Christine Philliou:

Cultural Politics and the Question of Opposition in Twentieth-Century Turkey

The political fault lines in Turkey today seem quite clear. But if we look back to the moment the Republic was founded in 1923, the contours of political authority and opposition are quite different. In this presentation I will discuss the significance of the "Armistice period" of Ottoman and modern Turkish history (1918-1922) through an examination of satirical and literary texts that were produced at the time and subsequently banned. The goal will be to better understand both the process of imperial devolution and the conflicted legacies of the recent Ottoman past in Turkey today.

Christine Philliou is Associate Professor of Ottoman History at Columbia University, where she has taught since 2006. Her recent book, Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution (2011) examined the tumultuous changes in the first half of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire, through the lens of an Orthodox Christian elite known as Phanariots. Her current work has to do with the changing nature of political opposition in the twentieth-century transition from the Ottoman Empire to Modern Turkey. She has also published on comparative empires and the Ottoman legacy in the Middle East and Balkans.