

M. Brett Wilson, PhD
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CEU Department of History
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Employment

2020-present Director of the Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Central European Univ.
2016-present Associate Professor, Central European University, Department of History
2016-2018 Associate Professor, Macalester College, Department of Religious Studies
2009-2016 Assistant Professor, Macalester College, Department of Religious Studies

Education

2009 Ph.D. Duke University, Department of Religion
2001 B.A. Honors College at the University of South Carolina, *Magna Cum Laude*

Publications

Books

Current *Subduing the Saints: Sufism from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic (Work-in-Progress)*
2023 *Nur Baba: A Sufi Novel of Late Ottoman Istanbul* by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, ed. trans. M. Brett Wilson (Routledge, 2023).
2018 *Milliyetçilik Çağında Kur'an Tercümeleeri: Türkiye'de Yazılı Kültür ve Modern İslam*. trans. Ceren Can Aydın (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2018).
2014 *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism: Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Articles &

Book Chapters

Forthcoming "Ottoman and Turkish Translations of the Qur'an," *The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*.
2020 "Binding with a Perfect Sufi Master: Naqshbandi Defenses of *rābiṭa* from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic," *Die Welt des Islams* 60, no. 1 (2020), pp. 56-78.
"Translations of the Qur'an: Islamicate Languages," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, eds. M.A. Abdel Haleem and Mustafa Shah, vol. 4 (Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 552-564.
2019 "Binding with a Perfect Sufi Master: Naqshbandi Defenses of *Rābiṭa* from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic," *Die Welt des Islams* (2019), pp. 1-23.
"Translations of the Qur'an: Islamicate Languages," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, ed. M.A. Haleem and Mustafa Shah, vol. 4 (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 552-564.
2017 "The Twilight of Ottoman Sufism: Antiquity, Immorality, and Nation in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's *Nur Baba*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, v. 49 (2017), pp. 233-253.
2016 "The Poet of Islam: Mehmet Akif Ersoy and the Idea of an Accessible Qur'an," in *The Resistant Translation*, ed. Recep Şentürk (Istanbul: Mahya Yayınları, 2016), pp. 39-46.
2015 "Ritual and Rhyme: Alevi-Bektashi Interpretations and Translations of the Qur'an (1953-2007)," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, n. 3 (2015), pp. 75-99.
"The Optional Ramadan Fast: Debating Q. 2.184 in the Early Turkish Republic," in *The Meaning of the Word*, ed. S.R. Burge (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 351-371.

- 2013 "The Failure of Nomenclature: The Concept of 'Orthodoxy' in the Study of Islam." in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Islam: Critical Concepts in Islam*. Ed. Maria Isabel Fierro (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 153-176.
- 2009 "The First Translations of the Qur'an in Modern Turkey (1924-1938)." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 41 no. 3 (2009), pp. 419-435.
- "The Failure of Nomenclature: The Concept of 'Orthodoxy' in the Study of Islam." *Comparative Islamic Studies*, 3 no. 2 (2007[2009]), pp. 169-194.
- 2006 "Women, Gender, and Women's Religious Education: Turkey." in *Encyclopedia of Women & Islamic Cultures, Volume IV: Economics, Education, Mobility and Space*, ed. Suad Joseph (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 353-354.

Book Reviews

- 2020 Wilson, M. Brett. *Pouvoir et secret dans l'Empire ottoman. L'initiation dans la confrérie Bektasîe*, written by Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, 2017. *Die Welt des Islams* 60.4 (2020): 473-477.
- 2015 Wilson, M. Brett. *And then we work for God: Rural Sunni Islam in Western Turkey*, written by Kimberly Hart, 2013 in *International Journal of Turkish Studies* v. 21 (2015), pp. 241-244.
- 2013 Wilson, M. Brett. *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic* written by Amit Bein, 2011, in *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 30, no. 2 (2013), pp. 115-16.
- 2011 Wilson, M. Brett. *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* written by Karen Barkey, 2008 in *The Journal of Early Modern History*, 15 no. 3 (2011), pp. 295-297.

Conference and Workshop Papers

- 2023 "The Last Masters: Sufi Shaykhs at the End of Empire and in the Early Republic," University of Leipzig (Jan. 27).
- 2022 "Ruins of the saints: Sufi lodges and objects as heritage in modern Turkey," University of Vienna (Nov. 25)
- 2022 "Rabita in the Late Ottoman Empire," LMU, Munich (April 30-31)
- 2021 "Orgies on the Bosphorus," Cini Foundation, Venice (Oct)
- 2020 "The Optional Ramadan Fast," AAR/IQSA (Nov)
- 2019 "Modernity and Mysticism in the Twilight of the Ottoman Empire," NYU Remarque Institute, Kandersteg Seminar – Kandersteg, Switzerland (April 11).
- 2018 "On the 1925 abolition of Sufi institutions in Turkey: Perspectives from government archives," WOCMES Conference – Sevilla, Spain (July 18).
- "Investigating a Late Ottoman Sufi Manual and its Legacy," The European Academy of Religion – Bologna, Italy (March 7).
- 2017 "Sufi Orders in the Making of Modern Turkey," UNC-Chapel Hill, NC, USA (Oct. 6).
- 2016 "Banning Sufism: Bektashis and the Abolition of Sufi Lodges in Modern Turkey," *Workshop on Imagining and regulating ethnic and religious diversity in Turkey – Macro-configurations and micro-dynamics*, Max Planck Institute – Göttingen, Germany (8-9 July).
- "Sacred Space and Public Order in Modern Turkey," Keynote Lecture at the *Faith and Power: Undergraduate Conference*, CEU – Budapest, Hungary (Aug. 6).
- 2014 "Modernizing the Qur'an: Printing and Pan-Islamism in Ottoman Turkey," *Making Publics: Publishing's Past, Present and Future*, Stanford University Humanities Center – Stanford, CA.

- “Rhyme and Ritual: Alevi Engagements with the Qur’an,” *JQS Workshop on Qur’an Translations*, University of Freiburg – Freiburg, Germany.
- 2013 “Caliph and Qur’an: Reimagining Religious Identity Across the Mediterranean (1919-1939), The Ginkgo Library Conference - London, UK.
- “The Dark Side of Sufism: Religion, Class, and Gender in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu’s *Nur Baba*,” Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting - New Orleans, USA.
- 2012 “Mehmet Akif Ersoy and the Idea of an Accessible Qur’an,” *Direnen Meali* Symposium, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University – Istanbul, Turkey.
- “Caliph and Qur’an: Re-imagining the Muslim Umma Across the Mediterranean (1925-1936).” Paper presented at *Identity in the Mediterranean World: From the Middle Ages to Today – Mediterranean Exchanges Workshop*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN USA - 2012.
- 2011 “Qur’an Translation in the Age of Nationalism.” Paper presented at *Languages, Literacy, and the Social Construction of Authority in Islam*, Stanford University, Stanford, CA USA.
- 2010 “For those who have the strength: Translating *yuṭīqūnahū* (Q. 2:184) in the Turkish Republic.” Paper presented at *The Meaning of the Word Workshop*, American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA USA.
- 2008 “Printing the Qur’an in the Ottoman Empire and Ahmet Cevdet Pasha.” Paper presented at The World Conference of Middle Eastern Studies, Barcelona, Spain.
- “Secularism and the Qur’an: Dealing with an Arabic Qur’an in the Context of Turkish Nationalism.” Paper Presented at the North American Association for the Study of Religion Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL USA - 2008.
- 2007 “Printing the Qur’an in the Ottoman Empire.” Paper presented at AATT Turkish Studies Conference, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
- “The Politics of Qur’an Translation: The Turkish Qur’an.” Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Conference, San Diego, CA USA.
- 2005 “The Problem of Orthodoxy in Islamic Studies.” Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion National Conference, Philadelphia, PA USA .
- “Engaging the Qur’an in Turkey.” Paper presented at the American Academy of Religion: Southeastern Region, Winston Salem, NC USA.
- 2004 “Orthodoxy in Islamic Studies.” Paper presented at the New Directions in Islamic Studies Conference, Durham, NC USA.

Invited Lectures, Seminars, and Interviews

- 2022 “Museums of Mysticism: Sufi Lodges as National Culture in Modern Turkey,” Atatürk Library, Istanbul, Turkey (May 16)
- 2021 “Translating Mysticism,” Master Class at FSCIRE La Pira Library, Palermo Italy (Oct)
- 2017 “Subduing the Saints: State Control Over Sufi Lodges in Late Ottoman and Modern Turkey,” Duke University, Durham, NC, USA (Oct. 4).
- 2016 “Subduing the Saints: The Prohibition of Sufi Lodges in Modern Turkey,” Lecture, University of Freiburg – Freiburg, Germany (Jul. 6).
- “Historiography and Intellectual Decline: Interpreting an Ottoman Symposium on al-Ghazali’s *Incoherence of the Philosophers*,” History Department Research Seminar, CEU – Budapest, Hungary (Sep. 21).
- “Power grab or stability amid the turmoil? Turkey’s presidential referendum explained,” by Chris Harris - Interview with Euronews (Apr. 13).
- 2015 “A Most Unusual Sufi Lodge: *Tekke*, Nation and Antiquity in Yakup Kadri

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- 2014 Karaosmanoğlu's *Nur Baba*, "Bilkent University—Ankara, Turkey.
"Controversies in late Ottoman and Modern Turkey: Printing and Translating the Qur'an," The Institute of Ismaili Studies – London, UK (December 8).
"Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism," Department of History and Center for Religious Studies, Central European University – Budapest, Hungary (Nov. 21).
"Modernizing the Qur'an," Macalester College Faculty Seminar – St. Paul, MN–USA (February 25).
"Turkey and the EU: A Troubled Affair?" Macalester EUROPA Panel - St. Paul, MN (November 14).
- 2013 "Towards a Cultural History of the Qur'an: Print-Capitalism in the Ottoman Empire," Macalester Humanities Colloquium – St. Paul, MN U.S.A. (October 15).
"To the hands of the rich and poor: Ottoman Qur'an Printing," Şehir University – Istanbul, Turkey (April 18).
"Qur'anic Translation and Modernization," Bosphorus University - Istanbul, Turkey (April 8).
"Şemseddin Sami'nin de kayıp tefsiri var," *Yeni Şafak* Newspaper – Istanbul, Turkey (April 13).
"Ottoman Qur'an Printing," The Ottoman History Podcast (March 3).
"Poets, Princes and Profiteers: Printing the Qur'an in the Late Ottoman Empire," The American Research Institute, Istanbul-Turkey (February 18).
- 2012 "Revealed for the Masses: Qur'anic Translation in Egypt and Turkey," University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (November 5, 2012).
"Middle Eastern Society and Translation," Dept. of History, University of Minnesota (March).
"Pan-Turkism," Dept. of Music, Macalester College (March).

Professional Service and Experience

- 2023- Kanz Philosophia: Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism Journal, Advisory Board
2023- Tanzil: Qur'anic Studies Journal, Advisory Board Member
2022- *İslam Araştırmalar* Journal, Advisory Board Member
2022 Panel Chair, NEHT Conference, University of Vienna
2022 Panel Chair, GRACE-H, Oxford University (March?)
2021- Turkologentag, Advisory Board Member
2021- Director Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies
2021 Referee for the University of California Press
2021 Reviewer, *Die Welt des Islams*
2020 Director, Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies
2020 Panel Chair, "Spaces of Subversion" GRACEH, EUI
2019 Reviewer, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
2019 Reviewer, *Die Welt des Islams*
2018, 2019 Reviewer, European Research Council Grants (ERC)
2017- Director, MA Program in Comparative History
2012-4 Director, Middle Eastern and Islamic Civilizations (MESIC) Concentration
2014 Project Scholar, National Endowment for the Humanities: Muslim Journeys Program Lebanon," (Feb.11)
2014 Referee for the University of South Carolina Press

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- 2012-13 Faculty Adviser, Mac HOPE Student Organization for Iraqi/American Reconciliation
2012 Panel Chair, "Islam in the Successor States of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire," Islam
and Muslim Communities in Central Europe, University of Minnesota - (April 27)
2012 Organizer, "Indonesian Filmmaker: Gotot Prakosa," Macalester College (March 1)
2011 Referee for *Comparative Islamic Studies*
Referee for the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
Book Reviewer for the *Journal of Early Modern History* (JEMH)
Book Reviewer for the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (AMISS)
2011 Organizer, Lecture by Noah Salomon, "Beyond Mysticism: Sufism as a Theory of
Islamic Knowledge (A view from Sudan)" (November 14)
2011 Panelist, "Protest and Revolution in the Middle East," Weyerhauser
Memorial Chapel, Macalester College, (March 1)
2011 Panel Chair, "Science: Between the Human and the Divine," *Shared Cultural
Spaces: Islam and the West in the Arts and Sciences Conference*, University
of Minnesota (February 25)

Languages

Arabic
English (native)
Ottoman Turkish
Spanish
Turkish

Professional Associations

American Academy of Religion (AAR)
Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA)
The Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association (OTSA)