

Editors' Letter

This 60th issue of the *New Perspectives on Turkey* is an open issue offering five articles from different disciplinary backgrounds, including sociology, political science, and history. Two of the articles focus on migration, a topic that this journal takes prodigious care to follow. *New Perspectives on Turkey* has a strong geographical focus and framework, and migration in our part of the world is a burning political topic, a vital everyday life occurrence, and a consequential sociological phenomenon. We want to bring the sense of urgency and importance that our geographical location dictates out into to the larger social science community, and so to make the case for migration as one of the fundamental processes that will shape the twenty-first century. This is why, in this issue, we follow up on our former special issue devoted to migration by beginning this issue with two articles on the same topic. This issue also features articles that explore railroad technology and the problems it created for the Ottoman state, childcare and gender and state relations, and contemporary foreign aid patterns of the Turkish state.

In the first article, Orçun Ulusoy, Martin Baldwin-Edwards, and Tamara Last revisit the much discussed and researched massive migration movements along the Greco-Turkish border between 2015 and 2017, when these movements peaked in terms of both the number of people crossing the border and the number of people perishing while doing so. Ulusoy, Baldwin-Edwards, and Last are cautious about labeling this as a migration “crisis”; instead, they argue that the human tragedy we all witnessed during this period “was not an isolated or ‘one-of-a-kind’ event, but rather another peak point in an ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Aegean region.” The authors make their case by adopting a long-term perspective and situating the “crisis” within the framework of Turkish migration management, EU border management, and Turkey-EU relations.

In the second article, we turn to the emigration from Turkey of professionals and educated. This article deals with what may be one of the hottest conversation topics among the educated, professional middle class in gatherings of friend and extended family, middle-class parents after they have put their children to bed, and young university graduates getting together to discuss their future: whether to stay in Turkey or move abroad, preferably to Europe or North America. Brain drain and the migration of skilled people is an issue that, despite being very readily observed in contemporary Turkey, has not yet been much studied. As a result, Adem Yavuz Elveren and Gülay Toksöz’s article is important not only because it offers a systematic analysis of the emigration of professionals, but also because it focuses especially on the dynamics and reasons behind professional and educated women’s decisions

to emigrate. In their article, the authors attempt to understand the different weights and impacts of the push and pull factors driving men and women living in Turkey to emigrate.

The third article takes us back to the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Can Nacar's piece studies an often neglected aspect of the Ottoman railroad system; namely, the Ottoman state's encounter with railroad technology and how it tried to manage and regulate the risks and dangers that railroads posed to the public. Through Nacar's detailing of the relevant rules and regulations and how they were both implemented and transgressed, we are given the chance to think about the capacity building processes of modern states, as well as the relations between the state, private companies, and the public in the late nineteenth century.

The issue's fourth article carries us on to the complicated relationship of the contemporary state with its citizens in terms of gender roles and care services. Başak Can presents a qualitative study of the increasingly prevalent practice of grandmothers taking care of their grandchildren in the absence of affordable childcare services provided by the state. In her article, she lets us see how this practice simultaneously reproduces and recasts gender roles, as it keeps older women in the traditional role of caregivers for children while also allowing young women to pursue paid work. Can also addresses the implications of this practice for the family-centered policies of the contemporary government in Turkey.

The final article in this issue offers a quantitative analysis of patterns of foreign aid in twenty-first-century Turkey. Hüseyin Zengin and Abdurrahman Korkmaz explore the Ottomanist, pan-nationalist, and Islamist orientations of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) government over the past decade by looking at the ways in which foreign aid was distributed between 2005 and 2016, and in doing so they argue for the greater weight that the Ottomanist orientation carries as compared to the Islamist and nationalist orientations in decisions of how aid should be distributed.

We hope that the articles in this issue will enable our readers to continue to think further about the different capacities of the modern state, be it in the late nineteenth or the twenty-first century, across a wide range of areas, from gender policies to migration and from foreign aid to the regulation of new technologies.

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