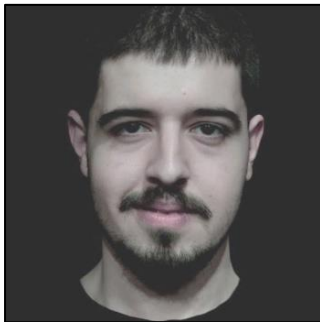




**Mustafa Yildiz, The 2016-2017
Rafael Rodriguez Golden Age Fellow
at International House, UC Berkeley**



My name is Mustafa Yildiz and I was born in Denizli, Turkey, to parents of civil servants who were themselves coming from families with a long tradition of viticulture. Growing up in a small town cherished with nature and history, I was always amazed by languages and medieval history from an early age.

As a BA student I studied Translation Studies at one of the best universities of Turkey, which equipped me with good command of English and French languages. When I decided to pursue an academic career, I switched my field to Byzantine history. For this purpose, I heavily studied Ancient and Byzantine Greek.

During my first years at Berkeley I also intend to further my knowledge of German and Latin to be fully appreciative of the primary and secondary sources I would encounter in the coming years. As for my artistic interests, I am deeply interested in literature and theater, both as a follower and practitioner. Aside from penning many short stories and poems with an amateur zeal, I have acted in several plays as well as founding a fledgling theater company based in Istanbul. After staging a play on the life of a young woman who committed suicide, I had to quit this enterprise with more serious concern for the thesis I was working on. But that does not mean I will be away from the stages forever.

As a PhD student at UC-Berkeley I cannot wait to join this multicultural community. I believe that the years I am going to spend at Berkeley will be among the most unforgettable ones in my life and prepare me for an enriching academic career.



The Rafael Rodriguez Golden Age Fellowship was established in 1989, and serves as a model for the current Gateway Fellowship program. This fellowship was made possible by the generosity of I-House alumni from the “Golden Age” (1946-1952), who created the scholarship in honor of fellow alumnus Rafael Rodriguez of Costa Rica. The fund provides for a full room and board grant for one entering graduate (Ph.D.) international student of great promise who may lack the financial resources to come to Cal and is deemed likely to benefit from, and contribute to, life at I-House. The recipient receives paid room and board fees for twelve months, a stipend from International House, and tuition and fees paid by the corresponding academic department for the first academic year. Recipients are selected annually by the Dean of UC Berkeley’s Graduate Division after faculty input.