

CURRICULUM VITAE

Merve Safa Kavakci-Islam

1400 South Joyce st. # 1024
Arlington VA 22202
Tel: (202) 431 0653
mervesk@yahoo.com

Present Position:

Lecturer, Full Time Faculty
Department of Political Science
Howard University
2400 Sixth st. NW Suite 139
Washington DC 20059

Lecturer, Adjunct Faculty
Elliott School of International Affairs
George Washington University
1957 E. st. NW Suite 604
Washington DC 20052

Education:

Ph.D. (2007) Howard University
Department of Political Science

M.P.A. (2003) Harvard University
Kennedy School of Government

B.S. (1993) University of Texas at Dallas
Eric Johnson School of Engineering, 1993

Research Experience:

2010-Present: Turkey's Changing Significance in the Post Arab Spring Period

2008-2009: Post Cold War Dismantlement of Deep States: Italian and Turkish
Deep States

2004-2007: Questioning Turkey's Role Model Status: A Critical Examination of
Social and Political Implications of the Headscarf Ban in Turkey (Ph.D. Dissertation
nominated by Dr. Mervat Hatem, President of the Middle East Studies Association

(MESA) to the **Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Award** (MESA) for 2007): Through the employment of theoretical framework: postcolonialism, Orientalism and language of rights, it examines how the West constructed Turkey as an international role model for Muslim countries. Its secularism and Westernization were to be followed by others in the large Muslim world as signs of overall progress and development. By studying the plight of women who wear headscarves in secular state, the dissertation offers a more critical representation of the Turkish political system and role of religion in the public space in Turkey.

Publications:

2013: *International Relations in the Global Village: Changing Interdependencies* ed. (San Diego: Cognella Academic Publishing, 2013)

"Unpacking Turkish Military's Involvement in Religious Affairs," Guardians or oppressors: The military-civil relations and democratization in the Mediterranean littoral Workshop Working Paper (Mediterranean Research Meeting 2013, March 20-23, 2013, European University Institute and Mersin University)

"*Hak'tan Haksizliga Uzanan Yol*," Egitime Bakis: Egitim-Ogretim ve Bilim Arastirma Dergisi, Yil:9, Sayi: 25 (Ocak-Subat-Mart 2013) [*Road That Lies From The Truth to Injustice*, Egitime Bakis Year:9, No:25, January-February-March, 2013]

2012: "Deciphering Kemalist Edifice: Secularism As A New Ideo-Religious Thrust," *Annuaire du Droit et Religion*, vol:6, (2012-2013)

"Ne Oldu?" *Bin Yilin Sonu 28 Subat: Sureklilik ve Kopus*, [What happened? The End of a Thousand Years, February 28: Continuum and Desist] ed. Abdurrahman Babacan (Istanbul: Pinar Yayinlari, 2012)

2011: "Gateway to Western Modernity: The Case of Turkish Women," *Journal of the Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World*, vol: 9 (Fall 2011)

"Debates about Muslim Women Alter Their Lives," *The Washington Post*, April 28, 2011

"Islamic Feminism and Identity Politics of Headscarved Women in Turkey," *Working Paper*, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute (April: 2011)

2010: *Headscarf Politics in Turkey: A Postcolonial Reading* (NY: Macmillan, 2010)

"Sole Protector, of What? Unpacking Turkey's Anti-Muslim Policies" *Arches Quarterly*, vol.4 edition: 7 (Winter, 2010)

2009: "Turkey's Test with Its Deep State," *Mediterranean Quarterly* vol: 20 no:4 (Fall 2009)

"Best Place in the World for Muslims to Live? The US" *Christian Science Monitor, Weekly Edition* vol:101 issue: 109 (September 27, 2009)

2008: *Siyasetin Oyunu* [The Game of Politics] (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 2008)

Ortunun Altında Kalanlar [Hidden Under the Veil] (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 2008)
Bati'da Musluman Olmak [To be Muslim in the West] (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 2008)
Dünyanın Güzel İnsanları [Beautiful People of the Earth] (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 2008]

2004: "Headscarf Heresy," *Foreign Policy* issue: 142 (May-June, 2004)
"Put This Woman in Her Place," *QNews* no: 353 (January, 2004)
Basortusuz Demokrasi [Scarflless Democracy] (Istanbul: Timas Yayinlari, 2004, trans. to: Arabic and Persian)
"Yasaga Maruz Kalanlarin Dilinden Yasak Uygulamalari," [Applications of the Ban on the Women who Faced it] in *Dunu, Bugunu ve Yariniyla Basortusu* [The Past, Present and Future of the Headscarf] (Istanbul: Pinar Yayinlari, 2005), 225-230
"Avrupa ve Amerika'da Musluman Kadin Olmak," [To be Muslim Women in Europe and America] *AKDER*

2003: "Democratization of the Muslim World through Women,"
www.bitterlemons-international.org edition: 9 vol: 1 (September, 2003)

Professional Experience:

2007-Present: **Full time Lecturer**, Department of Political Science, Howard University

2004-Present: **Part time Lecturer**, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, Washington D.C.

2004-Present: **Lecturer**, Executive Program, U.S. Department of Defense

2006-2007: **Teaching Fellow**, Department of Political Science, Howard University

2004-2006: **Teaching Assistant**, Department of Political Science, Howard University

2004-2005: **Visiting Scholar**, Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, George Washington University

2002-2003: **Edward Mason Fellow**, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Teaching Assistant, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

1999-2001: **Parliamentarian (Grand National Assembly) of Turkey** (denied oath of office due to headscarf)

1994-1999: **Head of Foreign Affairs, Women's Commission of Welfare-Virtue Party, Ankara, Turkey**

Service to Community:

2005-Present: Consultant, Commission on Security and Cooperation with Europe, U.S. Congress

2004-Present: Columnist, Turkish daily *Vakit, Yeni Akit*

1999-Present: Interfaith Dialogue (Meeting with the Pope Benedict XVI., Catholic University, April 17, 2008)

1994-1999: International spokesperson for the Welfare-Virtue Party (oversaw 200,000 party workers with 11 other executive members throughout Turkey, founded and headed international relations committees of the party in 80 cities, trained party members on building political activism skills)

Invited Academic Lectures:

2013: "Cultural, Social and Political Challenges of democratization of Middle East," National Security Colloquium: The Utilization of Critical Thinking and Metacognitive Strategies in the Intelligence Community: A Means of Engaging Calculated Risks in the Middle East and South East Asia, October 25, 2013, **Miles College (USA)**

"Stepping into the New World: Challenges Ahead for the Global Citizen," Keynote Address, May 18, 2013, **University of Hamburg (Germany)**

"In between Islamist Politics and Democratizing Changes in the Muslim World," April 30, 2013, **University of Milan (Italy)**

"Unpacking Turkish Military's Involvement in Religious Affairs" Guardians or oppressors: The military-civil relations and democratization in the Mediterranean littoral Workshop, Mediterranean Research Meeting 2013, March 21, 2013, **European University Institute and Mersin University (Turkey)**

"At the Aftermath of the Arab Spring," January 28, 2013, **National Defense University (USA)**

2012: "Gender & Religious Freedom in Christian-Muslim Relations" The Boundaries of Religious Pluralism & Freedom: The Devil is in the Details, Common Word Conference, October 31, 2012, **Georgetown University**

"A Look at the Binarities within the Muslim World: The East and the West Divide" September 28, 2012, **Syracuse University**

"Under the Threat of the Looming Winter: The Arab Spring" Importance of Peace for Sustainable Development in Africa Conference, September 27, 2012, **The African Union Mission to the United States and Howard University**

"When Arab Spring Meets Occupy Wall Street" The 17th Annual Women Ambassadors Conference, April 18, 2012, **US Congress and Howard University**

2011: "The Quest for Justice for Muslim Women: From Oppression to Egalitarianism," Gender, Social Justice & Islam Conference, November 5, 2011, **Drew University**

"Turkish Women: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," Turkish American Solidarity Conference, September 18, 2011, **Wright State University**

"Headscarf Ban and Labor Discrimination in Turkey: A Critique of TESEV Report," April 26, 2011, **Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research, Washington D.C.**

"The Road to Revolt: Inspiration Behind Democratic Uprising," Two Perspectives on Middle Eastern Democracy Movements Forum, April 21, 2011, **Howard University**

"Islamic Feminism and Identity Politics of Headscarved Women in Turkey," 12th Mediterranean Research Meeting, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, April 8, 2011, **European University Institute (Italy)**

"Women's Status in the Islamic World," March 30, 2011, **George Washington University (USA)**

"Banning Burqa in France," Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority Club, February 28 2011, **George Washington University**

2010: "A New Era in Turkey's Foreign Policy Role in the Middle East," Middle East and North Africa Forum, October 18, 2010, **Georgetown University**

"A Reading of the Turkish Referendum: Causes and Implications," The Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, September 15, 2010, **George Washington University**

"Human Rights and Individualism in Islamic and Secular Societies," May 24, 2010, **University of Milan (Italy)**

"Islam and the West-Religion, Culture and Politics," Georgetown Diplomacy & International Security Conference 2010, March 19, 2010, **Georgetown University (USA)**

"Turkey: A Key 'Bridging' Alliance," March 18, 2010 **Department of Defense, George Washington University**

"Engaging Philanthropy to Promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," February 22, 2010, **UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

2009: "Challenges Ahead: Muslim Women's Empowerment Trajectory vis a vis Dress," November 27, 2009, **University of Milan (Italy)**

"Sociology of Time: A Right to the Time?" November 26, 2009, **Comitato pari Opportunita dell'Ordine degli Avvocati di Milano**

"Democracy without the Veil: The Religious Symbols in the Space of the Public Institutions," November 25, 2009, **Casa della Cultura**

"The Question of Rights in Muslim Societies," October 12, 2009, **Georgetown University (USA)**

"The Contestation of Halal and Kosher in America: The Caveats of Halal Production," April 25, 2009, **International Halal Food Conference (Turkey)**

“The Challenges for the Muslim World in Moving Forward,” April 21, 2009, **Pennsylvania State University (USA)**

“Security, Civil Society and Democracy,” April 8, 2009, **Sudanese National University (Sudan)**

“Time to Reconcile,” April 6, 2009, **Tribal Leaders Conference, Nyala-South Darfur**

“Turkey: A Key ‘Bridging’ Alliance,” March 19, 2009, **National Security Agency-Security Studies, George Washington University (USA)**

“Women, Feminism and Faith,” March 18, 2009, **American University**

“Democratization and Religious Freedom in the Muslim World,” February 24, 2009, **Professional Foreign Service Society, George Washington University**

2008: “A Perfect Storm? Global Politics and Religion in the 21st Century,” October 24, 2008, **Honors Symposium, George Washington University**

“Scarless Democracy: Indispensability of secularization of the Muslim Societies,” May 4, 2008, **School of Law, University of Milan (Italy)**

“International Threat from Radical Islam,” April 18, 2008, **National Security Agency-Security Studies, George Washington University (USA)**

“Democratization of Turkey: Stumbling Blocks in the Prospect,” April 15, 2008, **Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University**

“Global Reverberations on Islamist Women,” April 8, 2008, **Drury University**

“Liberal Democratization in the Muslim World: A Hope or Futility in the Prospects?” March 27, 2008, **University of Pittsburg**

“Democratization of the Muslim World,” March 24, 2008, **University of Connecticut**

“Women as Agents of Geopolitical Change,” March 7, 2008, **National Intelligence Council, US Department of State**

2007: “A Reverse Reading of the Muslims’ Reaction to Islamophobia in America,” December 8, 2007, **International Conference on Islamophobia, The Union of NGOs of the Islamic World (Turkey)**

“Fighting for Faith,” November 19, 2007, **University Lecture Series, University of Pennsylvania (USA)**

“Perils of the Empire: Islamophobia, Religious Extremism and the New Imperialism,” October 28, 2007, **University of Maryland**

“Islam: The Choice of Thinking Women,” October 24, 2007, **George Mason University**

“Role of Religion and Turkey’s Reputation as a Moderate Islamic State,” September 5 2007, **National Security Agency-Security Studies, George Washington University**

“The International Threat from Radical Islam,” June 22 2007 **National Security Agency-Security Studies, George Washington University**

“East Meets the West: Turkey’s Experimentation with Democracy,” April 9 2007, **University of Kentucky**

“Democratization of the Muslim World,” America, Islam and the Middle East, Building Bridges between the Great Divide Conference, Keynote Address, April 2 2007, **Missouri State University**

World of Islam Lecture, March 20 2007, **American University**

“Women of Islam: Past and the Present,” February 9 2007, **College of William and Mary**

“Muslims’ Presence in Europe,” January 29 2007, **George Washington University**

2006: “Issues of Hijab-Identity or Freedom Crisis,” November 24 2006, **Center for Strategic Studies (Lebanon)**

“Women, Islam and the Modern Nation State,” April 7 2006, **Cornell University (USA)**

“Human Rights and Women of Islam,” March 29 2006, **Florida University**

7th Annual Social Justice and Activism Conference Keynote Address, March 25 2006, **New York University**

“Islam and Feminism,” February 27 2006, **George Washington University**

2005: “The Politics of Dress,” November 2005, **Middle East Studies Association Annual Conference**

“Unveiling Turkey’s Secularism,” May 26 2005, **Northwestern University**

“Democracy and Development, Challenges in the Islamic World,” April 23 2005, **Center for Study of Islam and Democracy**

World of Islam Lecture, March 20 2005, **American University**

2004: “Politics, Religion and Women” Presidential Lecture Series, March 2004, **Auburn University**

Women of Islam Lecture, February 2004, **American University**

2003: “Turkey at the Conjunction of Islam and Democracy,” November 19 2003, **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars**

“Turkey’s Secular Face,” October 2003, **World Bank**

“Is Interfaith A Sufficient Tool to Counter Terrorism,” August 23 2003, **University of Texas at Arlington**

“Empowerment of Muslim Women and Challenges before Them,” March 2003, **Harvard University**

“Turkish Women’s Empowerment,” February 2003, **Boston University**

2002: “Islam in the Western Europe,” July 2002, **Insburg University (Austria)**

German Universities Lecture Series, June 2002, **Duisburg University (Germany)**

German Universities Lecture Series, June 2002, **Berlin Technical University**

German Universities Lecture Series, June 2002, **Hanover University**

German Universities Lecture Series, June 2002, **Hamburg University**

“Dissent in the Middle East,” May 2002, **Yale University (USA)**

“Human Rights Abuses against Women in the Middle East,” April 10 2002, **Florida State University**

“Islamic Struggles for Justice,” February 19 2002, **Cambridge University (Great Britain)**

2001: “Islam in America 2001: Domestic Challenges, International Concerns & Historical Legacies,” March 9, 10, 11 2001, **Harvard University (USA)**

“Can Religion and State Burgeon Independently?” October 2001, **Johns Hopkins University**

Islamic Awareness Week Lecture, October 2001, **Michigan University**

“Islamist Politics and Democratization in Turkey,” June 2001, **Toronto University (Canada)**

“Role of Women in the Rise of Political Islam,” June 2001, **Ottawa University**

“East Meets West in Turkey,” June 2001, **Carleton University**

2000: “Spark of the Veil: When Religion and Politics Ignite,” November 7, 2000, **Harvard University-Institute of Politics (USA)**

Islamic Vision for the 21st Century Conference Keynote Address, April 26, 2000, **Georgetown University**

Invited Public Addresses and Testimonies:

2013: "The Continuum of Resolution: Implications of the Kurdish Opening" May 25, 2013, **Diyarbakir'da Kadın Bulusmalari (Turkey)**

"From War on Terror to Arab Spring" International Women's Day Keynote Address, March 9, 2013, **Surici Dernegi Istanbul Hanimefendileri, (Turkey)**

2011: "Empowered Muslim Women: Defying Stereotypes & Cultural Constraints" Keynote Address, December 3, 2011, **Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition (USA)**

"Compassion in Action: My Life as a Muslim Woman Activist Scholar," United We Stand, One Nation One Destiny Conference, September 10, 2011, **Charter for Compassion and Zaytuna College**

2009: “Ramadhan: The Month of Giving,” October 1, 2009, **American Airlines Headquarters**

"Freedom To or Freedom From? July 22, 2009, **Islamic Society of North America Convention, Washington DC**

“New Balances in International Politics at the Age of Security,” May 23, 2009, **Wisdomnet**

“Social Empowerment of Women Through Civic Engagement,” Opening Plenary Address, **World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists, March 22, 2009, (United Arab Emirates)**

2007: “Role of Extremism in Disempowerment of Muslim Women,” July 13 2007, **International Women's Peace Conference (USA)**

Islamic Society of North America (**ISNA**) Regional Conference Keynote Address, June 30 2007

Council on American Islamic Relations (**CAIR**) Annual Conference Keynote Address, May 5 2007

2006: “Role Model Muslim Women,” July 6 2006, **Islamexpo (Great Britain)**
“Turkey on the Path of European Union,” March 26 2006, **Chai Discussion Group (USA)**

2005: “Religious Freedom in Modern Turkey,” April 12 2005, **US Congress Commission on Security and Cooperation with Europe**
“Disempowerment of Muslim Women,” March 23 2005, **UN Commission on Human Rights (Switzerland)**

2004: “Religious Freedom in Secular Turkey: The EU Effect,” December 14 2004, **Institute of Religion and Public Policy (USA)**
“Religion, Pluralism and Secular State” August 7 2004, **Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs (Canada)**
“Religious Dress and Secular Fundamentalism,” July 9 2004, **Council for a Parliament of World’s Religions (Spain)**

2002: Organization of National View (**IGMG**) Conference Keynote Address, May 2002 (**Belgium**)

2001: Inter Parliamentary Union (**IPU**), Testimony on 1999 Turkish General Elections (**CUBA**)

2000: “Turkey’s Future with an Islamic Heritage,” November 1 2000, **British Parliament, House of Lords (Great Britain)**
Islamic Society of North America (**ISNA**) Annual Convention Keynote Address, August 30 2000 (**USA**)
Islamic Circle of North America (**ICNA**) Annual Convention Keynote Address, July 2000

1997: International Organization for Women and Children (**IOWC**) Annual Conference Keynote Address, November 1997 (**Turkey**)
Islamic Society of North America (**ISNA**) Annual Convention Keynote Address, September 1 1997 (**USA**)
International Muslim Women’s Union (**IMWU**) Annual Conference Keynote Address, May 1997 (**Yemen**)
Organization of National View (**IGMG**) Annual Conference Keynote Address, March 1997 (**Germany**)
1996: International Muslim Women’s Union (**IMWU**) Annual Conference Keynote Address April 1996 (**Sudan**)

Teaching:

Undergraduate (International Relations)

2007-Present: Political Islam (GWU)

2006-Present: Introduction to Political Science (Howard University)

2009-2011: National Government of United States (Howard University)

2004-2008: Culture and International Affairs: Islam and Its Challenges in 21st Century (GWU)

2011 Summer: Introduction to International Affairs, World Geography and National Security (Howard University)

2011-Present: Theories of International Relations (Howard University)

Undergraduate (Comparative Politics)

2010-Introduction to Comparative Politics (Howard University)

Graduate (Comparative Politics)

2005-Present: East meets West: Turkey's Place in Europe (GWU)

Executive Program (Security Studies of GWU with the Department of Defense/National Security Agency)

2007-Present: Terrorism and Religious Extremism in the Middle East

Turkey and Its Politics

Teaching Assistant (International Relations)

2005-2006: Governments and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa (Howard University)

2004-2005: International Law (Howard University)

2002-2003: Politics, Justice and Social Change (Harvard University-MIT)

Teaching Assistant (Comparative Politics)

2005-2006: Nationalism and Revolution (Howard University)

Guest Lecturer

2007-Present (Summer): Human Rights in Islam and the Muslim World (University of Milan)

2004-Present: World of Islam (American University)

Professional Service to the Profession:

2012-Present: Reviewer/Reader, Oxford University Press
Reviewer/Reader, Palgrave Macmillan
Reviewer/Reader, Contemporary Islam

2011-Present: Reviewer/Reader, Contemporary Islamic Studies, Bloomsbury
Qatar Foundation Journals

2004-Present: Reviewer/Reader, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*

Awards and Recognition for Community Service:

2014: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Royal Islamic Strategic
Research Center (Jordan)

2013: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Royal Islamic Strategic
Research Center (Jordan)

2012: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Royal Islamic Strategic
Research Center (Jordan)

2011: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Royal Islamic Strategic
Research Center (Jordan)

MAZLUMDER Loyalty Award by the Association of Human Rights and
Solidarity for Oppressed People (Turkey)

2010: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Royal Islamic Strategic
Research Center (Jordan)

2009: **The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims** by Georgetown
University (USA)

2006: **Appreciation for Social Justice Certificate** by New York University
(USA)

2004: **Women of Excellence Recognition** by NAACP/GWU (USA)

2000: **Exemplary Service Award** in recognition of efforts for the advancement
of human rights and Muslim women's empowerment by:
International Association for Women and Children (USA)

2000: **Service to Humanity Award** by:
Haus der kulturellen Aktivitat und Toleranz (Austria)

1999: **Mother of the Year Award** by:
Capital Platform of Ankara
National Youth Organization (**Turkey**)

Membership:

2013-Present: Member, Advisory Board for Turkish Citizens Abroad, Prime Ministry of the Republic of Turkey, Presidency of Turks Abroad And Related Communities (**Turkey**)

2012-Present: Member, General Assembly, International Islamic Charitable Organization (**Kuwait**)

2009-Present: Member, Islamic Resource Bank (**USA**)

2008-Present: Editorial Advisory Board, Mediterranean Quarterly (**USA**)

Media Appearances:

Visual and Audio

Regular contributor to CNN, Al Jazeera English, BBC, NPR and myriad of Turkish national channels on Turkish politics, Middle East Politics and Muslim Women

Appeared on Canadian CBC TV, France National Channel 3, Greek National Channel, South Africa Radio 786, Australian SBS radio

Print Media

Featured on Time, The Economist, New York Times, Washington Post, Foreign Policy, Star Telegram, The Telegraph, Der Spiegel, Al Wasat and many other newspapers and magazines in the Muslim World.

Reference:

Dr. Mervat Hatem, Middle East Studies Association and Howard University,
2419 Sixth Street NW Suite 144, Washington DC 20059

Dr. John Cotman, Howard University, 2419 Sixth Street NW Suite 144,
Washington DC 20059

Dr. John Voll, Georgetown University, 37th and O streets NW, Washington DC
20057