

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES AND
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PRESENTS

QUO VADIS TURKEY?

THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN TURKEY



by **Dr. Bilgin Ayata**

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Thursday, April 6, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
NAASR Center, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA

On April 16, 2017, Turkish citizens will vote at home and abroad on the constitutional referendum that entails fundamental changes for Turkey's political system. In this talk, Prof. Bilgin Ayata will analyze what is at stake for state and society on the eve of this referendum and explore future scenarios for the aftermath of the referendum both for domestic and foreign relations, with a focus on Turkish prospects for peace and reconciliation with Armenians and Kurds.

Since summer 2015, the deterioration of democracy has accelerated at full speed in Turkey. Curfews were first declared in the wake of military operations against Kurds, during which thousands of Kurdish civilians were displaced and their homes destroyed. Since last year, a nationwide state of emergency has been declared after a coup attempt in July 2016. The Turkish government has intensified the suppression of media, opposition, and civil society, while it has sacked over 100,000 state employees. Opposition leaders and members of parliament are in prison, along with journalists, elected mayors, and intellectuals. Tensions have increased with the European Union, whose Parliament has called to suspend accession talks until democratic rights are restored.

Dr. Bilgin Ayata is Assistant Professor of Political Sociology at University of Basel. She obtained her PhD in Political Science at Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, USA), and her MA degree from York University (Toronto, Canada). Her regional expertise includes the Middle East and Europe, in particular Turkey, the Kurdish regions, and postcolonial Germany. She has published on transnational activism of diasporas, the politics of displacement, foreign policy, genocide denial, and memory regimes.

Admission free (donations appreciated). Doors open at 7:00 p.m.

Contact NAASR at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org for more information.