

Ringvorlesung Turkologie | Der Buchdeckel als Weltkarte Osmanisch-Türkische Literaturen (16.-21. Jahrhundert) | 11.03.2020 - 17.06.2020 | Institut für Orientalistik | Mittwochs 18.30 - 20.00 Uhr | Campus der Uni Wien | Hörsaal des Instituts

Demonic Hermaphrodites, Infidel Catamites, and Poetaster Pimps: Sociocultural Tensions in the Early 17th-century Ottoman Elite as Seen through Invective Verse

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Throughout the premodern Islamicate cultural milieu, invective verse (*hijā'*, *hajw*, *hicv*) was a tool used widely among the sociocultural elite for the articulation of critiques and grievances both private and public in nature. While some iterations of invective were relatively decorous in terms of their language and approach, more often this highly instrumental literary mode was deliberately lewd, a choice meant to render its examples all the more efficacious against their target or targets. In this talk, I will examine one particular efflorescence of Islamicate invective of this latter variety; namely, the rich and ribald invective corpus produced by and among the early 17th-century Ottoman sociocultural elite. Drawing on the procedures of critical discourse analysis, I will unpack how the terminology and approach used in this corpus reveal, with special clarity, the fault lines along which the Ottoman elite were dividing during this period, when that elite's identity was being consciously reformulated in response to administrative, economic, and social adversities. In this way, the talk will not merely shed light on the largely unstudied corpus of Ottoman invective verse, but, more broadly and significantly, will show how this highly topical mode of poetry can expose the contours of how sociocultural tensions come to be expressed, and subsequently reinforced, through literary production.

Bio

Michael D. Sheridan currently holds a position as Visiting Assistant Professor in the Cultures, Civilizations and Ideas program at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey. He received his Ph.D. in 2018 with the dissertation entitled "'I curse no one without cause': Identity, Power, Rivalry, and Invective in the Early 17th-century Ottoman Court," which he is currently preparing as a book. His research concentrates broadly on comparative cultural history and literature in early modern Europe and the Near East, particularly on the interplay among the profound historical transformations, intra- and intersocial tension and conflicts, and reactionary and radical tendencies in historiographical and literary discourses during this era. His most recent publications are *Ottoman Explorations of the Nile* (with Robert Dankoff and Nuran Tezcan; London: Gingko Library, 2018), a translation and analysis of the traveler Evliya Çelebi's journey along the Nile River and his accompanying map, and the book chapter "Defining and Defaming the Other in Early Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Invective" (in the book *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018). He has also published a translation of the collected verse of Sultan Mehmed II.