Image and Imaginary of the New Ottoman Muslim Woman:

Photography, Modernization, and Women in Late Ottoman Istanbul (1913-1918)

Abstract:

Since the introduction of photography to Ottoman citizens in the 1840s, the production and circulation of images of Ottoman Muslim women were subject to various discussions among the ruling and popular classes of the Empire. Together with the changing circumstances concerning access to photography, women's presence in the public space, and cultural production, Muslim women's engagement with photographic practices increased. This lecture focuses on the construction of the phenomenon of the New Ottoman Muslim Woman starting with the publication of the images of the authors of *Kadınlar Dünyası* (1913-1921) magazine in its 117th issue in 1913. Analysis of the images and the texts in the journal provides us with insights into Muslim women's firsthand experiences of claiming their representation and identity, their relation to this new technology, and changing social, political, and economic conditions in the Empire and the globe during WWI. This lecture will be held in two parts. The first part will be centered on the methodological aspects of this work. I will introduce the benefits and challenges of using photography as the primary source material for writing the gender history of the Ottoman Empire. The second part will focus on how Ottoman Muslim women experienced modernity and change through photographic practices, and how they used photography to express their perception of modernity, change, and women's role in these processes.

Short Bio:

Enise Şeyda KAPUSUZ is a Ph.D. candidate at the History Department of the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. She is a feminist historian working on the history of photography, the women's movement, and the modernization process in the Late Ottoman Empire. Currently, she is an Andreas-Tietze-Fellow at the University of Vienna, and she is teaching at ELTE University (Hungary) as a part of the CEU Global Teaching Fellowship Program.