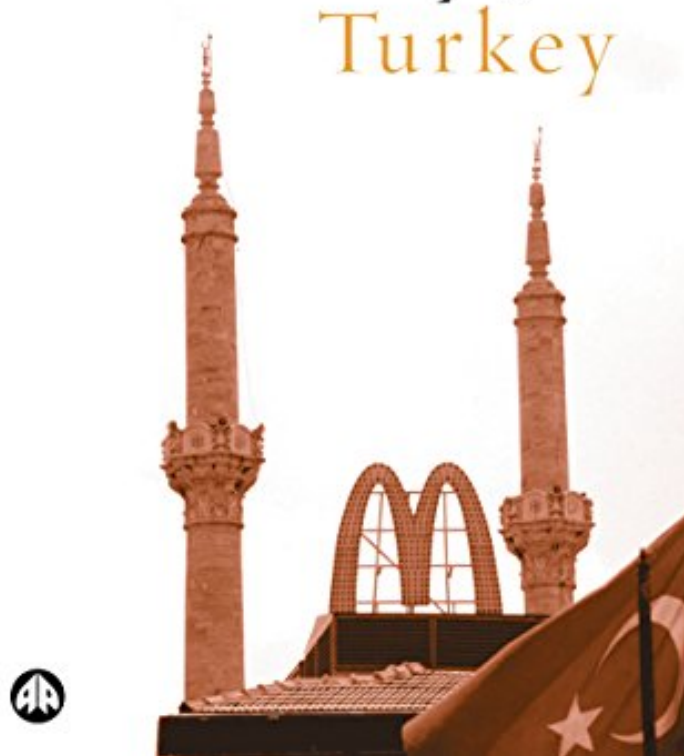


# The Political Economy of Turkey (Third World in Global Politics)

*Zuuml;lkuuml;f Aydin*  
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Z ü l k ü f A y d i n

## The Political Economy of Turkey



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**Zuuml;lkuuml;f Aydin : The Political Economy of Turkey (Third World in Global Politics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Political Economy of Turkey (Third World in Global Politics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A scathing rebuttal of the 'Turkish miracle'By Lukas SZuuml;lkuuml;f Aydin is a senior lecturer in Development Studies at the University of Leeds, and a native of Turkey. 'The Political Economy of Turkey' is a scathing rebuttal of the 'Turkish miracle' - the assertion that since 1980, Turkey has witnessed incredible improvements in living standards for its 75 million inhabitants. Instead, Aydin argues that an alliance of international financial institutions, the military, and the political elite have allowed Turkey to become a neo-

liberal project in the age of globalisation. What is worse; this transition from a developmentalist state economy to a liberalised free market economy is in fact the chief underlying cause of the country's cyclical economic crises - for instance in 1994, 2000, and 2001. All three can be directly linked to the liberalisation of the country's capital accounts in 1989. Aydin includes a very useful introductory chapter which explains the fundamentals of globalisation and international development through free market policies expounded by bilateral (OECD) and multilateral (World Bank, IMF, WTO) organisations. A further chapter lays out the terminology of these neo-liberal reforms, which are done through a lexicon of 'good governance' and 'democratisation', which both cover a process of implementing procedural/minimalist democracy (elections, multiparty system) in order to satisfy the bare minimum requirements for the international financial institutions and the Western hegemonic powers. The rise of political Islam is a further consequence of the neo-liberal project, Aydin asserts. The transition has allowed the development of an Islamic bourgeoisie, which is shifting its power alliance from a religious basis (with the rural, Islamic working class) to a class basis (with the urban, secular-Kemalist ruling elite). A survey of the Kurdish question leads Aydin to conclude that Kurdish nationalism surged in the period of the SAPs, mainly as a result of globalisation: questioning identities as well as lopsided development and wealth distribution caused discontent in the poorer Eastern Anatolia, as growth centred around Istanbul and its metropolitan area. Aydin skilfully illustrates how the 1981 Constitution and its preceding 1980 coup was an "authoritarianisation of the Turkish state" by the military partly to crack down on trade unions. The weakening of the working class was necessary in order to ram through the project of liberalisation. Furthermore, Aydin argues how the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) initiated by the state under pressure (and with funding) from the IMF and the World Bank have shifted the focus of the economy from small-scale agriculture for domestic consumption to outdated industry, incapable of competing with foreign economies on the global market. This has caused the presence of countless transnational corporations (TNCs) in the Turkish economy. However, these have not spurred new businesses, jobs, and exports; they have instead simply bought up and replaced existing Turkish companies, hence not benefiting the Turkish people but shifting its profits abroad to no benefit of the Turkish state. The SAPs in their entirety involved unprecedented levels of liberalisation including trade, imports, finance, and State Economic Enterprises, and were on the whole a disaster for the ordinary Turkish people. 'The Political Economy of Turkey' is a much needed addition to the debate of liberalisation and exploitation of peripheral economies in the globalised world. Aydin includes a breadth of topics and manages to explain much of Turkey's recent political and economic changes through the prism of liberalisation of the economy. It shall come as no surprise if Turkey witnesses further economic crises unless it fundamentally alters its economy.

This book analyses the political and socio-economic problems faced by Turkey in recent decades and the country's gradual integration into the global economy. Since the 1970s, Turkey has faced some of the most serious crises since the Republic was established in 1923. Social unrest, political and ethnic violence, paralysis of the state bureaucracy and other institutions, increasing foreign debt, decreasing economic growth, vast inflation and increasing unemployment have all been part of everyday life in Turkey's recent history. The author argues that this state of affairs is symptomatic of a deeper, more enduring crisis arising from the way in which Turkey has been integrated into the global economy. He shows how, like many other developing countries, Turkey has become reliant on foreign investment and international financial institutions, and he offers a broader critique of globalisation in this light. Topics covered include democracy, repression, the military, the Kurdish question and regional inequalities, civil society, human rights and Islamic fundamentalism.

About the Author Zulkuf Aydin is a lecturer in Development Studies at the University of Leeds. He received his doctorate in 1972 from the University of Ankara.