

American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages

Newsletter January 2018

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Nice Yillara! Happy New Year!

When I was a prep student at Keirtepe Anatolian Teacher Training Highschool 27 years ago, we were immersed in English so much that in December, I wondered why an English word "nice" and a Turkish word "yillara" meaning "years" appeared on a billboard in Lüleburgaz to wish people a happy new year. After sharing this odd expression with my friends, it didn't take long for me to realize that "nice" is also a Turkish word meaning "many".

As you might have seen the announcements in the AATT mailing list or our Facebook page, there are several opportunities to study Turkish in an intensive setting in prestigious universities in the US. I would strongly encourage you to remind your students to take advantage of intensive language learning this summer by applying for FLAS if it is offered at your institution. Although the opportunities to study Turkish in Turkey started to disappear in the last few years, the alternative locations like Azerbaijan and Cyprus have emerged as viable options.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will find the descriptions and reviews of several gatherings that took place within three days in November 2017 in Washington, DC. In addition to the successful 2nd AATT Conference on November 17, we had the 13th AATT Graduate Student Pre-conference and 32nd AATT Annual Meeting at Georgetown University on November 18. The annual MESA-AATT Roundtable was another successful event that brought us together on November 19th. I am excited to share the news that we are hoping to organize the 3rd AATT conference and the 14th AATT Graduate Student Pre-Conference in November 2018 in Austin, Texas. Tune in for details in the coming months.

In closing, on behalf of AATT, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Uli Schamiloglu for serving as the President of AATT over many years. While thanking Funda Derin who finished her term as the Executive Board member, it's my pleasure to welcome Esra Prodolac as the new Executive Board member. Last but not least, I would like to thank everybody who helped make 2017 a successful year for AATT. It seems like team spirit and selfless commitment/devotion of like-minded people played an important role in our success.

Wishing you all the best year,
Ercan Balci

AATT has increased its member base, kept a balanced budget and met its financial obligations throughout the fiscal year. We continue growing and adding new members to our association. Our revenues are growing as well. We have grown our total membership dues; that is institutional and individual members, by almost 50% compared to the previous year. We have strong numbers and we are aiming to improve even more.

We thank all our members, our supporting and sustaining member institutions. The institutions below have supported AATT with generous grants and/or membership fees: Institutional membership process, granting funds take time and effort. We appreciate the support and cooperation as always and this year special thanks go to: **The Institute of Turkish Studies**, Sinan Ciddi; **Georgetown University**, Sylvia Önder; **University of Pennsylvania**, MEC Firoozeh Kashani Sabet; **University of Arizona, Center For Middle Eastern Studies**, Julie Ellison and Dr. Anne-Megan Betteridge-Young; **Boston University**, Roberta Micallef; **University of Texas at Austin**, Jeannette Okur; and **Stanford University**, Ebru Ergul, Burcu Karahan, and Burçak Keskin from **Abbasi Program** who worked hard for Stanford University's institutional membership.

We also thank all the support during AATT and Pre-Conferences in **Georgetown University** especially to **Meriem Tikue and Sylvia Onder** for their work and all their support, not only financially but also with their time and valuable suggestions and input for the success of conferences, are priceless.

We also thank very much to our individual member **Dr. Sylvia Onder** for her generous institutional level personal donation to AATT. Her donation was beyond the regular membership dues.

I also would like to thank **Dr Erika Gilson's** tireless efforts and work for AATT. AATT owes her a lot.

Thanks to all our members for the support you provide to this institution. And for everything you do including paying your dues timely and helping us sustain a strong financial standing.

We also would like to thank outgoing President **Dr. Uli Schamiloglu** who has been a great leader and a guide for so many years. While we will miss him, we are sure he will extend his guidance to AATT always. We wish him all the best in his endeavors in Kazakhstan.

Feride Hatiboğlu
University of Pennsylvania

Professor Uli Schamiloglu, our long-time president, resigns.



On November 18, 2017 at the 13th Pre-conference at Georgetown University, Prof. Schamiloglu who is now at the Nazarbayev University in Kazakistan, announced that he would henceforth not be available to serve AATT as president. Considering the distances involved, we could hardly expect Uli to continue in the position he has held since first appointed to the presidency in 2003. Since our founding, we have had two presidents, Prof. Kathleen R.F. Burrill, and Prof. Uli Schamiloglu, both among the founding members of AATT.

Twice elected to serve on the executive board, for the 1994-1997 academic year and again for 2001-2004, Uli has been very involved throughout the years: he was instrumental in starting the Graduate Student Pre-Conferences, and being a bridge between the Central Eurasian Studies Society and AATT.

Everyone at AATT appreciates the time and effort Uli gave to our field. He was someone we could always count on, even if it came to the last minute: he always came through. We will miss his wise guidance, and the fact that we could rely on his experience and expertise in the field of Turkic languages. But we will also miss him as the warm and considerate person he is.

We wish him much success in the new venture at Nazarbayev University, and will support him in any way we can.

Erika H Gilson

Past Conferences

The Second AATT Conference: Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching Turkic Languages and Literatures

Tuğba Yıldırım

The 2nd AATT Conference on “Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching Turkic Languages and Literatures” took place at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. on November 17th, 2017. As an organizing committee member, I am glad to provide a holistic review of this one-day international event.

Our first AATT Conference held at Harvard University last year received very positive feedback. Following that, as organizing committee, we invited proposals on the themes of “New approaches to the teaching of Turkic languages and literatures, World-readiness for Turkic languages, Perceptions and perspectives on teaching Turkic languages and literatures, Use of technology in teaching Turkic languages, Curriculum development and textbook writing for Turkic Languages, and Teaching Turkic languages through literature”.

We were fortunate to receive 52 well-qualified submissions. In the process of reviewing and selecting the abstracts, the selection committee narrowed this number down to 21 exceptional proposals on the basis of substance, relevance, originality, and applicability.

However, as the conference was approaching, we were regrettably informed that a few presenters from Turkey would not be able to attend due to unexpected political issues, which resulted in visa restrictions between Turkey and the USA. This led to last minute program changes.

Nevertheless, we were able to start the conference as planned. Following the AATT Panel on “Collaboration with Other LCTLs”, there were four parallel sessions covering the themes of “Use of Technology in Teaching Turkish,” “Curriculum Development and Textbook Writing in Turkic Languages”, “Approaches to Teaching Turkic Languages,” and “Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching Turkic Languages and Literatures”. Our dynamic group of presenters and panelists provided in-depth perspectives drawn from their invaluable experiences and best practices. It was deeply inspiring to be surrounded by so many scholars of Turkic languages from various institutions around the world. Additionally, this day provided a unique chance to build an international network and foster collaboration.

On behalf of AATT, I would like to express gratitude to all those who made this event a reality. Since the AATT Conference is an annual event, we look forward to seeing you again in November 2018.



Past Conferences

The Thirteenth AATT Graduate Student Pre-Conference

Sylvia Önder

The Thirteenth AATT Graduate Student Pre-Conference was held in the Mortara Center of Georgetown University on Saturday, November 18, 2017 in conjunction with the start of the Middle East Studies Association annual conference. The conference is sponsored through the generosity of the Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS) with additional support this year from Georgetown University's National Resource Center on the Middle East and North Africa, a Title VI Center funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Introductory remarks were made by local host Sylvia Wing Önder, AATT President Emerita Erika Gilson, and current AATT President Uli Schamiloglu, who joined the conference all the way from Astana, Kazakhstan.

This year, there were eight graduate students presenting papers in a range of subjects from Ottoman philosophy and calligraphy to Turkish language teaching in Taiwan and from Contemporary Turkish literature to on-line Ottoman language affinity groups. The impact of politics on the media in Turkey was explored, as were the profiles and uses of provincial archaeology museums and the Ottomanesque edifices of recent construction.

Rosabel Ansari, Georgetown University: "Greek into Ottoman via Arabic: Greek scientific and philosophical vocabulary in Mecdi's Hadâiku'ş-Şekâik"; **Rao Mohsin Noor**, University of Chicago: "A Shared Episteme: Resemblance, Calligraphic Knowledge and Confessionalization in Mustafa Âli's Menakib-i Hunarverân and Qâdi Ahmad's Gulistân-i Hunar"; **Matthew Chovanec**, University of Texas, at Austin: "21st Century Ottoman: The Ottoman Turkish Linguistic Revival in Digital Affinity Spaces"; **Yao-Kai Chi**, University of Wisconsin-Madison: "From acemi to uzman: The

identity construction of a non-native Turkish language teacher"; **Claire Baytaş**, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign: "Memory, Place, the Individual, and the Collective in the Writing of Karin Karakaşlı"; **Britt van Paepeghem**, U Minnesota-Twin Cities: "On Display for No One to See: Heritage Artifact Repatriation, New Museums and the Dissemination of Cultural Value in Turkey"; **Bianca Brown**, University of Pennsylvania: "Visual Culture: Communicating Neo-Ottoman Identity in Contemporary Turkey"; and **Elizabeth Pertner**, George Washington University: "Media Moguls and Political Patrons: Media and Democracy in Turkey 1980-2012."

The conference organizers were very pleased to invite Princeton University PhD student **Varak Ketsemanian** and Stockholm University Institute of Turkish Studies Professor **Jenny White** to discuss the papers. Their insights and suggestions for deepening the projects were very on-point and appreciated by the audience and the presenters.

Four out of the eight presenters were previous recipients of the ARIT-BU Fellowship for Advanced Turkish -- proving that this source of language study and this pre-conference tradition work well together to support graduate students from around the United States.

The presenting graduate students had been invited to join the AATT professionals leaving their Friday conference the night before to enjoy a top-quality dinner at local restaurant Café Divan. This mixing of educational levels, ages, and institutional affiliations is a wonderful part of the pre-conference event and strengthens the field as a whole across the US and beyond. With Turkish breakfast and lunch, a delightful visiting infant, and general camaraderie, the thirteenth AATT Graduate Student Pre-conference has taken its place in the annals of Turkish and Turkic Studies.

Summer Language Programs

Indiana University Summer Language Workshop

The Indiana University Summer Language Workshop is now accepting applications for intensive summer courses in: Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, and Persian, as well as 16 other less-commonly taught languages.

Arabic and Turkish are taught in special, extra-intensive courses developed and managed in conjunction with IU's Flagship Language programs.

* All Workshop participants pay in-state tuition.

* Classes run May 29 or June 4 - July 27, 2018.

(Start date depends on course; see <http://languageworkshop.indiana.edu> for details)

* Courses cover one year of language instruction; students earn transferable IU undergrad or grad credit.

* Language-dorm housing available for Flagship languages and selected others.

* Extensive in-language and cross-language co-curricular programming.

* Graduate and undergraduate funding available:

-- Project GO scholarships for ROTC students of Arabic, Persian, or Turkish

-- FLAS funding for Arabic, Persian, and Turkish

-- Friends of the Workshop scholarships for all others.

Early admissions rounds take place in December and January, with rolling admissions thereafter until May 1.

Scholarship and Fellowship application deadlines: February 1, 2018.

(Exact deadline varies by program, see <http://languageworkshop.indiana.edu> for details).

For more information or to apply, visit <http://languageworkshop.indiana.edu> today.

Questions?

Contact languageworkshop@indiana.edu or 812-855-2889.

University of Arizona summer program in Turkish in the Mediterranean

The University of Arizona will be holding a Turkish in the Mediterranean program summer 2018. The program is an eight-week summer program based in Famagusta, Northern Cyprus. The Turkish in the Mediterranean courses will be held on the campus of Eastern Mediterranean University, one of Cyprus's most preeminent institutions of higher education. Students can earn University of Arizona credit for Turkish language coursework.

The classes offered include: Beginning Turkish, Intermediate Turkish, and Advanced Turkish along with a political history of the island.

The application deadline is: February 25, 2018.

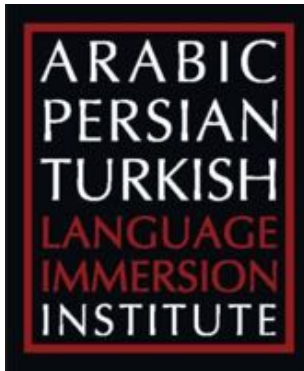
Please go to: <https://cmes.arizona.edu/studyabroad/turkish-mediterranean> and push the apply now button.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email sbs-cmes@email.arizona.edu or give us a call at 520-621-5450.



Summer Language Programs

Arabic, Persian, and Turkish Language Immersion Institute (APTLII)



The UW-Madison Arabic, Persian, and Turkish Language Immersion Institute (APTLII) is a residential summer language immersion program for undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals. Courses are offered for academic credit at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels (depending on sufficient enrollment). Students commit to using their target language as their only means of communication for the entire summer – in class, in their shared living space on campus, at meals, and at co-curricular activities that combine to create a language immersion experience.

Each 8-week language class is equivalent to two semesters of study, with full academic year credit. Instruction is given in small groups taught by native speakers and experienced language teachers. The classes are intensive, involving a minimum of 4.5 hours contact hours Mondays through Fridays, plus extra hours for homework. In addition to formal classes, on most afternoons and evenings students participate in co-curricular activities covering a range of topics relating to the history and culture of the region. This combination of formal classes, cultural and language activities, movies, field trips, and language tables provide students with opportunities to expand their vocabulary and practice using the language in different settings.

Georgetown University Summer Turkish Class

- Non-intensive Intermediate Turkish
- Courses taught by dedicated and experienced academic year faculty
- Small classes equipped with latest language learning technology
- Weekly conversation hour & movie screening. Field trips and cultural activities in Georgetown and around DC.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Partiel-tuition scholarship available for visiting (non GU) students
- FLAS eligible
- GU graduate students can apply for Graduate School Language Scholarship through their home department.

HOW TO APPLY

Please visit summersessions.georgetown.edu for more information on how to apply

For questions, please contact Ms. Meriem Tikue at mmt43@georgetown.edu

2018 DATES

Session I: June 4 - July 6

Session II: July 9 - August 10



Elizabeth Nelson's Summer Language Study In Turkey*

Emily Nielsen

Six weeks of living in another country is a significant way that liberal arts students can apply their education to the world around them. Elizabeth Nelson, a government senior with a minor in Turkish, traveled to Izmir, Turkey, last summer, immersing herself in the language and culture of the country. Nelson is from Denver, Pennsylvania, which has a population of less than 4,000. "It is the definition of small town and to be honest, I never thought I would be in Texas, let alone go to Turkey," Nelson said.

With funding from the humanities honors program, as well as the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association's 2017 Halide Edip Adivar scholarship, Nelson was able to study at a language offshoot of Ankara University called Tömer and experience the Turkish community firsthand. Read more about Nelson's experiences in Turkey in the Q&A below.

What was your experience in Turkey like?

Not to be cheesy but it was really life changing. I had done solo-travel before, but this was nothing like that. I was in an entirely different country by myself. Of course, they have programs that offer more assistance, but I enjoy solo-travel. I wanted this experience without tour guides, and I'm glad I did it this way. I definitely missed out on some history lessons, but going by myself let me tailor my trip to me.

How did the culture differ?

Turkey is a Muslim country, but it is not as different as a lot of people said it would be. I went during Ramadan and everyone told me it was going to be a ghost town, but it really wasn't. My advice to those interested in Middle Eastern studies is leave your preconceptions on the tarmac.

What were your courses at Tömer like?

They were definitely a different learning experience for me. I learned a lot of personal responsibility in my education. I've always participated in class but these classes were largely mandatory answers. You were

called on, you didn't raise your hand. This was hard for me at first, but I learned a bunch about my own strengths and weaknesses.

What was your favorite moment of your time abroad?

I had this moment in the Atatürk airport in Istanbul. I was late for a flight to Izmir. I was running through the airport to catch my plane, and I realized that I was 22 years old by myself in Turkey with a year of Turkish under my belt. It changed who I am fundamentally.

What was the most challenging part of your trip?

The most challenging part of this trip was the first night. I had a bit of a freak out when I went to the corner store and tried talking to the attendant. We couldn't understand each other, and I got really upset. I returned to where I was staying, head low.

When I finally asked one of my Turkish housemates about it a week or so later, she explained that the man was from Iran and that she sometimes couldn't understand him either!

How did your experiences abroad change your outlook?

I fell in love with solo-travel. I had done it before, but this trip solidified my love for it. I really recommend it to any adventure seekers out there.

Educationally, I feel a lot more confident speaking, laughing, arguing and even singing in Turkish. I'm also trying to do next semester—my final semester before graduation—at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul.

I spent most of my education wondering how I can combine my passions and my skills. Study abroad helped me fuse the two into a real possible career path.

How do you think study abroad factors into a liberal arts education?

If the goal of a liberal arts education is to spark a fire and make a well-rounded graduate, study abroad adds fuel to that fire. It made me step out of my pre-conceptions of the area I was studying, the language I was speaking and who I am.

**Special thanks to Emily Nielsen & Elizabeth Nelson for letting us reprint [the original story from Life & Letters](#), and to Jeannette Okur for making it happen.*

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