

TURKEY

# TALES FROM TURKEY

by Giovanni de Mojana







Istanbul (Turkey). A Turkish woman takes a selfie at the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque.

## **"The Contemporary Face of a Country at the Crossroads"**

In the Quran, "Hüzün" denotes the sadness that arises from the loss of a loved one. Writer Orhan Pamuk extends it to the ruins of Istanbul, the sight of which produces pain and at the same time pride in the hearts of its inhabitants. In his photographic work, Giovanni de Mojana follows the "Hüzün" beyond the city walls and tries to capture the moments when melancholy manifests itself in all its ambivalence. Turkey has undergone great cultural, political and economic change in recent decades, moving from a rural to an urbanized society. This has led the country to open up to the West, but it has also created new tensions within society. The history of the Turks is a history of alternate destinies. Over time almost everything that had been won was subsequently lost,

reducing the country's borders to the area around Anatolia. After the defeat in World War I, with the dissolution of the empire and the rise of the republic, a secular state was born under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (better known as Atatürk, the father of all Turks), which included the separation of religion and politics, the abandonment of the Arabic alphabet, and the abolition of the veil for women. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has led Turkey for 20 years – initially as prime minister and since 2014 as the country's president – and according to many political analysts his goal is to rebuild a kind of neo-Ottoman "empire." By contrasting Atatürk's legacy, will Turkey really become the new center of the Islamic world?





Göreme (Turkey). An Azerbaijani trainer stands next to his horse in the rocky valley of Cappadocia, with a hot air balloon taking off in the background.



Konya (Turkey). During a trade fair for journalists in Konya, various sports activities are displayed using VR in anticipation of the Islamic Solidarity Games. The VR headset shows a virtual archery experience.





Istanbul (Turkey). The Atatürk Bridge on the Golden Horn. It is named after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first President of the Republic of Turkey.





Istanbul (Turkey). A girl at the "Arter" contemporary art museum: she is photographing a cardboard installation that captures the landscape and atmosphere of a forest.





Ihlara (Turkey). A street and its lights at night.





Istanbul (Turkey). A guide explains the history of the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque to a group of schoolgirls on a field trip.





Eğirdir (Turkey). A mountain in Eğirdir bearing the words "Güçlüyüz - Cesuruz - Hazırız" which mean "We are strong – We are fearless – We are ready". The "Mountain Commando School and Training Center Command" are located near the mountain.





Ihlara (Turkey). Two young newlyweds celebrating by following Turkish tradition, with the bride wearing a traditional red veil to bring good luck. The family have hired a videographer to record the event for posterity.





Istanbul (Turkey). An aerial view of the outskirts of Istanbul, near Sabiha Gökçen International





Istanbul (Turkey). Members of the Alevi community become emotional during a religious function at the Karacaamhet Sultan Cem Evi. The spiritual leader (known as a “Dede”) remembers the Sivas massacre, which occurred on July 2, 1993, when 37 Alevi intellectuals were burned alive in the Hotel Madimak in Sivas.





Isparta (Turkey). A young man with his friends prior to leaving for military service.





Istanbul (Turkey). After prayers, a woman uses her phone inside the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque.





Antalya (Turkey). Mermerli Beach in the center of Antalya, in the old city of Kaleiçi.



Konya (Turkey). Two friends loudly singing traditional songs in a car.





Istanbul (Turkey). At the port of Eminönü a group of tourists and locals on a ferry that connects the European and Asian sides, with the Yeni Cami Mosque visible in the background.



Istanbul (Turkey) A curtain inside the Zilberman Gallery.





Antalya (Turkey). A man attempting to peek through the bars at Hadrian's Gate.



Göreme (Turkey). Just before dawn, a woman waiting for her boyfriend in her car.



p a r a l l e l o **z e r o** ●