

GIZEM ZENCIRCI

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Director of the Middle East Studies Program, Providence College
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[Google Scholar Page](#)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2024 Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Käte Hamburger Kolleg, Centre for Advanced Study Inherit. Heritage in Transformation, Research Fellow.
- 2020- Associate Professor of Political Science, Providence College.
- 2023- Director of the Middle East Studies program, Providence College.
- 2013-2020 Assistant Professor of Political Science, Providence College.
- 2012-2013 Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science, Amherst College.

EDUCATION

- 2013 Ph.D., Political Science, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- 2013 Graduate Certificate in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- 2004 MA, Political Science, Bilkent University, Turkey, *University Honors*.
- 2003 BA, Political Science, Bilkent University, Turkey, *University Honors*.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING EXPERTISE

Islamic Neoliberalism, Middle East Politics, Religious Politics, Civil Society, Politics of Charity, Welfare Regimes, Islamic Politics, Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies, Heritage Studies, Cultural Studies, Gender Studies, Ethnographic and Interpretive Methods, Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia.

BOOK

The Muslim Social: Islamic Neoliberalism and Governing Poverty in Turkey. 2024. Syracuse University Press.
<https://press.syr.edu/supressbooks/6109/muslim-social-the/>

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Zencirci Gizem. (Forthcoming). "Saving' Anatolian Girls: Nationalism, Neoliberalism, and Gender Community in Turkey." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*.
- Zencirci, Gizem and Catherine Herrold. (2022). "Project-Think and the Fragmentation and Defragmentation of Civil Society in Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 51 (3): 545-565.
- Zencirci Gizem. (2021) "A Just Economy? Unifying and Dividing the Islamic Intellectual Field in Neoliberal Turkey." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 89(3), 840-862.
- Zencirci, Gizem (2020) "Markets of Islam: Performative charity and the Muslim middle classes in Turkey," *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 13(5), 610-625.

Zencirci, Gizem (2019) “Affective Politics of Structural Adjustment: “Cruel Optimism” and Turhan Selcuk’s Cartoons in Turkey, 1983-1986,” *Journal of Social History*, 53 (1): 53-75.

Zencirci, Gizem (2015) “From Property to Civil Society: Historical Transformation of *Vakıfs* in Modern Turkey,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (47): 533-554.

Zencirci, Gizem (2015) “Illusory Debates: How the ‘*Sadaka* Culture’ Discourse Masked the Rise of Social Assistance in Turkey,” *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 43 (1-2): 125-150.

Zencirci, Gizem (2014) “Civil Society’s History: New Uses of Ottoman Heritage by the Justice of Development Party in Turkey,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 19.

Zencirci, Gizem (2012) “Secularism, Islam and the National Public Sphere: Politics of Commemorative Practices in Turkey” in *Visualizing Secularism and Religion: Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, India*. Eds. Alev Cinar, Srirupa Roy, Maha Yahya. University of Michigan Press.

Zencirci, Gizem (2008) “The Headscarf in Turkey in the Public and State Spheres,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 44 (5). (with Dilek Cindoglu)

WORK IN PROGRESS

Islam, Decoloniality, Heritage: The Politics of Reviving the Ottoman-Islamic Economy in Turkey (book manuscript)

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS

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| 2024 | InHerit-Heritage in Transformation Residential Fellowship, Käte Hamburger Kolleg, Advanced Research Centre, Berlin, Germany. |
| 2023-2024 | Civil Discourse Faculty Fellow, Providence College. |
| 2022 | Interdisciplinary Scholar Award, School of Arts and Sciences, Providence College. |
| 2018 & 2019 | Co-recipient of an Equity and Engagement Grant, Office of Institutional Diversity, Providence College. |
| 2017 | Summer Scholars Award, Providence College. |
| 2017 | Research Grant for a project titled: “Tracing Asian Connections: An Analysis of Knowledge Production and Islamic Charity in Turkey and Malaysia,” Providence College. |
| 2017 | Curriculum Development Grant for developing an undergraduate course titled: “Globalization in the Muslim World,” Global Religion Research Initiative, University of Notre Dame. |
| 2015 | TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) 1001 Research Grant (~ \$100,000) for a multi-year project on Islamic political and economic thought. |
| 2013 | Joyce E. Berkman Award for Best Paper in Advanced Feminist Studies, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, UMass, Amherst. |
| 2011-2012 | Science of Generosity Dissertation Fellowship, University of Notre Dame. |
| 2011 | ARNOVA Dissertation Fellowship (\$1,000). |
| 2006 | Graduate Student Best Paper Award, University of Massachusetts Amherst. |

BOOK REVIEWS

- 2024 “A review of Timur Hammond’s ‘Placing Islam: Geographies of Connection in Twentieth Century Istanbul.’” *Reading Religion* <https://readingreligion.org/9780520387430/placing-islam/>.
- 2024 “A review of Florian Weigand’s ‘Waiting for Dignity: Legitimacy and Authority in Afghanistan.’” *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 53, Issue 1.
- 2015 “A review of ‘Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony.’” *Review of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 49: (2).
- 2014 “A review of Mona Atia’s ‘Building A House in Heaven.’” *Sociology of Islam*, Vol. 2: (3-4).

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- 2016 “Lessons from Turkey: Populist Nationalism and the Threat to Democracy.” *Duck of Minerva*.
- 2014 “Neoliberal Islam and Emergent Forms of Social Service Provision in Turkey,” Memo for the Islamist Social Services Workshop, POMEPS, September 23, 2014.

INVITED TALKS

- 2018 “Humanitarian Responsibility and the Muslim Poor,” at the *Islamist Movements in Indonesia and Turkey: Mobilization, Islamization and Legitimacy Workshop* at Northwestern University, Chicago, USA.
- 2015 “Reimagining the Ottoman Past, Depoliticizing Civil Society: Islamic Neoliberalism and the *Waqf* Civilization Rhetoric in Turkey,” Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- 2014 “The Market and The Mosque: Islamic Neoliberalism and Emergent Forms of Charity in Turkey,” presented at the *Islamist Movements and Social Services Workshop*, POMEPS (Project on Middle East Political Science), Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University, USA.
- 2010 “Geographies of Veiling: Post-Islamism, Secularism and Statehood in Turkey” presented at *New Mexico State University*, USA.

CONFERENCE

PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 “The Muslim Social: Islamic Neoliberalism and Governing Poverty in Turkey,” *Middle East Studies Association Conference*, Montreal. November 2023.
- 2022 “The Hidden Codes of Civilization:” Reviving Ottoman Ahi (Craft) Guilds and Rebuilding Islamic Business Ethics, *Middle East Studies Association Conference*, Denver. December 2022.
- 2022 Saving Anatolian Girls: Neoliberalism, Nationalism, and Paradoxes of Gendering Poverty. *New England Political Science Association Conference*. April 2022.
- 2021 “Muslim Intellectuals and Theorizing the ‘Islamic Economy’ in Turkey.” *Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics Conference*. Virtual. July 2021.

- 2021 “Muslim Intellectuals and Markets of Islam in Turkey.” *Turkish Political Thought Working Group*. Virtual. April 2021.
- 2021 “Project-Think?: A Critical Perspective on NGOs, Social Justice, and Democracy in the Middle East. *International Studies Association Annual Convention*. Virtual. April 2021.
- 2020 “Project-Think: Effects on Civil Society and Democracy in the Middle East.” *116th American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*. Virtual. September 2020.
- 2019 “Between Heritage and Audit: Islamic Materialities and the Revival of Waqfs in Turkey and Malaysia,” *Social Science History Association Annual Meeting*, Chicago, Illinois.
- 2019 “Project Think? A Critical Perspective on NGOs, Democracy, and Development in the Middle East,” *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, New Orleans, Louisiana. (with Catherine Herrold).
- 2019 “Islamic Humanitarianism and Shifting Representations of the Muslim Poor in Turkey,” at the *Islamist Movements in Indonesia and Turkey: Mobilization, Islamization, and Legitimacy Workshop*, Northwestern University, March 2019.
- 2018 “Good Governance according to Islamic NGOs in Turkey: Political Autonomy or Technical Expertise?” *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, San Antonio, Texas.
- 2018 “Populist Reform and Social Assistance in Turkey,” *Northeast Middle East Politics Working Group Meeting*, Harvard University.
- 2018 “Islamic Civil Society and the Rise of the Muslim Individual,” *International Studies Association Annual Meeting*, San Francisco.
- 2017 “Islamic Political Theory and Ottoman Civil Society in Turkey,” *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Washington D.C.
- 2016 “Islamic Capitalism and Moral Narratives of Humanitarian Generosity in Turkey,” *New England Political Science Association Conference*, Newport.
- 2015 “Producing Knowledge, Democratizing the Middle East: Turkey, Indonesia and the Model Muslim Democracy Discourse,” *ISA-Northeast Conference*, Providence.
- 2015 “Rethinking Wealth, Reconfiguring Piety: Neoliberal Islam and the ‘Ottoman’ Culture of Generosity in Turkey,” *North East Middle East Politics Working Group Meeting*, University of Connecticut.
- 2014 “Pro-poor and pro-market? Market Islam and New Politics of Islamic Generosity in Turkey,” *Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting*, Washington D.C.
- 2014 “Neoliberal Welfare: Islamism, Secularism and New Cultures of Generosity in Turkey,” *POMEPS Junior Scholars Book Manuscript Development Workshop*, Yale University, New Haven.
- 2013 “A Neoliberal ‘Logic of Relief’ or a Post-neoliberal ‘Logic of Rights’? An Analysis of the Welfare Regime in Turkey”, presented at the workshop “After Neoliberalism: The Future of Post-Neoliberal State and Society and Asia,” *SSRC Inter-Asian Connections IV: Istanbul Conference*, Istanbul.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2022 Panel Organizer, “Mapping AKP’s Civilizational Ideology in Turkey,” Middle East Studies Association Conference, December 2022, Denver, Colorado.
- 2018 Chair and Discussant of a panel titled “Modernizing Hegemony and Discourse,” Middle East Studies Association Conference, November 2018, San Antonio, Texas.

- 2018 Panel Organizer, “Civil Society and Governance in the Middle East,” Middle East Studies Association Conference, November 2018, San Antonio, Texas.
- 2018 “The Cruel Optimism of Neoliberalism: Political Cartoons in Turkey during the mid-1980s,” Political Science Department Brown Bag Lunch Series, Providence College.
- 2017 Chair and Discussant of a panel titled “Comparative Welfare Policy,” *New England Political Science Association Conference*, April 2017, Providence, RI.
- 2017 “Legitimizing Development: Shifting Notions of Welfare Policy in Turkey,” Summer Scholars’ Presentations, The School of Arts and Sciences, Providence College.
- 2016 “Making Capitalism Islamic: Market Piety and Moral Citizenship in Turkey,” Political Science Department Brown Bag Lunch Series, Providence College.
- 2014 Panel organizer, “Neoliberal Politics of Charity in the Middle East,” at the Middle East Studies Association Conference, 2014, Washington D.C.
- 2014 Participant at a roundtable titled: “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Islamic Charities,” at the Middle East Studies Association Conference, November 2014, Washington D.C.

**PROFESSIONAL
AFFILIATIONS**

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)

Middle East Studies Association (MESA)

American Political Science Association (APSA)

Northeast Middle East Studies Working Group

New Civilizationisms Project

New England Political Science Association (NEPSA)

1980s Network