

Why the Turkish Flag?

Level: Upper-Intermediate

Objective: To analyze and discuss underlying world views based on a text

Alternative: Write a letter of complaint

Alternative: Grammar: Passives or Parallelism

Auxiliary Vocabulary: to single out, to alter, to reinforce, to institute, to depict, to portray, to align, to serve as a reminder, a premiere, an insignia, a poll, an ally, staunchly

Plan:

1) Post up the image of the cover of *Sacrificed Survivors* - a documentary made by the Christian Action Network (CAN). You should cut out or fold over the title of the film so students can't see it. Ask if anyone knows what the image is from. If so, have the student(s) explain the story and open up the floor for discussion.

2) If not, hold an open discussion and slowly feed in information. After adding new information, hold a short discussion on how that changes assumptions about the film and why.

1. Get some guesses as to where the image is from and what it is portraying

2. Tell them it's from a movie.

3. Tell them it's a documentary

4. Tell them it's an American film

5. Tell them it was created by the Christian Action Network

6. Finally, tell them it's about the Ground Zero Mosque

3) Hold an open reflection on the discussion. When and why did ideas change regarding the image.

4) Looking at the discussion, what assumptions do students make about America and Christians. (As this will prepare the way for the rest of the lesson, this could also be done as a short writing to really allow students to reflect and think about their own ideas as analyzing your own assumptions is not always easy).

5) Your students will undoubtedly be quite upset with the use of the Turkish flag being connected to Al-Qaeda & 9/11. Tell them that CAN received thousands of complaints about the image and so they wrote a public apology/defense on their website. Students are going to read the letter. *In groups of 3, their task is to find out what assumptions CAN is making about Turkey. They must highlight the passages that illustrate their point.*

6) Give students in each group a number from 1-3. Now students form new groups based on their new number and share their ideas about the text.

7) Finally open the class up for an all class discussion. The questions for discussion below can be used to prompt further discussion if needed.

8) For homework split the class into two groups. One group should research CAN. The other group should research the Ground Zero Mosque controversy in America. The following class they will share and discuss what they found. Alternative homework: have them write their own letter of complaint and email it to CAN.

Alternative:

1a) After part 2) above open up the class to discussion on their feelings and opinions regarding the image (if

possible, play the trailer to the film found at <http://www.redcounty.com/content/watch-sacrificed-survivors-trailer-new-york-premiere>).

2a) As most students will be upset, ask them to write a letter of complaint to the makers of the film following traditional complaint formats (i.e. state purpose of letter, reason for complaint - include feelings and counter-arguments, future action wished taken).

3a) Continue from part 5) above.

Open Letter from CAN

The Christian Action Network has received thousands of emails about the cover of our new documentary, *Sacrificed Survivors: The Untold Story of the Ground Zero Mosque*. This controversy could result in protests at the premiere of the film in New York City on October 28. We regret any hurt feelings caused by the use of only the Turkish flag on the cover of the film. We did not mean to single out Turkey and therefore, the cover will be altered to include the flags of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan and Syria.

The decision to include these flags is being made in order to reinforce one of the themes of the film: Radical Islam seeks to bring the world under Sharia law and the U.S. is no exception. The flags that will be depicted are of countries that have instituted Sharia law in their country and/or sponsor the spread of radical Islam.

Turkey was chosen because the country serves as a reminder of what can happen if “stealth jihad” is successful. Turkey was once a staunchly pro-American ally with a secular identity. Unfortunately, it is today governed by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party, which has brought Turkey in the opposite direction.

Erdogan and his party’s initial 2002 election victory encouraged the Muslim Brotherhood, with its political chief saying the victory came as a result of the “exposing of the failure of the secular trend.” Turkey has become a leading provocateur of Israel and bastion of anti-Americanism. Erdogan has moved the country much closer to Iran, Syria and Sudan, going so far as to oppose U.N. sanctions on Iran for their nuclear program. He has even said, “I do not think that Hamas is a terrorist organization.

The Turkish flag was originally chosen because of the presence of the Islamic star and crescent on the flag. As the CIA World Factbook explains, “the crescent moon and star serve as insignia for the Turks, as well as being traditional symbols of Islam.” Those symbols were chosen to signify Turkey’s status as a country with a Muslim identity—and will be used in the same fashion on the American flag should the country be overtaken by radical Islamic forces.

We do not mention this to try to portray a negative image of the Turkish people. Although their votes put Erdogan’s party (and therefore, him) in power, we know not all Turks can be characterized as Islamists. Polls show the vast majority of Turks oppose Osama Bin Laden, Hamas and Hezbollah, and we hope the election next July will reflect this opposition to radical Islam and the aligning of Turkey with enemies of the West. But the fact remains—the “stealth jihad” of political Islam has been successful in Turkey. And this is something the West must learn from.

The flags of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran and Sudan were chosen because their governments are using Sharia law as a basis for government and because of their support for the spread of radical Islam. The Syrian flag was chosen because, although the government is secular, it undoubtedly contributes to the spread of radical Islam by sponsoring terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah.

The cover of *Sacrificed Survivors: The Untold Story of the Ground Zero Mosque* will not single out Turkey, but the editing omission should not take away from the film’s premise and the stories of the survivors of 9/11 and the families of the victims as the Ground Zero Islamic center and mosque controversy continues.

<http://www.christianaction.org/node/111>

Questions for discussion

1. How much does CAN know about Turkey?
2. How do they perceive Turkey?
3. What similarities are there between CAN's perception of Turkey and many Turks perception of the current government?
4. Ultimately, why did CAN choose Turkey's flag to put on the cover of their documentary?
5. The letter is meant to be partly an apology and mostly a defense of their cover choice. Do you accept the apology? Do you agree with their reasoning?
6. The organization decided to change the cover to include other countries' flags. How do you feel about this decision?
7. What do you think about the choice of the other countries' flags to be included in the photo?

Key to Parallelism:

(Note: there are a couple I didn't highlight)

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The decision to include these flags is being made in order to reinforce one of the themes of the film: Radical Islam seeks to bring the world under Sharia law and the U.S. is no exception. The flags that will be depicted are of countries that 1. **have instituted** Sharia law in their country and/or 1. **sponsor** the spread of radical Islam.

Turkey was chosen because the country serves as a reminder of what can happen if “stealth jihad” is successful. Turkey was once a staunchly pro-American ally with a secular identity. Unfortunately, it is today governed by 2. **Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan** and 2. **his Justice and Development Party**, which has brought Turkey in the opposite direction.

3. **Erdogan** and 3. **his party's initial 2002 election victory** encouraged the Muslim Brotherhood, with its political chief saying the victory came as a result of the “exposing of the failure of the secular trend.” Turkey has become 4. **a leading provocateur of Israel** and 4. **bastion of anti-Americanism**. Erdogan has moved the country much closer to Iran, Syria and Sudan, going so far as to oppose U.N. sanctions on Iran for their nuclear program. He has even said, “I do not think that Hamas is a terrorist organization.

The Turkish flag was originally chosen because of the presence of the Islamic 5. **star** and 5. **crencent** on the flag. As the CIA World Factbook explains, “6. **the crescent moon** and 6. **star** serve as insignia for the Turks, as well as 6. **being traditional symbols of Islam**.” Those symbols 7. **were chosen** to signify Turkey's status as a country with a Muslim identity—and 7. **will be used** in the same fashion on the American flag should the country be overtaken by radical Islamic forces.

We do not mention this to try to portray a negative image of the Turkish people. Although their votes put Erdogan's party (and therefore, him) in power, we know not all Turks can be characterized as Islamists. 8. **Polls show** the vast majority of Turks oppose Osama Bin Laden, Hamas and Hezbollah, and 8. **we hope** the election next July will reflect 9. **this opposition to radical Islam** and 9. **the aligning of Turkey with enemies of the West**. But the fact remains—10. **the “stealth jihad” of political Islam has been successful in Turkey**. And 10. **is something the West must learn from**.

The flags of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran and Sudan were chosen 11. **because** their governments are using Sharia law as a basis for government and 11. **because of** their support for the spread of radical Islam. The Syrian flag was chosen because, although the government is secular, it undoubtedly contributes to the spread of radical Islam by sponsoring terrorist groups like 12. **Hamas** and 12. **Hezbollah**.

The cover of *Sacrificed Survivors: The Untold Story of the Ground Zero Mosque* will not single out Turkey, but the editing omission should not take away from the 13. **film's premise** and 13. **the stories of the survivors of 9/11** and 11. **the families of the victims** as the Ground Zero Islamic center and mosque controversy continues.

Key to Passives:
(Total 12)

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