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How to be a good guest: American ethnographers in Turkey in the long 1968

Ali Sipahi *Özyeğin University*

The article uncovers a forgotten chapter in the history of anthropology by revealing the experiences of American ethnographers in Turkey between 1967 and 1969. Using original archival documents and oral history interviews, it focuses on the trials of Professor Lloyd A. Fallers as well as doctoral students Michael Meeker, Peter Benedict, and June Starr in navigating Turkish bureaucracy and global politics. Conceptually, the article evaluates the case of anthropologists in Cold War Turkey from the perspective of hospitality studies with a particular focus on guest-to-guest relationships. Adopting the guests' points of view shows us that hospitality assemblages are forged by other-oriented thinking and behaviour, which involves misunderstandings, empathy, and projection. The article conceives the hospitality relationship as an encounter among perceptions of hospitality.

Prologue

'You ought to learn to control your temper', anthropologist Lloyd A. ('Tom') Fallers wrote in January 1969 from Edremit, a small town on Turkey's Aegean coast, to the US Ambassador Robert W. Komer in Ankara, 'I can stand the heat in my kitchen; can you in yours?'[1] The reference to Truman's popular expression was only partly metaphorical: just three weeks earlier, leftist students had set Komer's diplomatic car alight on the campus of the Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara. Komer's appointment in November 1968 had outraged many in Turkey because he was known as a former CIA agent who ran the infamous pacification programme in Vietnam. After protesters greeted his plane with a barrage of eggs, the 'butcher of Vietnam' (known to his friends as 'Blowtorch Bob' for his irascible management style) attempted to explain to the press that he had not served as an agent in the CIA but merely as an analyst. This, it seems, was a distinction without a difference as far as the press was concerned.[2] Meanwhile, amidst the public furore, Fallers, who was in the middle of a year-long ethnographic fieldwork visit in Edremit, privately protested against Komer's appointment. The anthropologist sent a letter to US Secretary of State William P. Rogers advising that Komer be withdrawn from Turkey.[3] 'Out of courtesy', Fallers sent a copy

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of the letter to Komer himself, a 'rather naïve mistake' that left the ambassador 'furious'. Komer's response, Fallers recalled, was 'the nastiest letter I've ever received!'[4] Fallers was especially perturbed by the patronizing postscript in which Komer declared that he 'w[ould] *not* write [University of Chicago president] Ed Levi suggesting that your poor judgment on the Turkish scene should disqualify you from teaching anthropology at Chicago'.[5] Hence, Fallers' Trumanesque dressing-down cited above.

However, it would be a mistake to position Fallers and the protesters on one side and Komer on the other. To begin with, although he was sympathetic to their democratic demands, Fallers was quite wary of the student movement in Turkey (and at home) and especially intolerant of the resort to violence. As a professor at the University of Chicago, he witnessed with some trepidation the emergence of the sit-in movements against the Vietnam War in May 1966. He was particularly upset by the occupations of campus buildings. Apparently, some of his students were resentful towards him for 'neglecting' them.[6] After the violent clashes surrounding the Democratic Convention in Chicago in August 1968, Fallers, a Democrat, laid the blame squarely at the feet of the 'McCarthy kids' for pushing too far and giving the right a pretext to retaliate.[7] In 1969, when police teargassed and opened fire on students in the People's Park at Berkeley, he 'was outraged, but it didn't make me want to destroy other universities'.[8] He was irritated by the uncritical sympathy liberal intellectuals directed at radical students: 'Students can burn a university down and even such decent people as [*New York Times* columnist] Tom Wicker will say: "these young people are trying to tell us something"'.[9]

Second, in addition to their methods, Fallers also disagreed with the New Left's wholesale denunciation of American foreign policy, a matter on which he was more or less in accord with Komer. 'I quite see that from the student's standpoint it's easy to view the whole of post-war American policy as "imperialistic"', he wrote to his graduate student Michael Meeker, '[but] I think they're wrong … [B]ecause Vietnam is their salient experience, the whole thing looks more like institutionalized evil than tragedy'. In fact, Fallers recalled that radical students had also opposed providing aid to Turkey in the 1940s, but according to him, 'this bet paid off. So, I believe, did Korea'.[10] In a policy article about Vietnam co-authored by Fallers, Clifford Geertz, and Morris Janowitz (1965), they emphasized the importance of American aid in the long run for the new nations and explicitly stated that the United States needed to retain a military presence in some regions. For Vietnam, specifically, they suggested not withdrawal but negotiation. Fallers was very clear about the idea of good imperialism in his letter to Komer, where he stressed that he was not 'one of the self-righteous petition-signers and demonstrators' like 'many academics [who had] made a disgusting spectacle of themselves with respect to Vietnam during the past couple of years'. It was simply a

> national mythology that imperialism is a wicked thing which the US has virtuously avoided … The fact is that we accepted a colonial role in the Philippines and did a pretty good job … Having myself spent six years in East Africa and having seen some splendid work done by British officials preparing the countries of the area for independence, I have the highest regard for people who can do these things well.[11]

Why, then, did Fallers think that Komer's 'idiotic appointment' was 'a disaster for Turkish-American relations'?[12] The short answer is because it looked bad. 'Proconsuls are proconsuls and diplomats are something different', Fallers reminded Komer, 'one does not run [a] pacification program … in a fully independent, allied country'. From the Turkish people's point of view, his appointment 'equate[d] Turkey with Vietnam'

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and was thus derogatory ('You know how fiercely nationalistic Turks are'). Moreover, Fallers thought Komer's appointment gave radical movements an excuse and made things harder for the centre-right government of Süleyman Demirel. Referring to his experience with student activism on the Chicago campus, he advised Komer that 'you don't give in to extremists, but neither do you incite them'.[13] That is why, in a letter to his close friend Geertz, Fallers described Komer as 'LBJ's and [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk's final gift to the New Left'.[14]

I believe that there is also a long answer as to why Fallers objected to Komer's appointment, and this article is the product of my conviction that their exchange tells us about much more than the strategic disagreements between two Cold Warriors. Fallers was embarrassed by Komer's mere presence in Turkey as it both exposed the intimate bias in American political thought about Turkey and abused the hospitality of the Turkish people. Fallers wanted to be a good, empathetic guest in his fieldsite and to act in a politically correct way. The difference between Fallers and Komer lies less in their political ideologies than in their understanding of the right way to interact with the 'other'. Drawing on original archival research on unpublished correspondence and oral history interviews, this article sheds light on the experiences of Fallers, his students Michael Meeker and Peter Benedict at Chicago, and Laura Nader's student June Starr at Berkeley, all of whom undertook fieldwork in Turkey in the 'long 1968' between 1966 and 1969. It invites the reader to rethink Cold War American anthropology through the lens of hospitality studies by focusing primarily on guest-to-guest relationships.

The ingrate: American bad guests in the 1960s

For Fallers, Komer was not (objectively) a bad person or a bad politician but (situationally) a *bad guest*. 'Even the conservative Turks were affronted by the appointment', Fallers wrote to Geertz, and asked 'when will the State Department learn that all anti-communists – which … includes all but a tiny fragment of Turks – do not automatically approve of US policies?'[15] This widespread suspicion about American foreign policy was indeed a recent development in Turkey. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Turkey was one of the most stalwart allies of the United States – a relationship that was enthusiastically supported by most of the population. During this period, first and foremost, collaborations in the military domain expanded to the extent that the Turkish army was entirely remodelled after the US army, a development facilitated by two-way mobility of the military personnel for training purposes (Aslan 2018: chap. 3). By the late 1960s, there were several American military facilities in Turkey (including the major Incirlik Air Base) with around 30,000 US military personnel (Holmes 2014: 51). In addition, under the rubric of the Marshall Plan, American technical experts played an extensive role in infrastructural development, especially road construction. The exchange of engineers and other technical staff between the two countries created new government bodies that served as agents of modernization theory on the ground (Adalet 2018: chaps 3-4; Keskin-Kozat 2013).

In the 1950s, Turkish-American encounters mounted in the cultural domain as well. The Rockefeller and Ford Foundations worked together with governments on educational reform projects. They funded and/or supervised, to name but a few, the establishment of new 'science high schools', business administration programmes at the university level, the Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies, the Turkish Social Science Association, and the Science Foundation of Turkey (modelled on the National Science Foundation). Likewise, METU and Erzurum Atatürk University were

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founded as joint projects (Erdem & Rose 2000; Erken 2018; Garlitz 2013; Örnek 2013; Pakin 2008). These endeavours enabled extensive academic exchanges and contributed to the institutionalization of Ottoman, Turkish, and Middle Eastern studies in the United States (Örnek 2012). Finally, the Peace Corps programme brought 1,200 young Americans to urban and rural Turkey between 1961 and 1970, extending the relations to everyday life (Erken 2015).

In the second half of the 1960s, public opinion in Turkey took a sharp anti-American turn. The untoward behaviour of American military personnel was already beginning to irritate the public by the late 1950s. As early as 1958, an internal report warned the US government about 'indications that local attitudes toward US service personnel [in Turkey] are changing from acceptance to hostility' as local incidents caused 'outbursts of popular resentment and bitter press comment' (Holmes 2014: 56). These hostilities continued in the following decade and included incidents such as disrespect for Turkish law enforcement, public intoxication, non-compliance with cultural rules, and harassment of women. Diplomatic confrontations such as the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) and the Johnson Letter (1964) furthered the scaling-up of the image of the ingrate American from the local-individual to the national-group level. The Letter, which explicitly prohibited Turkey from using US-supplied equipment for any military intervention in Cyprus, was taken as a humiliating dressing-down by the Americans, who, it was felt, owed a long-time and stalwart ally like Turkey more respect. A Peace Corps volunteer later reported to Robert Kennedy that 'the Turkish reaction to our position changed from unbelieving disappointment to vituperative bitterness' (Bali 2010: 128). An American diplomat reported in March 1965 that anti-Americanism was the most popular idea in the press while being pro-American was 'a charge as heinous in some circles today as communism [had been] a few years [prior]' (Bali 2010: 102).

By the second half of the 1960s, anti-Americanism had turned into the lingua franca of daily life (Köse 2020). This was especially true for the rising left: the Workers' Party of Turkey declared a propaganda war against the United States; strikes erupted in various American facilities; activists and students regularly protested against the visits of the 6th fleet of the US navy; American buildings were attacked; and, in 1971, four officers were kidnapped by an armed leftist organization (Holmes 2014: 58-85). Anti-Americanism was not limited to the left. During his fieldwork in Edremit in 1968-9, Fallers observed that 'the idea that Turkish friendship had been poorly repaid become pervasive right down to the deepest grassroots'.[16] The allusion to repayment was not simply a metaphor; the newspapers that were not anti-American in principle criticized the United States for allotting only a tiny portion of the Marshall Plan funds to Turkey (Keskin-Kozat 2013). In other words, Americans were not only bad guests but also parasites who 'take more than they give, by intent and design' (Shryock 2019: 553). Within this context, Komer's appointment was the last straw. It proved, in the eyes of the Turkish public, that the US government saw Turkey more as a cat's paw than an ally on equal footing. Komer became the *ultimate bad guest* for all segments of the society.

The desire to be a good guest

The wave of anti-Americanism in Turkey was similar to political movements that emerged in many countries in the late 1960s. What interests me is Fallers' attitude. He could have criticized the activist movement in Turkey in his private letters, as he did the student activism in the United States. Or he could have made a public scene with his protest to support the cause of his Turkish informants. Instead, he asked Frederic

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Shorter, representative of the Ford Foundation in Ankara, to keep his criticisms 'entirely confidential' as he did not 'want to be identified in Turkey as "political"'.[17] Fallers acted according to what he thought was right for his host community vis-à-vis his own political position. A good example of this attitude was his reaction to the behaviour of American Peace Corps volunteers, which he shared in a letter to his wife during his first three-month stay in Turkey, in Konya, in the autumn of 1964 (amid public furore over the Johnson Letter):

> One reason I stayed at home was that I wanted to be alone today, having had a depressing experience last night that I wanted to mull over. One of the Peace Corps groups was moving to a new flat and I offered to help with my car. They gave me supper and suggested we go to the movie at the house of [a group of] US Army officers who are attached to the Turkish 2nd Army here. They have a regular miniature base and have movies sent out to them each week. I thought they were intelligent, decent guys. I had good talks with several and they seemed to have a very good relationship with the Turks. But [three of four] of the Peace Corps girls drank far too much and began to throw themselves at the officers, most of whom were twice their ages. Since I had brought them in my car, I had to hang around and see them home. One girl, particularly, was a mess. Apart from anything else, if this sort of thing got out (and in a gossipy, conservative provincial town like this, it's bound to), it could blow the whole Peace Corps operation in Konya sky high – particularly if the kids act in other situations the way they did last night. All this worried me deeply and I wondered what I ought to do. I really wished you were there![18]

It is not certain that if Margaret Fallers had been there, she would have agreed with her husband. We do not have her reply, but she seems to have questioned Fallers' moralistic judgement about the young women because his next letter to her was slightly defensive:

> I obviously wasn't clear about what bothered me at the army party. By US standards, nothing particularly objectionable happened. The point is that the kids are supposed to behave so that they have the respect of the *local* community. The local community is disgustingly puritanical by our standards, but some successfully adapt to it in order to do their job, while others don't. That's all. Anyhow, it all seems to have blown over.[19]

Both this scene and the Komer case reveal something of how a good guest felt about the bad guests hailing from his own country. Fallers' sensitivities perfectly fit 'cultural intimacy' (Herzfeld 2016): his embarrassment about the acts of compatriots would not necessarily have been embarrassing or wrong had they remained in the American context. Fallers was in almost full agreement with Komer about American foreign policy, and he was certainly no conservative patriarch in Chicago. However, while in Turkey, the guest felt obliged to comply with the rules of the host.

The desire to be a good guest is an under-theorized theme in the anthropological literature on hospitality. As Benny Nuriely and Liat Kozma point out, 'scholarship on hospitality usually focuses on the characteristics of the host rather than those of the guest' (2021: 575). Although most accounts define hospitality as a *relationship*, it usually comes to mean the host's attitude towards the guest; hence, it is treated principally as a *property* of the host (Agier 2021: 13ff.). This happens for a reason. Michael Herzfeld (2021: 118), one of the pioneers of critical hospitality studies, implies in a recent paper that the focus on the host, particularly in accounts of migration, helps us see differentiated responses towards guests and, therefore, to avoid reductionist arguments about racism. Exclusive attention to the perspective of migrant guests can indeed confine us to what Joel Robbins (2013) called 'the suffering slot', a space that has grown large in the anthropology of the last two decades. For this reason, Herzfeld (1987; 2012) has always emphasized scalar shifts in hospitality rhetoric – from

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local village to nation-state, if not to global settings – in order to discuss multifaceted representations of the guests.

Nevertheless, as Cynthia Malakasis contends, shifting scalar levels 'do not sit on a schema of neat, concentric circles' (2021: 41) and the guest's perspective could also reveal diverse host situations. Matei Candea (2012), for example, examines in detail how 'the processes of scaling' in Corsican hospitality are forged as much by guests as by hosts. Other scholars indirectly criticize the concept of hospitality as a property of the host. For example, Naor Ben-Yehoyada (2016) points to mutual negotiations between guests and hosts, Caroline Humphrey (2019) suggests cutting the direct link between the host and masterhood, and David Henig (2016) analyses social spaces that mediate encounters between hosts and guests. Inspired by such balanced understanding of hospitality, I would like to take the next step and discuss hospitality relations from the guests' point of view.

In hospitality narratives, guests sometimes appear as bad guests. According to Andrew Shryock, bad guests and bad hosts give hospitality its moral ground by 'offer[ing] a rare glimpse of how it works and how it can be manipulated' (2012: S27). Thus, not surprisingly, the burgeoning hospitality literature on Turkey discusses the widespread image of Syrian refugees and immigrants as bad guests (Alkan 2021; Carpi & Şenoğuz 2019; Dağtaş 2017; Rottmann & Nimer 2021). My interest in bad guests/hosts lies less in their discursive function than in how they perceive their own position and what kind of strategies they adopt to avoid being bad. In the Turkish-Syrian border town of Hatay, for example, some locals feel trapped by the official open-door policy towards Syrians: on the one hand, they criticize certain behaviours of the Syrian newcomers (as bad guests); on the other, they do not want to be seen as bad hosts (Dağtaş 2017). In Istanbul, Hilal Alkan describes a '"bad host" par excellence' (2021: 189) as well as individuals who were trying to be good hosts. Similarly, in a rare account of the migrants' perspective, Susan Beth Rottmann and Maissam Nimer (2021) point out the strategies used by Syrians in Istanbul to become good guests.

Such other-oriented attitudes give rise to a question that is less often asked in the hospitality literature: how do guests see the other guests? Magnus Marsden (2012) tells us how Afghan traders living in Tajikistan complain about Afghan newcomers. The latter, he was told, are clueless about social norms and state bureaucracy in Tajikistan and constantly trigger police intervention with their irresponsible behaviour (e.g. their sexual relations with local women), indiscretions that could jeopardize the social standing and residence permits of already-established Afghan traders. Like Fallers, Afghan traders are embarrassed by bad guests from their home country and try to highlight, by contrast, their good guest status. In their historical study of African students at Hebrew University in the 1960s, Nuriely and Kozma (2021) show that although these students suffered discrimination and harassment at the hands of Israeli students, the Africans students nevertheless bit their tongue to avoid reinforcing the stereotype of African incomers as a nuisance. In fact, their perception of Israel as a modern, advanced country caused them to reproduce the judgemental discourse of the host public; they, like Fallers, voluntarily strove to be good guests. In their research on Syrian migrants in Istanbul, Rottmann and Nimer (2021) discover that Syrian housewives make a conscientious effort to host visiting days in the neighbourhood in order to be seen as good guests in Turkey. In all these examples, we encounter guests who tacitly or explicitly concede the correctness of the host's rules and act accordingly.

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A final, contrary case analysed by Candea (2012) will sharpen my point. In 2003, in a village on the French island of Corsica, the car of a policeman from continental France was blown up and he had to leave the island with his family. In response to this incident, a continental journalist in the same village published a critical op-ed in a national paper questioning the genuineness of Corsican hospitality, a virtue of which people on the island are historically proud. A few days later, the journalist found her car riddled with bullet holes. She was accused 'of being an ungrateful guest who ha[d] "insulted" the hospitality' of her hosts (Candea 2012: S42). Candea points out that in this case the discourse of both sides reproduced the abstract, binary opposition between absolute openness to and exclusion of strangers: the paradox of hospitality according to Derrida. However, as both Candea and Shryock (2008) suggest, hospitality practices in real-life settings are always limited, spatially and temporally, thus complying more with Pitt-Rivers' sociology than with Derrida's abstract philosophy. We observe in the actual flow of social life neither absolute openness, nor absolute closure, but always something in-between.

Fallers was aware of this. He knew about the dark side of hospitality, and he admitted that it was the guest's responsibility to act in the limited space allowed to him or her. Fallers also understood how Komer was perceived by the Turkish public. This did not mean that he approved of Turkish sensibilities (remember his 'disgustingly puritanical' comment above). On another occasion, he actually mocked the fact that 'virtually all Turks believe that Johnson had both Kennedys and M.L. King assassinated' and that 'he's really a bastard and not to be believed'. It was just culturally relative: '[I]t's a bit difficult for people in the US to grasp the notion that the intellectuals of an allied country almost unanimously believe that US politics consist of no more than one big kan davasi [blood feud]'.[20] In other words, Fallers acted according to *his own take* on what the right attitude was in a different culture. As the following scene highlights, this stance was open to misunderstanding.

The permission crisis, spring 1967

The year 1967 was extraordinary in the history of American anthropology in Turkey. If one were to create a graph showing the number of Western anthropologists doing fieldwork in the country annually, there would be a clear peak in 1966-71: Reidar Grønhaug and Michael E. Meeker were in the field in 1966-7, June Starr in 1967, Peter Benedict in 1967-8, Fallers in 1967 and 1968-9, Paul J. Magnarella in 1969-70, and Alan Duben in 1969-71. It is hard to name any non-Turkish anthropologist of Turkey other than Paul Stirling for the twenty years prior, and the imaginary graph would mostly oscillate between 0s and 1s for the decades after 1971. The apex was reached in spring 1967 when one Norwegian and four American anthropologists were in the field, quite coincidentally. This was not a joint expedition; they barely knew each other. Fallers was the main connection point among Fredrik Barth's student Grønhaug, Laura Nader's student Starr, and his own students Meeker and Benedict. Thus, when a permission crisis broke out for Meeker, Benedict, and Starr, the Turkish bureaucracy unintentionally (re)connected them to each other, to Fallers, and to the Turkish academy.

In April 1967, Benedict had just arrived in Turkey but Meeker and Starr had already been in the field for six months, conducting ethnographic research openly and enjoying excellent relations with local authorities. Customarily, 'a foreigner had to apply for a residence [permit] from the place where [he or she] wanted to reside' (Meeker in

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Sipahi 2021: 109) and, as Benedict later complained, 'the question of higher permission was not discussed at that time'.[21] Starr, for example, simply sent her two-page research proposal to the Turkish Consulate in Chicago to apply for a research permit. 'Within ten days, I was given a year's Research Visa, allowing me to live in any two villages I chose', she recalled (Starr 2003: 83). She went directly to Izmir, showed her face at the US Consulate there, and then proceeded to the town of Bodrum. The local governor was pleased to have an American family in town. It could not have gone smoother.

In late April, however, things changed swiftly. Of course, it was hardly new for Westerners living in small towns and villages to come under suspicion for being spies or smugglers. Yet two international crises unfolding simultaneously increased tension in everyday life, not to mention domestic politics. First, to the southeast came the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, culminating in the Six-Day War in June. Then, on 21 April, across the Aegean, a coup felled the Greek government, sweeping into power a new military regime that was dead set against Turkish claims in Cyprus. The former conflict affected Meeker particularly. He was living in a town in northeast Anatolia, close to Turkey's border with the USSR, which NATO presumed was playing a spoiler role in Arab-Israeli relations. He began 'to receive "cool" reactions from local governmental officials' and decided to visit Ankara to find out about his official standing (Meeker in Sipahi 2021: 109). Meanwhile, the coup in Greece was especially worrisome for foreigners on the Aegean coast, such as Starr and Benedict. The day after the coup, Starr wrote to Fallers, at Nader's recommendation, informing him that an American journalist living in the same village had already been ordered to leave the country: '[I]t seems like a good idea for me to strengthen my links with METU'.[22] Similarly, Benedict went to Ankara on 27 May on the advice of friendly local authorities.[23]

All three anthropologists eventually learned they had been banned from living in their fieldsites. In the 4th Bureau (designated for foreign nationals) of the Police Headquarters in Ankara (known as the 'Emniyet'), Meeker saw on the desk a thick file with his name on it but was not told anything except that he had to return to Of, a town on the Black Sea, where he would find his expulsion order. He was given two weeks to leave the country. Meeker and his wife packed up and returned to Ankara to knock on the doors of the bureaucracy (Sipahi 2021: 110). Starr was, in a sense, luckier; the officers at the Emniyet told her bluntly that she was banned from conducting research in the village where she was then living. Benedict was similarly banned from where he was working in Yatağan (Starr 2003: 90). Nevertheless, both researchers were allowed to return to the town centres – Bodrum for Starr and Ula for Benedict – within the limits of their (more or less indefinite) tourist visas.

While in Ankara, all three students met with Fallers to seek advice. He was teaching a course on 'social change' in the Department of Social Sciences at METU and had decided to sacrifice a semester of time and funding to live in the capital before going into the field. He had been impressed by the intellectual vibe at METU during his visits to Ankara from Konya in 1964. Now he wanted to forge academic relationships. As soon as he heard word of Meeker's expulsion order, Fallers brought the case up with Mübeccel Kıray, the department chair at METU. Kıray agreed that an institutional connection would strengthen Meeker's official application for a research permit and offered him a course to teach at METU the following autumn, just as Fallers was doing at that very moment. When Benedict came to Fallers with similar concerns, he suggested making the same deal and explained the reason as follows:

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> There is much national pride here clear across the political spectrum and a very natural feeling of being too much under US domination. There have been cases of researchers with links to METU getting into trouble by trying to investigate sensitive subjects and bringing down political attacks on the University from all sides. Some American researchers have also been rather callous in their professional dealings with Turkish colleagues. All this I had heard a great deal about throughout my stay here. I therefore concluded that any link with METU should be of a sort which could not be interpreted as Americans simply 'using' METU for their own purposes. I had reached this conclusion, not merely as a matter of tactics, but also because it seemed right. This is in part why I elected to spend this term here teaching on funds given for research purposes. I do believe that in countries where there are developed academic institutions, we must in future carry out our work in some sort of collegial relationship with our local counterparts.[24]

Fallers, yet again, was the best possible guest: he considered suspicion of Americans hanging around in remote places as a 'natural feeling' and wanted to properly return the gift of hospitality by teaching at METU with his own means. Meeker and Benedict accepted the METU deal in the hope that behaving as good guests would smooth the process. With the help of Şerif Mardin, then a rising star in Turkish sociology, Meeker filed a carefully crafted application for a permit to undertake research in Antalya, knowing full well that eastern Turkey would be off-limits for the foreseeable future.[25] Yet he did not hear back from the authorities. Benedict officially applied as well but was rejected within a week.[26]

Fallers and Frederic Shorter (from the Ford Foundation) placed a premium on following the official channels: the Americans might be accused of pulling political strings and risk becoming bad guests. Nevertheless, when they thought they had reached a dead end, Benedict and Meeker tried to make use of their presumptive connections. They called on the US embassy, but it 'considered ordinary American citizens a nuisance, as we learned later' (Meeker in Sipahi 2021: 110). They talked to a visiting American diplomat and professor, J.C. Hurewitz, yet to little avail: 'Prof. Hurewitz who had seemed so powerful and encouraging to us the day before shrank in our eyes', Meeker wrote in a letter to Fallers.[27] Relying on the family relations of Benedict's in-laws, they sent a word to Eugene ('Gene') Northrop, the head of the Ford Foundation in Turkey. They received a short negative reply, which tragicomically, Benedict's wife, Cordelia, remembered, 'became a kind of mantra for us: "Gene can't help", as Peter and Michael pursued various fruitless avenues to get their permits'.[28]

The pair seemed to have deadlocked. There was one more option to try: Nur Yalman, a Turkish professor of anthropology at Chicago, insisted that they contact his friend Aydın Yalçın, the deputy chairman of the ruling Justice Party in the National Assembly. He thought, in Meeker's words, that 'it was stupid to follow official procedures', that '[they] should seek a "connection"'[29] because they needed 'the solid support of upstanding members of the Turkish community rather than the cool support of the METU people, offered only on a formal basis'.[30] Yalman was, in general, so pessimistic about the official procedures that he even advised Meeker to consider other Turkish-speaking fields like Iran or Afghanistan. Since they were out of options anyway, Meeker and Benedict reached Yalçın and met him at the National Assembly on 30 June. And to their surprise, it worked like a charm! The bureaucratic attitude towards Meeker and Benedict changed overnight. Hasan Bey at the Emniyet, 'who had [before] sent [Meeker] to Trabzon and back, [was now] an absolute lamb. He seem[ed] ready to do whatever [they] wished'.[31] They soon received their research permits. To Meeker, 'the ease of this final attempt seem[ed] dream-like'.[32]

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Meanwhile, June Starr was having a much harsher experience. The male anthropologists had mostly pleasant relationships with local authorities and townspeople; their problem was with the national bureaucracy and corresponded to domestic and international political conjecture. For example, Alan Duben, another student of Fallers, reflected in a recent autobiographical essay that '[i]t was not surprising that I was suspect by some during those times. What *was* surprising was that no harm came to me, that, in fact, most people, even radical Leftists I knew, were very hospitable' (2020: 134, original emphasis). Likewise, Meeker recalled in an interview that '[o]f course, I was considered a "spy" in Of by many people', but they were 'good-natured' about it. 'Anti-Americanism was widespread', and 'from their point of view, any foreigner asking questions was a spy'. Yet, in general, he was 'treated very well by a great many people, in a friendly and helpful way'.

> This was all the more the case because [my wife] and I respected local customs. She always covered her hair when going to the market and wore modest clothes. We were far more conservative than the Istanbulite wife of the pharmacist, for example, who was often denounced for her Istanbul dress (Sipahi 2021: 108-9)

Similarly, Cordelia Benedict covered her hair in Ula while the wives of appointed Turkish bureaucrats did not. The Benedicts lived in a humble house without running water, and they did not hire any help; Cordelia's daily life as a housewife and a mother of a 2-year-old son was the same as her neighbours, with whom she was on close terms. Moreover, Peter Benedict was praised as a hard-working and respectful man. Today, more than 50 years later, their old acquaintances still speak of the couple as being 'one of them' in every respect (Sipahi 2022). For instance, in November 1967, when the tension between Turkey and Greece over the Cyprus issue threatened to lead to all-out war, the Benedicts felt a keen solidarity with the locals living in the Aegean town of Ula:

> I was overwhelmed by people's behavior toward me. Each felt obliged to justify personally to me what Turkey was doing. Each felt obliged to guarantee personally my safety in the event of hostilities. During this time I was honored by many compliments, and people went out of their way to make me feel like a part of what was going on and not like a stranded tourist looking for the first plane out.[33]

June Starr, however, was on the verge of being judged a bad guest by the same audiences that considered Meeker and Benedict, whose professional status scarcely differed from Starr's, to be good guests. During her confrontations with government and security agents, she was recurrently charged with smuggling, as well as spying, on grounds that she was collaborating closely with a local man, Dursun (whom she referred to in her writings with the pseudonym 'Adnan'), a sponge diver with a boat (linked to the smuggling of seabed antiquities) and reputed to be a socialist. Starr had been abandoned by her husband (George Starr), who left her with their 2-year-old son in the village where they were based only a week after they arrived in Turkey. For the Turkish authorities, 'her identity as *wife* slipped away', and her relationship with Dursun, which became romantic, reinforced suspicions about her conduct as a single woman researcher (Starr 2003: 79, original emphasis).

Besides her struggle with the Ankara bureaucracy, Starr also had to bear with the harassment of local authorities. For instance, after Ankara banned her from living in the village, she rented a house in the town of Bodrum and began visiting the village, but the local gendarme soon caught wind and put the kybosh on this practice. Starr and Dursun were later arrested for allegedly carrying dynamite in her car. They were soon acquitted on lack of evidence, and they could only hazard a guess as to who had

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planted the dynamite. Still, the judge's interpretation of the incident sheds light on how Starr was perceived in some town circles: 'He [the judge] said someone in Bodrum was jealous of the fact that Adnan [Dursun] was my assistant. They were jealous that I, a mere female, drove a red Land Rover around town and lived the life of a "free woman"' (Starr 2003: 89).

The American single mother who had trouble with government agents could not get much help from Fallers, either. On her first visit to Ankara, Starr met with Fallers and shared her concerns with him. When she returned to Ankara in July, she wrote to Fallers to tell him what had happened since their first meeting and to ask his advice. She knew that Meeker and Benedict had finally received their permits, but she did not know how. Fallers advised her to move to a different place because 'I have the impression that if you get along with the local officials, you can ultimately get permission from Ankara. If not, you haven't much chance'. As to his own students, he wrote, 'They both submitted research plans to the Ministry [of Interior]. This seems to be the only way to do it'. Yet he failed to mention the parliamentary connection, which had been crucial for Meeker and Benedict. Rather pointedly, he also remarked that '[n]either was accused of anything, so they didn't have quite the same problems'.[34]

More royalist than the king: (over-)empathy or (mis)understanding?

We should not be surprised that townsfolk in Turkey in the 1960s were annoyed by a young American single mother who drove a red Land Rover, walked around uncovered, and had a romantic relationship with a local man. What I have found more interesting from the start is *the reflex of the guest to be judgemental about other guests based on what the former assumes to be correct behaviour for the entire host community*. Based on his reading of the Komer affair and his comments on Starr's situation, I infer that Fallers might have been to some degree in agreement with the prejudice against Starr and saw her as a not-so-good guest. Similarly, Katherine Flegal, who, as a fresh graduate of Berkeley anthropology, happened to have spent the summer of 1967 in Bodrum, found Starr's attitudes, especially her 'questionable' relationship with Dursun, 'really culturally insensitive in all kinds of ways'. She disapproved, for example, that Starr 'was dressing [her local babysitter] in miniskirts' at the age of 13.[35]

It is beyond the scope of this article to evaluate how Starr was portrayed (which surely indicates the gendered character of the guest status). Instead, I want to point out that the culturally sensitive perspective relied on the assumption of a homogenized host community (*the* Host) and uniform hospitality rules (*the* Turkish hospitality), not unlike national character studies of the past. Starr, to the contrary, thought that what 'provoked the Turkish authorities' (and arguably Fallers and Flegal) were 'the very actions that gave relief to the village people, [namely] her finding a Turkish male field assistant … to help her with her work and difficult living situation' (Starr 2003: 79). The same difference of perspective applied to the case of Meeker and Benedict. During the permission crisis, Frederic Shorter and Şerif Mardin, both living in Ankara, were frustrated to hear that a politician was involved in the matter because such a move could potentially endanger future applications. They seemed to have associated exerting such political influence with traditional societies, a label that West-minded, liberal intellectuals in Turkey were striving to overcome. Although he backed his students' decision, Fallers also agreed with Shorter and Mardin in principle and insisted on taking the official route for his own application.[36] However, it seemed that no one in Ula or Of cared if the two young researchers pulled a few strings. For Meeker, the insistence on

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bureaucratic procedures 'was mistaken advice; indeed, very mistaken … Fallers and Shorter were committed to the ideal of a rationalized Turkish modernity. But I am not sure they even understood how the rationalized US modernity really worked!' (Sipahi 2021: 110).

Fallers was indeed committed to something 'ideal', an idealized notion of Turkish hospitality, which in reality was shared by only a minority of liberal intellectuals. In the actual world of multiple host perspectives, one behaviour might be perceived as scandalous among local families, modernizing for liberal academics, and entirely insignificant for government agents, while the same two actors might find the same behaviour generating alternative responses under different circumstances. When hospitality is defined by the standards of a generic host, homogenization is almost inevitable, a situation to which Candea drew attention:

> The notions of guest and host cultures, guest and host communities, guest and host societies are commonly used throughout the social-scientific literature. And yet when one 'zooms in' to what has been described as a 'host community', one finds it is made up of some individual 'hosts', perhaps, but also of people who deal with strangers in different ways: as paying customers, as indifferent passers-by, as intruders. It would indeed be surprising if the combined effect of these multiple individual reactions to strangers could straightforwardly, by the simple process of 'zooming out', translate into a kind of macro-organic 'host' (2012: S42).

I would add that, if hospitality is a relationship between strangers, there must be misunderstandings or miscalculations, which might have unintended consequences. 'Accusations of spying', as in the cases of Meeker, Benedict, and Starr, 'are common motifs in ethnographic writings' (Price 2016: 224), but how to dodge such accusation has never had a clear answer. Anthropologist Paul Dresch, for instance, wrote in his retrospective account on fieldwork in Yemen: 'Precisely by trying not to seem a spy … here I was in the labyrinth of National Security' (2000: 118). Similarly, when the anthropologist Geoffrey Owens was accused of being a spy (to be eventually expelled) during his fieldwork in Zanzibar, his insistence – like Fallers – on following purely official procedures annoyed bureaucrats. It made him an 'Ugly American' who lacked empathy towards local ways of handling such issues, a label he was trying to avoid, paradoxically, by sticking to paperwork (Owens 2003).

Misplaced empathy is the key term here. When Malinowski's diaries were first published (coincidentally enough, in 1967), the anthropology community was astonished by the paradox that the champion of cultural relativism and the critic of missionary and colonial perspectives had written quite demeaning comments about the natives. Geertz's (1974) now classic intervention, however, criticized the community for confusing analytical understanding based on systematic observation with empathy, which, for him, was simply a euphemism for projection. Fallers seemed to agree with his close friend: he would not see it as a paradox that he found the local culture 'disgustingly puritanical' while defending it against his fellow compatriots' attitudes. In fact, if empathy is defined as 'understanding the other vicariously without losing one's own identity' (Bubandt & Willerslev 2015: 7), Malinowski and Fallers were overly empathetic. Nonetheless, empathetical perspective-taking does not preclude misunderstandings. Giving examples from his own experience as a fieldworker and a psychoanalyst, Douglas Hollan (2008) suggests that, unless it is coupled with intersubjective dialogue stretched over time with informants, projections might be mistaken as empathetic understanding.

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Fallers could not have been more empathetic, more respectful of local culture as a guest in Turkey. One may even say that he was more royalist than the king in his critical stance towards Komer, American Peace Corps volunteers, and informal tactics in getting a research permit. On the other hand, as a full professor at a prestigious American university, he had options. 'If it means that I can't work in Turkey, I'll of course regret that very much',[37] he thought during the permission crisis, 'but I'm more or less established and hence my research here is less crucial to me',[38] in comparison to a doctoral candidate. Thus, he insisted on taking the official route for himself; he was going to stay a good guest no matter what: 'With respect to next year, I'm just going to gamble. Margaret and I are spending most of this year on Turkey and Turkish and will do our best with the proper channels. If it doesn't work, so be it. We'll go back to Africa'.[39] Ironically, only the powerful have the option of being empathetic, of being respectful to a different culture. Thus, instead of preoccupying itself with the bad guests, the Cold War anthropology literature might benefit more from the cases of 'good guests' as a better analytical tool to understand power inequalities.

Epilogue

American ethnographers were powerful guests – a fact that has been amply emphasized by the 'Cold War Anthropology' perspective (Price 2016). Critical hospitality studies, however, help us to shift the focus towards the unspoken obligations of (and limitations on) guest status, even when the guest is a powerful one. The 1967 permission crisis in Turkey was a perfect example of what Michael Herzfeld calls 'the moral and conceptual subordination of the guest to the host' (1987: 77), or 'the moral englobing of political asymmetry' (1987: 86), which would open up 'fertile ground [to developing countries] for gaining advantage over economically stronger competitors in everyday social life' (2012: S210). Indeed, all three students had to face expulsion orders, not because they were bad guests, but because they were there at the wrong time belonging to the wrong nationality. Moreover, Herzfeld reminds us that 'when an outsider fails to appreciate the implications of his dependent status, he may suffer' (1987: 80). After all, as Shryock notes, 'hospitality is a test that can be failed; the stakes include life and death' (2012: S21). Hence the difference in how Starr and Benedict were treated by local authorities.

Yet I believe that these stories involve more than the display of sovereignty as it is articulated in global and local power competitions. When we change the angle of our camera from the (inevitably functionalist) bird's-eye view to the ground-level shot, we enter a universe of variant positionings in which actors' perceptions and misperception of others shift alongside contested hospitality rules. In this Goffmanian world of 'strategic interactions' (Goffman 1969), we should reconsider Gabriel Tarde's sociology, which refused to sacrifice peer-to-peer influence for the functionalist accounts of social cohesion that prevailed in Durkheimian sociology (Candea 2010). Here, the other-oriented attitude takes main stage: 'what do the others think about me?', 'what shall I do to be seen in this or that way?', 'what if I mistook the other's intentions?'. Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's 2014 movie *Two days, one night* invites us to consider the relationship *among* factory workers as a key component of the employment assemblage, not as a minor side effect of a supposedly more fundamental boss-to-worker relationship. I believe that the hospitality literature would also benefit from shifting its focus towards guests' subjective points of view.

Fallers and his younger colleagues judged each other and other Americans according to their own conceptions of how to be a good guest in Turkish society, assumptions that

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were not shared by all segments of the host society itself. Stories about bad guests are indeed 'morality tales' of hospitality (Shryock 2012: S27) but they do not necessarily reveal how hospitality assemblages objectively work. To echo Lévi-Strauss's famous dictum, I would suggest that hospitality is never hospitality, but hospitality-for. How can we talk about bad guests without specifying – bad *for whom*? Komer, Fallers, Benedict, Meeker, and Starr all found themselves cast as both good and bad guests depending on their interlocutor, be it the government, a townsperson, the bureaucracy, an academic mentor, a neighbour, leftists, a spouse, or even themselves. By scrutinizing guest-to-guest relations, I do not propose that we shift attention to a marginal aspect of hospitality. If we see hospitality relations as an encounter of perceptions of hospitality, we will need to admit that any hospitality relationship is shaped by other-oriented attitudes – by perspective-taking, projection, and empathy – and will always be a mix of understanding as misunderstanding.

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[1] L.A. Fallers to Robert W. Komer, 27 January 1969. Lloyd A. Fallers Papers, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Box #15, Folder #7. (From now on, after the first appearance only the family name is given, and the archival reference is abbreviated as follows: LAFP Box/Folder.)

[2] *Milliyet*, 29 and 30 November 1968.

[3] Fallers to William P. Rogers, 17 January 1969. LAFP 15/7.

[4] Fallers to Nur Yalman, 6 February 1969. LAFP 17/22. Fallers to Frederic C. Shorter, 1 March 1969. LAFP 14/1. Fallers to Komer, 17 January 1969. LAFP 15/7.

[5] Komer to Fallers, 22 January 1969. LAFP 15/7. Original emphasis.

[6] Clifford Geertz to Fallers, 29 May 1966. LAFP 6/6.

[7] Fallers to Geertz, 16 September 1968. LAFP 6/7.

[8] Fallers to Michael Meeker, 28 May 1969. LAFP 10/4.

[9] Fallers to Geertz, 2 March 1969. LAFP 6/7.

[10] Fallers to Meeker, 12 April 1969. LAFP 10/4.

[11] Fallers to Komer, 27 January 1969. LAFP 15/7.

[12] Fallers to Geertz, 2 March 1969. LAFP 6/7. Fallers to Rogers, 17 January 1969. LAFP 15/7.

[13] Fallers to Komer, 27 January 1969. LAFP 15/7.

[14] Fallers to Geertz, 2 March 1969. LAFP 6/7.

[15] Fallers to Geertz, 2 March 1969. LAFP 6/7.

[16] Fallers to Shorter, 1 March 1969. LAFP 14/1.

[17] Fallers to Shorter, 1 March 1969. LAFP 14/1.

[18] Fallers to Margaret C. Fallers, 8 November 1964. LAFP 44/7.

[19] Fallers to Margaret C. Fallers, 21 November 1964. LAFP 44/7. Original emphasis.

[20] Fallers to Shorter, 1 March 1969. LAFP 14/1.

[21] Peter Benedict to J.C. Hurewitz, 29 June 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[22] June Starr to Fallers, 22 April 1967. LAFP 14/13.

[23] Benedict to Hurewitz, 29 June 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[24] Fallers to Benedict, 20 May 1967. LAFP 3/1.

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[25] Meeker to the Ministry of Interior in Turkey, 12 June 1967; Meeker to Fallers, 10 June 1967; 18 June 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[26] Benedict to Hurewitz, 29 June 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[27] Meeker to Fallers, 2 July 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[28] Cordelia Dahlberg Benedict, email, 17 January 2022.

[29] Michael Meeker, email, 26 March 2021.

[30] Meeker to Fallers, 18 June 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[31] Meeker to Fallers, 11 July 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[32] Meeker to Fallers, 2 July 1967. LAFP 10/4.

[33] Benedict to Fallers, 30 November 1967. LAFP 3/1.

[34] Starr to Fallers, 23 July 1967; Fallers to Starr, 4 August 1967. LAFP 14/13. Starr managed to stay in Bodrum until the end of the year by extending her permit every three months through negotiating with the officers in Ankara. Finally, during the above-mentioned Cyprus crisis, she was ordered to leave immediately (unlike Benedict), which she did, on 10 December (Starr 2003). Laura Nader to Fallers, 12 May 1967. LAFP 14/13. Starr to Fallers, n.d. [May 1967]; 23 July 1967. LAFP 14/13.

[35] Katherine Flegal, email exchanges, August 2021.

[36] Fallers to Şerif Mardin, 3 October 1967. LAFP 9/16. Meeker to Fallers, 28 August 1967; 13 October 1967; Fallers to Meeker, 3 October 1967. LAFP 10/4-5. Fallers to Benedict, 20 May 1967. LAFP 3/1.

[37] Fallers to Mardin, 3 October 1967. LAFP 9/16.

[38] Fallers to Benedict, 20 May 1967. LAFP 3/1.

[39] Fallers to Shorter, 20 November 1967. LAFP 14/1.

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Comment être un bon invité : des ethnographes américains en Turquie autour de 1968

Résumé

Le présent article lève le voile sur un chapitre oublié de l'histoire de l'anthropologie en révélant les expériences d'ethnographes américains en Turquie entre 1967 et 1969. À partir de documents d'archives et d'interviews d'histoire orale, il se concentre sur les tentatives du professeur Lloyd A. Fallers et des doctorants Michael Meeker, Peter Benedict et June Starr d'explorer la bureaucratie turque et la politique mondiale. L'article examine le cas des anthropologues dans la Turquie de la Guerre froide du point de vue des études sur l'hospitalité, en mettant un accent particulier sur les relations entre invités. En adoptant le point de vue de ces derniers, il apparaît que les assemblages de l'hospitalité sont formés par des pensées et des comportements tournés vers l'autre, ce qui implique malentendus, sympathie et projection. L'article envisage la relation d'hospitalité comme une rencontre entre des perceptions de l'hospitalité.

Ali Sipahi is Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Özyeğin University, Istanbul. His research focuses on transregional mobility, biographical narratives, and the history of anthropology in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. He is the co-editor (with Yaşar Tolga Cora and Dzovinar Derderian) of *The Ottoman East in the nineteenth century* (I.B. Tauris, 2016).

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Özyeğin University, Çekmeköy Campus, Nişantepe District, Orman Street, 34794, Çekmeköy, Istanbul, Turkey. ali.sipahi@ozyegin.edu.tr

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