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Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies is an interdisciplinary refereed journal focusing on the humanities and social sciences of the Balkan countries and the former Soviet republics. The journal welcomes contributions in the fields of history, economics, politics, international relations, culture, art, geography, literature, theology, ethnography and environmental sciences. The idea behind this initiative is to extend a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary approach over issues of regional importance. Under this light, the journal aspires to act as an academic forum for scholars in historical as well as contemporary context on a wide range of cross-regional issues and to provide the epistemological framework for a comparative investigation, which would enhance our understanding of the Balkan, and Black Sea societies, politics and communities. Furthermore, manuscripts connecting the region with wider scopes, such as technological applications, will be also considered.

The journal is published online with two issues per year (June and December) commencing in 2018 and themed issues are anticipated. Submitted manuscripts should be original and not published or under consideration for publication elsewhere. Their length should not exceed 8.000 words. The manuscript will be subject to anonymous peer-review by at least two members of the scientific committee. The use of graphics and images in colour is encouraged and not subject to limitations (within reason). However, it is the responsibility of the individual authors to acquire copyright permission if needed. The language for manuscripts is English and Turkish. Articles, other than in English or Turkish, will be occasionally accepted. Articles must have an abstract of up to 150 words in English.

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Editorial Office Contacts



Journal Website: <http://dergipark.org.tr/balkar>

Postal address:

BALKAR, Yıldız Technical University,

Davutpaşa Campus, İİBF,

34220 Esenler, Istanbul-Turkey

e-mail: balkar@yildiz.edu.tr

Tel: +90212383 68 33

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Editorial

Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies is an Istanbul-based journal aiming at strengthening academic exchange among social scientists from Turkey, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Eastern European countries. We started the journal in 2018 and have published five issues until now. The fifth issue includes three research articles and a special issue. The special issue on “*Transottoman Infrastructures and Networks across the Black Sea*” consists of one introduction and four research articles on the history of infrastructure in the Balkans and the Black Sea region. The special issue underwent a double editing process, first by the editors of the special issue, *Dr. Lyubomir Pozharliev*, *Dr. Florian Riedler* and *Prof. Dr. Stefan Rohdewald*. The research articles of the special issue were additionally evaluated through a double-blind review process, including reviews both by some editorial board members and external reviewers.

The first article of the special issue titled “*Concessions and Mirages along the Lower Danube: The Town of Silistria in the Plans of Foreign Railway Promoters during the mid-1850s*” by *Assist. Prof. Dr. Boriana Antonova-Goleva* (Sofia) deals with railway and road projects aiming to connect the Danube with the Black Sea to facilitate the transportation of goods from the Balkans. The second article of the special issue titled “*(Dis)Connected: Railway, Steamships and Trade in the Port of Odessa, 1865–1888*” by *Dr. phil. Boris Belge* (Basel) discusses the port of Odessa which was constructed at the end of the 18th century and became the most important Russian port across the Black Sea. The connection of Odessa with different parts of Russia is the main subject of the article. The third article of the special issue titled “*State Goals and Private Interests in the Development of Transport Infrastructure in the Russian Black Sea Region in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*” by *Dr. phil Lyubomir Pozharliev* (Leipzig) deals with -parallel to the territorial expansion of Russia - the increasing Russian investments in the Black Sea coasts to improve the transport infrastructures. The fourth article of the special issue titled “*Integrating the Danube into Modern Networks of Infrastructure: The Ottoman Contribution*” by *Dr. phil. Florian Riedler* (Leipzig) dwells on the projects and investments to improve and facilitate the transportation over Danube. The increasing corn export from the Balkans to Central Europe and development of trade in the region made the infrastructural investments in connecting Danube with hinterland essential.

The first article of the issue 5 titled "An Ottoman Story Until the End: Reading Fan Noli's Post-Mediterranean Struggle in America, 1906-1922" by *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Isa Blumi* (Stockholm, Sharjah) examines the life and historical role of Fan Noli, founder of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, celebrated in Albania as one of the leading national heroes of the Albanian national movement. The author discusses different aspects of his life as a transnational personality and tries to show the role of the diaspora communities, particularly the Tosk community in the USA, in the transformation process of Albania after its independence in 1912.

The second article of the issue 5 titled "Kemalism, Literature and Politics: Turkish Historical Novel in a Comparative Perspective" by *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aslı Daldal* (İstanbul), focuses on the Turkish novelists Kemal Tahir, Atilla İlhan and Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar in the Interwar period. Daldal evaluates their historical novels in the context of Kemalist nationalism, national historiography and perception of the East and West, and discusses if there is in their novels any criticism or support regarding the Kemalist modernism.

The third and last research article of the issue 5 titled "Theoretical Approaches to the Black Sea Region: Is the Wider Black Sea Area a Region?" by *Nasuh Sofuoğlu* (Rize, Istanbul) tries to evaluate the existing literature and theories about the Black Sea area within the concept of regionalism and new regionalism.

The issue also includes four book reviews.

I would like to thank the editors of the special issue and especially Dr. Florian Riedler, who carried out the collection and submission of the articles of the issue, and the authors of the articles and book reviews. We feel privileged due to the fact that they decided to publish their valuable contributions in our journal. I would like to thank also all the referees for their precious efforts during the evaluation process of the articles. Finally, I would like to thank the national and international institutions which started to index our journal.

Mehmet Hacısalihoglu, Prof. Dr.

Editor in Chief