

INTRODUCTION

Editors' Introduction

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New Perspectives on Turkey's issue number 67 features five independent articles, a commentary, and seven book reviews. The independent articles, from various fields, all contribute to current scholarly debates in Turkey. Land occupations as a form of peasant struggle were a key part of Turkey's recent history and, as social inequalities continue to grow, this subject deserves more attention today. In close connection to this, we feature an article on the unprecedented and largely devastating food inflation problem in Turkey in the last decade. A third subject covered in this issue is institutional decision making with a focus on the Central Bank. All related to important topics in today's crisis-ridden environment in Turkey, these articles show the multi-dimensional nature of socioeconomic problems. Another urgent issue in Turkey is climate change. The adverse and uneven impact of the climate crisis notwithstanding, the representation of this key transformation in the media is also important in shaping the understanding of and policy making on climate change, as one of the essays in this issue demonstrates. The next research article we feature is on the continuities and ruptures between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic with a specific focus on architectural history.

Burak Gürel, Bermal Küçük, and Sercan Taş's article delves into the critical and persistent phenomenon of land occupations between 1965 and 1980. Focusing on the previously unseen large-scale effects of agricultural modernization after 1945, the authors illustrate the importance of land conflicts and key initiatives such as land reform to address them. Showing how peasants utilized the emergent legalistic discourse provided by land reform and combining it with direct action, the authors argue that land occupation became a major tactic during this period. The authors also show that successive right-wing governments, though critical of such action politically, took a pragmatic stance and prioritized flexible and reconciliatory politics over conflict that ensured gains for peasants in the long run.

The next article by Ece Baykal Fide studies climate change media coverage pointing at a very interesting dilemma. Why are media organizations in developing countries so keen at recognizing climate change as an anthropogenic phenomenon but do not feature politicians and policy makers as responsible parties and actors to mitigate and address its ill-effects? Fide finds out that unlike global trends, there is still considerable effort to hide

anthropogenic causes of climate change in the mainstream Turkish media. The media's stance helps policy makers escape responsibilities to tackle climate change. Fide also reveals key differences among newspapers of different political leanings with mainstream progovernment ones showing a determined interest in discussing the issue as a key component of economic development specifically in connection with the energy and construction sectors.

The third article by Serkan Demirkılıç, Gökhan Özertan, and Hasan Tekgüç focuses on a subject that impacts millions in Turkey: the causes of food inflation. The authors show that high food inflation in the last decade is caused by a range of factors. In a sector dependent on imported inputs (specifically energy, animal feed, and fertilizers), the depreciation of the Turkish Lira against other currencies is often considered to be the main factor behind high food inflation, but the authors show that it is hardly the only cause of increasing food prices in Turkey. They provide a closer look at a range of products such as red meat and fresh vegetables to show the importance of additional factors such as seasonal and cyclical variation in prices, the role of intermediaries in food trade, and the lack of planning.

The fourth article by Sinan Akgünay in this issue presents a very intriguing look at the Central Bank decision-making mechanisms in Turkey in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. This article shows how delicately central banks of individual countries are situated vis-à-vis global crises, and their decision making entails a juggling of macro- and micro-level factors on a continuous basis through the Turkish case.

The fifth and final article is on the emergence of a national architectural idiom during the late Ottoman and early Republican period. Ahmet Erdem Tozoğlu questions the search for and building of national identity through architectural modernization in Turkey using Kemaleddin Bey's work, specifically the Fifth Vakıf Han in Istanbul. Tozoğlu argues that what deemed Kemaleddin Bey's work national has roots in the Tanzimat Era principles first published in *Fundamentals of Ottoman Architecture*. Continuously appropriated and criticized by successive architects, these principles were later reappropriated to represent nationalist architecture, specifically through major public buildings such as the Fifth Vakıf Han. Tozoğlu questions the extent of this nationalist character by establishing its connections with Ottoman architecture.

The commentary by Professor Fikret Şenses, the original English version of which first appeared in our issue number 66, attracted so much attention worldwide that we decided to have it translated to render it more accessible to Turkish-speaking audiences. The commentary on the economic turmoil in the critical final quarter of 2021 is still relevant and informs current debates. One of NPT's most shared and widely read pieces globally and nationally, we believe it is a very apt one to be the first-ever article to be published in Turkish in this journal. We once again thank Şenses, one of our long-standing editorial board members, for this valuable contribution. Finally, in this issue we feature seven book reviews on Ottoman history and politics and everyday life in Turkey.

This might be our first issue marking the end of the pandemic, a phenomenon some thought would have arrived and others still strongly dispute as immature optimism. Despite the end of the pandemic, we are far from being free of crises. On the contrary, crises worldwide including Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine,

intensifying tensions in the South China Sea, and the deepening economic and political crisis in Turkey are troubling. During this flux, we are happy to contribute to scholarly discussions on the politics of land, food inflation, climate change, the currency crisis in Turkey as well as the history of architectural modernization in Turkey.

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