



INTRODUCTION

Editors' Introduction

Evren M. Dinçer , Biray Kolluoğlu and Deniz Yüksek 

New Perspectives on Turkey's 68th issue for Spring 2023 is coming in the aftermath of domestic challenges in Turkey. Following one of the worst disasters in recent history not only in Turkey but also in the world, the country is still fighting hard to recover from the double earthquakes of February 6. Though their epicenter was Kahramanmaraş, a southeastern city of 1.1 million, the earthquakes wreaked havoc in ten surrounding provinces (many more in northern Syria), home to more than 13 million people, and killed more than 50,000 according to official figures. It deeply impacted another ten provinces neighboring the hard-hit areas, and arguably, the entire country has been transformed by this highly devastating experience socially, politically, economically, and psychologically. The lingering effects are expected to further alter the region and the nation in numerous unprecedented ways. We are deeply sorry for the loss of tens of thousands of lives.

The other process defining the moment of publication of our 68th issue is the upcoming national elections of May 14. The country is headed to elections in yet another extremely polarized political atmosphere, which has been exacerbated by the impact of the double earthquakes. Continuing high inflation rates are impacting all aspects of domestic politics and the economy and these are further convoluted by the persistent regional challenges such as the ongoing war in Ukraine and the perennial conflict in Syria.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our editorial board member and a much-admired professor for many, Professor Fikret Şenses. Şenses contributed to our journal until the very end with his widely read and highly influential piece on the Turkish economy. We start this issue with a memorial essay written by a student of his, as well as a member of our editorial board, Murat Koyuncu.

This issue features five independent articles, a review article and six book reviews. The independent articles contribute to various current scholarly debates in Turkey from environment to migration, from gender representations in media to elections. We have written many times that we want NPT with its interdisciplinary approach to be a dynamic medium to cover environmental and climate change related research. The first two articles of this issue are a product of this agenda. The first article by Berna Doğan, Hasan Tekgüç and Alp Erinç Yeldan brings together the debates on basic income and environmental policy making. Investigating the potential of what they call the green basic income program, the authors argue that such policy scenarios have the capacity to achieve both GDP growth to expand welfare and reduce carbon emissions to address global environmental challenges. The second article of this issue by Fatih Serkant Adıgüzel addresses the critical problem of deforestation in Turkey.

Combining the use of high-resolution satellite data with political sociological tools, Adıgüzel shows that deforestation has been a chronic occurrence and more prevalent in districts run by Justice and Development Party (AKP) mayors. Adıgüzel also shows that deforestation correlates with more intensive mining activities as well as the building of hydropower plants.

The third article by Ergin Bulut and Zeynep Serinkaya Winter shifts our attention from the environment to the contested representations of masculinity and authoritarianism in mass media. Focusing on the popular but highly contested TV series *Çukur*, which offers narratives highlighting the protection of family and territory, the authors argue that the political backlash against the show demonstrates the precarity around the key components of authoritarianism. Though traditional in its depiction of main characters and narrative, the authors argue that *Çukur*'s men reject unquestioned political loyalty, conspicuous consumption, and entrepreneurship, all qualities inconsistent with the promoted forms of neoliberal authoritarianism.

The fourth article by Pınar Dinç and Özge Özdüzen also deals with the problem of authoritarianism albeit from a different angle: populist online communication of governments. Presenting a rhetorical analysis of the Twitter posts of four key actors (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Yalçın Akdoğan, and Efkan Ala) of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) regarding the Kurdish Peace Process, the authors argue that online communication of these actors entailed remilitarization and resecuritization of Turkey's Kurdish question. The authors also argue that the approaches utilized in this communication reinvigorated previous political alignments vis-à-vis the Kurdish question and finally promoted Erdoğan's one-man power presence, another obstacle blocking more constructive dialogue for the resolution of the Kurdish question.

The fifth and final research article of the issue by Saime Özçürümez and Julinda Hoxha is on the role of municipalities in migration governance in Turkey. It investigates the prevalent and curious manifestations of entrepreneurial municipalism in Turkey despite the very limited role ascribed to local municipalities in this area. Identifying four key strategies, namely, local networking, community engagement, organizational adaptation and city branding, the authors argue that municipalities are not only present in this realm but are also key in the functioning of any migration policy in Turkey.

We also feature one review article by Kaleb Adney and six book reviews in this issue. Adney's piece entitled "Transgressive Moderns: Social Relations and Cultural Institutions in Middle Eastern History" presents a critical reflection on three recent studies focusing on crime and marginality in recent historiography in the Middle East. Book reviews by Nazan Maksudyan, Talha Çiçek, Hale Yılmaz, Selin Sayın, Begüm Adalet, and Volkan Yılmaz cover rich subjects from Ottoman history to the early Republican era, from regional conflicts in Southeastern Turkey to citizenship and welfare in contemporary Turkey.

Amid this extremely intense period of gloom, we are very happy to contribute to scholarly discussions on the environment, media, political culture, and governance in Turkey.