

## Editors' letter

This is a “special” issue of *New Perspectives on Turkey*. It is so in two senses. Since its launching in 1987 in the United States by a group of Turkish social scientists who had left the country in the wake of the 1980 military coup, the journal has changed its home several times. Initially it was sponsored by Simon's Rock of Bard College, and subsequently by Vassar College. Then it came home to İstanbul in 1993 to be published by the History Foundation (*Tarih Vakfı*). In 2004, Homer Publishing House took over the flag, and has carried it until now. Starting with this issue, *New Perspectives on Turkey* will be published by Cambridge University Press (CUP). In ten years, Homer expanded the journal's institutional subscription base, achieved a high quality of production, and made the content available for online subscription. In the world of academic journal publishing, dominated as it is by a few international players, this was a remarkable achievement. Yet, in an age where scholarly journals are mostly online, the Editorial Board felt that there was still room for improvement in terms of NPT's visibility and accessibility. With great gratitude to Homer, we decided that it was time to move. We are excited that the journal will be accessible to a larger community of scholars under the CUP label.

This is a special issue for a second reason. While *New Perspectives on Turkey* continues to boast of its home editorial base in İstanbul, we now have an expanded Editorial Board with additional members from Turkey, Europe, North America, and the Middle East. This reflects our objective of strengthening comparative and multidisciplinary perspectives on Turkey and the region within which it is located.

With this issue, we begin to feature interviews; in future issues this may take the format of round-table discussions as well. In the inaugural interview, we host Seteney Shami, the founder and director of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), and a new member of our Editorial Board. In the interview, Shami not only talks about her personal history of becoming a social scientist, but also about the importance of scholarly collaboration and community- and institution-building in the social sciences in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), a region marked by constant conflict. She emphasizes how comparative and collaborative perspectives can contribute to social science knowledge on the region, but she also addresses how our current conceptual tools and practices—which are based on notions of stability—are often not adequate for scholarship on the MENA region.

Issue no. 52 is an open issue, and as always, we feature articles from diverse disciplines. Seda Demiralp and Selva Demiralp's article on Islamic banking

compares it with conventional banking and suggests that actors in Islamic banking have pragmatic motivations and may adapt to liberal systems in order to seize economic incentives. Duygu Köksal, in her article, examines the rise of aesthetic modernism as a major intellectual current in the arts and literature of the early Republican Era. Focusing on a historical period rarely studied in terms of the artistic and literary manifestations of modernism, she deciphers the main areas of tension and negotiation between international cultural flows and their reception in the newly founded Republic of Turkey.

Studies on youth as an interdisciplinary field of research have been expanding in different directions—ranging from cultural consumption to education and from identity to political mobilization—at a time when youth-led social movements are on the rise across the globe. In this issue, we feature three articles that can be seen as falling under that rubric. Leyla Neyzi and Haydar Darıcı focus on the notion of *bedel* (debt) and kinship relations in Diyarbakır, arguing that these have played a central role in the subject formation of Kurdish youth as well as in their political involvement. Erik Mortenson, Duygu Ergun, and Selen Erdoğan look at “underground literature” among Turkish youth in their article and investigate its role in shaping readers’ opinions on many critical contemporary issues, among them politics, ethics, sexuality, and religion. Finally, Ayhan Kaya puts the Bologna Process, a key event in terms of contemporary changes in higher education in Turkey, under scrutiny, locating it within wider debates on Europeanization in Turkey. He portrays in detail dissenting views on the Bologna Process, views that are particularly critical of marketization and the adoption of neoliberal principles in higher education in Turkey and Europe.

Our objective is to maintain *New Perspectives on Turkey’s* status as the leading English-language social science journal on Turkey while also opening it further to comparative perspectives. We continue to rely on the support of our readers, authors, and reviewers in this path.

**Deniz Yüксеke**  
**Zafer Yenil**