

A Slice of Turkey: Istanbul, Bursa and Cappadocia

Speaker

Dr Bob Solomon

Bob Solomon first travelled outside Australia to compete against New Zealand with the Australian Universities' Athletics Team in 1953. While a student at Oxford, he drove 10,000 miles around Europe in nine weeks in the summer of 1956. This remains his most intensive travel experience, much of his subsequent movement being in the form of occasional round-the-world trips, with stops for old friends or favourite places. The trans-Mongolian-Siberian train from Beijing to Moscow in 2008 was again an intensive trip, after which he flew to Istanbul and then to Cappadocia to see its uniquely eroded landscape. Bob has previously spoken about "50 Years of Townscapes and Landscapes" in 2005 and about "The Old Man of Lake Baikal: Beijing to Moscow" in 2009. Since Ela Taranto's retirement in 2010, he has been the Travellers Club convenor.

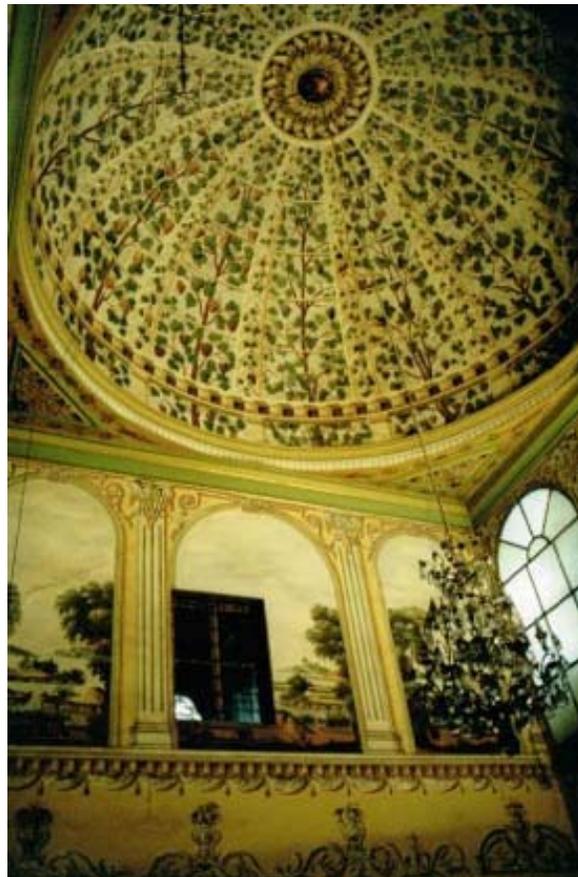


Turkey, with Istanbul, Ankara and on its southeast, Kayseri, gateway to Cappadocia

Turkey occupies a central position between Europe and Asia, geographically and politically. In *The Next 100 Years* George Friedman sees it as a coming world power. **Istanbul** is at the heart of that, though peripherally located near the western border of the nation. Sited beside the Bosphorus, with its rich history of Christian and Moslem influence, its imposing mosques and new international bridges, the city is one of the most interesting in the world.



Istanbul and the Bosphorus, with one of the two international bridges (1973 and 1988)



Mosaics in the harem of Topkapi Palace

Across the Sea of Marmara, **Bursa** is a former Ottoman capital of about one million people.



Funicular above Bursa

Cappadocia, in southern Anatolia, just over an hour's flight east of Istanbul to Kayseri, is one of the most distinctive parts of the world. About 25 million years ago, an area about 400x250 km was deeply covered with volcanic ash. Newer lava covered the tuff and formed a cap when erosion occurred, leaving columns as high as 40m. Passages and rooms were dug in some of the larger residuals, making living space for Christian monks avoiding persecution. Several catacombs below ground level are called underground cities.



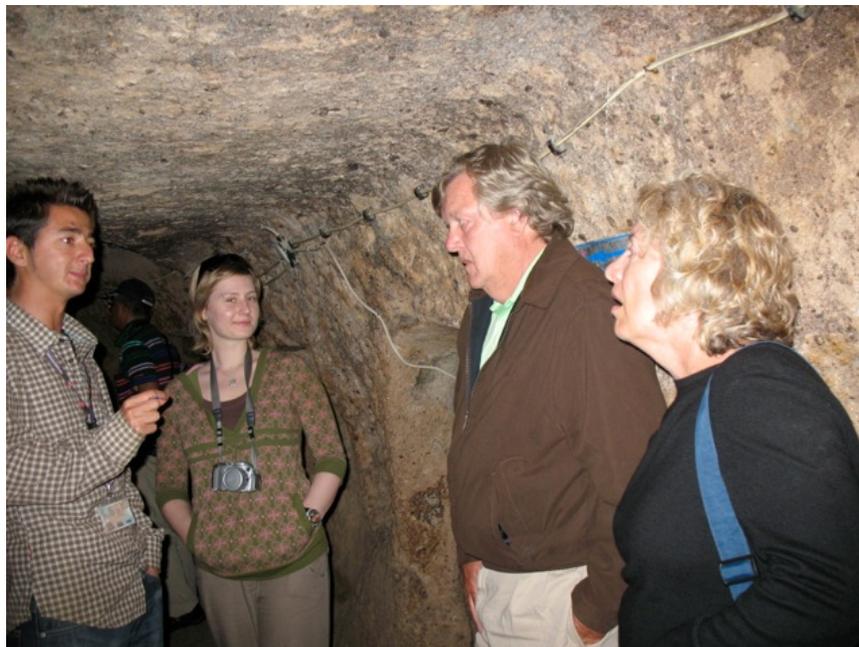
The speaker, backed by the erosion of volcanic tuff in Cappadocia



Some of the tallest residual columns



Formerly inhabited, large remnant



Chamber in "underground city", up to 30m below the surface