

Dear Colleagues and Students,

You are cordially invited to a seminar titled "Married yet Single: Experiences of Muslim and Christian Deserted Women in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul" organised by the Department of History.

Date: 09 November 2022, Wednesday

Avenue: A - 130

Time: 15.30-17.30

Title: Married yet Single: Experiences of Muslim and Christian Deserted Women in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul

Speaker: Dr. Gamze Yavuzer

Bio: I received my BA and MA degrees in history at Boğaziçi University. I recently completed the PhD program at the University of Maryland, College Park. My dissertation is titled "Legal Plurality in Family Law: Muslim and Christian families in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul. Currently, I am a postdoctoral fellow at Sabanci University. My research interests include women's and gender history, legal history, the history of non-Muslims, and cultural history.

Abstract: My paper addresses the social and legal consequences of the existence of multiple legal systems in the early modern Ottoman context. It tries to understand the role of religion in marital life and how the lives of women from two religions, living in the same town and period, could differ. By focusing on women who were abandoned by their husbands, I discuss the ways in which the same legal issue was dealt with, first in Islamic and Orthodox Christian canon laws, and second in the Patriarchal and Sharia courts. The scholarship tends to assume that non-Muslims were assimilated into the dominant Muslim culture to such a degree that they opted for Islamic practices and courts to the exclusion of their religious customs. The case of deserted women, however, demonstrates that the Patriarchal court was more favorable to Orthodox Christian women and was able to attract them. In this context, through different experiences of Muslim and Orthodox Christian women, this paper attempts to reveal yet another aspect of multireligious and multicultural Ottoman society besides emphasizing the heterogeneity of the category of "Ottoman women."