

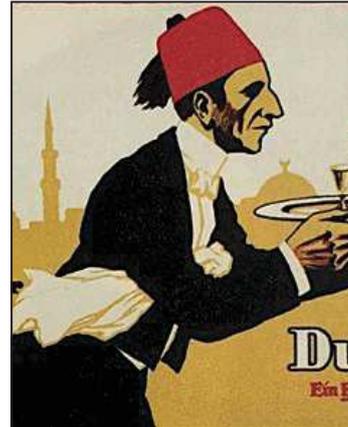


Global Urban Studies Program
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Tavern as Site and Spectacle in late Ottoman Urban Life

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Michigan State University

Friday, January 18th, 2019
Sociology Conference room—Berkey 457
10:30am – 11:45am



What is she talking about?

In social histories of the Middle East, coffee and tea houses long constituted focal points in both artistic representation and scholarly research. These were not the only spaces of congregation and interaction, however, just as caffeinated beverages were not the only drinks on tap. Often located in the more cosmopolitan quarters of port cities, the tavern was also a vital site in the urban landscapes of Ottoman society. Featuring not only alcohol, many of these establishments also provided their patrons with food and with access to entertainment, recreation, and opportunities for fraternization with fellow citizens. Throughout its varied histories, the tavern also served more than just society as a locus for social gathering and drinking; it also served the state and its officials variously through time as a target for levying taxes—and rent seeking, policing the empire's subjects and visitors, and enforcing regulation and/or prohibition. In this regard, the tavern existed as a critical site that facilitated official and unofficial state-society encounters, and it thus functioned as a place of contact, collaboration, confrontation, and contestation. This research draws on a broad range of primary sources to interrogate the place, purpose, and pertinence of the tavern in Ottoman cities in order to explore it both as a locale of consequence unto itself and as a conceptual vantage for observing and assessing the social, political, and material fluidities evident during the late Ottoman era. Such dynamics, particularly as they implicated people's identities and identity politics, included modernization, globalization and Westernization, accentuation of religious and/or secular agendas, and particularization and exclusion of others; throughout, answers to the questions of "what" and "where" people drank were markers of identity, politics, and class. Amid ongoing social and political debates that center on the place and legal status of alcohol and its consumption in contemporary Turkey—as observable particularly in its cities, this research on the tavern in Anatolian cities of the late Ottoman period also informs and serves as a corrective to ongoing narrative manipulations of the country's diverse histories and traditions.

Who is she?

Emine Evered is an Associate Professor of History at Michigan State University. Her specialty is modern Middle East history with an emphasis on Turkey. This presentation stems from her current book project dealing with history of alcohol in Turkey.

Talk is sponsored by the Global Urban Studies Program (GUSP). Light refreshments will be available. For additional information, contact Jonah White (white115@msu.edu).



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