

Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey

Call for Papers – Fourth Annual European Symposium on Turkey: “Societal Conflict and Cohabitation in Turkey and Beyond”

Like most diverse societies, Turkey has seen peaceful co-existence as well as communal tension that in some instances has escalated into collective violence. The 4th annual meeting of the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey calls for proposals to help us better understand the processes and mechanisms that underlie societal conflict and cooperation in Turkey.

Communal conflict occurred in various forms throughout the lifespan of the Ottoman Empire. The early Republican era was marked by sustained violence against Kurdish insurgents and by pogroms against the Jews of Thrace in the 1930s. Occasional violence like the riots against Greeks and other Christian and Jewish minorities) occurred in 1955. During the 1970s, there was an upsurge of collective violence between extreme groups on the political right and left, and Alevis were targeted by sectarian violence at the end of 1970s and in Sivas in 1993. The protracted insurgency between the PKK and the Turkish state continues to affect interethnic relations with the rise of mob violence directed at Kurdish civilian targets and terrorist attacks against both Kurdish and non-Kurdish civilian targets today. Moreover, vulnerable groups like Syrian refugees and LGBT people have been victims of harassment, discrimination and mob violence in recent years. The coup attempt of July 2016 appears as a major moment of escalating societal tension. Currently, there are debates on the danger posed by new militias or paramilitary groups serving the government or nationalist causes. In short, the risk of societal strife in Turkey in the years to come appears high, and fallout from such conflict can be expected in European countries with large diaspora groups from Turkey.

But the Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey have also often been represented in the language of peaceful coexistence between ethnic/religious/social groups. Spanish Jews were indeed welcomed to the empire in Anatolia after the fall of Granada in 1492. As Turkish Jews in Thrace were persecuted in the 1930s, some educated Jews were able to find refuge in Turkey during WWII. Many towns and cities in Turkey are ethnically and religiously diverse and everyday interactions are predominantly peaceful. Thus, we need to understand why in some cases societal conflicts escalate into collective violence while in other cases, the tensions exist but societal disputes are contained by formal or informal institutional mechanisms.

In this context, we are calling for papers examining societal conflict and cooperation in Turkey and the diaspora for the 4th annual European Symposium on Turkey, to be held in Stockholm from 29 November to 1 December 2018. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Case studies (historical and contemporary) of inter-group relations and conflicts
- Examinations of peace processes, mediation, and/or conflict transformation attempts
- The dynamics of conflict and inter-group relations; the dynamics of peace and cooperation
- Societal violence and the state
- Societal conflict in a regional and global setting (Syrian civil war, migration, and global nationalist-populist-authoritarian trends)
- Comparative studies, including comparing cases where large-scale societal violence broke out with those where it did not
- The psychology of mass violence
- The (political) economy of societal conflict and cooperation/cohabitation

We welcome contributions from all disciplines in the social sciences and humanities (both quantitative and qualitative) and encourage interdisciplinary and comparative work in collaborative form.

Abstract submission:

Please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words. Abstracts should include a research question and information about data/empirical material, methodology and expected/preliminary findings.

Abstracts should be submitted via email to:

suits@suits.su.se and imren.borsuk@su.se

Funding is available for intra-European airfare and local public transportation and accommodation in Sweden. (For co-authored papers, funding will be available for one of the authors.)

Deadlines and dates:

Call posted: 6 April

Deadline for submissions: 8 May

Decisions announced: 22 May

Papers submitted: 15 November

Symposium: 29 November to 1 December

Questions can be directed to Imren Borsuk at imren.borsuk@su.se