

# YILLIK

Annual of Istanbul Studies

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# YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies

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## Foreword

*Istanbul is a palimpsest*—or at least that was how the city was presented, as a question, at a recent conference, “Cities as Palimpsests? Urban Evolutions in the Eastern Mediterranean,” held at Bahçeşehir University.

*YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* is a palimpsest, and this is how we are (re)imagining the journal here in this editorial, positioned next to an advertorial featuring the seven previous issues of *İstanbul Araştırmaları Yıllığı / Annual of Istanbul Studies*, the academic journal of the Istanbul Research Institute published every year from 2012 to 2018. The reordering of words in the journal’s title and the overhaul of its graphic design (which we hope you enjoy at least as much as we do) might seem like a simple cosmetic rebranding, but the transformation is much more substantial.

Rising on the shoulders of the *İstanbul Araştırmaları Yıllığı / Annual of Istanbul Studies*, the relaunched *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* is now peer-reviewed. Thanks to a reformed advisory board, whose expertise covers all periods and disciplines in the study of Istanbul’s past and present, the journal now sets a much higher academic standard, manifested through double-blind peer review process with two experts reviewing each manuscript accepted for consideration. Every year, one of the articles written by a student or recent PhD will be awarded the *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* Early Career Article Prize. This year we congratulate Nilay Özlü, one of the three eligible authors in this issue, for winning the inaugural prize.

*YILLIK*’s topical diversity is also much broader and richer. In addition to the peer-reviewed articles, there are now three additional sections in the journal: Meclis, Cabinet, and Reviews & Istanbul Bibliography. Meclis creates a space to publish papers presented at the institute’s events and individual essay submissions that do not undergo peer-review. We also expect Meclis to serve as a forum for serious engagement on topics driving public discourse on the city, from earthquakes to urban renewal. The Cabinet is devoted to short essays by renowned experts on historical documents from the collections of the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation and held by the Istanbul Research Institute and the Pera Museum. The Reviews & Istanbul Bibliography section includes a bibliography, a feature that goes back to 2012. The bibliography is also accompanied by a Reviews section, which features reviews of books on Istanbul as well as on any topic having the potential to contribute to the study of the city. This section also includes reviews on exhibitions—those on Istanbul and especially those organized in the city. Again, we hope these reviews will contribute to the formation of a venue for critical discourse on the cultural scene in Istanbul, a city that hosts numerous exhibitions but lacks a space for serious engagement.

Finally, the new *YILLIK* is now published in both print and online, the latter of which is open access, and available through the website of the Istanbul Research Institute as well as the DergiPark platform of Tübitak’s Ulakbim.

Istanbul is “*hüsrân u hatar,*” “*hûn-ı ciğer,*” “*hüzn ü keder,*” and “*şer deryası,*” as Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, in the first article of this first issue, recounts from Mustafa Âli—in our translation:

This city is a realm of rain; [of] frustration, fear, and death; a realm of venom and blood in the days of the plague; a realm of grief and sorrow for the expelled and the poor in tears; ... a realm of pleasure and benefits for those in power, and a realm of harm and evil for the destitute... And finally this city is a realm of travelers, the center of travel and movement. Mustafa Âli, just like the unknown painter of the *Hünernâme* map, directs a multitude of lenses onto the city to portray the splendor, misery, and the restless complexity of the early modern metropolis. By merging contradictions and complexities with signs of power and wealth, both render the city outside the utopian conceptual framework that idealized the city and the political powers governing it, which dominated holistic representations of Istanbul.

*YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* follows the lead of not only Mustafa Âli and the unknown painter of *Hünernâme* but also its advisory board and contributing authors as it undertakes its new mission to project a multitude of lenses onto Istanbul’s written, oral, and material cultures; its changing historical, human, and nonhuman geographies; and its past, present, and possible futures without idealizing any of its periods or actors. It aims to venture out into all the city’s realms described by Mustafa Âli—its “misery” as well as its “splendor”—and even more in order to expand the ever-multilayered realm of Istanbul studies.

The Editorial Board