

EDITOR INTRODUCTION

Editors' Introduction

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New Perspectives on Turkey's Fall 2024 issue is ready for our readership. The 71st issue is a dense one which features a mini dossier on a brief but consequential historical period of İstanbul known as the Armistice Period (1918–1923) during which the city was under Allied occupation. The issue also offers four independent articles on various aspects of the two-decades-long reign of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi; AKP) including how the party mobilizes clientelist networks, homophobia, and gendered discourses to gain advantage in elections, language fights on Twitter among culturally and politically polarized groups, and migrants' access to healthcare. It also contains five book reviews covering a range of topics.

Let us begin with the mini dossier on the turbulent years of İstanbul. Both Gizem Tongo, the special editor of the mini dossier in her introduction, and Jay Winter in his postscript explain the significance of this interim period and its lasting impact on the Sublime Porte and tease out the specific contributions of the articles in an organic manner. Hence in our introduction we will be brief and descriptive.

The first article of the dossier is a co-authored piece by Gizem Tongo and İrvin Cemil Schick. The authors in their piece entitled “Islamic art and visualities of war from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic” tap into under-explored visual and textual sources including calligraphic panels, miniature paintings, war posters, and religious timetables that were produced during the prolonged war in Anatolia which includes World War I and closes only with the end of the War of Independence (1914–1924). They study the ways in which Islamic arts, genres, and motifs were appropriated and utilized for the nationalist cause.

In the next article of the mini dossier entitled “Musical convergence and divergence in occupied İstanbul, 1918–1923,” Daniel-Joseph MacArthur-Seal studies the impact of the pouring of Allied military personnel into the city and the demand they created for music halls, cabarets, *cafés chantants*, and concert venues. Looking at British, French, and Turkish government documents, memoirs, and newspapers, the article investigates the local and global impact of the aural encounters of this period in İstanbul's cultural and musical history.

The third article of the mini dossier is by Ceren Abi, “‘If it is not too paradoxical’: archaeology in İstanbul under occupation as a window into understanding the creation of a postwar cultural heritage regime.” Taking the occupation period as a reference point, the article explores the larger reconstruction of the Middle East

through the practices and policies used by the Allies in the realm of cultural heritage. Relying on archival documents and archaeological literature, the article shows that using institutions like museums, schools of archaeology, excavations, scholarly publications, and laws and regulations on cultural property during the war, the Allies made geopolitical claims in the region and legitimized their occupation while acquiring as many antiquities as possible.

The final article of the dossier is “The palace under the shadow of occupation: cultural, archaeological, and military activities at Topkapı Palace during the armistice period, 1918–1923.” In this article, Nilay Özlü looks at Topkapı Palace as a showcase reflecting the changing cultural heritage policies of the Allies, as well as of the İstanbul and Ankara governments, during the occupation of İstanbul. It analyzes the military, archaeological, and cultural facets of the occupation and explores the military takeover of the Topkapı gardens, the French archaeological mission at the Seraglio, and the conflicts over the possession of the imperial treasures and sacred relics. Drawing on primary sources from Ottoman, Turkish, French, and British archives, as well as memoirs, letters, newspapers, and visual material, Özlü showcases the versatility of cultural heritage policies during the occupation and the entangled relations among various power groups, institutions, and actors.

A postscript by Jay Winter brings the mini dossier to a conclusion. While emphasizing the specific contributions of the articles, Winter adds to the strength of this dossier which sheds light on an understudied period in the history of this historically and culturally significant city by embedding İstanbul’s occupation in the larger European context of the aftermath of World War I and the post-World War II periods. Underlining the fact that İstanbul was the only capital city of the Central Powers occupied by Allied forces, Winter poses a significant question: whether the occupation of this predominantly Muslim city was different from the colonial occupation of Cairo, or Alexandria, or a host of other Muslim cities. Working through this question by both drawing on the findings of the articles included in the mini dossier and the larger literature he concludes that the cultural history of İstanbul developed in the period between 1918 and 1923 was colonial in essence and transnational in practice.

The 71st issue also includes four independent research articles. The first is by İbrahim Kuran, entitled “The AKP’s clientelist–machine politics and the role of Kurdish brokers: the case of Bağcılar.” Focusing on a lower-income district of İstanbul, Kuran shows how the AKP mobilizes Kurdish voters through machine politics and relational clientelism. Based on fieldwork among Kurdish entrepreneurs, housewives, and representatives of associations, the article argues that the AKP cultivates enduring personal relationships with Kurdish voters by mobilizing problem-solving networks in addition to providing material benefits.

Didem Ünal penned the next article entitled “Political homophobia as a tool of creating crisis narratives and ontological insecurities in illiberal populist contexts: lessons from the 2023 elections in Turkey.” Focusing on the ruling AKP’s 2023 election propaganda, Ünal writes about how political homophobia as a populist tool was exploited to construct and reinforce political antagonisms and carry out crisis-driven politics. The article argues that gendered performance plays a key role in the process of democratic erosion in Turkey by restructuring politics through crisis-driven

imaginaries, post-truth epistemologies, and emergency legislation that lacks political responsiveness.

H. Deniz Genç and Z. Aslı Elitsoy co-authored the third self-standing article of the issue on “Migrants’ access to healthcare services: evidence from fieldwork in Turkey.” Based on interviews with 110 migrants of different categories, the authors discuss the fit between migrant patients and Turkish health services. There is an overall mediocre fit between migrant patients and the Turkish healthcare system, which varies for different migrant groups, and is influenced by the dimensions of awareness, availability, affordability, and accommodation, they argue. Expectedly, migrants’ social capital and socio-economic statuses affect the degree of fit, while, surprisingly, irregularities in their legal statuses do not necessarily create a misfit. The article finds that the existence of private healthcare institutions has improved migrants’ access to healthcare, but it underlines problems such as discrimination, especially in the case of Syrian patients.

The last article of the issue is by Emre Yağlı entitled “Using the ‘proper one’: language ideology in the context of Kemalism and neo-Ottomanism.” Yağlı explores the deep-seated polarization in Turkey as it surfaces through fights over Turkish spelling and grammar. Studying the exchanges on Twitter, this study brings an understanding of the process of how language users deploy their language ideologies by commenting on others’ spelling styles and hence create yet another realm of cultural polarization over spelling and language use.

This issue also features reviews of five books, which weave through historical and contemporary periods. Alpan Birelma writes on Barış Alp Özden’s *Working Class Formation in Turkey, 1946–1962: Work, Culture, and the Politics of the Everyday*; Müge Özbek reviews Görkem Akgöz’s book *In the Shadow of War and Empire: Industrialisation, Nation-Building, and Working-Class Politics in Turkey*; Ohannes Kılıçdağı comments on Esra Özyürek’s *Subcontractors of Guilt: Holocaust Memory and Muslim Belonging in Postwar Germany*; Ahmet Talha Karapınar writes on Uğur Zekeriya Peçe’s *Island and Empire: How Civil War in Crete Mobilized the Ottoman World*; and, finally, Özkan Akpınar reviews Elizabeth R. Williams’s *States of Cultivation: Imperial Transition and Scientific Agriculture in the Eastern Mediterranean*.

The 71st issue embodies the longstanding intellectual and academic orientation of *New Perspectives on Turkey* of bringing together the historical and the contemporary so as to open space for a genuine dialogue between the two. While one set of articles is on an interim and understudied era – the Armistice Period in İstanbul – that marked the birth of modern Turkey, the next set of articles continues to explore the increasingly entrenched rule of the AKP since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Likewise, the book reviews too bring together historical and contemporary studies.