



ARIT NEWSLETTER



American Research Institute in Turkey

DECEMBER 2024

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I am happy to announce that this year ARIT won a four-year US Education American Overseas Research Centers grant to support operations, a 2024-2025 US State Educational and Cultural Affairs grant through the Council of American overseas Research Centers ([CAORC](#)) for the US fellowship program, and US Education Group Projects Abroad award to support the 2025 Turkish language program at Boğaziçi University. We are waiting to hear about one more three-year grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for long term advanced research fellowships, We are grateful to these US agencies for their generous support.

For private funding, we thank the Fotos family for conveying the bequest that will support research fellowships for Turkish and non-US citizens. ARIT has begun to make awards in honor of Evan and Leman Fotos. Also supporting the research of Turkish fellows, this time at institutions within Türkiye, is ARIT's new fellowship fund in honor of the late Dr. İhsan Çetin, husband of former Ankara Director Toni Cross. ARIT welcomes welcomes contributions to the Çetin/Cross fund as well as to the Toni M. Cross Fund. We are grateful to the Joukowsky Family Foundation for supporting 2025 fellowships in honor of John Freely, Bob Ousterhout, and Brian Rose. Finally, we thank the Merops Foundation for its support of fellowships in honor of George M. A. and Ilse B. Hanfmann, and Machteld J. Mellink.

We also owe thanks to ARIT's member institutions whose fees cover operating expenses that are not supported by federal funds and last but not least, to the individual donors who do much to keep ARIT running. Every gift is appreciated, no matter the amount.

This funding supports two centers in Türkiye, whose expanded facilities house libraries and meeting spaces, as well as their small staffs. I wrote last year that I hoped these spaces would accommodate gatherings of students and researchers. The Istanbul office hosts a regular meeting of past Turkish fellows, sponsored by the Dernek as well as the orientation activities for the ARIT language program fellows. ARIT in Ankara offers in-house hybrid lectures and dedicated study spaces. Both Directors assist visiting researchers and projects to secure permits and visas, access research resources, interface with Turkish officialdom, connect with local colleagues, and arrange housing and travel. If you travel to Istanbul or Ankara, I hope you will visit the ARIT centers.

The lectures and conferences of the past year are listed here on page four. They focus on the archaeology of periods from the Bronze age to the Byzantine era, and on Anatolia and the Ottoman Empire. ARIT also thanks local collaborating institutions in Istanbul and Ankara. Together with the Koç University Mustafa V. Koç Maritime Archaeology Research Center ([KUDAR](#)) and the [Institute of Nautical Archaeology](#), ARIT cosponsored seminars focused on maritime archaeology and heritage.

Noteworthy was "Nurturing Byzantium, Growth, Change, Vibrance: A Symposium Dedicated to the Memory of Robert G. Ousterhout (1950-2023)." Hosted by the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations ([ANAMED](#)) and cosponsored with the Dumbarton Oaks and ARIT, this event celebrated longtime ARIT scholar and friend Dr. Bob Ousterhout, a prolific writer, and caring friend and mentor whose ground-breaking publications significantly influenced the field of Byzantine studies.

"Dreams of Tsargrad," a symposium on "Constantinople and the Black Sea in the Imperial Russian Imagination" was held at the [Swedish Research Institute](#) in Istanbul and co-sponsored ARIT and the [Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes](#). With ANAMED. and the Türk Amerikan İlmî Araştırmaları Derneği in Istanbul, ARIT cosponsored "Zafer Toprak'ın Dostlarından Disiplinlerarası Yaklaşımlar," a conference honoring Ottoman historian and former Istanbul Dernek President Professor Zafer Toprak.

The international project for conservation of the [Ferikoy Protestant Cemetery](#) and its monuments in Istanbul, is largely complete. Further work depends on new funding. The project to digitize the [archive](#) of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions goes forward as resources permit. The development of the "Red List for Turkish Cultural Objects at Risk" is in progress with the support of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara.

Linda T. Darling, President

ARIT-ISTANBUL NEWS

This has been a dynamic and productive year at ARIT Istanbul with our projects and programs resuming in full speed thanks to the efforts of the ARIT Istanbul staff, volunteers, interns, fellows and our partner institutions and colleagues.

Cataloguing and digitization of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) Archives continued on thanks to Mary Berkmen and Anthony Greenwood, both of whom spent many hours throughout the year. Over the summer Hillsdale College interns assisted to the project, Alexandra Laird catalogued correspondence from the ABCFM's mission stations in Türkiye as well as reports, administrative and financial documents from the organization's headquarters in Istanbul whereas Lydia Magyar operated a high-performance, large-format scanner to digitize the material at hand.

While Alexandra and Lydia were busy at SALT Research, their peers Luka Stanic and Brian Knewton were occupied with other projects in Istanbul. Luka spent the summer at the ARIT Annex Office to catalogue the ARIT archive, consisting mainly of reports and administrative documents, as well as the scholarly archive bequeathed to ARIT by the Byzantine scholar Kenneth Snipes. Brian, on the other hand, was at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery retaking photographs, documenting missing graves, resolving outstanding questions from the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative's documentation and recording project. We are grateful for their diligent work conducted under the supervision of Brian Johnson and colleagues at SALT Research, Lorans Tanatar Baruh and Sinem Gülmez, and would like to extend our thanks to Charles Yost for arranging the internship program.

As in previous years, we were delighted to welcome the 2024 cohort of ARIT Turkish Language Fellows to Istanbul in June. Our traditional welcome dinner at Fıccın had a special guest this year. ARIT president Linda Darling joined us along with another well known colleague at ARIT, Fariba Zarinebaf (figure 1). The merry evening was followed by an orientation session and Turkish language testing at the Annex Office the next day. Fellows had a packed schedule with intense Turkish language classes as well as multiple cultural activities organized by ARIT and Boğaziçi University (BU), about which Sylvia Önder gives a detailed report in a following section. When the program reached an end in August, we gathered

one last time for a farewell dinner in Beyoğlu. We thank the BU faculty and teaching assistants for another wonderful program and look forward to welcoming the new cohort to Istanbul in June 2025.

We ended the summer on a very high note with the finalization of the gift of Drs. Evan and Leman Yolaç Fotos to ARIT. Two of ARIT's most loyal supporters, Evan and Leman Fotos made a generous donation to create an endowment fund to support fellowships for advanced research in Türkiye. We are grateful to Robert Pollock, Bahar Yolaç Pollock, and Onur Ülgen for their help and patience in finalizing the gift.

This year the Hanfmann-Mellink Fellowship Committee found four projects worthy to be supported. The Dernek Fellowship Program also received strong applications and the committee awarded five doctoral research fellowships. A detailed list can be found below with information on the fellows of both programs and their research projects. We congratulate all the recipients and wish them success in their academic endeavors.

With the untimely death of Zafer Toprak last year, Alan Duben took up the role of president of Türk Amerikan İlmi Araştırmalar Derneği. At the first Dernek board meeting, it was decided that a fellowship and a conference in memory of Zafer Toprak would be arranged. The conference was held on the first anniversary of Zafer Toprak passing away (June 3rd, 2024) with the participation of Alan Duben, Binnaz Toprak, François Georgeon, Çağlar Keyder, Edhem Eldem, Selçuk Esenbel and



Figure 1. ARIT Turkish Language fellows at the welcome dinner with ARIT President Linda Darling and historian Fariba Zarinebaf



Figure 2. Binnaz Toprak and Alan Duben speaking at the Zafer Toprak Memorial Conference

Şevket Pamuk (figure 2). The Dernek board is now looking into ways to fundraise for a fellowship program in economic and social history of Türkiye in memory of Zafer Toprak. If you would like to make a contribution to the fellowship fund, please get in touch with us.

Also in June, we held the tri-annual meeting of the Dernek. Alan Duben continues his role as the Dernek president; Güneş Duru joined in as board member; and Anthony Greenwood, Mihriban Özbaşaran and I continue to serve on the executive board.

This year, the Dernek held two events for its fellows. In the Spring, a group of six former fellows came together at the Annex Office for a round table discussion of their research processes. In Fall, a zoom meeting was arranged so the 2024 fellows could meet each other and present their research projects. As for U.S.-based fellows coming to Türkiye for their field work, every last Friday of the month foreign research institutes in Istanbul get together so our researchers can meet each other. If you happen to be in Istanbul, don't hesitate to join us.

Throughout the academic year, our scholarly events as well as the joint lecture series on underwater archaeology in collaboration with Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA) and the Koç University Mustafa V. Koç Maritime Archaeology Research Center (KUDAR) continued. We had a wide range of topics as you can see in the 2024 programs list below. In addition to the monthly lectures, we had a robust conference program organized in collaboration with other research centers.

In February, the retirement of Mihriban Özbaşaran was marked with a conference in her honor organized in collaboration with ANAMED. With the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

(SRII) and Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes (IFEA) a two-day international conference on the Russian imaginations of Constantinople was held in October.

In December, we partnered with ANAMED and Dumbarton Oaks for this year's Annual ANAMED Symposium dedicated to the memory of Robert G. Ousterhout (page 9, figure 1). Colleagues and students of Bob Ousterhout convened for a two day symposium to present on topics inspired by his scholarship. Byzantine Studies indeed marked the academia in Istanbul this year. While in April Dumbarton Oaks brought together foreign research institutes and Boğaziçi and Koç Universities' centers for a discussion on the resources, projects and programs on Byzantium in Türkiye (figure 3). The Fall semester offered a series of conferences, panels and workshops coinciding with the 1700th anniversary of Constantinople becoming the Byzantine Empire's new capital in 324.



Figure 3. Thomas Cummins, Nikos Kontogiannis and Yota Batsaki (Dumbarton Oaks) with colleagues from ARIT, Boğaziçi

As for the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, in early 2024 the management responsibility passed from the U.S.A. to Germany. Initiative members Brian Johnson (ARIT) and Richard Wittmann (Orient-Institut Istanbul) provided management support so the general rules introduced in 2023 by the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative could be put into action, which resulted in a productive collaboration between the President and the Initiative. Following the 2023 restoration of the American section, in 2024 twelve historically important monuments in the Hungarian sector were renovated under the direction of Hungary's National Heritage Institute, with local support from the Liszt Institute and the Hungarian Cultural Centre. A smaller but no less important renovation was also carried out in the cemetery's German section, that of the tomb of the scholar and artist Traugott Fuchs.

For public outreach, formal tours were organized throughout the year for diplomatic members and scholars by the Initiative members. Moreover, Brian Johnson and Richard Wittmann participated in the International Conference on Cemetery Studies, at Harokopio University, Athens with a paper, “Five Years Sustaining a Five-Century Legacy: Efforts to preserve the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, 2018-2023,” describing the site, its history and significance, and the Initiative’s efforts of the last half decade to an international audience. We ended the year with our third annual festive gathering to celebrate the holiday season, which included a rich program of presentations by the President and the Initiative members on their work, music by the German High School Choir as well as former ARIT fellow Audrey Wozniak and Oktay Üst (figure 4), followed by an ecological site tour by Ahmet Emre Yaprak, Necmi Aksoy, and Ilgın Deniz Can (figure 5).

This year also marked the official conclusion of the Initiative’s program to fully record the cemetery. This vital work for the cemetery’s future preservation and management was accomplished entirely by student interns and volunteers from all the Initiative’s member institutes, to whom we are very grateful. More news and updates can be followed from *Ledger*, the biannual online bulletin, accessible at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative website (<https://www.ferikoycemetery.org/>).



Figure 5. Former ARIT fellow Audrey Wozniak and Oktay Üst performing at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Chapel

I would like to reiterate our heartfelt thanks to all the scholars and colleagues who took the time from their busy schedules to give lectures and serve on our fellowship committees; to all staff members at ANAMED; to all FARIT members and program participants for their support, with a special mention of the FARIT Steering Committee members: Nedret Butler, Ali Ertenu, Antony Greenwood, Başak Kızıldemir, Aylin McCarthy, Alan Mellaart, Neslihan Tonbul, and Yaprak Archibald Uras.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year...

Zeynep Simavi, Istanbul Director



Figure 4. Former ARIT ECA Fellow Audrey Wozniak and Oktay Üst performing at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery

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ARIT-ANKARA NEWS

We are pleased to announce that between the Fall of 2023 and the Spring of 2024, Ankara ARIT completed the monumental task of relocating and settling in our new home at Atatürk Bulvarı 154/13 in Çankaya. Our dedicated librarian, Özlem Eser, with the invaluable assistance of Selim Tosun from Ankara University, worked tirelessly to complete organizing more than 20,000 volumes and journal issues of the Toni M. Cross Library through the winter of 2023-2024. Together, they created a shelving system that optimizes the use of space while ensuring the collection's accessibility and preservation.

On March 2nd, 2024, we inaugurated Ankara ARIT's new location with an Open House celebration in the Toni M. Cross Library. The iconic Dr. Kudret Emiroğlu of Bilkent University, Department of Turkish Literature, offered a seminar in Turkish on "The Book and the History of the Library" / "Kitap ve Kütüphanenin Tarihi." The talk was followed by a reception attended by members of the academic community in Ankara as well as the Ankara Friends of ARIT (figure 1).



Figure 1. Dr. Kudret Emiroğlu, Bilkent University during his seminar before the Open House

We are thankful for the never-ending support of the Ankara Friends of ARIT and the members of the Steering Committee, Shirley Epir, Ron Tickfer, Jennie Lane, Shauna Tufan, Marlene Elwell, Marco Sims, Baybars Alpaslan, Pınar Akdeniz, Burcu Yıldırım, Zeynep Simavi, Elif Denel, Scott Oudkirk and Charles Gates, in addition to the others from the Ankara academic community, especially from our neighboring institute, the British Institute in Ankara (BIAA) (figure 3).

Most importantly, we are grateful for the fantastic work our Ankara ARIT staff, Çiğdem Önal Emiroğlu, Burcu Yıldırım, Özlem Eser, and Songül Yıldız, have put into packing, moving, and reorganizing the Institute at its new location (figure 2).



Figure 2. ARIT staff and assistants



Figure 3. Ankara ARIT Director Elif Denel with former Chair of the Bilkent Archaeology Department Dominique Kassab Tezgör and British Institute in Ankara Director Lutgarde Vandepuit

With the challenges of the pandemic and the massive effort of the move, Ankara ARIT had focused on online lectures and had to take a break from the educational trips sponsored by the Friends of Ankara ARIT. Between the Spring and the Fall of 2024 trips in and around the city of Ankara resumed. These included:

A walking tour of Cinnah Caddesi, Architecture of 1960's-1980's Ankara, with Prof. Lale Özgenel (METU, Architectural History)

A walking tour of Roman Ankara with Prof. Suna Güven (METU, Architectural History, Emerita) (figure 5)

A day trip to Gavurkalesi and Külhöyük with Assoc. Prof. Thomas Zimmermann (Bilkent University, Archaeology)

A day trip to Gordion with Prof. Brian Rose (University of Pennsylvania, Archaeology and Classical Studies)

A walking tour of Early Republican Architecture with Prof. Elvan Altan (METU, Architectural History)

A trip to the Vehbi Koç Ankara Studies Research Center (VEKAM) and Historical Shepherd School (Tarihi Çoban Mektebi) – the Museum of Atatürk Ankara War of Independence (Atatürk Ankara Milli Mücadele Müzesi)

We also started using our lecture room for hybrid lectures and seminars.



Figure 4. Former ARIT assistant, Pelin Gürol Öngören, in Ankara ARIT's seminar room, lecturing her architectural history

The Toni M. Cross Library now provides a unique atmosphere for classes taught at universities in Ankara. Burcu Erciyas (Settlement Archaeology and City Planning, METU), Pelin Gürol Öngören (TOBB ETÜ, Architecture), and Ankara Director Elif Denel (Archaeology Program in English, Ankara University) held a class in the library the Spring Semester of 2024 (figure). Hakan Öztaner (Classical Archaeology, Ankara University) held two classes of courses he taught in the Spring Semester.



Figure 5. Roman Ankara trip with Suna Güven – Roman Baths

The number of library visitors has increased significantly since ARIT Ankara moved to its new location. The end of the pandemic must have contributed to this change. While some were independent scholars, the majority of the library visitors came from a range of national and international universities, including the University of Cincinnati, the University of Central Florida, the State University of New York, Marburg University, Helsinki University, Akdeniz University, Dumlupınar University, Ege University, Gaziosmanpaşa University, Hitit University, Karamanoğlu University, Sakarya University, Ankara University, Hacettepe University, Hacıbayram Veli University, Medipol University, Middle East Technical University, TED University, and TOBB ETÜ University.

The Toni M. Cross collection increased between the Fall of 2023 and 2024 by a total of 270 volumes and ninety-one items of 33 journal titles through purchases and donations by Adnan Polat, Ayşegül Aykurt, Berkay Orhaner, Coşkun Kökel, Elif Denel, Ender Varinlioğlu, Gary Leiser, Hatçe Baltacıoğlu, İbrahim Canbulat, Jens Daehner, Kenan Yurttagül, Marie-Henriette Gates, Marlis Hey-Dinçer of the Cultural Department of the Embassy of Germany, Marco Sims, Mitchell Rothman, Serdar Hakan Öztaner, Serim Denel, Tayyib Gökbilgin, Timothy Potts, Tolga Pelvanoğlu, and Zeynep Simavi as well as by the American Numismatic Society, the British Institute at Ankara, Ankara University, British School at Athens, Isparta Süleyman Demirel University, İzmir Kalkınma Ajansı, Japanese Institute of Anatolian Archaeology, Ministry of Culture and Tourism –General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums, Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, and TANAP (Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project).

Ankara ARIT continued to share duplicates with different organizations in Türkiye. From September 2023 to March 2024, Hacettepe University received a total of 901 duplicate volumes in several installments from the ARIT collection. ARIT also donated 26 titles to the Nif Excavations, directed by Mijde Peker of Istanbul University, Classical Archaeology.

In the Spring of 2024, Gonca Dardeniz of Istanbul University, Protohistory, undertook the significant task of bringing the library collection of Prentiss de Jesus (Ankara ARIT Director and research fellow, 1972-1974) from the US to Türkiye. This mission was made possible with the invaluable help of Bülent Arıkan from Istanbul Technical University's Eurasia Institute of Earth Sciences. We are excited to announce that a portion of this generous donation will soon be incorporated into the Toni M. Cross Library collection. Additionally, we plan to share duplicates from this collection with other institutions in Türkiye, especially Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, to ensure its broader accessibility and use in ongoing research.

We are also thrilled to announce that Michelle Köycü, a recent PhD recipient from the Architectural History Program at METU, generously donated her



Figure 6. Michelle Köycü working on the Yıldız Ötüken archives currently in the Toni M. Cross Library collection

time and expertise to the Yıldız Ötüken Collection at the Ankara ARIT between the Spring and Fall of 2024 (figure 6). Her invaluable contributions to the archiving process have greatly enriched the collection, ensuring its preservation for future generations of researchers and scholars. We are deeply grateful for her dedication and passion for archiving. She not only prepared a prototype for archival recording but also left a lasting impact on our work in Ankara ARIT. As such, her influence will continue to shape our efforts moving forward with archival recording.

ARIT continued to collaborate with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's Department for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property and ICOM (International Council of Museums) for the creation of ICOM's Emergency Red List of Cultural Objects at Risk for Türkiye. In October of 2023, ARIT signed a protocol with ICOM's central headquarters in Paris and ICOM's National Committee for Türkiye at an event organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism at the Antalya Archaeology Museum. ICOM's Red Lists provide practical tools for individuals, organizations, officials, and authorities to identify archaeological and historical objects in danger of exploitation and illegal trade. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is working with fourteen national museums in selecting distinct types of items on display that best represent objects of Turkish cultural and historical heritage at risk of illicit trade. These lists also serve as educational tools for protecting Turkish history and cultural heritage in training programs for specialists, customs officers, and armed forces, as well as for the young members of the society. ARIT had already collaborated with the Embassy and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the Turkish translation of ICOM's Red List for Iraq and is grateful again to the Embassy's support for the realization of this important contribution to the protection of Turkish historical and cultural heritage. ICOM and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism anticipate a public event to celebrate the completion of this project in the Spring of 2025.

Spearheaded by Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy the Ministry of Culture and Tourism launched an initiative called 'Legacy for the Future' ('Geleceğe Miras'), aimed at promoting archaeology through tourism in Türkiye. This new program is designed to bolster the country's domestic and international archaeological excavations for the future of development and tourism in Türkiye. The excavation projects that operate for twelve months had been designated specifically for Turkish archaeological projects but now have been expanded to include almost all excavations, domestic or foreign. With funding coming directly from the Ministry, this program offers long-term assistance for ongoing excavations with some preservation work. Turkish Coordinator Directors are chosen by the Ministry to oversee the funding for this new program and to manage the progress of excavations at sites with foreign archaeological directors.

ARIT has contributed to facilitating communication and collaboration between the

stakeholders in the 'Legacy for the Future' program. Working closely with the US Embassy and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, ARIT has helped organize a series of online meetings to keep all parties informed and engaged. These meetings involve the US project directors, team members, officials, and interested parties, ensuring that the key archaeological sites in Türkiye under the directorship of American directors, Gordion, Kaymakçı, Notion, Aphrodisias, Antiochia ad Cragum, Kerkenes Dağ, Zincirli Höyük, Çadır Höyük, and Tell Tayinat, continue to serve as platforms for training young scholars of different nationalities and backgrounds and conducting cutting-edge research in Anatolian archaeology.

The recovery from the disastrous earthquakes of February 2023 that struck Türkiye and Syria continued throughout 2024. The recovery process has been long and challenging, especially in Antakya, where the old historical part of the city was destroyed almost in its entirety with its historic buildings, homes, religious structures, and cultural landmarks. As of 2024, the reconstruction efforts are well underway, but they face several challenges. Rebuilding Antakya has become not just a matter of restoration but also of creating a new spirit for the city. The approach to rebuilding has balanced the need for modern infrastructure and housing with the desire to preserve the cultural essence of the city. The Hatay Museum is also experiencing a series of strengthening and reconstruction treatments and thus remains closed to the public. Yet, research continues in its premises despite all changes and challenges.



Figure 7. Antakya today, as seen from the highway

It is heartening to see how the archaeological community in the disaster areas has rallied together in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake (figure 7). Zincirli in Gaziantep and Tell Tayinat in Hatay have resumed archaeological research. Most museums in affected regions have now largely opened their collections to the public. All these developments provide significant steps towards the process of full recovery.

The collaboration between local and foreign archaeologists, as well as the support from organizations like the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, ICOMOS Türkiye, and various universities and civil society groups, is crucial for the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage. Their efforts are not just about restoring physical structures but also about safeguarding the shared history and identity of the affected regions. This collaborative approach can help mitigate future risks, integrate disaster preparedness into archaeological and heritage work, and foster long-term sustainability for the region's heritage sites. ARIT and those associated with the Institute keep close watch over the recovery efforts in the region, motivated by the understanding that the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage for future generations plays a pivotal role in the healing and rebuilding process.

With the wishes of a happy and healthy 2025 from all of us in Ankara ARIT,

Elif Denel, ARIT Ankara Director



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2024 ARIT LECTURES

(In chronological order.) You may view recorded events on ARIT's YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/@americanresearchinstitutei3409>

“Nurturing Byzantium: Growth, Change, and Vibrance in Byzantine Studies, A Symposium Dedicated to the Memory of Robert G. Ousterhout (1950-2023)” in collaboration with ANAMED and Dumbarton Oaks (in person and online)

Dr. Müge Durusu Tanrıöver (Temple University and Bilkent University) “Before Midas: Revisiting the Bronze Age in Western Ankara”

“Dreams of Tsargrad” A Symposium on Constantinople and the Black Sea in Imperial Russian Imagination at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. Cosponsored with the Swedish Institute and the Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes.

Dr. Mark Lawall (University of Manitoba) “The Long Voyage of the Kyrenia Amphoras 1968-2024” In collaboration with the Koç University Mustafa V. Koç Maritime Archaeology Research Center (KUDAR) and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology.

“Zafer Toprak’ın Dostlarından Disiplinlerarası Yaklaşımlar” / “Interdisciplinary Approaches from Zafer Toprak’s Friends” A conference honoring Professor Zafer Toprak cosponsored with ARIT, ANAMED. and the Türk Amerikan İlmi Araştırmaları Derneği.

Gergő Máté Kovács (Budapest University of Technology and Economics) “Hungarian Architects in Early Republican Türkiye” In conjunction with the Hungarian-Turkish Cultural year.

David Meza (University of California, Riverside) “An Empire of Individuals: Ottoman Antioch, 1703 to 1764”

David Hendrix (The Byzantine Legacy) “Exploring Central Anatolia (Galatia and Phrygia): On the Road with The Byzantine Legacy” The 44th Annual



Figure 1. Bob Ousterhout Memorial Conference

Lecture Series: Art and Archaeology in Turkey, at the Turkish American Association (TAA) / Türk Amerikan Derneği (TAD)

Deniz Berk Tokbudak (Karamanoğlu Mehmet University, Karaman) “The Flavian Building Programme in Asia Minor: The Age of Vespasian” The 44th Annual Lecture Series: Art and Archaeology in Turkey, at the Turkish American Association (TAA) / Türk Amerikan Derneği (TAD)

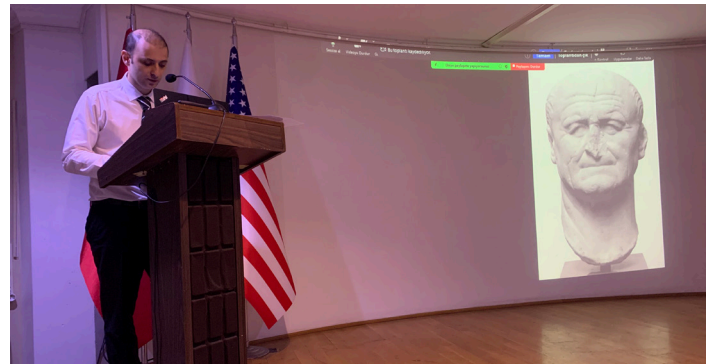


Figure 2. Deniz Berk Tokbudak speaking at the Turkish American Association

Professor Alan Mikhail (Department of History, Yale University) “Ottoman Environmental History: Some Egyptian Perspectives”

Professor Ayfer Karakaya-Stump (History, The College of William and Mary) “Alevi-Bektashi Digital Archive: A Project of Cultural Preservation”

Pat Yale, writer, “Following Miss Bell: Travels Around Turkey in the Footsteps of Gertrude Bell” Cosponsored with the British Institute at Ankara with discussant Mark Jackson, co-curator, The Gertrude Bell Archive

“Constructing the Future by Understanding the Past: A Neolithic Symposium in Honor of Mihriban Özbaşaran” A day-long symposium honoring Professor Mihriban Özbaşaran, archaeologist and teacher (Istanbul University), who specializes in the Neolithic of Anatolia, at Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, cosponsored by ANAMED and ARIT.

Dr. Lana Radloff (Bishops University) “Networking Women: Modelling Female Maritime Mobility” A seminar cosponsored with the Koç University Mustafa V. Koç Maritime Archaeology Research Center (KUDAR) and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology

ARIT TURKISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM 2024

Thanks to continued funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad, we were able to support a cohort of 17 ARIT-BU Fellows: 6 PhD students, 4 MA students, and 7 undergraduates. Their academic programs ranged from our usual applicant fields of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Ottoman History, Art History, Islamic Studies, and International Relations to the less common applicant fields of French Literature, Journalism, Epidemiology, and Environmental Science.



Figure 1. Orientation at ARIT Istanbul Annex

On Saturday, June 22nd, we met for orientation in Istanbul, sharing a lovely Circassian meal with ARIT Branch Director Zeynep Simavi at Ficcın in the Istiklal Avenue neighborhood where ANAMED houses the ARIT Library collection (figure 1). ARIT President Linda Darling, herself a former ARIT-BU Fellow, and Dr. Fariba Zarinebaf graced us at the orientation dinner. The next day we were hosted by the ARIT annex in Karaköy for the inevitable barrage of pre-program testing. How unique to undergo online testing with a spectacular view of the Topkapı Palace! The Black Sea cuisine at lunch restored the jet-lagged and over-taxed Fellows. As always, the ARIT Istanbul staff remained helpful throughout the summer.

The Boğaziçi Turkish Language and Culture Program was directed this summer by Kadir Gökgöz and Metin Bağrıaçık, with help from the always amazing team of faculty and TAs. The intensive 8-week program included lectures, excursions, and plenty of homework and testing. One special June activity was a walking tour of Beyoğlu and Fatih led by Archi-

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techtural Historian Dr. Paolo Girardelli. Although the temperatures were very hot, the breezes from the Bosphorus, the trips outside of the city, the shaded gardens, and the multiplicity of ice cream varieties made it a wonderful summer.

For one short weekend trip, a group of Boğaziçi TLCP faculty, ARIT-BU Fellows, and a few international students stayed in the traditional wooden houses of Mudurnu, including the konak of Terra Mudurnu (figure 2). Our host and guide Ege Yıldırım provided tours focused on historic and cultural preservation, a walk through fields to collect herbs and flowers for a soap-making demonstration, and an all-too-clear view of the nightmarish Burj Al Babas neighborhood of unfinished, abandoned “castles” which have come to symbolize corrupt and rapacious development (figure 3). We got a “hayride” on the back of a farm truck and then benefitted from a local ice cream maker’s demonstration of organic ice cream. On Sunday, ARIT former President Dr. Brian Rose met our group at Gordion to show us around the fantastic archaeological site and explain the latest developments in environmentally-friendly site maintenance techniques (figure 4).



Figure 2. Program travelers at Mudurnu village



Figure 3. Burj Al Babas

For this Project Director, the most vivid memory of the summer began with a lovely group visit to the Sait Faik Museum on Burgazada Island of the Princes' Islands in Istanbul. After a visit to a Greek Orthodox Church, a peaceful stroll, and a short hop to Kınalı Island, we were warmly welcomed to a fish restaurant for lunch.

Unfortunately, one of our Fellows was stricken by a food allergy crisis and the next moments involved the crucial use of the Fellow's own epipen, a run through the streets, an ambulance to a speedboat, a film-worthy speedboat chase to the mainland, an ambulance to a local hospital.... and then, thank heavens, a calm period of waiting under observation for the remainder of the afternoon. Fortunately,



Figure 4. Visit to the site of Iron Age Gordion

ARIT Istanbul Branch Director Zeynep Simavi and her Kınalı Island-connected assistant Selin Hogopian were able to complete the afternoon tour with the remainder of the group. The BU program wrapped up with the much-awaited and much-remembered evening Bosphorus Boat Tour.



Figure 5. Setting out for the Bosphorus Boat Tour

In the post-program evaluations, we collected comments such as:

“It is an outstanding program for students who are interested in improving their Turkish, learning more about Turkey, and living in Istanbul. It is a great program with committed and effective instructors. It is basically the best Turkish language program in the entire world, given Boğaziçi University's outstanding staff, facilities, and students.” and,

“The Boğaziçi program is the best of the Turkish summer language programs I have taken, and I learned an enormous amount. The ARIT stipend is critical to the experience and enough that one can freely engage with what İstanbul has to offer without overly-worrying about finances. Through the ARIT funded TCLP program I made a significant number of research connections and met multiple mentors whom I plan to work with in the future.”

After the final slew of tests and evaluations, the 2024 ARIT-BU Fellows headed off in all directions. Since the end of the program, we have learned that our application for the Summer of 2025 has been approved by the US Department of Education – so be sure to spread the news. Applications open in February of 2025.

ARIT FELLOWSHIPS 2024-2025

ARIT – National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows:

Dr. Uğur Peçe, Ottoman History, Lehigh University, *Breaking the Silence: Soundscapes of Revolution in the Ottoman Empire*

“Breaking the Silence” is a sensory exploration of the Ottoman Constitutional Revolution of 1908 and its aftermath. It examines revolution not as an abstract process but in terms of its soundscapes produced and experienced by individuals caught up in it. Taking as its main cast of characters artists, parliamentarians, street criers, striking workers, and refugee protesters, the project traces how the concepts of freedom, equality, fraternity, and justice came to life through sound in middle-class and popular venues from the theater to the parliament and to the coffeehouse and the streets.

Dr. Nazif Shahrani, Anthropology, Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University, *Khirgiz Refugees of the Afghan Pamirs in Turkey: From Stone Age to Post-Modernity in Four Decades*

Dr. Shahrani’s study examines transnational leadership of a tribal Khan, in a century-long saga (1917-), of the Kirghiz pastoral nomads of Central Asia. Their Khan led them through four forced displacements, undergoing significant transformations since their resettlement (1982) as refugees in eastern Turkey. The life history of this Khan makes us rethink our assumptions about and characterization of, local/tribal leadership in the region. In their 41 years in Turkey, their numbers have tripled; 2300 of them live in a village in Van, and 800 are scattered in clusters in towns near Ankara.

Dr. Christopher Whitehead, History, Ohio State University, *Rebellion, Reform, and Taxation in the 17th Century Ottoman Empire: The Struggles of the Imperial Household Cavalry*

Dr. Whitehead’s will explore the Ottoman Empire’s response to the multifaceted crisis of the 17th century by investigating the Ottoman dynasty’s household cavalry forces, the Six Regiments. The study challenges a conventional scholarly dismissal of the Six Regiments by demonstrating that many of the upheavals and pro-

vincial rebellions of the period 1620-1660 stemmed from efforts by members of the Six Regiments to defend their political and economic privileges from reformist challenges.

ARIT US Department of State– CAORC Fellows:

Dr. Dilyara Agisheva, Legal History, Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Toronto, *Law Across Borders: Ottoman Influence on the Crimean Khanate in the Early Eighteenth Century*

This project investigates the intellectual-legal connections between the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Empire in the early 18th century. It explores this research question: What was the nature of the intellectual relationship between the Crimean judicial structure and the Ottoman legal-learned establishment during this period? Employing archival sources and court records, it will assess the nature of Ottoman influence in parallel to the development of Crimean legal autonomy as presented in the chronicles. Studying this historical interplay will show the influence of Ottoman legal heritage on neighboring regions and reveal the forces that were at play in the development of Ottoman socio-legal tradition.

Ms. Jordan Cannon, History and Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University, *Forged by Fire: Social, Political, and Architectural Transformations in Early Modern Istanbul (1509-1826)*

Drawing on Ottoman archival documents located in Istanbul, the project will research the frequency and extent of fires in the city between 1509 and 1826. I will compile my findings into a fire catalogue which will trace a distinct set of variables: date, time of day, season, alleged cause, place of origin, architectural damage, casualties, responses from contemporaries, and other remarks. This data collection and synthesis will provide the basis for for the first comprehensive study of early modern Istanbul’s fires and investigate how they remade the city’s social, political, and architectural landscape.

Ms. Ashley Cercone, Archaeology, University at Buffalo, *Pottery Traditions in Inland Western Anatolia*

During the Early Bronze Age (3000-2000 BCE) in Anatolia, economic, political, and social changes took

place including the emergence of craft production, the adaptation of the potter's wheel, and the rise of long-distance trade. This project employs petrographic, chemical, and mineralogical techniques to study archaeological ceramics and geological samples (i.e., clay, rocks) from the modern-day province of Eskişehir to examine local ceramic production throughout the Early Bronze Age and shed light interactions with inland Western Anatolia.

Dr. Jessie Clark, Geography, University of Nevada, Reno, *Youth Geographies of Faith, Fatalism, and Future in Türkiye's Kurdish East*

Young people in Türkiye are questioning the moral authority of traditional religious institutions while also reconceptualizing faith outside its modern boundaries and institutions, with implications for how youth perceive and act in relation to the future. This project studies new geographies of religion and the future among young people in Kurdish Türkiye, an under-examined region and experience, using interviews and focus groups with youth ages 18-25 in the city of Diyarbakır. Understanding the aspirations and associated belief systems of Kurdish youth is important for devising inclusive policies for Türkiye's future.

Mr. Nathaniel Moses, History, Harvard University, *Overflow: State, Subject, and Ecology in Late Ottoman Iraq, 1869-1917*

This project studies the relationship between the late Ottoman state and its subjects in a landscape shaped by natural disasters and capitalist development. It examines the vexed efforts of the Ottoman state between 1869 and 1917 to engineer the middle Tigris and Euphrates river valleys for commercial agricultural production. Despite repeated hydraulic interventions, the inhabitants of the province of Baghdad continued to experience devastating flooding and drought and, in turn, petitioned, migrated, and rebelled. It explores these recurrent "failures" of social and ecological control as generative sites of state and subject formation in the late Ottoman Empire.

Ms. Maryam Patton, Late Medieval and Early Modern Ottoman History, Harvard University, *Hermes on the Horizon: Ottoman Intellectual History and the Global Renaissance*

Historian Frances Yates transformed our understanding of the impact of occult science on the Renaissance. She overlooked, however, the influence of contemporary Ottoman thought. This study will reevaluate the role of the Ottomans and the flourishing of occult and Neo-platonic ideas in the early modern period. The new post-Mongol historiography recognizes a Neo-platonic revival and the influence of esoteric knowledge in the Islamic world that influenced Ottoman intellectual history from the 14th–16th centuries, partly due to the influx of Central Asian scholars. It will explore how the Ottomans played an essential role as a bridge between East and West.

ARIT Fellows:

Evan and Leman Fotos Fellow:

Ms. Yosra Ali Ahmed Hussein, Middle Eastern History, Columbia University, *Ordinary People's Justice: Narrating Ottoman Egypt from the South (1700-1840)*

This project develops a social history of Ottoman Upper Egypt, a region extending from the south of Cairo along the Nile River to the borders with Sudan, in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Focusing on questions of justice, it utilizes Arabic and Ottoman archives to build up a social history from the commoners' pleas for justice. It examines how ordinary people in Upper Egypt understood, internalized, and sought justice through different judicial venues, like shari'a courts and petitions to the sultans. In historicizing Ottoman Egypt and the whole Ottoman empire from the south, i.e. Upper Egypt, this project emphasizes a different map, where Upper Egypt connects to Sudan, Arabia, and the Indian Ocean.

John Freely Fellow

Ms. Farah Bazzi, Global History, Stanford University, *The Alluring Aesthetic of Andalusī Nature: Transplanting al-Andalus across the Iberian, Moroccan, and Ottoman Early Modern Worlds*

This study explores the various ways in which the geography of al-Andalus was reimagined and recreated across the Mediterranean and Atlantic worlds at the turn of the seventeenth century. I

am interested in understanding why and how al-Andalus, both as an idea, a memory, as well as a material reality, came to be viewed as an aesthetically appealing, desirable, and transplantable natural landscape across the Iberian, Moroccan, and Ottoman Empires. The research will show how these constructions shaped the making of racial, religious, and ecological borders and geographies in newly conquered territories such as North Africa as well as the Americas.

Friends of ARIT Fellow:

Dr. Bürge Abiral, Anthropology, Ohio State University, *Sedimentation of Crises: Alternative Food Networks, Food Inflation, and Trust in Turkey*

This research examines the effects of the economic crisis on alternative food networks in Turkey. Through ethnographic fieldwork in Istanbul and the Bayramiç district of Çanakkale, it seeks to trace how producers and consumers who participate in these networks deal with the pressures of the crisis, which get sedimented on previous crises, namely, a crisis of political disenfranchisement and a crisis of food security. By studying how the mechanisms of trust established along alternative supply chains have been affected, this research also seeks to document and share with stakeholders best practices of economic solidarity.

Toni M. Cross – William D. E. Coulson Aegean Exchange Fellows:

Turkey:

Dr. Stefo Benlisoy, Humanities and Social Sciences, Istanbul Technical University, *Workers of Istanbul Unite! A Socialist Workers Organization in the Late Ottoman Capital 1909-1922*

Dr. Benlisoy is conducting archival research at the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive in Athens, the EDiplomatic and Historical Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, and the Contemporary Social History Archives in Athens to study Ottoman labor history and the beginnings of the socialist movement, which had complex demography, but whose history became homogenized after the events of 1912-1922.

Ms. Naz Defne Kut, Art History, Koç University, *Print and Propaganda: The Cretan War in Venetian Engravings in Greece*

Ms. Kut will study at the Gennadius Library, the National Library, the Benaki Museum, as well as in Heraklion and Chania on Crete to research the image of Ottomans in prints and engravings in books and other printed materials.

Ms. Gizem Güner, Architectural History, Middle East Technical University, *Demeter's Legacy Unveiled: Architectural Continuity and Ritual Metamorphosis from Greece to Hellenistic Western Asia Minor*

Ms. Güner will carry out research at ancient sites including the open-air chamber of the Assembly of Athenians (the Pnyx) and the Panhellenic Sanctuary of the Eleusinian Mysteries to carry out a spatial and architectural analysis of the cult of Demeter and Persephone.

U.S. Department of Education, Fulbright-Hays Advanced Language Fellows, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul:

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Sasha Ward	University of Washington
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George M. A. Hanfmann Fellows:

Mr. İnan Kopçuk, Archaeology, Ankara University, *Roman Fine Ware Ceramics from Aspendos: A Diachronic Analysis within the Framework of Material Culture, Pottery Network and Production Issues*

Mr. Kopçuk is traveling to the University of Cambridge to conduct library research and attend academic workshops. He is visiting sites in London (Londinium), Chesterfield, Colchester, Richborough and settlements such as Verulamium and Vindolanda as well as viewing museum collections.

Ilse Bohlund Hanfmann Fellow:

Ms. Fatma Nihal Köseoğlu, Art and Archaeology, Istanbul University, *Funerary Portraiture Tradition in the Roman East: A Study on Art, Death and Identity through Palmyrene Loculus Reliefs in Istanbul Archaeological Museums*

Ms. Köseoğlu is conducting library research at the libraries of Aarhus University and of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Denmark in consultation with Professor Rubina Raja. She will also work at Watson and Onassis libraries of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the German Archaeological Institute in Athens.

Machteld J. Mellink Fellows:

Ms. Gamze Karakaş Çakan, Archaeology and History of Art, Istanbul University, *The Development of Livestock Activities in the Neolithic and Early Chalcolithic Periods in Central Anatolia: A Zooarchaeological Study on Animal Husbandry at Tepecik-Çiftlik Höyük*

Ms Çakan will carry out research at the Archaeology Institute at Groningen University analyzing the animal bones from the Tepeçik-Çiftlik Höyük excavations and will participate in research seminars on zooarchaeology.

Mr. Devrim Sönmez, Archaeology and History of Art, Koç University, *Survey Project at Pre-Pottery Neolithic Göbekli Tepe and Its Vicinity: Interactions Between the Landscape and People who Built the Earliest Monumental Architecture*

Mr. Sönmez is conducting research at the Earth Sciences Department of Freie University, Berlin analyzing the unmanned aerial vehicle data collected during the 2022 and 2023 surveys with Dr. Moritz Nykamp under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Brigitta

Schütt. In addition, he will conduct a literature review on the Southwest Asian Pre-Pottery Neolithic and Göbekli Tepe at the German Archaeological Institute, Orient Department in Berlin.

ARIT Turkish Dernek Fellows:

Ms. Munire Rumeysa Çakan, Architecture, Kocaeli University, *Journey to the Memory of Rural Settlements: Space and People in Taşlıca*

The project focuses on documenting the rural vernacular architecture of the post-medieval period in and around the village of Taşlıca on the rural Bozburun Peninsula.

Ms. Doğuş Coşar Güler, Archaeology, Mimar Sinan University, *Peraias (mainland territories of islands) of the North Aegean and Western Anatolia in Antiquity*

Ms. Güler's study deals with mobility, connectivity and land use in the Aegean by making use of Peraiai as case studies.

Mr. Mustafa Sayan, Conservation, İstanbul Technical University, *A Proposal of Methodology to Preserve Istanbul's Land Walls as Historical Documents*

This project aims to produce a comprehensive and analytical description of the historical stratification of Istanbul's Land Walls and offer a preservation methodology and process.

Mr. Barış Can Sever, Sociology, Middle East Technical University, *Migratory Movements as a Multifaceted Process Under the Impacts of Climate Crisis: The Case of Central Anatolian Agricultural Basin, Cihanbeyli/Konya/Türkiye*

Mr. Sever explores how the climate crisis influences migratory patterns in the Cihanbeyli/Konya region.

Ms. Halet Uluant, Art History, İstanbul Technical University, *An Illustrated Manuscript from the Late Ottoman Period*

The project focuses on an illustrated manuscript belonging to Sultan Abdülmecid's mother Bezmialem Valide Sultan with the aim to contextualize the production as well as the patronage and reading culture of the illustrated prayer books.



Tughra of
Abdülmecid I

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ARIT thanks all those who supported our centers and activities over the past year, through November 2024. Your support ensures our future.

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Egyptian Bazaar, Istanbul



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REPORTS ON ARIT FELLOWSHIPS

Dr. Andrea Gatzke, History, State University of New York, New Paltz, ARIT US Department of State, Educational and Cultural Affairs – CAORC Fellow

The Inscribed City: Written Space, Bilingualism, and Group Membership in Roman Anatolia

This project examines how residents of the cities of Roman Anatolia used inscriptions, and especially bilingual Greek-Latin inscriptions, in public displays (e.g. buildings, monuments, and statue bases) to communicate their personal connections to both imperial Roman and local Greek cultures, and to control, influence, and classify civic space as belonging to the imperial or local sphere. The ARIT fellowship allowed me to spend a summer conducting research in Ankara's research centers, both at ARIT Ankara and at the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA), and to conduct on-site research and observation at some of the ancient cities that comprise the focus of my study.

In the libraries in Ankara I could access a wide variety of epigraphic corpora, excavation reports, and city-specific monographs that are difficult to access from my home institution. It was useful to look at recent excavation and epigraphic publications to update the sets of inscriptions and buildings on which I am focusing my study. Most exciting, however, was access to a variety of materials dealing with the archaeology and epigraphic landscape of Roman Ankara itself. I hadn't included Ankara (Rom. Ancyra) in my study, as I had never found much interesting information regarding the Roman city beyond the Temple of Augustus, which bore the famous *Res Gestae* of Augustus (figures 1, 2). The libraries at ARIT and BIAA, however, had a wealth of resources of Roman Ancyra that I had never encountered, and I am now including the city in my study.

Walking around the city, understanding its ancient layout, allowed me to see what the relationship of the Augustus Temple would have been to the rest of the Roman settlement in the early imperial period.

This includes more recent preservation work at the Roman theater on the hillside below the castle, from which the Temple of Augustus – the ultimate symbol of Roman power in the Anatolian interior – would have been easily visible to those sitting in the *cavea*, as well as from various other points of the city, including the baths further to the northwest.

The incorporation of Ancyra into my study will bring a new perspective since most of the other cities that I discuss had a higher incidence of bilingualism and a stronger presence of Greeks and Romans in the first two centuries CE. Ancyra, in contrast, was largely populated



Figure 1. Temple of Augustus, Ankara



Figure 2. *Res Gestae* of Augustus (Latin version), Temple of Augustus, Ankara

by Galatians before the Roman annexation, and though Greek was still the dominant language of administration and epigraphy, the populations were not predominantly Greek. This offers a new angle to analyze and explain the utility and role of Latin-Greek bilinguals among provincial populations.



Figure 3. Roman theater, Ankara

I was also able to visit other ancient cities about which I am writing. Most notably, in June I spent a week in Selçuk, where I worked at the excavation house library of the Austrian Archaeological Institute's Ephesus excavations, reading more specialized reports of some of the finds and reconstructions of ancient buildings in Ephesus and neighboring cities such as Laodicea and Hierapolis.

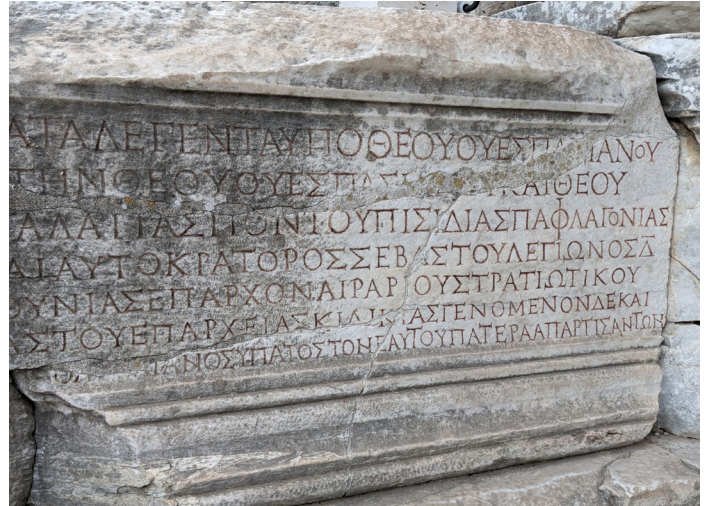


Figure 4. Greek honorary inscription of Tiberius Iulius Celsus Polemaeanus, left inner cheek wall of stairs approaching the Celsus Library, Ephesus, Selçuk

I visited the site of Ephesus to photograph relevant inscriptions and monuments, and to visualize and reconstruct the ancient civic spaces and the experiences of people as they moved through them. Other cities I visited for similar observations and visualizations include Pergamon, Pisidian Antioch, Antiochia ad Cragum, and Ariassos. The last of these is new for my project, and my site visit was intended largely to assess what we know and can see about the ancient city to determine what it can contribute.

Antiochia was a coastal city on the edge of Rough Cilicia towards Pamphylia, and its prominence was later in date than cities like Perge and Ephesus. There has been great progress in the excavations of the site in the decade. Although the epigraphic finds here have been minimal, they have been useful to show the nature and function of epigraphy in a smaller city that was not central to provincial activity. The only Latin discovered here thus far has been a milestone from the late second century CE, and other inscriptions – all monolingual Greek – are minimal. In a city like this, where the residents in the fourth and fifth centuries melted down much of the marble to make lime, it is difficult to recover how prominent (or not) epigraphy may have been in the landscape.

Ms. Sarah Molina, History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University, ARIT US Department of State, Educational and Cultural Affairs - CAORC Fellow

The Poetics of Space: How Safavid Carpets Shaped the Early Modern Islamic World (1539-1671)

This generous fellowship helped me advance research for my dissertation, “The Poetics of Space: How Carpets Shaped the Safavid World” (updated title). My dissertation examines how carpets mediated experiences of space in the Safavid world. For the ARIT grant, I was interested in exploring how Safavid carpets were exported to furnish and mediate spaces abroad, primarily those in the Ottoman empire, and to better understand the relationship between the production of carpets in the Safavid and Ottoman empires.

I spent half of my fellowship tenure in Konya and Divriği, which allowed me to understand the older, intertwined histories of carpets and architecture in Anatolia. It was incredible to see and examine up-close some of the best preserved 13th-century Seljuk carpets at the Konya Etnografya Müzesi (figures 1, 2).

The patterns and compositions of these carpets reflect the architecture of the splendid Great Mosque of Divriği. These eye-opening journeys allowed me to think more deeply about cross-currents between textiles and architectural revetment in the period before the early modern empires.



Figure 2. Seljuk carpet detail

At the Mevlâna Müzesi in Konya, Dr. Naci Bakır and his staff generously showed me carpets that have been attributed to Safavid Iran. This experience was crucial, as I was able to technically examine a particularly famous carpet depicting the Kaaba that I now believe belongs to a group of rugs possibly made in Ottoman workshops based on Safavid models (figure 3). In my dissertation, I argue that the relationship between Safavid and Ottoman carpet weaving should be reexamined to consider how the two practices were actually more closely intertwined in certain workshops.



Figure 1. Seljuk, 13th century, wool pile carpet, Konya Etnografya Müzesi

During my time in Istanbul, I was kindly shown carpets by the staff at the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, including another Kaaba rug that significantly helped me put together more pieces of my attribution puzzle (figure 4).

I also attended the International Conference on Oriental Carpets (ICOC), which was held in Istanbul in June. There, I was able to connect with many important carpet scholars and see some of the Safavid prayer rugs that were given as gifts and held at the Topkapı Palace Museum and meet with many curators and art handlers working in Turkish institutions.



Figure 3. Examining the Kaaba carpet at the Mevlâna Müzesi



Figure 4. Researcher examining the weave structure of a carpet at the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi

Ms. Ruşen Bingül, Cultural Anthropology, Emory University, Evan and Leman Fotos Fellow

Negotiating Kurdishness: Gender, Justice, and Dispute Resolution in Southeastern Turkey

With the generous support of the Fotos ARIT grant, I conducted my dissertation fieldwork for four months in 2023 as part of a larger 12-month field project. The fellowship enabled me to collect data for my doctoral dissertation. While residing in Mardin, I engaged in participant observation and conducted in-depth interviews with a diverse group of individuals and institutions involved in alternative dispute resolution methods among the Kurdish communities in Southeast Turkey.

My research focuses on a practice of Kurdish people who solve their disputes through alternative judicial bodies (AJBs). They often avoid state courts, preferring AJBs for settling disputes using customary and Islamic law. These AJBs are widely recognized by most Kurds for their efficiency and effectiveness in satisfying both parties involved in disputes. My research suggests that the widespread recognition of AJBs underscores the deep cultural and social trust invested in them.

A defining characteristic of AJBs is the non-legally binding nature of their decisions, as they operate outside of formal state law. This extrajudicial status, however, does not diminish their authority or the acceptance of their resolutions within the community. AJBs function autonomously as informal arbitration forums, facilitated by the voluntary engagement of community elders and, especially in the recent years, the civil society organizations (CSOs). My fieldwork observations indicate that this collaborative and community-based approach to dispute resolution exemplifies the embeddedness of diverse groups of AJBs in Kurdish social groups.

Another aspect of my fieldwork involves understanding how Kurdish women seek resolution through alternative channels. It focuses on how

they navigate and exercise their agency within the male-dominated AJBs, such as *Heqîs*, which exclude women from direct participation in arbitration processes, and mandate that women be represented by a male proxy. During this stage of my fieldwork, I discovered that various CSOs and feminist groups are significantly engaged in alternative dispute resolution methods. These groups have intervened in the gendered power dynamics, especially within the male-dominated arbitration bodies, *Heqîs*.

Particularly post-2019, my fieldwork highlights the rise of feminist organizations and CSOs that struggle for gender equality in the Kurdish region and advocate for involving women in the arbitration processes. These organizations are dedicated to handling women-centric cases, preventing gender-based discrimination during arbitrations conducted by the *Heqî*-AJBs and others, and integrating Kurdish women's perspectives and visions into customary law practices in the Kurdish region. They particularly emphasize the necessity of women's involvement in the negotiation processes within the AJBs, particularly in the *Heqî*, and they fight against the absence of women in such negotiations.

My field observations underscore the development of legally pluralistic mechanisms in the Kurdish region, leading to a power struggle, especially in recent years. This power struggle is particularly prominent among a diverse group of arbitrators. Those based in religious and secular civil society organizations, political parties, and kin-based mediation each have diverging ideologies and outlooks.

The variety of the Kurdish mediation approaches highlights the complex interplay among various ideological and social forces shaping the region's customary legal framework. The AJBs exemplify a form of legal pluralism within Kurdish communities. My research not only sheds light on the intricacies of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms among Kurdish communities but also contributes to broader discussions on legal pluralism, state sovereignty, and the dynamics of customary law within state frameworks.

Dr. Christopher Whitehead, History, Ohio State University, ARIT National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow

Rebellion, Reform, and Taxation in the 17th Century Ottoman Empire: The Struggles of the Imperial Household Cavalry

In Summer 2024, I carried out a four-month term of research in Istanbul at the Ottoman archives in Kağıthane, focusing on the vast materials that remain accessible only locally, despite the recent digitization of the archive and its opening to online access.

My book project is a history of the “Six Regiments,” the cavalry branch of the Ottoman dynasty’s household army, and their transformation from the late sixteenth century onward into an influential socio-political interest group in the empire. The Six Regiments had their origins in systems of military slavery with roots as far back to the 9th-century Abbasid Caliphate and originated as a component of the personal slave-army of the sultan. But from the 16th century, they underwent a transformation that turned them into far more than just a military organization. They became a hereditary status group, with members living across the empire and with embedded interests in the empire’s economy.

This transformation was closely connected to the wide-ranging crisis that the empire was grappling

with, and – at least in its political dimensions—which reached a climax with the 1622 murder of the sultan by his household army. My research has found that this event catapulted the Six Regiments into a position of unprecedented authority within the empire’s tax administration, facilitating their emergence as provincial elites in Anatolia, northern Syria, and the Balkans, and giving rise to a decades-long political and economic struggle over what the role of the Six Regiments in the empire should be.

The support of NEH-ARIT allowed me to widen the chronological and topical bounds of my study and to incorporate previously unread sources. Most significantly, by uncovering a series of unexpectedly intimate records – primarily letters, petitions, and court documents, I expanded my book’s coverage with a new chapter on the social and cultural history of the Six Regiments. This change will allow me to infuse what has thus far been an exploration of politics, economy, reform, and rebellion with human stories and experiences, capturing not just what the Six Regiments did in the seventeenth century, but also what it meant to belong to them.

In addition, my presence in Istanbul gave me the opportunity to present my research to a Turkish audience, at the Early Modern Ottoman Studies (EMOS) conference hosted by Sabancı University in June, and through an invitation to speak at Marmara University’s Marmara Tarih Konuşmaları program in October.



The Ottoman Archives in Kağıthane.



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