



# THE INSTITUTE *of* TURKISH STUDIES

## THE VERNACULAR, THE MODERN AND THE USEFUL: SCIENCE VERSUS THE ‘ULEMĀ’ IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Asst. Prof. B. Harun Küçük, University of Pennsylvania



*Co-sponsored by:*

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

School of Foreign Service

Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies

**Thursday, September 25**

**2:30-4:00 PM**

CCAS Boardroom (ICC 241)

Georgetown University

This talk focuses on anti-‘ulemā’ rhetoric in eighteenth-century Ottoman naturalistic texts. The historical analysis of Ottoman science has generally privileged the ‘ālim and the medrese and, remained within the bounds of medieval categories such as the rational and the transmitted sciences. Yet, a number of Ottoman naturalists of the eighteenth century operated outside the knowledge profession and, deployed the vocabulary of practice, expertise, usefulness and experience in an effort to seize epistemic authority from the ‘ulemā’. Many authors from Hayatizade Mustafa Feyzi to İbrahim Müteferrika targeted the intellectual traditions of Islam, while others, such as Ömer Şifai and Abbas Vesim, weaved a social critique of ‘ulemā’ privilege into their works.

**Dr. Küçük** is a historian of science, a 2012 PhD graduate of the University of California, San Diego. He received a 2005 M.A. from Sabancı University, Istanbul, and a 2003 B.A. from St John’s College, Annapolis. Currently, he is an assistant professor in the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania. In 2012-2013, Küçük was a lecturer at Şehir University, Istanbul. Since 2013 has been a post-doctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. Küçük is an accomplished scholar who does creative and serious work on the history of science in the early modern Ottoman Empire. His dissertation, “The early Enlightenment in Istanbul,” won the 2013 Chancellor’s Dissertation Medal for Best Dissertation in Arts & Humanities from the University of California, San Diego.

*A Light Lunch will be served*



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