

ZEYNEP OKTAY

E-mail: zeynep.oktay@bogazici.edu.tr

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

<i>May 2019-</i>	Boğaziçi University, Department of Turkish Language and Literature Assistant Professor
<i>June 2014-May 2019</i>	Boğaziçi University, Department of Turkish Language and Literature Part-time Instructor
<i>February 2017-June 2017</i>	Boğaziçi University, Department of History Part-time Instructor
<i>December 2014-December 2016</i>	University of St. Andrews School of History, Fife, Scotland, UK Research Fellow ERC project: The Islamisation of Anatolia, c. 1100-1500

EDUCATION

<i>November 2010-June 2017</i>	Sorbonne University École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, France PhD in Islamic Civilization
<i>October 2006-June 2010</i>	Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey MA in Turkish Language and Literature Area: Classical Turkish Literature
<i>September 2002-June 2006</i>	Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA BA in Comparative Literature (French and English Literatures)
<i>September 1995-June 2002</i>	Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

Vice Director, Nafi Baba Sufism, History and Cultural Heritage Research Center (December 2021, February 2021)
Vice Chair, Boğaziçi University Department of Turkish Language and Literature (November 2020-November 2023)
Executive Board Member (deputy), Nafi Baba Sufism, History and Cultural Heritage Research Center (December 2019-December 2021)
Board Member, Nazım Hikmet Culture and Art Research Center (since May 2021)

AWARDS

Turkish Science Academy's Young Scholar Award (BAGEP) 2025, in Literature
BAGEP Social Sciences Award 2025, in Memory of Asım Kocabıyık

SCIENTIFIC BOARDS

Institut français d'islamologie (since 2022)
Zemin Edebiyat, Dil ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi, peer-reviewed journal (since 2021)
The Federation of Alevi Foundations (AVF), Research Prize in Alevi and Bektashi Studies (since 2022)
Türk Kültürü ve Hacı Bektaş Veli Araştırma Dergisi, peer-reviewed journal (since 2022)

PUBLICATIONS

Books

I am the Essence of God: Kaygusuz Abdal and Dervish Poetry (with a translation of the Book of Prattle). Brill, forthcoming.

Yolcu Benem Menzil Benem: Tasavvuf ve Alevi-Bektaşî Edebiyatı İncelemeleri, Alfa Kitap, 2026.

Mesnevî-i Baba Kaygusuz. Massachusetts: Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, 2013. 320 pp.

Peer-reviewed articles & book chapters

With Ulaş Özdemir, "Deyiş in Transmission: Alevi Music and Poetry as Religious Tradition." *New Perspectives on Turkey* (2025), 1–20. doi:10.1017/npt.2025.10045.

"Anadolu'da Türkçe Edebiyatın Doğuşu ve Mesnevi Nazım Biçimi: Yerelleşme, İcra, Ritüel." *Nesir: Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8 (2025):127-152.

"Selfhood and Mystical Meaning in the Poetry of Yunus Emre." In *Handbook of Turkish Literature*, ed. Didem Havlioğlu and Zeynep Uysal. Routledge, 2023, 40-55.

"Alevism as Islam: Rethinking Shahab Ahmed's Conceptualization of Islam through Alevi Poetry." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 49 No 2 (2022): 305-326.

"Historicizing Alevism: The Evolution of Abdal and Bektashi Doctrine." *Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies* Vol. 13 No 3-4 (2020): 425-456.

"Alevi-Bektashi Literature as a Discursive Tradition: Interpretive Strategies, Orality, Charisma Loyalty," In "Entangled Literatures and Histories in the Premodern Ottoman World," ed. N. İpek Hüner Cora and Michael Pifer, special issue, *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* Vol 7. No 2 (2020): 33-53.

"The şaṭhiyye of Yūnus Emre and Kaygusuz Abdāl: The Creation of a Vernacular Islamic Tradition in Turkish." *Turcica* 50 (2019): 9-52.

Other articles and book chapters

"The *Velāyetnāme* on the saintly presence and sensory regime of Ḥaccī Bektāş." *Islamic Sensory History, 1500-2000*, ed. Christian Lange et al. Brill, forthcoming.

"The *Mesnevi* Form and the Beginnings of Islamic Literary Culture in Anatolia." In *Jalal al-Din Rumi and his Legacy: Religion, Literature and Culture Between Medieval Anatolia and the Persianate World, 13th-14th Centuries*." ed. Andrew Peacock, Scott Redford and Richard McClary. Gingko Library, forthcoming.

"The Speaking Qur'an in Alevism: Poetry and the Word of God." In *Esotericism and the Qur'an / L'ésothérisme et le Coran*, ed. Wissam Halawi and Bruce Fudge, forthcoming.

"Sufi Metaphysics as Literary Theory: Şeyh Galib's *Beauty and Love*." In *Pre-modern Comparative Literary Practice in the Multilingual Islamic World*, ed. Hany Rashwan and David Larsen. Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

"Ottoman Dervish Poetry in the Sixteenth Century: The Religious and Poetic Discourse of Muḥyiddīn Abdāl." In *De la lettre à l'esprit / From the Letter to the Spirit: Travaux en hommage à Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi / Studies in Honour of Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi II*, ed. Mathieu Terrier ve Orkhan Mir-Kasimov. Turnhout: Brepols, 2025, 289-304.

“Bir Bilim Sahasının Doğuşu: Alevilik Çalışmalarının Metodolojisi Ne Olmalı?” In *Sosyal Bilimler Perspektifinden Aleviler ve Alevilik 1*, ed. Şükrü Aslan, Çiğdem Boz, Cemal Salman. Ütopya Yayınevi, 2023.
“Alevilik Bize Güncel İslam Tartışmaları Hakkında Ne Söyler?” In “Dinin Geleceği,” ed. Ayşe Çavdar and Volkan Ertit, special issue, *Pasajlar Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* Vol. 8 (2021): 53-78.

“Erken Dönem Bektaşî ve Abdal Şiirinde Farsçanın Rolü: Kaygusuz Abdal Örneği.” Festschrift in Honor of Zehra Toska, ed. Fatma Büyükkarcı Yılmaz and Tülay Gençtürk Demircioğlu, *Journal of Turkish Studies: Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* Vol 54 (2020): 251-264.

“Yunus Emre Şiirleri ve Kemal Ümmî’nin *Kırk Armağan*’ının 15. Yüzyıla Ait Bilinmeyen Bir Yazması Üzerine.” *Journal of Turkish Studies: Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 50 (2018): 389-398.

“Giriş: Aleviliğin ve Bektaşiliğin Kültürel ve Edebi Kaynaklarını Nasıl Anlarız?” Special Section on Alevi-Bektashi Literature, ed. Zeynep Oktay Uslu, *Şerh Şiir ve Eleştiri Dergisi* 6 (2017): 112-117.

“Yunus Emre ve Kaygusuz Abdal’ın Türkçe Şathiyeleri: Yerel Bir Dindarlık Geleneği Nasıl Doğdu?” Special Section on Alevi-Bektashi Literature, ed. Zeynep Oktay Uslu, *Şerh Şiir ve Eleştiri Dergisi* 6 (2017): 176-199.

“Layers of Mystical Meaning and Social Context in the Works of Kaygusuz Abdal.” In A.C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yıldız (eds). *Literature and Intellectual Life in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-century Anatolia*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission (Istanbul Texts and Studies), 2016, 73-99.

“Hüseyin Ferhad İçin Üç Kör Nokta.” *Yeniyazı* 9 (2011): 50-61.

Preface. *Berlinde Üç Gün*. By Ahmet Mithat. Istanbul: Notos Kitap, 2009, pp.13-20

Translations

(Trans. Zeynep Oktay). Corbin, Henry. *Bir’le Bir Olmak: İbn Arabî Tasavvufunda Yaratıcı Muhayyile*. Istanbul: Pinhan Yayınevi, 2013.

(Ed. Zeynep Oktay). Ahmet Mithat Efendi. *Berlinde Üç Gün*. Istanbul: Notos Kitap, 2009.

Book Reviews

Book review for: Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlu (eds.), *Historicizing Sunni Islam in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1450–c. 1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2021) and Vefa Erginbaş (ed.), *Ottoman Sunnism: New Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), *Die Welt des Islams* 63/3 (2023): 372-375.

Poetry Books

Soy. Istanbul: Epona Kitap, 2026.

Birlerken. Istanbul: Epona Kitap, 2024.

LANGUAGES

Turkish	Native	English	Excellent
Ottoman Turkish	Excellent	French	Excellent
Persian	Very Good	Arabic	Very Good
Russian	Fair		