

Activities - Voyvoda Street Lectures 2007-2008

A. POLITICAL ECONOMY LECTURES

First Wednesday of each month, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. the theme this season is, "Understanding New Turkey."

● **November 3, 2007** - Taha Erdem

"New" Turkey's Variables

In the first part of the conference that will constitute the basis for this season's lecture series on the theme "Understanding 'New' Turkey," Tarhan Erdem delivers a lecture entitled "'New' Turkey's Variables." With the last 20 years as a frame of reference, Erdem will consider what has changed in Turkey and whether the topic under investigation is history, our everyday life, or the future. He will also convey his opinions on the isolation and strength of those who resist change, as well as on the dynamics of change and its actors/players. In addition, Erdem will address the race for globalization and the challenge of climate change. In the second half of the conference, there will be a panel discussion with panelists Dr. Mahfi Egilmez and Prof. Fuat Keyman.

● **October 3, 2007** - Prof. Ali Carkoglu

Elections 2007: Ongoing Trends and New Beginnings

Stressing the emerging trends of recent elections, the lecture attempts to define what made this last election different from previous ones. Prof. Ali Carkoglu reveals both the divergences and common aspects reflected in the cultural, ideological and political choices of AKP, CHP and MHP voters.

● **December 5, 2007** - Prof. Arus Yumul

Old Issues in New Turkey

The lecture concentrates on the formations, ideas and relationships that the new world order has brought about and on the old issues that now appear more salient while considering as well the old/new solutions suggested for these problems.

● **January 2, 2008** - Prof. Nilufer Gole

Old Europe - New Turkey: Memory, Gender, Space

To understand 'new' Turkey, it is necessary to look at conflictual encounters and unexpected hybridizations with Europe. The lecture examines how 'new' Turkey has transformed European identity in terms of memory, gender and space.

● **February 6, 2008** - Assoc. Prof. Murat Somer

Identity, Secularism and Democracy in Changing Turkey

Now that through symbols like the veil or the headscarf, the political and social center is becoming increasingly conservative, how and why will this influence secularism and modernization? Can the rise of ethnic nationalism be prevented? The answers to these questions can be sought on two levels: first, the issue of secularism is better understood when taking into account the worldwide rise in religious conservatism, changing religion-state-society relationships, and Turkey's integration with the rest of the world. Secondly, to achieve a more democratic modernization that safeguards secularism and national unity, ethnic and cultural identity issues have to be viewed from a different angle, and politicians must be able to come up with new social projects. Using concrete data and examples from Turkey and the world, the lecture addresses these notions with reference to the EU, democratization and Turkey's new constitution controversy.

● **March 5, 2008** - Prof. Fulya Atacan

Social Change and Religious Groups in Turkey

With the modernization that followed World War II, self sustainable village community life began to disintegrate. New technologies, products and market-oriented production made much of the rural labor force redundant, which in turn resulted in migration flows from rural areas into big cities. In the structural transformation that ensued, the people moving out from the country into large urban areas did not immediately renounce their own value systems, forms of faith expression or religious organizations, instead they carried these values, beliefs and organizations with them to the cities. Using a Naksibendi group as a case in point, the lecture focuses on the way religious groups recreated their Islamic organization in the cities during the migration process, and on how the changes occurring in the cities reflected back on and transformed the value systems of those still living in rural areas.

B. ISTANBUL LECTURES

Second Wednesday of each month, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. discussions on "Everyday Lifestyle Culture in Istanbul."

● **October 10, 2007** - Gonul Pultar

From Imperial Capital to Global City: Change and Transformation in Istanbul's Lifestyle

As capital of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul's lifestyle culture witnessed changes that paralleled the westernization movement of its last centuries. The greatest transformation, however, occurred because of events in the 20th century. The foundation of the republic deprived Istanbul of some of its functions and attributes. At the same time, the country's drive towards industrialization transformed the city into a different kind of capital, making it a new center of attraction and initiating a change in its lifestyle culture. Gonul Pultar discusses what phase of this transformation we are in today, and what kind of lifestyle culture exists currently in Istanbul now that it is allegedly being 'revamped' as a 'global' city. The lecture examines the areas that have undergone radical changes in this field, from Ottoman times to our day, and attempts to evaluate the lifestyle culture of Istanbul at the beginning of the 21st century.

● **December 12, 2007** - Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Kagar

The Sultan's Nameless Heroes

Research on the scientific, technological and cultural activities of those foreigners (*muhtedi*) who became Ottoman citizens and converted to Islam and on their contributions to the Ottoman state is difficult due to the nature of the topic itself; such scholarship is therefore very limited. The *muhtedi* issue is probably one of the least known aspects of Ottoman history so that any remarks in this area should be taken merely as a form of appraisal. Using as its starting point the example of a European at the service of the Ottoman state around the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, the lecture offers a perspective on a tiny section of the matter. Rather than simply presenting the biography of a *muhtedi*, Prof. Kagar examines the relationships between Europeans, converted foreigners and Muslims within the period's scientific and cultural sphere. By considering the aforesaid populations' approach to science and industry, the tendencies of the period, the obstacles thwarting the advance of progress, and the conduct of the administrators, the lecture will present an analysis of the positive or negative dispositions of the Ottoman state.

● **January 9, 2008** - Necdet Sakaoglu

School Life from Elementary to House of Sciences (Darulfunun)

From the *Sehzadegan Mektebi* (the school for imperial princes) in the palace to the neighborhood primary school, a ceremonial tradition accompanied every stage of school life and education in Istanbul. Examinations and graduations; different school uniforms for different scholastic levels; school books and school log books; personal awards, certificates of achievement, excellence awards; sanctions; categories of teachers; types of schools, the *tas mektep* (stone schoolhouse), *valide mektebi* (school founded by the *valide sultan* or mother of the sultan), the *numune mektebi* (model school), and reformatories... The lecture explores all the above, gives examples of different schools in Ottoman Istanbul and focuses on their impact on character formation and cultural development.

● **February 13, 2008** - Assoc. Prof. Yesim Ulman

The Galatasaray Imperial School of Medicine (1839-1848)

The Galatasaray Imperial School of Medicine was an educational institution that perfectly reflected modernization trends in the Ottoman Empire. After undergoing radical reforms between 1839 and 1848 it had moved into its renovated premises in the Galata district, where it would remain until the great fire of 1948. The School of Medicine (*Mekteb-i Tibbiye*) prepared annual reports of its activities, which it presented to the Sultan at the end of each academic year during graduation ceremonies. These reports constitute first hand sources related to that period and contain abundant information about the institution. The School of Medicine was not only an educational establishment; it also provided a structure for state decision-making and implementation on health issues. In time, as the prestige of the school grew and greater numbers of parents wished to enroll their children there, its fame as a leading educational institution traveled beyond national borders. The lecture will offer a glimpse into various aspects - educational, medical, historical, and administrative - of this famous school known more simply as *Galatasaray Tibbiyesi*.

● **March 12, 2008** - Assoc. Prof. Zeynep Tarim Ertug

A Door Open to the People: The Palace Kitchen

In addition to catering to the entire palace household, the Ottoman Imperial Kitchen also cooked meals for state dignitaries and even the people of Istanbul. Among other topics, the lecture describes the different sections of the imperial kitchens, the cooking implements used and how they were obtained, the amount of food served a-day, to whom it was served and in which quantities.

C. ENLIGHTENMENT LECTURES

Third Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. "The Role of the Enlightenment in Shaping Political Thought and Art in Turkey"

● **October 3, 2007** - Prof. Binnaz Toprak

Enlightenment and Religion

Addressing the Turkish enlightenment's understanding of secularism, the lecture focuses on the model that was applied in the early years of the Republic, the evolution of secularism over time, and the consequent secular-Islamist tension that ensued. From the 1970s on, as the Islamists acquired better organization in the political arena, this tension increased leading to a transformation of Islamist parties and their staff. Basing her talk on these changes, and the results of public opinion surveys, Toprak investigates current Turkish popular opinion on questions of religion and secularism.

● **November 21, 2007** - Prof. Mete Tuncay

Enlightenment, Ethics and Morals

The Enlightenment developed in the 18th century in France, Scotland and Germany where it led to a questioning of every kind of authority. The movement stressed empiricism in science and created new concepts in the field of political theory through its critical approach. The lecture highlights the views of the political philosophers of the Enlightenment on the boundaries between ethics and morals.

● **January 16, 2008** - Prof. Fusun Ustel

The Enlightenment from an "Educational" Viewpoint

The modernization of the educational system witnessed in the second half of the 19th century, led both to an increase in the rate of scholarization and to the heightening of the controversy surrounding the required attributes of schooling. This in turn, made the "School" an important institution in the enlightenment discourses of the populations of the Ottoman Empire. Examining educational movements overlooked by mainstream collections on the history of education in the Ottoman Empire, the lecture evaluates them in terms of their contribution to the creation of the modern individual and the process of nation-state building.

● **February 20, 2008** - Prof. Murat Guvenc

The Enlightenment and the City: Towards New Conceptualizations

The social, spatial and administrative structures of the modern city were shaped by an accumulation of processes and interactions within the singular, routine and ordinary rhythms of everyday life. In the late Middle Ages, different factors brought about changes in housing, work and consumption patterns; the pace of everyday living; demography, urban hygiene, health, leisure, and tourism; political, social and cultural awareness; and the understanding of risk and causality. The foundations of the world as we know it today evolved over the course of this process. Guvenc investigates these transformations complementing his lecture with visual materials.

● **March 19, 2008** - Prof. Galip Yalman

Political Economy from the Enlightenment to our Day

When it appeared in 1776, Adam Smith's classic *The Wealth of Nations* represented the first comprehensive defense of the advantages of a free market, and the social order he advocated was offered as an alternative to mercantilism. In light of the evolution his ideas have undergone since then and the critiques directed towards his economic theory, the lecture examines the stance taken by contemporary political economy models towards the social, political and economic issues that emerge in our current global system, in a 'free market' that allows the free flow of capital across the borders.

D. OBJECTS AND RITUALS

Fourth Wednesday of each month, 6:30-8:30 p.m. "The involvement of art in everyday life and the interaction of culture with perceived reality".

● **October 24, 2007** - Metin Gokgay

Excavation of the Port of Theodosios/Portus Theodosiacus

Archaeological excavations to dig up the ancient port on the south side of the seven hills of former Constantinople began on 27/11/2004 and are still in progress today. The dig, which currently involves a team of some 500 people and stretches over a 58,000-m² site, has produced findings that contribute significantly to Istanbul's archaeology. Discoveries include the earliest known city wall of Constantinople - considered one of the most important archaeological finds from that period - and a number of architectural findings from various epochs, as well as 26 sunken ships. So far, excavations have yielded Neolithic artifacts unearthed for the first time from Istanbul's historic peninsula, a wide variety of architectural remains, from a 13th century church to 19th century Ottoman warehouses, and over 10,000 priceless ancient artifacts. Ongoing excavation efforts are bringing to light a major part of Istanbul's 8,000-year history.

● **November 28, 2007** - Vera Bulgurlu

11th Century Byzantine Administration as revealed in Lead Seals

The lecture describes how Byzantine lead seals were made and where they were used. The popularity of these seals, which were in use from the 6th century to the final years of the Byzantine Empire, reached its peak in the 11th century. There are close to 70,000 such lead seals in known collections today but, although most originate from Turkey, very little is known about them in this country. Comparable to today's 'business' or 'calling cards,' these fascinating objects provide information unavailable even in written sources. Illustrating her lecture with a selection of lead seals, Bulgurlu examines state administration in Byzantium and the various positions and titles that existed in the palace, the army and in monasteries.

● **December 26, 2007** - Assoc. Prof. Taciser Sivas

Phrygian Traces left over from the Phrygian Valley to our Day: the Mystery of Phrygian Rock-Cut Monuments

Between 900 B.C. and 700 B.C., ancient Phrygia was a powerful Iron Age kingdom that left its mark on Anatolia's socio-political history in the first millennium B.C. Even after the Phrygians disappeared from the historical scene, vestiges of the great culture they had produced retained their influence virtually throughout the classical age. Their greatest sociopolitical impact was in the mountainous region popularly known as the Phrygian Valley, which stretched from the Upper Sakarya Valley to Eskigehir, Afyonkarahisar and Kutahya. Ever since prehistoric times, the area's geographical makeup, which facilitated well-protected dwellings, the presence of vital water sources feeding the alluvium-filled valleys and large plains, and its vineyards, orchards and fields encouraged people to settle in the region. From the 8th century B.C. to the first half of the 6th century B.C., numerous Phrygian fortresses were built in the valleys of the mountainous Phrygian area while Phrygian settlements appeared in the rich alluvial plains. Rock-cut monuments and other smaller shrines best express the deep veneration the Phrygians felt for *mater/matar* Kybele, the Great Mother Goddess who symbolized nature in all its vibrancy. These rock-cut religious monuments - fagades, altars and niches carved into the main rock - are concrete evidence of the existence of authentic Phrygian cult practices.

● **January 23, 2008** - Assoc. Prof. Yelda Olcay Ugkan

Olympus: A Town from the Middle Ages on the Mediterranean Coast

In recent years, the ancient city of Olympus, renowned for its rich history and the natural beauty of its site, has become a favorite vacation and leisure spot for young people. Located in southeastern Anatolia, about 80 kms. from Antalya, in the ancient region of Lycia, Olympus's history can be traced back to Hellenistic times. The geographical configuration of the area forced the city to spread between the mountain ranges into the valley and from the beginning of the second century B.C., because of its well-protected natural harbor, it became an important Lycean port town. The link that exists between Olympus and the first known Lycean bishops attests to the early roots of Christianity. Recent research has revealed settlement traces that prove the continuing life of the city from late antiquity through the Middle Ages. It appears that medieval construction was largely focused on religious buildings and the private dwellings and public edifices in their vicinity. In all likelihood, these construction groupings, built like inner city monasteries, surrounded by tall walls with separate interior units, conformed to an architectural approach ruled by security concerns, whose roots go back to late antiquity.

● **February 27, 2008** - Prof. Haluk Abbasoglu

Latest Findings from Ancient Pamphylia's Great City Perge

Situated 18 km east of modern Antalya, Perge, one of the chief cities of ancient Pamphylia, is the site of the oldest and longest-lasting excavation undertaken by Turkish archaeologists in this country. The dig that Prof. Arif Mufid Mansel directed between 1946 and 1974, and which Prof. Jale Inan took over until 1987, concentrated mainly on the city's splendid edifices left from the Roman period. From 1988 on, Prof. Haluk Abbasoglu took charge of the preservation and restoration efforts and excavations were mainly aimed at two issues. After the border city Parha, mentioned on a bronze tablet found in the Hittite capital Hattuga, was established as Perge, the primary aim became to investigate the city's pre Roman period. In this context, work on the Acropolis led to the discovery of findings dating back to the Chalcolithic period. The second project focused on dwellings and cemeteries in order to shed light on everyday reality and social life in antiquity. It was established that dwellings perpetuated the traditional Hellenistic house plans and remained in use for many years. In addition to magnificent funerary monuments, the excavations carried out systematically since 1994 on the city's Western Necropolis have uncovered numerous different kinds of graves and richly decorated sarcophagi. The lecture assesses the results of recent research and findings.

● **March 26, 2008** - Prof. Sait Basaran

A Principality in Thrace: the Antique City of Ainos

Known as "Aenus" in antiquity, Ainos was founded on the southeastern coast of Thrace near the mouth of the Hebrus River (the modern Merig River). The site has remained inhabited without interruption from the Neolithic period to our day. Its large inner port protected by towers, the 25 meter high fortress walls, its 2,500 year-old wine cellars carved into the rock of the fortress, the remains of splendid houses and streets, tumulus and funerary monuments from Roman times, and the vestiges of church, chapel, public baths and caravanserai from the Byzantine period make it the most important city of ancient Thrace.