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# KEYMAN MODERN TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM

2023-2024  
NEWSLETTER



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# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The past academic year was a challenging one for the American Academy. The charged atmosphere on campuses all over the country has stifled free speech, respect for differences, and the right to peaceful protest. That the leadership of several prestigious institutions failed to rise to the task of protecting their communities from political brinkmanship and their students and staff from harm—including physical harm, has been disheartening, leaving many to question the robustness of our institutions to weather adversity. But I am proud to add that our colleagues at Northwestern have responded in the best way that scholars can: by teaching, by answering questions, by accommodating differences, and by doing their best to show our students that we have their back, and we hear them.

Turkey is now situated between the two most dangerous global crises since the end of the Cold War that may yet spread further. Our program will continue its mission to foster scholarly debate and analyses to educate our campus and the public. But we also continue to support and showcase the scholarly and artistic work created in and by our region and people. The Keyman Program completed another academic year full of events and initiatives advancing this mission—and we had quite a few occasions to celebrate. As usual, you will find a digest of these in the following pages of the newsletter; but I will highlight a few starting with the most recent: a trip I took with my colleague and Keyman Faculty Board member, Professor Thadeus Dowad to Istanbul. Dr. Dowad led a group of first-year art history doctoral students learning about the art and architecture of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. Dr. Dowad and I also had a chance to attend two events organized by the Northwestern Club of Turkey and Northwestern's Development Office where we were also joined by Ceyda Avunduk, our program's new ambassador and volunteer developer. The events took place against the dreamy backdrop of Istanbul in all its late summer glory, and the energy at both places was riveting. Dr. Dowad and I talked about our program and our vision for the future, which we can only realize with the support of our community. I would like to express our gratitude to Fuat Pamukçu and the entire leadership team of the NU Club of Turkey. We also started preparations for next year's conference: this time we will meet in Istanbul, thanks to our collaboration with Sabancı University.

This academic year starts with the Şarık Tara Memorial lecture on October 2. Second in this series of annual events on themes related to Eastern and Southeastern Europe, this year's lecture will be delivered by Dr. Leyla Amzi Erdoğan of Rutgers University on her recently published monograph, *The Afterlife of Ottoman Europe*. On October 25-27, our Program will host the first conference of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, with the participation of more than seventy presenters and scores more attendees. Please follow us on our socials and consider registering for announcements on upcoming events.

Wishing you a wonderful new academic year,

**İpek Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu**

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## OUR PEOPLE



**İpek Yosmaoğlu**

Director of Keyman MTS,  
Director of OTSA, Associate  
Professor of History, Keyman  
MTS Faculty Board



**Alicen Collum**

Keyman MTS Program  
Coordinator



**Önder Eren Akgül**

2024-2026 Keyman MTS  
Postdoctoral Fellow



**Kenan Behzat  
Sharpe**

2023-2025 Keyman MTS  
Postdoctoral Fellow



**Roberto Mazza**

Keyman MTS Visiting Scholar



**Feyza Burak-Adli**

Postdoctoral Fellow in the  
Department of Anthropology,  
Keyman MTS Faculty Associate

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# FACULTY BOARD



**Thadeus Dowad**

Assistant Professor of Art History, Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Jeff Eden**

Assistant Professor in the Department of History, Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Bihter Esener**

College Fellow of Medieval Mediterranean and Islamic Art in the Department of Art History, Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Seda Öğrenci**

Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the Department of Computer Science, Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Wendy Pearlman**

Professor of Political Science, Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Özge Samancı**

Associate Professor in the School of Communication, Keyman MTS Faculty Board

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**Shayna Silverstein**

Assistant Professor of  
Performance Studies, Keyman  
MTS Faculty Board



**Lauren Stokes**

Assistant Professor of History,  
Keyman MTS Faculty Board



**Oya Topçuoğlu**

Assistant Professor of  
Instruction in the Middle East  
and North African Languages  
Program, Keyman MTS Faculty  
Board



**Emrah Yıldız**

Crown Junior Chair in Middle  
East Studies and Assistant  
Professor of Anthropology,  
Keyman MTS Faculty Board

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

- **Elizabeth Howell**, History
  - **Hevi Gökdemir**, Political Science
  - **Esra Çimencioğlu**, Radio, Television, Film
  - **Elif Buyukakbas**, Sociology
  - **İdil Özkan**, Anthropology
  - **Özge Karagöz**, Art History
  - **Şeyma Kabaoğlu**, Anthropology
  - **Ubeydullah Ademi**, Political Science
  - **Ulaş Erdoğan**, Political Science
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# ACTIVITIES

## NU Club of Turkey Alumni Event and Dinner

September 2024









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## Art History Department's Seminar in Istanbul

In September, the Art History Department's rising second-year PhD students completed a successful 2-week summer seminar in Istanbul. Supervised by Keyman faculty board member Prof. Thadeus Dowad (Art History) and co-organized with Keyman Director Prof. İpek K. Yosmaoğlu (History), the seminar introduced Northwestern students to Istanbul's art, architectural, and urban history, from the Byzantine period to today, including visits to significant historical sites, museums, and other cultural institutions across the city. Along the way, students met with local scholars, curators, and artists who offered their unique perspectives on the city's history, culture, and art collections. Highlights included two events organized in collaboration with Sabancı University: a seminar on the history of Ottoman typography and a roundtable with contemporary Turkish artists on the afterlives of Islamic miniature painting. Dowad and Yosmaoğlu would like to extend their special thanks to Prof. Meltem Müftüler-Baç, Prof. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, Prof. Günsel Renda, Prof. Onur Yazıcıgil, Prof. Ahu Antmen, Hülya Bilgi, Onur Hastürk, Cansu Çakar, and Seval Şener.





# EVENTS

## Israel, Palestine, and Turkey in the post Oct 7th Reality: A historical look toward the Future

**November 8, 2023**

Author of *Jews and Palestinians in the Late Ottoman Era 1908-1914, Claiming the Homeland* Louis A. Fishman, Brooklyn College, joined Keyman MTS and the Chabraja Center for Historical Studies for a talk titled "Israel, Palestine, and Turkey in the post Oct 7th Reality: A historical look toward the Future"

## Protest Music and Culture of Critique in Contemporary Turkey

**January 31, 2024**

What does protest music look and sound like in contemporary Turkey? How do we understand this contemporary conjuncture within the broader history of music, dissent and critique in the cultural history of protest music? Internationally renowned music producer, DJ and queer activist Ipek Ipekcioglu probed these questions in conversation with KMTS Postdoctoral Fellow, Kenan Sharpe.



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## Turkish Psychedelic Rock and the World 1960s

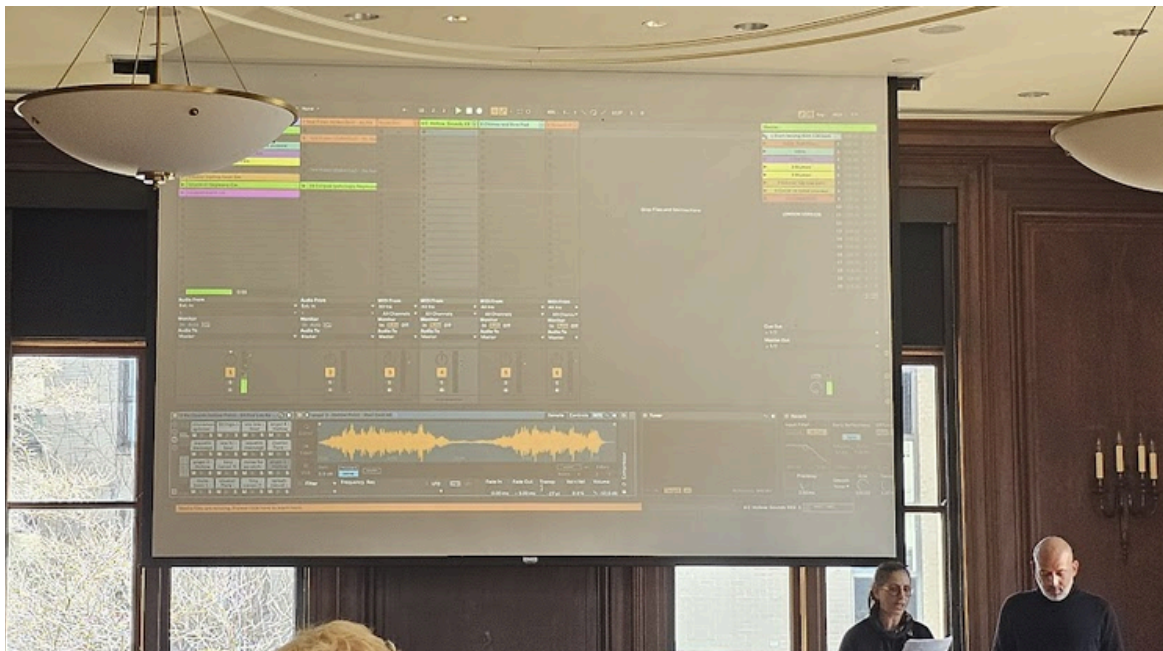
**February 28, 2024**

Postdoctoral Fellow Kenan Sharpe discusses the historical roots, musical underpinnings, and political implications of Anadolu Rock, as well as the reasons for its ongoing appeal today.

## Collective Feelings Across Languages in Transition

**March 6, 2024**

Internationally renowned music producer, DJ and queer activist Ipek Ipekcioglu presented a performative reading from Esther Dischereit's "Blumen für Otello – Flowers for Otello." pairing excerpts from Esther Dischereit's works, "Klagelieder" and "Flowers for Otello," with music she has composed in this multilingual presentation across languages in transition.



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## Swamps, Sediments, and Sandwich Terns: on the Moral Ecology of Turkish Wetlands and Seeds

**April 3, 2024**

Caterina Scaramelli's research asks how and why communities and individuals undertake projects of environmental stewardships, and the political stakes, effects, and multispecies entanglements of these projects. Her monograph, "How to Make a Wetland: Water and Moral Ecology in Turkey" was published by Stanford University Press in 2021.

## Trash-Talking Democracy: How Leaders Erode Their Democracies and How to Stop Them

**April 9, 2024**

Susan Stokes explores the effects of income inequality, partisan polarization, and loss of confidence in democratic institutions in encouraging erosion.



## Protest and Rock'n' Roll in Turkey

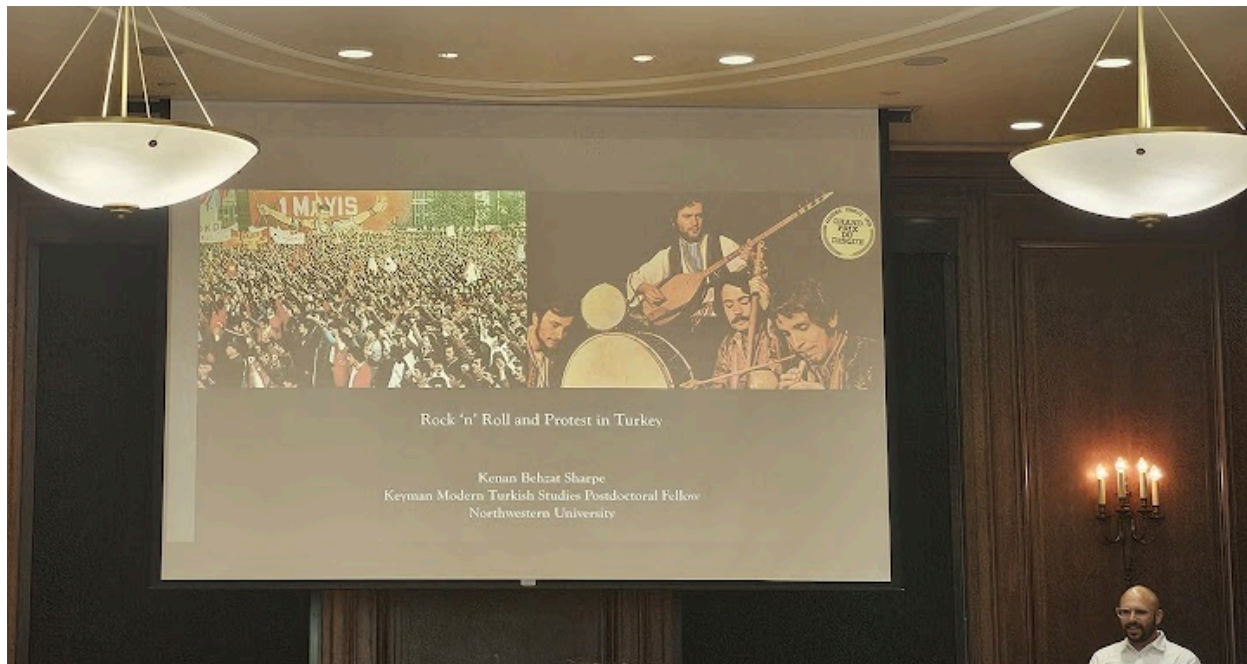
**May 1, 2024**

Looking at three key songs of the psychedelic protest rock genre, this talk with KMTS Postdoctoral Fellow Kenan Sharpe explores the relationship between popular music and social movements, global circuits of cultural exchange, and Turkey's place in the worldwide counterculture of the long 1960s.

## Dams as More-than- technical Infrastructures: Of Sediment and Techno- ecopolitics in the Çoruh Basin

**May 15, 2024**

Ekin Kurtiç offers an ethnographic examination of state-led nature restoration projects, namely Çoruh Watershed Rehabilitation Project conducted by foresters and villagers in the uplands to protect the dams from the detrimental impacts of soil sedimentation.







## 2024 Annual Conference Looking Turk-ish: A Modern Identity Reframed

May 31 - June 1, 2024

Each year, the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program convenes a conference around a chosen theme. This year's conference will be dedicated to the role of visual objects and technologies in the making of modern Turkish identity, and it will take place in Northwestern University's Evanston campus on May 31- June 1, 2024.

The conference aims to engage received understandings of modern Turkish identity by reappraising the images, objects, and visual technologies that contributed—and continue to contribute—to its production. This visual archive represents a dispersed and diverse collection ranging in medium and genre, from lens-based media like photography and film, to cartoons, maps, performances, advertisements, and fashion. The purpose of the conference is to analyze this archive to reframe Turkish identity as a visual artifact indissociable from the technologies and objects that produce it.

The conference is premised on the understanding of “Turkishness” as precarious, protean, and subject to resistance (hence the “-ish” of our title). The articulation of Turkish identity is inseparable from its dialectical emergence alongside other identities such as Armenian, Arab, Kurdish, Bulgarian, Greek, and Jewish, among other religious and ethnic identities of the post-Ottoman Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean.

These communal identities were directly implicated in the visual formation of hegemonic Turkish identity in Turkey. For Turkish diasporas in Europe, especially after the labor migrations starting with Germany's Gastarbeiter program in the 1960's followed by waves of political dissidents in exile, this dialectical relationship was also embedded in the racialized and often hostile context of “host” societies. Accordingly, the conference foregrounds visual culture's unique functions in mediating ethnic and religious differences, as well as its intersections with gender, sexuality, and ability in Turkey and its various diasporic communities.

The visual production of modern Turkish identity is both a historical and ongoing process. As such, the conference takes a wide historical frame, examining technologies and objects dating from the turn of the 20th century to the present. The conference's focus will be on Turkey, yet like “Turkishness” itself, we conceive of Turkey as a geographically and culturally flexible entity rather than a stable referent or bounded nation state. Because the visual archives of Turkish identity follow several diasporas and migrations, the conference hopes to include images and objects considered historically and geographically marginal to Turkish culture and society.

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## 2024 Article Workshop

The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program at Northwestern University's Buffett Institute of Global Affairs continues its series of virtual workshops to support early career scholars preparing an article for publication by a peer-reviewed journal. We invite applications from junior scholars working in all branches of the Social Sciences and Humanities on themes related to Turkey and its diasporas. The accepted papers will be grouped in two and matched with a pair of experts who will read the works and provide comments and suggestions for revisions at a virtual discussion forum organized by the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program. Scholars will be asked to submit their completed articles two weeks before the scheduled workshop date. Please note that incomplete or "rough" drafts will not be accepted; while the purpose of the workshop is to provide you with pre-submission feedback, your paper should be as close as possible to the version you would be submitting to a peer-reviewed journal.

Thank you to our 2024 participants! This year we had a cohort of 5 authors. We look forward to hearing news about their publications.

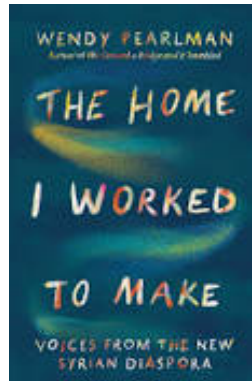
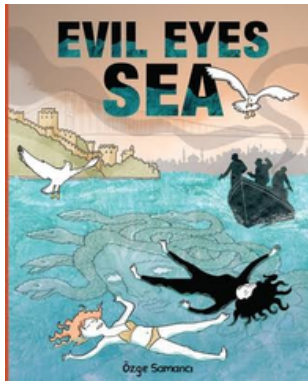
Anahit Kartashyan  
Ziya Kaya  
Ipek Sahinler  
Hazal Ozdemir  
Ovgu Ulgen

We would also 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.

Benjamin C. Fortna  
Samuel Dolbee  
Lerna Ekmekcioglu  
Leyla Neyzi  
Caterina Scaramelli

Ziya Kaya, 2024 Article Workshop participant, has been awarded the 2024 APLA (Association for Political and Legal Anthropology) Student Paper Prize, for the article she workshopped with us!

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

- Our 2022-2024 Postdoctoral Fellow Ekin Kurtiç has accepted a position at Cambridge University as an Assistant Professor in Development Studies at the Centre of Development Studies in the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS). Congratulations Ekin! She also has forthcoming book she co-edited "Material Politics in Turkey: Infrastructure, Science, and Expertise" coming out soon. More info on the books can be found here: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/material-politics-in-turkey-9780755647897/>
- During the 2023-2024 academic year, Keyman Faculty Board Member, Emrah Yıldız, has published his first monograph, *Zainab's Traffic: Moving Saints, Selves, and Others across Borders* (University of California Press, 2024), edited a special issue of the *Journal of Cultural Economy*, titled "kaçak | qaçax | قاچاق: Fugitive Forms of Bureaucracy and Economy across Southwest Asia (2024)." He edited a special *Gaziantep's Iranian Bazaar*, for which he wrote the introduction, and an article titled "Guaranteed Contraband." He published with the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* another research article, titled "Zainab's Traffic: Spatial lives of an Islamic ritual across Southwest Asia". He has also designed, raised the funds for, and supervised DJ İpek İpekcioglu's artist residency at Northwestern during the 2024 winter quarter, thanks to the generous sponsorship of six Northwestern academic units, including Keyman Modern Turkish Studies. Emrah has also received a Post-PhD Research Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research for his second long-term research project on regional lives of economic sanctions on Iran and contraband trade across the border with Turkey as a significant method of sanction mitigation, titled *Outsmarting Smart Sanctions: Currency, Mobility and Security between Iran and Turkey*. Yıldız will be spending the 2024-2025 academic year as the Global Horizons Junior Fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study to shape that second line of research into his second monograph.
- Thadeus Dowad's article, "Dāvūd Gūrcū, Ottoman-Egyptian Refugee & Girodet's First Mamluk Model" was published in the May issue of *The Burlington Magazine*. He also co-organized the Keyman's annual conference, "Looking Turk-ish: A Modern Identity Reframed," with Prof. İpek K. Yosmaoğlu and Dr. Hazal Özdemir. He looks forward to September when he'll supervise a two-week summer seminar in Istanbul for the Art History Department's rising second-year PhD students alongside Prof. Yosmaoğlu.
- Director İpek Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu was named Crown Professor of Middle East Studies by Weinberg College.



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- Wendy Pearlman has finished her first year as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal Perspectives on Politics as of June 2024. She also published her latest book "The Home I Worked to Make: Voices from the New Syrian Diaspora" in July 2024.
  - The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program would like to extend a very warm welcome to our newest 2024-2026 Postdoctoral Fellow, Önder Akgül!
  - Oya Topçuoğlu was invited by the Cornell University Language Resource Center to give a [talk about collaborative curriculum design in language instruction](#) as part of their Speaker Series. The talk was also the opening address of the Southeast Asian Language Council (SEALC)'s conference. She also recorded a podcast for the Language Resource Center, available [here](#).
  - Özge Samancı's second graphic novel "Evil Eyes Sea" was released on June 18th from Uncivilized Books. Reviews of the book have appeared in the New York Times Book Review, Publisher Weekly, BookList, and The Beat Magazine. Özge was invited to MoCCA (The Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art Festival) and she was a special guest at TCAF (Toronto Comics Art Festival). Özge had book events in Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Toronto, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Maddison. Özge's interactive art installation "You are the Ocean" was exhibited at the Ibrida Festival in Italy from Sept 19th to 22nd. This interactive installation allows participants to control a digitally simulated ocean using only their brainwaves.





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- Kenan Sharpe had a productive and enjoyable first year as a Keyman postdoctoral fellow! He was able to visit Turkey twice, where he did archival research on popular music magazines from the 1960s-1970s in the state archives. He also interviewed musicians from the period and collected rare records. He also had the chance to travel widely in North America to present at conferences. He represented KMTS at the University of Chicago, the University of Southern California, and the annual conference of the American Comparative Literature Association in Montreal. He also gave two presentations on his ongoing book project here at Northwestern besides presenting at the annual Keyman conference.
  - Hazal Özdemir defended her dissertation in May and we are so proud of her! She also co-organized the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies 2024 Annual Conference with Thadeus Dowad, earned the History Department's Lacey Baldwin Smith Prize for Teaching Excellence, awarded to the best TA of the year, and topped it all off with two post-doctoral fellow offers, the Manoogian Fellow in Armenian Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and the Laureate Postdoctoral Fellow in History & Population at the University of New South Wales, Sydney.
  - Ulaş Erdoğan has published "Democratization, Foreign Military Intervention, and Rebel Fragmentation in Civil War: Evidence from the PKK Insurgency in Turkey" in the Journal of Global Security Studies.



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## STUDENT EXPERIENCES

- “This past summer, I had the privilege of studying abroad at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, Turkey, an opportunity that was made possible through the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program. Having been introduced to the program by Professor Oya Topçuoğlu, whose class on “Foodways of Turkey” deeply influenced my interests in Turkey, I was excited to explore the connections between Turkish food, culture, and history. Professor Topçuoğlu’s course highlighted how food in Turkey is intertwined with issues of power, gender, economics, the environment, and global popular culture. Experiencing Turkey firsthand allowed me to see these connections in real life. I had the opportunity to not only study at a highly acclaimed university but also to engage with the culture through local interactions, visiting historical sites, and, most memorably, tasting the foods we had discussed in class. This was my first time visiting Turkey, and it was transformative for both my academic and personal development. As a history major concentrating on the Middle East and Asia, this experience helped me understand the diverse historical narratives that have shaped the region, particularly the various ethnic and religious groups that inhabited Anatolia for centuries. On a personal level, it also expanded my worldview, teaching me to appreciate the diversity and complexity of Turkish society. I am incredibly grateful for the support of the Keyman Program, which made this special experience possible. Studying abroad in Istanbul has not only supplemented my studies but also broadened my understanding of Turkey in ways that will stay with me throughout my academic journey and beyond.” - Daniel Kim, Northwestern Undergraduate Student





## STAY CONNECTED!

### Upcoming Events:

[10/25/2024-10-27/2024](#)  
OTSA 2024 Conference

[10/30/2024](#)  
Book Launch Event: Zainab's Traffic with  
Emrah Yıldız

### Social Media Accounts:



@KEYMANMTS



@KEYMANMODERN  
TURKISHSTUDIES4134



@KEYMANMTS



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TURKISH STUDIES PROGRAM

The Keyman Modern Turkish Studies at Northwestern University's Buffett Institute of Global Affairs promotes intellectual dialogue and scholarship to provide a deeper, interdisciplinary, and critical understanding of contemporary Turkey in connection with global social processes, problems or conflict. Part of this mission is to raise awareness about literature and fine arts from Turkey and its diasporas.

The Program funds two postdoctoral fellows annually, provides research support to graduate and undergraduate students studying in Turkey, and promotes Turkish language acquisition. It also hosts visiting scholars, professors and postdoctoral fellows. Its programming and other activities are overseen by an interdisciplinary a faculty board. It consults with student affiliates for new initiatives and works closely with partner programs at Northwestern. It also has several global connections with other institutions of Turkish Studies including the Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey.

The Keyman family's gift also supports Northwestern library's acquisitions in modern Turkish studies.

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*Thank you for reading!*