

Modernity's Other: Nostalgia for Village Life in Turkey

A lecture with Dr. Nathan Young, Ohio State University

Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 07:00 PM Istanbul (UTC+3)

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvcuurpjwjGNNcYN2NFHf9qEk_9IGhMdDg

Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Izmir and Ankara, *Modernity's Other: Nostalgia for Village Life in Turkey*, demonstrates how sentiments for small-scale, rural lifeways continue to shape Turkish identity and national formation. Applying current ideas from nostalgia theory, I analyze the significance of rural nostalgia from the nation's founding to its present, where it manifests in advertising, media entertainment, and politics. I contend that the durability of rural nostalgia illustrates and interprets the connection many Turks maintain with their agrarian hometowns despite the rapid influx to urban spaces. Additionally, I claim that such nostalgias reveal essentialized notions of Turkish identity, frameworks of moral-social expectations, and definitions of an idyllic "good life." Funded by a Fulbright-Hays DDRA and additional grants, ethnographic fieldwork included over hundred, twenty semi-situated interviews at a variety of location in the vicinities of Izmir and Ankara (2018-2019).



Nathan Young began researching Turkey's rural-to-urban dynamics while completing a master's degree in Turkish Folklore at Ege University (2014). His subsequent thesis investigated occupational changes in four villages in the Izmir province. He continued graduate studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the Ohio State University, earning his PhD in 2020. For his doctoral dissertation, he examined the ongoing significance of "village" and "villager" within Turkish imaginaries. His next research project will consider the various discourses surrounding Turkey's centennial in 2023. He currently serves as a lecturer at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.