
From the Editor

With the appearance of this issue, the *Freedom of Thought Journal* enters its eighth year and a new phase in its publication. What will remain unchanged is our commitment to the mission and goals that have guided the Journal since its inception. This commitment, in the first place, is to the principles of free speech and respect for others' views, particularly in matters of politics, ideology, and religious belief. Hence, as stipulated clearly in the constitution of the Association for Freedom of Thought, which is the founding sponsor of this journal, "toleration and acceptance of pluralism and respect for the rights of others," in compliance with the principles of universal human rights and equal citizenship rights for all individuals regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, will serve as our guiding principles. Furthermore, as in previous issues of the Journal, we will try to focus on the more pressing issues, crises, and problems that Iran and its neighboring countries are face in their governance, civil society, economy, natural environment, and foreign relations.

It is our hope that by making the Journal bilingual (in Persian and English), starting with the current issue, we will be able to promote fruitful dialogues between researchers and authors who write in these languages. We will also be adopting procedures for the acceptance, editing, and publishing that are in compliance with the current professional standards for peer reviewing, editing, and indexing articles in the Journal. These procedures will be implemented under the direction of our executive editor, Alireza Kazemi, at the Iran Academia University Press.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to those who for the past several years carried the responsibility for editing and managing the publication of the Journal and have now passed on that responsibility to me. For our future issues, in addition to our Editorial Board (Roja Fazaeli, Joel Hanisek, Mohammad Reza Nikfar, Saeed Paivandi, Nayereh Tohidi, and Ali Banuazizi), we are fortunate to be able to draw upon the expertise of a number of leading scholars in the social sciences and Iranian studies on our Board of Consulting Editors in the selection and the reviewing process of articles for publication. Ultimately, of course, the success and continued publication of the *Freedom of Thought Journal* will depend on its contributing authors, and the support of our readers.

Ali Banuazizi
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