

Editors' Letter

Issue 65 of *New Perspectives on Turkey* brings together contributions on a diverse set of topics. It is also an issue that celebrates the works of two scholars and commemorates a sixty-year-long process that has shaped both German and Turkish society.

In March 2021, the community of Ottoman historians lost a much revered and valued scholar, Mehmet Genç. Şevket Pamuk remembers the life and work of Genç in a memorial essay that opens this issue of the journal.

Studies on social policy in Turkey have frequently appeared in the pages of *New Perspectives on Turkey*. The first article in this issue is one that also contributes to research on social policy. Senem Çakmak Şahin and İbrahim Engin Kılıç conduct an analysis of the feasibility of basic income (BI) in Turkey. They estimate the costs of BI and its effects on income distribution and find that the implementation of BI would reduce income inequality and poverty if financed through a rise in income taxation.

The ideological and popular trend of Neo-Ottomanism has attracted a considerable amount of scholarly attention in the past decade. In this issue, we feature an article that takes a novel approach to the issue by comparing Neo-Ottomanism with “Cool Japan.” Murat Ergin and Chika Shinohara trace these state-led “projects” in Turkey and Japan and discuss how they are received in popular culture in the respective countries and are portrayed in international relations.

The next two papers are on Ottoman history. Talha Çiçek focuses on the experience of Arabs exiled into Anatolia by Cemal Pasha during the Great War to show how the Ottomans sought to design Syrian society according to the viewpoint of the Committee for Union and Progress. Using Arab exiles' memoirs and Ottoman documents, Talha Çiçek argues that while the goal was to depoliticize Arab notable families, this intention had mixed results on the ground. In the final article, Berna Kamay turns to diplomacy in the nineteenth century. She focuses on a legal conflict between the United States and the Ottoman Empire concerning the murder of an Ottoman subject in 1877 in İzmir in which an American sailor was involved. The controversy over the “Kelly Affair,” according to Kamay, demonstrates the gray zone beyond international law that touched on territorial jurisdiction and subjecthood regarding the issue of extradition.

In this issue, we are happy to reinvigorate the interview format that we have used in the past. Ali Sipahi interviewed anthropologist Michael Meeker, a veteran scholar of Turkey. The conversation is a gold mine not only for tracing

Meeker's exemplary career as a social scientist but also as a record of the difficulty of getting official permits to carry out and then actually conduct field research in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s for an American. One laments that such difficulties do not only belong to a bygone era only but have persisted and perhaps even proliferated, not only for international scholars but also for Turkish citizens.

In the Commentary section, Erol Yildiz marks the sixtieth anniversary of the agreement between Germany and Turkey that initiated Turkish labor migration. A pioneer of the "postmigrant perspective" of the past decade, Yildiz invites us to think about Turkish migration not in terms of the putative shortcomings of migrants or persistent racism but rather in terms of the migrants' contribution to urban development and culture in German cities. This is a welcome shift in perspective, as migration scholars in particular and society in general are debating the consequences of the mass arrival of refugees and migrants in Turkey. If we could ever get beyond the smoke of racist reactions to the presence of migrants, we might also perhaps start talking about their actual contributions to Turkish society.

Finally, in this issue, we have six book reviews penned by Einar Wigen, Burak Onaran, Fatma Öncel, Şerif Onur Bahçecik, Maissam Nimer, and Yaşar Tolga Cora.

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to rage and the Turkish political climate continues to deteriorate, this journal remains an outlet offering new perspectives on a variety of issues on contemporary Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. The issue includes discussions on how BI could be rendered viable in Turkey, Neo-Ottomanism in comparative perspective, demographic interventions in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, and the workings of international law again in the nineteenth century.

Deniz Yükseker
Biray Kolluoğlu