

MIGRATION, MINORITIES & REGIONAL IDENTITIES

Turkey and the Black Sea region are located between different geographical regions such as the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Their location perforce constituted them as a physical bridge and traditionally pitted them at the crossroads between different historical forces and empires. This was as much a feature in prehistoric as in historical and even contemporary times, when trans-boundary migration remains an important domestic and international concern. The interplay between these diverse historical forces and migratory patterns has been a significant factor in shaping these countries' domestic and social make-up over time. It played an important role in forming cultural identities whether at individual, regional, national or supra-national level. Simultaneously, these processes in relation to migrant communities have also influenced the neighbouring areas around Turkey and the Black Sea region. This Strategic Research Initiative aims to promote research interests across different academic disciplines that pertain to the themes of migration across time in Turkey and the Black Sea coastal region.

Sexualities in Roman Asia Minor

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A key concern within the discipline of Roman archaeology is the consequences of Roman imperialism on provincial communities. In recent times, one of the key questions for Romanists has been how provincial people generated, experienced, interpreted and responded to the socio-cultural and political forces of the Roman empire. It therefore comes as a surprise that the discipline has thus far remained only marginally concerned with sexualities in the imperial periphery. While our contemporary fascination with ancient sexualities is reflected in the numerous publications on this topic, archaeological and broader classical scholarship has generally been limited to the study of ancient texts and sexual imagery decorating luxury objects consumed by the elites of the city of Rome. This has produced an overwhelmingly static and elite-centric archaeological account of Roman sexuality. Yet sexuality was one of the crucial mechanisms in imperial situations, and is therefore integral to our understanding of the cross-cultural interactions, dynamics and changes in social identities in Roman provincial settings.

In my dissertation, titled 'Sexualities in Roman provinces: creating identities through sexual representations in colonial situations', I aim to shed light on the underexplored archaeological field of Roman regional sexual relations, practices and identities in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of peoples' lives during the period of Roman rule. I do so through the study of the nature of pictorial representations of humans engaged in sexual acts

and of myths with sexual narratives on mass-manufactured moulded terracotta lamps and fine tableware from the western and Mediterranean parts of the empire, including Roman Asia Minor.

Terracotta lamps were manufactured and used across the Roman world, and were accessible, for a prolonged period of time, to people of different social strata. During this period, lamps decorated with sexual iconography offered diverse pictorial decorations, ranging from mythological sexual pursuits to representations of humans engaging in sexual activity, including occasional depictions of bestiality. The sexual imagery decorating these ordinary, everyday objects is characterised by the apparent standardisation of the iconographic repertoire that is Romano-Hellenistic in nature. Nevertheless, preliminary study of the material from two sites located in Roman Asia Minor – Pergamon and Ephesus –



Roman terrace houses, Ephesus

reveals occurrences of unusual depictions of kissing couples engaged in sexual acts and the absence of otherwise common representations of dwarves in a range of coital positions. When compared and contrasted to the material from other provincial sites, this suggests that the production and consumption of certain sexual imagery is associated with specific provincial sites and that different provincial communities demonstrated distinct affinities towards certain types of sexual imagery.

In my study, I investigate continuity and change in the repertoire of sexual iconography over a period of five hundred years and also investigate patterns of consumption and the deposition of the cultural objects upon which such imagery occurs. In approaching sexuality as a lived experience informed by bodily representations and practices, I elucidate the social function and symbolic meaning of sexual imagery and associated material culture, and assert that they were used as a mechanism for producing, transforming and negotiating sexualities and gender hierarchies as provincial communities were integrated into the new and changing socio-political landscape of the Roman empire.

Generous support from the British Institute in Ankara, in the form of a 2015 Strategic Research Initiatives Study Grant, has allowed me to engage in three weeks of full-time research in Turkey, which has proved invaluable in achieving key research objectives for my dissertation. During my time in Turkey I was able to visit the archaeological museums and storerooms of Ephesus and Pergamon, study the material from the two sites and consult with archaeologists working on the material from the two excavations. The Austrian and German archaeological teams at Ephesus and Pergamon were extremely welcoming and keen to assist my specific interests and needs during my stay. This fieldwork trip has significantly enriched my PhD project and I am confident that I have broadened my approach to my research and have grown as an academic; this would not have been possible without the grant from the British Institute at Ankara. My time spent in Turkey was highly enjoyable and I am immensely grateful to the Institute for providing me with the opportunity to undertake such a successful research trip.

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Sun, sea and smack? Smugglers in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman Mediterranean

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When I began my fellowship at the Institute in September 2014, Ankara was something of a mystery to me – my work had always focused on Istanbul. From the perspective of the characters inhabiting my PhD thesis, which studies in detail the occupation of the Ottoman capital by Allied troops during the years 1918–1923, Ankara (or Angora) was a far-off centre of sedition, nationalist opposition and anti-imperialist conspiracy. Indeed, my thesis to some extent can be read as an explanation of the shift of the capital to central Anatolia and out of a city seen by 1923 to be irredeemably tarnished by Ottoman decadence and European imperialism.

While my heart and my head are still buried in Istanbul, I've come to darkly appreciate this city, looking as it does like a ready-made film-set for a state capital in an imaginary totalitarian future – *Bladerunner* (Kızılay's crowds), *1984* (the big-brother eyes staring at you at the city's metro stations) and *Alphaville* (the bakanlık buildings with innumerable tiny windows) rolled into one. As autumn now turns to winter, the city is as grey as ever, a contrasting backdrop to my current research on the very colourful history of smuggling in the eastern Mediterranean.

After finishing my PhD at Cambridge (a city that is perhaps the absolute opposite of Ankara in appearance and atmosphere) in May 2014, I finally had the time to begin pursuing what had been a side-interest in maritime smuggling. I had spent four years working on the meticulously planned (if not executed) military logistics that spread across the eastern Mediterranean during the First World War and its aftermath. Uncovering the secretive and dispersed smuggling networks that overlay, criss-crossed and succeeded them required a different archival approach.

To piece together these secretive transnational connections I have had to draw on multiple sources. My first leads were the documents written by British and French military authorities during the occupation of Istanbul, detailing the arrest of mostly Russian cocaine traffickers who made the most of the opportunities provided by a city in crisis. As Allied soldiers were consuming and at times aiding in the traffic of these drugs, military authorities in the city became acutely concerned. Nightclubs, like *La rose noire*, *Le Parisiana* and *L'oiseau bleu*, where cocaine was traded were put under surveillance and the Allies effected a number of arrests under martial law, targeting employees working in the city's recrudescing hospitality and entertainment sectors.

The occupied city's peculiar nightlife, booming from the demand of soldiers' wages but more tightly regulated than ever under the powers of martial law, was one of the major topics of my PhD thesis. Thanks to the support of the British Institute at Ankara, I was able to organise a day-long