



Contemporary  
**Turkish** Studies

## ENCOUNTERING THE PAST IN TURKEY

11-12-13 May 2015, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

In the past ten years something unexpected, but long overdue, started to unfold in Turkey. A new interest in history emerged in a country that had erased its Ottoman past. More surprising, the most traumatic aspects of Turkish history, especially those that were considered taboo, or simply denied until recently, became issues of public debate. Even though still a minority, citizens of diverse backgrounds have begun commemorating the Armenian Genocide, the Dersim and Maraş massacres, the Wealth Tax, and expulsions of Greeks. At the face of an official policy of denial, increasing number of activists, artists, scholars, and citizens demand a deeper understanding and recognition of past atrocities in order to atone and seek justice.

This 3-days conference explores how, why, under what conditions, and among which groups did willingness to confront the Armenian Genocide and other violent episodes Turkish history came into being. What kinds of strategies are used by different groups to promote coming to terms with the past as well as avoiding it? What transformative power can we expect from this numerically limited but strongly articulated movement? What are the implications of encountering the past for contemporary dynamics in Turkey? By doing so, it is hoped that the conference will contribute to promoting acts of reconciliation that have begun in Turkey.

### CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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**Monday, 11 May 2015**

**Venue: Room STC. S75, Ground Floor, St. Clements Building, LSE**

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**18:00 – 20:00**

#### **Opening Panel**

##### **Paper Titles and Speakers**

***“Violence, Survival, Sovereignty”***

**Marc Nichanian**, Visiting Professor, Sabancı University, İstanbul

***“The Impact of Refusal to Encounter the Past on Turkish State and Society”***

**Fatma Müge Göçek**, Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies, University of Michigan

***“Palimpsestic Memory: The Holocaust and Colonialism in the Cultural Imaginary”***

**Max Silverman**, Professor of French, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds

**Moderator: Esra Özyürek**, Associate Professor, Chair for Contemporary Turkish Studies, European Institute, LSE

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**Tuesday, 12 May 2015**

**Venue: Graham Wallace Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Old Building, LSE**

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**10:00 – 12:30**

**Panel I**

**Paper Titles and Speakers**

***“Lost in Translation: The Monument’s Demolishing”***

**Ayda Erbal**, Adjunct Professor and PhD Candidate, Department of Politics, New York University

***“Change and Continuity in the Politics of Denial: A Comparative Look at Reconciliation Discourses in Turkey”***

**Bilgin Ayata**, Department of Political Science, Center for Transnational Relations, Foreign and Security Policy, Freie Universität Berlin

***“Commemoration and Denial: Holocaust and Armenian Genocide in Public Memory in Turkey”***

**Corry Guttstadt**, Lecturer for Turkish Studies, Hamburg University, Germany

***“Limits of Liberal Multiculturalism: Neo-Ottomanism, Humanism, Branding the Nation and Civilization in Contemporary Turkey”***

**Aşlı Iğsız**, Assistant Professor of Culture and Representation, Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, New York University

**Moderator: Marc David Baer**, Professor of International History, Department of International History, LSE

**12:30 – 14:00**

**Lunch**

**14:00 – 16:00**

**Panel II**

**Paper Titles and Speakers**

***“Re-Making Life between the Weight of the Past and Void of Future: Ethnographic Explorations on Daily Encounters between the Cow, Villager and Returnee in a Ghost Village of Midyat, Turkey”***

**Zerrin Özlem Biner**, Research Associate, Division of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge

***“Moral Domains of Return”***

**Ceren Özgül**, Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

***“Debt of the Dead: Hunting for Treasures in what was Once Also Western Armenia”***

**Alice von Bieberstein**, Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Cambridge

**Moderator: Hakan Seçkinelgin**, Associate Professor, Department of Social Policy, LSE

**16:00 – 16:30**                      **Coffee Break**

**16:30 – 19:00**                      **Panel III**

**Paper Titles and Speakers**

***“Spaces of Education, States of Ruination and Survival”***

**Ayşe Parla**, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Sabancı University, İstanbul

***“Narratives of Survival: Gender, Memory and the Armenian Genocide”***

**Ayşe Gül Altınay**, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University, İstanbul

***“Landscapes of Memory and Forgetting: Facing the Armenian Genocide in 2015”***

**Sossie Kasbarian**, Lecturer in Middle East Politics, University of Lancaster

***“Cutting Manhood: A Phallic Genealogy for the Turkish State Sovereignty across Two Fin-de-siècles”***

**Serap Ruken Şengül**, Manoogian Post-Doctoral Fellow, Armenian Studies Programme, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

**Moderator: Esra Özyürek**, Associate Professor, Chair for Contemporary Turkish Studies, European Institute, LSE

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**Wednesday, 13 May 2015**

**Venue: Room STC.S221, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, St. Clements Building, LSE**

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**09:30 – 12:00**                      **Panel I**

**Paper Titles and Speakers**

***“Bûka Baranê (Bride of the Rain): A Documentary about the 90’s Truth Telling in Divided Societies”***

**Murat Çelikkhan**, Co-Director of Truth Justice Memory Center in İstanbul

***“Yüzleşme from a Psycho-Political Perspective”***

**Murat Paker**, Department of Psychology, İstanbul Bilgi University

***“Encountering the Past in Turkey: A Personal Reflection on Two Decades of Research and Experience”***

**Leyla Neyzi**, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University, İstanbul

***“Encountering National Histories, Encountering Global Histories: Turkey,***

*Armenia and the First World War Centenary”*

Joanne Laycock, Senior Lecturer in Modern History, Sheffield Hallam University

**Moderator:** Armine Ishkanian, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Policy, LSE

**12:00 – 12:30**

**Coffee Break**

**12:30 – 13:15**

**Final Discussion**

**This event is free and open to all. No ticket is required.**

For further information about the LSE Contemporary Turkish Studies and its seminars and other activities, please contact:

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