

# KEYMAN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM

2022 - 2023 Newsletter



## A Note from the Director

Dear Friends,

Fall is upon us, and the campus is lively again with students taking advantage of days borrowed from summer. Unfortunately, this past year was not a bright one for Turkey. Our hearts are still heavy from the loss of lives and destruction of entire cities along with their material and intangible heritage in the February 6 earthquake. As a campus community we mobilized our resources to help in any way we could. More than six months after the event, children in the earthquake zone have started the school year in tents and in buildings that may not be safe. The entire world is suffering from disaster fatigue and humanitarian aid is stretched thinner than ever. Donations poured in immediately after the quake, but the region still needs help. Therefore, I implore you to consider giving again.

2023 marks the centenary of the Turkish Republic. One wished that this milestone would be celebrated in a democratic, harmonious, and prosperous country, but it seems like we will need to wait a little more for those days, and hopefully they will not be long in coming.

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On the other hand, the 2022-23 academic year was a resounding success for our campus community. Students and faculty have almost entirely recovered the time lost to the pandemic. The Keyman Program completed the year stronger than last. As usual, you will find snapshots of last year's programming in the following pages. Some of our regular activities such as themed talk series and article workshops continued, and we again hosted a successful conference on a very important theme: The Afterlives of Lausanne, where scholars from Turkey, Eurasia, and North America got together in Evanston to discuss what the peace treaty that is considered the "birth certificate" meant at the time of its conclusion in 2023, and since then. Most of the presenters were early-career scholars who were paired up with expert discussants in their fields. The conference started with a keynote lecture by Lerna Ekmekçioğlu of MIT, and over two days of intense and stimulating exchange of ideas, new connections were made and old ones consolidated. We also made a "virtual visit" to Istanbul: Occupied City/Meşgul Şehir, an exhibition showing at the Istanbul Research Institute's Pera Museum until 26 December 2023. We were lucky to have the curators Gizem Tongo and Daniel-Joseph MacArthur-Seal as our guides. I cannot resist noting that the conference concluded with an impromptu dance party at Harris 108, the large meeting hall of the History Department that is not accustomed to hosting such a young (and young at heart!) and exuberant crowd.

Our intellectual engagement continued well into summer. In August, we participated in a Summer School that is organized by the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey (CEST). CEST has been organizing an annual conference since 2014 and a summer school since 2021 with a different theme each year. Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program is now an associate partner of CEST and contributed to this year's summer school that convened with theme "Turkey and/in the Balkans." We sponsored a lecture to honor the memory of the late Şarık Tara, whose philanthropy continues to support education and the arts in Turkey and beyond. Born in Skopje, Macedonia, Mr. Tara had a keen interest in the history of the Balkans and remained dedicated to peace in the region through his efforts in public diplomacy. Delivered by Emily Greble of Vanderbilt University, a prominent scholar of Southeastern Europe, the summer school's inaugural Sarik Tara Memorial Lecture was our homage to this legacy.

In a word, this past year was bittersweet, and I will finish on another bittersweet tone: we said farewell to our postdoctoral fellow Anoush Tamar Suni, who arrived at Northwestern in the middle of the pandemic and almost immediately enraptured us with her intellectual sophistication, collegiality, and then a very cute baby. Anoush, her spouse Akın, and baby Nino are now in UCLA, and we wish them all the best with their new life in Los Angeles. The program also gained two new members this year: Alicen Collum, our program assistant, who hit the ground running when she arrived in January and brought order and sanity to our lives soon thereafter. We also recently welcomed our new postdoctoral fellow, Kenan Sharpe. Kenan is an expert, among other things, on Anatolian Rock; stay tuned for our upcoming events, they are about to get even more exciting.

Wishing you a wonderful new academic year,

İpek Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu

Director

# OUR PEOPLE

## Administration

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Program Assistant, Alicen Collum,  
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2023-2025 Postdoctoral Fellow, Kenan Behzat  
Sharpe, and 2022- 2024 Postdoctoral Fellow,  
Ekin Kurtiç

# Postdoctoral Fellows

## **Kenan Behzat Sharpe, 2023- 2025 Postdoctoral Fellow**

**(Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz 2019)**



is a literature and cultural studies scholar focusing on the relationship between art/culture and social movements in Turkey during periods of unrest and popular mobilization. As the 2023-2025 Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Postdoctoral Fellow at Northwestern University, he is writing his first book manuscript: *Rockers and Radicals in Anatolia: Turkish Psychedelic Rock and the World 1960s*. The project discusses Anatolian Rock, an experimental genre of popular music that combined melodies, instruments, and lyrics from the Turkish countryside with the sound and rebellious ethos of global rock. It treats Anatolian Rock as a window into the politically turbulent and culturally rich period of the long Turkish 1960s (1960-1980), discussing music's central role in Turkish opposition movements and the influence of rural (and specifically Alevi) musical traditions on urban youth culture. In addition to popular music in Turkey, Sharpe's published research focuses on comparative Turkish and Greek literature, world poetry during the 1930s popular front, global modernisms, and feminist film theory. Before coming to Northwestern, he did field research in Istanbul as a postdoctoral fellow with the American Research Institute in Turkey and taught literature classes at Boğaziçi University. He has also worked as a journalist, covering contemporary Turkish music/cinema/popular culture for independent local media sites and publishing in outlets like the Washington Post and Al Monitor.

## **Ekin Kurtiç, 2022- 2024 Postdoctoral Fellow**

**(Ph.D., Harvard University, 2019)**



is a sociocultural anthropologist whose research is at the intersection of environmental humanities, social studies of infrastructure and technopolitics, and political ecology. She is the 2022-2024 Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Postdoctoral Fellow at Northwestern University. While at Northwestern, Kurtiç is working on her first book manuscript, *Sedimented Landscapes: Building Dams, Restoring Ecologies in the Çoruh Basin*, which critically examines state-led projects of restoring and salvaging nature in the process of large dam building in Turkey. *Sedimented Landscapes* shows that dam building is a central site of governing the socio-material space and enacting state power not only through environmental conquest but also through conservation. By tracing the role of the sediment carried by river waters in dammed landscapes, her book analyzes the making of state, technoenvironmental expertise, and rural lives through the governance of infrastructure and ecology. Kurtiç is also developing a new book project on the techno-ecopolitics of reframing soil as a "carbon sink" against the backdrop of the climate crisis and its implications for human and non-human lives in agricultural and pastoral landscapes of Turkey. Prior to coming to Northwestern, she was a Junior Research Fellow at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University.

**Anoush Tamar Suni, 2020- 2023 Postdoctoral Fellow**

**(Ph.D., UCLA, 2019)**

is a cultural anthropologist whose work bears on state and intercommunal violence, memory, materiality and landscape, cultural heritage, space and place, and political and historical anthropology in Turkey, Armenia, Kurdistan, and the broader Middle East. She earned her PhD in anthropology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2019. For her doctoral dissertation, entitled “Palimpsests of Violence: Ruination and the Politics of Memory in Anatolia,” she spent over two years (2015-2017) in the region of Van, in southeastern Turkey, conducting ethnographic research. She is currently working on her book project, which investigates questions of memory and the material legacies of state violence in the region of Van with a focus on the historic Armenian and contemporary Kurdish communities. Prior to coming to Northwestern, she was a Manoogian Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Armenian Studies Program and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Michigan. Her research interests include state and intercommunal violence, memory, materiality and landscape, cultural heritage, space and place, and political and historical anthropology in Turkey, Armenia, Kurdistan, and the broader Middle East.



# Faculty Board

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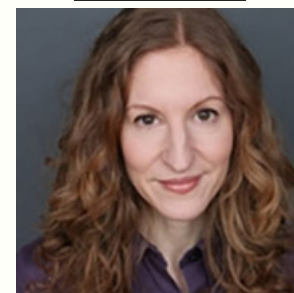
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**Wendy Pearlman,** Professor  
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# Visiting Professor

## **Fahri Öz, 2022- 2023 Visiting Professor, MENA Artist-in-Residence**

is an ex-academic, translator and poet. After signing Academic for Peace declaration in 2016, he was dismissed in 2017 from his position at Ankara University, where he taught British and American poetry, poetic genres, literary history and translation. He translated into Turkish works by Christina Rossetti, Jack London, Saki, William Burroughs and Bob Dylan. He co-authored and co-edited a collection of flash fiction in Turkish called Hayat Kısa Proust Uzun. His first book of poems, Meşrutiyet Çok Bulutlu On Beş Santigrat Yağmur Olasılığı Sıfır, came out in 2019. In 2021, Oz was one of the residents of IWP at University of Iowa, where he also taught at the MFA in Literary Translation.



# Visiting Scholar

## **Bilge Yabancı, 2022- 2024 Keyman Visiting Scholar**

is Marie Curie Global fellow at Northwestern University and Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy). Her research interests are interdisciplinary and relate to political science, sociology, and communication studies. In her current project co-hosted by Northwestern and Ca' Foscari, she investigates how the immigrant and refugee rights movement (IRRM) in Turkey can tailor its public communication strategies to reframe migrants and refugees as 'deserving' and "rights-bearing agents." Currently, Bilge is also working towards finalizing her book manuscript titled 'Civil Society and Autocratization: Repression, Cooptation and Contestation in Turkey'. Before joining Northwestern, she was the recipient of Open Society Fellowship (Human Rights Cohort) and Swedish Institute postdoctoral fellowship. In her previous projects, she researched the transformation of social movements and civil society under the pressure of democratic backsliding. Carrying out on extensive fieldwork on women, youth and diaspora organizations, she investigated both cooptation and resistance dynamics within civil society.



# Graduate Students

**Ulaş Erdoğan**, Political Science

**İdil Özkan**, Anthropology

**Esra Çimencioğlu**, Radio, Television, Film

**Ubeydullah Ademi**, Political Science

**Şeyma Kabaoğlu**, Anthropology

**Elif Buyukakbas**, Sociology

**Özge Karagöz**, Art History

**Elizabeth Howell**, History

**Hazal Özdemir**, History





# News and Updates

- Ipek Kocaömer Yosmaoglu was elected as the incoming president of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association.

- Oya Topçuoğlu has been promoted to Associate Professor of Instruction as of September 1, 2023.

- Wendy Pearlman has been chosen as a co-editor for APSA flagship journal Perspectives on Politics from June 1, 2023, until May 31, 2026. She has also become interim director of the Northwestern MENA program for 2023-24. She has also published a book, Muzoon, as well as three articles:

Emotional Sensibility: Exploring the Methodological and Ethical Implications of Research Participants' Emotions, How Homeland Experiences Shape Refugee Belonging: Rethinking Exile, Home, and Integration in the Syrian Case, and Putting Palestinian Agency First.

- Shayna Silverstein's article titled "The 'Barbaric' Dabke: Masculinity, Dance, and Autocracy in Contemporary Syrian Cultural Production" published in the Journal of Middle Eastern Women's Studies, received the 2022 Marcia Herndon Article Award from the Gender and Sexualities Section of the Society for Ethnomusicology. She also has a forthcoming article in the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication that will be out at the end of this year. Please look out for "I Dance, I Revolt: The Migratory Politics of Syrianness in Mithkal Alzghair's Displacement (2017)" in the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication 16.3 (2023), 1-22. Finally, Shayna will be releasing her first book in Spring 2024! "Fraught Balance: The Embodied Politics of Dabke Dance Music in Syria" (Wesleyan University Press) expands on the work of the previously mentioned articles to illustrate the significance of popular dance music in the public domain of authoritarian states.

- Özge Samanci received the Illinois Art Council's Artist Fellowship Award in the category of Media Arts. The Artist Fellowship Program recognizes exceptional artists who have created a substantial body of work throughout their careers by providing awards to support continued artistic growth. Her data-driven Virtual Reality installation VastWaste will be in the NOVA-Supercreativity exhibition in the Museum of Tomorrow, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil during this Fall of 2023. VastWaste is also being exhibited at the Electronic Language International Festival FILE, Sao Paulo, Brazil 4 July - 27 August 2023.

- Fahri Öz taught a course titled "Modern Turkish Literature" in the Winter 2023 semester and "Netflix Nation: The Turkish TV Boom" in Spring 2023. His time as our visiting professor ended in August and we wish him the best!

- Ekin Kurtiç's article "Infrastructural Decay: Maintenance Ecologies and Labor in the Çoruh Basin" published in Cultural Anthropology. She has co-edited "Infrastructural politics in the Middle East and North Africa: Pasts, presents, futures" published in Environment and Planning D: Society and Space. She also organized and co-hosted an event titled "Landscapes of Toxicity: Violence, Expertise and Environmental Justice" in February 2023. Ekin is also teaching a course this Fall titled "Infrastructure, Power, and Justice in the Anthropocene."



- Anoush Suni has a new article in the publication Anthropological Quarterly. It is titled “[Historical Alchemy: Buried Gold, Buried Pasts](#).” She previously taught a course in Spring 2023 titled Monuments & Memory. Anoush has also recently started a postdoctoral position at UCLA in the Promise Armenian Institute. Best of luck, Anoush!

- Kenan Behzat Sharpe is the newest addition to the Keyman team as our 2023-2025 Postdoctoral Fellow. Welcome Kenan!

- Idil Ozkan (anthropology) is working on her dissertation, which is tentatively titled “Curating Ancestry: Ideologies and Politics of Sephardic Heritage in Reparation Laws.” Özkan was awarded the Crown Graduate Fellowship for the academic year 2022-2023. During this time, she presented her work at several conferences and academic meetings. She co-organized a panel and presented her work at Middle East and North African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado. As part of her public facing scholarship endeavors, she published an op-ed article in [politik.yol](#), a Turkish political news outlet. In summer 2023, Özkan attended the CEST Summer School, “Turkey in/and the Balkans,” at the Venice International University, where she presented her dissertation chapter on Turkish conversos’ search for Iberian origins and proof of their Sephardic Jewish ancestry.

- Şeyma Kabaoğlu has received the 2023 Religion, Spirituality, and Democratic Renewal Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC).

- Özge Karagöz spent the year in residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) in New York, where she worked on her dissertation as a Leonard A. Lauder Fellow. She presented on her dissertation, “Refiguring Modern Art Across Revolutions: Turkish and Soviet Artists in Alliance, 1933–1937,” at the MET’s annual Fellows Colloquia and at a graduate workshop organized by the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey (AMCA). Her review of Sarah-Neel Smith’s art historical monograph, *Metrics of Modernity: Art and Development in Postwar Turkey* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2022), appeared on H-AMCA.



# EVENTS

## “Teach In” on the Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria

March 13, 2023

Dr. Eray aylı, Hazal Hürman, Dr. Hişyar Özsoy, MP. and Dr. K. Murat Güney gathered via Zoom for a "teach in" about the Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, moderated by Keyman Postdoctoral Fellows Dr. Anoush Tamar Suni and Dr. Ekin Kurtiç.



## Opposition Parties in Competitive

### Authoritarian Regimes:

#### The Turkish Case

March 31, 2023

We were joined by MESA Global Academy scholars Dr. Nihat elik and Dr. Selin Bengi Gümürkçü for a dialogue on opposition parties in Turkey, moderated by Keyman Postdoctoral Fellow Ekin Kurtiç.



**Book Talk with Dr. Nilay Özok-Gündoğan**  
**The Kurdish Nobility in the Ottoman Empire**

April 12, 2023

Author of *The Kurdish Nobility in the Ottoman Empire: Loyalty, Autonomy, and Privilege*, Dr. Nilay Özok-Gündoğan discussed her most recent book release with commentation by Keyman Postdoctoral Fellow Dr. Anoush Tamar Suni.



**Roundtable Discussion on Turkey's Elections Electoral Autocracies and Voting**

April 26, 2023

Dr. Mert Arslanalp, Dr. Seren Selvin Korkmaz, Dr. Elise Massicard, and Dr. Güneş Murat Tezcür conversed about Turkey's Elections. Moderated by Dr. Bilge Yabancı, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at Northwestern University and Ca' Foscari University of Venice.



**Book Talk with Dr. Aron Aji**

**Bringing Turkish Literature into English: Translating Murathan Mungan's Valor**

May 1, 2023

Dr. Aron Aji held a conversation about Murathan Mungan's book *Valor: Stories*, moderated by Fahri Öz, Keyman Visiting Professor and MENA Practitioner-in-Residence.



**Book Talk with Dr. Dimitar Bechev**

**Turkey Under Erdogan: How a Country Turned from Democracy and the West**

May 5, 2023

Dr. Dimitar Bechev joined us along with commentator Dr. Karabekir Akkoyunlu to examine his most recent book, *Turkey Under Erdogan: How a Country Turned from Democracy and the West*.

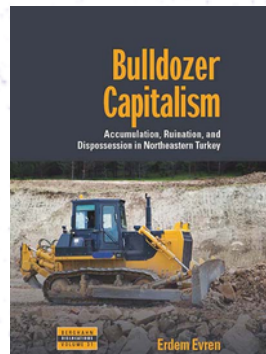


# Talk Series: Unruly Ecologies in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey

As the recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria have once again demonstrated, more-than-human landscapes are inextricably linked to politics. The calamity has not only revealed that there is no such phenomenon as a “natural disaster” disconnected from political, economic, and social (f)actors, but it also showed that the naturalization of the disaster is central to the dereliction of political responsibility. At a time of intensifying and proliferating ruination and disasters worldwide, this speaker series will closely explore the politics of ecology and its limits by featuring scholars who work on more-than-human life in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. The waters, soils, forests, wetlands, grasslands, plains, and mountains of the Empire and the Republic have long been subjected to forms of governing and technoscientific control to know, conquer, and benefit from what is cast as unruly natures. Yet, scholars have also pointed out the limits of this endeavor by showing the complex socio-material dynamics that challenge the will to tame. This speaker series will offer a reflection on new perspectives that close attention to ecological landscapes provides for the exploration of state formation, region-making, capitalist dispossession, infrastructural transformations, moral relations, and community building.

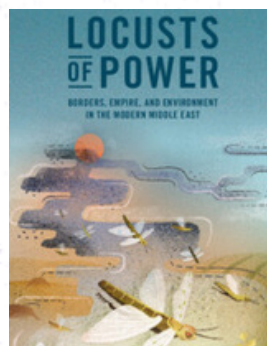
**Book Talk with Dr. Erdem Evren**  
**Bulldozer Capitalism: Accumulation, Ruination, and Dispossession in Northeastern Turkey**

April 19, 2023



**Book Talk with Dr. Samuel Dolbee**  
**Locusts of Power: Borders, Empire and Environment in the Modern Middle East**

May 10, 2023



# 2023 Keyman Article Workshop

The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program at Northwestern University's Buffett Institute of Global Affairs continued its series of virtual workshops to support early career scholars preparing an article for publication by a peer-reviewed journal. We invited applications from junior scholars working in all branches of the Social Sciences and Humanities on themes related to Turkey and its diasporas. This year we had a cohort of 6 authors. We look forward to hearing news about their publications.

**Dr. Bryan Van Wyck**

**Dr. Hülya Delihüseyinoğlu**

**Dr. Anoush Tamar Suni**

**Dr. Tarik Nejat Dinç**

**Dr. Gözde Kılıç**

**Dr. Ferda Nur Demirci**

We would like to thank the following scholars who shared their expertise in an exceptional spirit of generosity, this workshop series would not have been possible without their commitment.

**Dr. Ayhan Kaya**

**Dr. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu**

**Dr. Kabir Tambar**

**Dr. Andrew Matthews**

**Dr. Alison Downham Moore**

**Dr. Salih Can Açiksöz**



# 2023 Annual Conference The Afterlives of Lausanne: Society, Politics, and Belonging after Empire

May 26-27, 2023

Each year, the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program brings together scholars from around the world to discuss some of the most pressing issues facing Turkey from a global perspective. This year the conference's theme was the Lausanne Conference and Treaty of July 24, 1923.

The conference brought together 21 scholars from 8 different countries. During two intense days of lectures, presentations, and discussions, the participants analyzed Lausanne and its consequences from different perspectives.



Keyman MTS 2023 Annual Conference  
family photo





2023 Annual Conference  
Keynote Speaker,  
Lerna Ekmekcioglu

2023 Annual Conference  
Exhibition Presentation:  
"Meşgul Şehir: İşgal İstanbul'unda  
Siyaset ve Gündelik Hayat"  
[Occupied City: Politics and  
Daily Life in Istanbul under  
Occupation, 1919-1923]



2023 Annual  
Conference  
Roundtable

# CEST Summer School in Venice

August 6-14, 2023

The Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey is a network of institutions and scholars that aims to advance scholarship on Turkey especially by supporting young scholars in the field and assist in creating space for exchange of ideas in a safe and free environment. CEST has been organizing an annual conference since 2014 and a summer school since 2021 with a different theme each year. Their last summer school was organized by Kerem Öktem (Ca'Foscari University, Venice) and Élise Massicard (CNRS/CERI, SciencesPo, Paris) and took place on the campus of Venice International University on Servolo Island from August 6-14, with the theme "Turkey and/in the Balkans." Professors Öktem and Massicard are members of the extended Keyman community and have contributed to the program through their teaching, talks, and other service. This summer, the Keyman Program participated in the organization of the Summer School for the first time. We sponsored the inaugural Şarık Tara Memorial Lecture delivered by Emily Greble (Vanderbilt University) and supported two Northwestern graduate students, Elizabeth (Lizzy) Howell (history) and İdil Özkan (anthropology) who participated in the school. We had a very intense program of activities that continued until 10PM daily. It was an exceptionally stimulating experience of learning, networking, and socializing for the junior scholars as well as their professors.



CST Summer School  
family photo

"At the CEST Summer School, I had the opportunity to present some of my dissertation research for the first time, meet graduate students and leading scholars in my field, and receive valuable feedback on my work. It was exciting to learn about new work on Turkey and the Balkans, and I hope to continue to connect with scholars in Europe in the future."

-Elizabeth Howell

"Thanks to the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies' kind and generous support, I attended an excellent summer school at Venice International University in Italy in the summer 2023. The program was exceptionally helpful for me to formulate a key chapter in my dissertation that ties together different scholarly nodes that my dissertation contributes to. Apart from bringing together scholars who work on similar themes across disciplines and providing an inviting environment for graduate students like me to discuss our doctoral projects, the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey (CEST) summer school was particularly beneficial for me to situate my research within a post-Ottoman lens of historical Jewish-Muslim connectivities."

-İdil Özkan

The Keyman team at San Servolo:  
Postdoctoral Marie Curie fellow Bilge Yabancı,  
professor Emily Greble (Vanderbilt University),  
director İpek Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu  
and Northwestern graduate students  
İdil Özkan, Elizabeth Howell.



# STAY CONNECTED

## PROVIDING AN INTERDISCIPLINARY UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY TURKEY IN CONNECTION WITH GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program was founded in 2005 at Northwestern University's Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, with a generous gift from Melih and Zeynep Keyman, and with continued essential support from additional donors. The Program promotes intellectual dialogue and scholarship to provide a deeper, interdisciplinary and critical understanding of contemporary Turkey in connection with global social processes, problems or conflicts.

### PROGRAM ACTIVITY:

- Organizes seminars and conferences on critical issues
- Funds research by Northwestern faculty, graduate and undergraduate students
- Offers Postdoctoral Fellowship, Visiting Professor and Visiting Scholar programs
- Supports undergraduate teaching on topics related to Turkey
- Facilitates study abroad and exchange programs in Turkey
- Funds the university library's acquisitions in the area of modern Turkish studies

The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program is situated within the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, allowing for important collaborations with a broad pool of global experts and practitioners on a range of topics.

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