SARAH THOMSEN VIERRA (UNC-Chapel Hill)

From the Hinterhof to the Street Front: The Place and Purpose of Turkish Mosques in West Germany

(In conjunction with the UNC Center for European Studies)

As the Turkish immigrant population in the Federal Republic of Germany shifted from a temporary workforce to an established, multi-generational community, its mosques, too, developed to reflect the changing needs and interests of their users. In her presentation Vierra examines the mosque as a religious, cultural, and social space for Germany’s Turkish community, focusing in particular on its contested location both apart from and within German society. She explores the intersections of purpose, use and physicality, and analyzes how these elements affected Turkish Muslims’ belonging in the FRG from the 1970s to the early 2000s. In so doing, she shows how the mosque served both as a space apart from German society and as a bridge that enabled Turkish Muslims to feel more settled in their new home.

SARAH THOMSEN VIERRA recently received her doctorate in Modern European history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she currently serves as an instructor. Her dissertation, entitled “At Home in Almanya? Turkish-German Spaces of Belonging in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1961-1990,” examines the role of space and place in the construction of belonging of Turkish immigrants and their children in West Germany.

5:00 — 7:00 pm • UNC Institute for the Arts and Humanities • Hyde Hall

Refreshments and drinks will be served after all seminars.

Please register with Stephen Milder (smilder@unc.edu) in a timely fashion.

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