‘SLOW VIOLENCE’ IN THE HAMIDIAN PERIOD: PEASANTS AND PASTORALISTS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Violence towards Armenians in the early-twentieth century Ottoman Empire has been understood by scholars as a clash between Muslims and Christians, perpetuated by Kurdish nomadic tribes against agrarian Armenians. This talk complicates this claim, arguing it was a ‘clash of environmental economies’ rather than a ‘clash of cultures’. Evidence of the impacts of this clash emerges through an interdisciplinary investigation of military and commercial records held by the British National Archives—including reports by reconnaissance missions prior to WWI offering extensive documentation of land use, tribal settlement patterns, and water resources—alongside Ottoman documents pertaining to policy, provincial reports, crime statistics, and population surveys. Utilizing these rich documentary sources, this study proposes an alternative explanation of the roots of violence in the early twentieth century Ottoman Empire, challenging earlier understandings of the violent breakdown of centuries of interdependency between these communities. By considering the integral role of environmental factors in inter-communal violence, the project critically reassesses our understanding of Kurds and Armenians in the late Ottoman Empire, and at the same time contributes to ongoing efforts to connect environmental and political history the Middle East and beyond.

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To attend, CLICK HERE on Friday October 9th at 2:00 PM
Meeting ID: 840 4985 0820        Passcode: 921551