Turkey and Modernity Speaker Series

Mona Hassan

“Entangled Bodies of Learning: Gender, Islam, and Secularism in the Modern Turkish Republic”

Monday, February 18, 2013
12:30 p.m.
Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43201

To register for this event, RSVP on Eventbrite by Friday, February 15, 2013. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Ann Powers at powers.108@osu.edu.

Mona Hassan is assistant professor of Islamic studies and history in the Department of Religion at Duke University. Her comparative and interdisciplinary work delves into questions of religious authority and interpretation, Islamic political thought and jurisprudence, cultural memory and representation as well as female religious authority and scholarship.

Her recent research on Turkish state-sponsored female preachers analyzes the complex interplay of religion, politics, gender, and secularism in modern Turkey. She recently received fellowships from both the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council in order to complete work on her first book manuscript, Longing for the Lost Caliphate: Religious Imaginaries of State and Community among Premodern and Modern Muslims.

She holds a PhD from Princeton University.

Abstract
Two striking educational trends with their roots in the early Turkish republic have fostered the unexpected emergence of Turkish state-sponsored female preachers. The social engineering of religious education and the coeducational principle of gender equality have facilitated an unprecedented feminization of religious higher education in Turkey and a related increase in professional opportunities for these female graduates.

Employed by Turkey’s Directorate of Religious Affairs, female preachers
seek in turn to educate the public through regular sermons, lectures, and consultations in their assigned districts across the country. Located at the fraught intersection of religion, politics, gender, education, and secularism, Turkey's state-sponsored female preachers aptly illustrate the elaborate complexities of secular modernity.