

Journal of American Studies of Turkey

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Editorial

The issue you have in your hands has been the cherished dream of many in the Association of American Studies of Turkey, and we are happy to have at last realized it. We hope that the *Journal* which has thus taken off will enjoy a long life span and contribute effectively to American Studies in the largest sense of the word.

Conceived to be multidisciplinary in nature, as the formation of "American Studies" itself requires, the *Journal* is meant to serve a number of purposes at the same time. It will first of all constitute a forum for those Turkish and international scholars working on American topics who would like to disseminate their ideas and findings in Turkey. Originality is what we will be looking for in such articles; it is our wish that the *Journal* should act not only as a sounding board but also as an arena of productive debate on controversial issues.

A second aim of the journal is to publish lectures delivered by American scholars visiting Turkey in the hope that these essays will provide "a whiff of fresh air" to those Turkish Americanists who may not always have direct access to developments within the U.S. Moreover, there are quite a number of American academicians living and working in Turkey; we hope that they will send us informative articles.

These are, however, only two of our professed aims. We hope further that the *Journal* will bring innovation to Turkish academic life by being interdisciplinary. We invite articles, within the realm of American Studies, that cross borders and break rigid barriers.

Our most ambitious goal yet is to be comparative. In an age when multiculturalism and ethnicity are so much at the center of discussion, we believe that such matters as Turkish immigration to the U.S. and the Turkish experience in America should be studied more extensively than has been the case so far. Furthermore, in a period of time when globalization signifies to a great extent Americanization, what has been the impact of American culture on Turkey? Consequently, what has been the reaction to the impact? What does the future of Turkish-American relations look like in the post-Cold War era?

Without false modesty, our first call for papers, made at the end of 1994, was received most enthusiastically, and we were overwhelmed by an avalanche of articles that would fill at least three issues. We were therefore obliged to be most selective in regard to the quality of the articles and in order to maintain focus for this issue.

This issue contains nine articles, the maximum our limited funds allowed us. Four are by Turkish scholars from four different universities in Turkey, four are by American scholars resident in or having visited Turkey recently, and one is by a German scholar. The first three deal broadly with socio-political themes, the next three are on performing arts and the last three are basically literary studies.

The first article is the keynote speech delivered at the American Studies Seminar held in October 1994 in Çesme (Izmir) by Shelley Fisher Fishkin. Entitled "Reframing The Multiculturalism Debates and Remapping American Studies," it presents an overview of the recent debates on the subject.

Lawrence B. Goodheart's "The Disintegration of the New Deal Coalition" offers, especially to the Turks bewildered by the latest developments in U.S. politics, a historical analysis of the factors having led to those developments. Professor Goodheart was, with Professors Alan Brinkley and William Chafe, a speaker at the seminar held in March at Bilkent University on Dissent and Reform in Modern America. The article was one of the two lectures he delivered at the seminar.

"The Discourse on 'Post-Nationalism': A Reflection on the Contradictions of the 1990s" by Irem Balkir introduces a theme not much considered in Turkey, that of postnationalism and its parameters. The article was delivered as a lecture at the Turkish-American Association (on Cinnah Caddesi in Ankara) in December 1994 within the series of talks sponsored by The American Studies Association.

With "What Hath Rock Wrought?: Blues, Country Music, Rock'n'Roll, and Istanbul," Clifford Endres provides a comparative cultural approach. The article was delivered as a lecture with audio accompaniment at the seminar in Çesme.

Necla Çikigil's "Dance in America" is also a lecture delivered at the Turkish-American Association (in fact, one of the first talks given after the establishment of the American Studies Association). With her article, we wanted not only to pay tribute to the scholars who founded and gave so much of their time to the Association in those early days, but also to set the multidisciplinary tone of the journal.

Michael Oppermann is a German scholar, and at present a member of the faculty of a Turkish university. He is an expert in comparative film analysis. His article, "Alfred Hitchcock - A Silent Vision," based on a talk he made at the Çesme

Seminar, evaluates the presence of German Expressionism in Alfred Hitchcock's films.

Ayfle Kirtunç's "Storytelling: Ritual, Catharsis and Healing in the Jewish American Experience," is a monograph on a theme that is of current topical interest in American Studies, namely ethnic literature. Kirtunç's article introduces authors not sufficiently known in Turkey.

Sibel Irzik's article on a well-known ethnic American woman writer, "Maxine Hong Kingston: Languages and Silences of Being Chinese-American," discusses the predicament of being a hyphenated American. The article was also a lecture at the Çesme Seminar.

Students of poetry will enjoy reading the last article, selected to wrap up the issue. A paper at the Çesme seminar, Robert Bertholf's "Multiculturalism in Contemporary American Poetry," argues against the reigning orthodoxy in contemporary American poetry.