**Pols 504: Turkish Social and Political Thought**

**Sabanci University**

**Spring 2024**

**Thursday 10:40-13:30 (SBS G050)**

**Instructors:**

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**Description:**

This graduate seminar traces the historical evolution of Turkish social and political thought from the pre-Ottoman period to the twentieth century. The goal of the seminar is not to impress upon students a single, overarching, pre-conceived narrative of that history but to be an open forum where instructors and students with different views and interests discuss different aspects and periods of that history.

The seminar will be co-taught by Abdurrahman Atçıl and Nedim Nomer. In four sessions, however, we will have also guest lecturers. Each session will start with a short presentation by one of the instructors, guest lecturer, or a graduate student, which will be followed by a question-and-answer session and then by an open discussion. So it is essential that students do all the reading assignments and actively take part in class discussions.

**Requirements:**

1. Attendance of all class meetings and active participation in class discussions
2. Preparation of at least one question for discussion each week
3. 2 response/opinion papers (no more than 500 words each) (10% of the final grade)
4. One or two short presentations (10% of the final grade)
5. A final research paper on a topic of your choice (80% of the final grade)

A response paper is a concise statement of your interpretation of a scholarly claim, concept, or view, which you come across in the readings. In that statement you would be expected to defend your stance against alternative interpretations. So a response paper is not a mere description or summary of a position; it is an argumentative defense of it.

**Recommended general readings about the topics of the course:**

-Caroline Finkel, Osman’s Dream: The History of the Ottoman Empire.

-Douglas A. Howard, A History of the Ottoman Empire.

-Suraiya Faroqhi, Approaching Ottoman History: An Introduction to the Sources.

-Halil İnalcık, The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600.

-Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, eds., An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 2 vols.

-Karen Barkey, Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective.

-M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire.

-Donald Quataert, The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922.

**Readings:**

Readings will be made available online in Su-Course

**Plan of the Course:**

Feb 15 General introduction

**1. Situating the history of Turkish social and political thought**

Feb 22 Peter E. Gordon, “What is intellectual history? A frankly partisan introduction to a frequently misunderstood field,” The Harvard Colloquium for Intellectual History (2012).

David Armitage, “The International turn in intellectual history” in Rethinking Modern Intellectual History (ed.) McMahon and Moyn (Oxford UP, 2014).

Andrew March, “What is comparative political theory?” The Review of Politics 71/4 (2009), 531-565

Alp Eren Topal & Einar Wigen, “Ottoman Conceptual History,” Contributions to the History of Concepts, 14/1 (2019), 93-114

Feb 29 Ayşe Zarakol, Before the West: The Rise and Fall of Eastern World Orders (Cambridge UP, 2022)

**2. Trajectories of Law and Statehood**

Mar 7 Cemal Kafadar, “The Ottoman Empire,” in European political thought 1450-1700: Religion, Law and Philosophy

Engin Akarlı, “The Ruler and Lawmaking in the Ottoman Empire,” in Law and Empire (ed.) Jeroen Duindam, Jill Diana Harries, Caronine Humfress, amd Hurtitz Nimrod (Brill, 2013), 87-109

Mar 14 Gülrü Necipoğlu, “A Kânûn for the State, A Canon for the Art: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman art and architecture” (1990)

Kaya Şahin, “Staging an Empire: An Ottoman Circumcision Ceremony as Cultural Performance,” The American Historical Review 123/2 (2018), 463-492

Hüseyin Yılmaz, “Containing Sultanic Authority: Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire before Westernization,” The Journal of Ottoman Studies 45 (2015), 231-264

Mar 21 Cumhur Bekar, “The Ottoman Revolution of 1661”: The Reconfiguration of Political Power under Mehmed IV and Köprülü Grand Viziers,” Journal of Early Modern History, 27/3 (2022), 224-253

Baki Tezcan, “The Second Empire: The Transformation of the Ottoman Polity in the Early Modern Era,” Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 29/3 (2009), 556–572

Mar 28 Tommaso Stefini, “Defining ‘Ottomans’ and ‘Foreigners:’ Venetian merchants, jurisdictional conflicts, and legal belonging in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul.” (forthcoming)

H. V. D. Maurits Boogert, “Resurrecting Homo Ottomanicus: The Constants and Variables of Ottoman Identity. Osmanlı Araştırmaları, 44 (2014), 9-20

Jessica M Marglin, "Extraterritoriality and Legal Belonging in the Nineteenth-Century Mediterranean". Law and History Review 39/4 (2021), 679-706

**Guest lecturer: Tommaso Stefini**

**3. Social orders, identities, forces and dynamics**

April 4 Aslıhan Gürbüzel, Taming the Messiah: The Formation of an Ottoman Political Public Sphere, 1600–1700(University of California Press, 2023)

**Guest lecturer: Aslıhan Gürbüzel**

April 11 **No class**

April 18 Terzioğlu, Sufis in the age of state-building and confessionalization” in The Ottoman World (ed.) Christine Woodhead (Routledge, 2013), 86-99

Baki Tezcan, “Ethnicity, race, religion, and social class,” in The Ottoman World (ed.) Christine Woodhead (Routledge, 2013), 159-170

Ali Yaycıoğlu, “Guarding Traditions and Laws--Disciplining Bodies and Souls: Tradition, Science, and Religion in the Age of Ottoman Reform,” Modern Asian Studies 52/5 (2018), 1543-1603

April 25 Nir Shafir, The Order and Disorder of Communication: Pamphlets and Polemics in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire (Stanford University Press, 2024)

**Guest lecturer: Nir Shafir**

**4. Modernity and constitutionalism**

May 2 Avi Rubin, Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity (Palgrave 2011)

Khaled Fahmy, In Quest of Justice: Islamic Law and Forensic Medicine in Modern Egypt (University of California Press, 2018), chapter 2.

May 9 Aylin Koçunyan, Negotiating the Ottoman Constitution, 1839-1876 (Leuven, 2018)

Hüseyin Yılmaz, “From *Serbestiyet* to *Hürriyet*: Ottoman Statesmen and the Question of Freedom during the Late Enlightenment.” Studia Islamica 111 (2016), 202-230

**5. Power of the People**

May 16 Metin Metinsoy, The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-1938 (Cambridge UP, 2022)

May 23 Alp Eren Topal & Einar Wigen “Formations of the Political in the Ottoman Empire,” (forthcoming in Contributions to the History of Concepts).

Özgür Türesay, The Political language of Takvȋm-i vekayi: The discourse and temporality of Ottoman “reform” (1831-1834), European Journal of Turkish Studies, 31 (2020), 1-45

**Guest lecturer: Alp Eren Topal**