Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
Presidency of Religious Affairs

International Symposium on the Exploitation of Religion in Media

Call for Papers

May 12–13, 2025

International Symposium
on
the Exploitation of Religion in Media

May 12–13, 2025, Ankara/Türkiye

*The symposium offers the flexibility of both **in-person** and **remote** participation.*

Call for Papers

Important Dates	
Abstract Submissions Due	March 7, 2025
Notification of Acceptance	March 17, 2025
Paper Submissions Due	April 28, 2025
Announcement of Symposium Program	May 2, 2025
Symposium Date	May 12–13, 2025
Publication of Symposium Proceedings	2025

In our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity, **we are pleased to offer free registration for all accepted presenters**.

Overview

Human beings, by their very nature, have a tendency to acquire information and news from their surroundings and to communicate. The most basic form of this communication is word-of-mouth transmission. However, throughout history, humanity has managed to convey information and news to places beyond the reach of sound—first through signals such as smoke and later through letters. Following the invention of the printing press, mass communication

was further developed and widely utilized. The human pursuit of knowledge and news gained new momentum in the last quarter of the 20th century. Internet technologies, initially conceived on the eve of World War II to decode enemy plans and ciphers, developed in the 1970s and made accessible to the global public from the 1990s onward, laying the groundwork for the rapid rise of social media in the 2000s. The continuous enhancement of social media through constantly evolving and increasingly powerful algorithms, along with support from smart devices, has strengthened its influence over traditional media. With these and similar advantages, its rapid global rise has profoundly impacted many established concepts, representations, and experiences. Fundamental transformations aligned with social media have been observed in various fields such as commerce, politics, education, entertainment, and communication.

The rapid spread of digital transformation can be easily tracked through statistics related to information technologies. According to international research conducted as of 2024, the number of social media users worldwide has exceeded 5 billion. The same research also indicates that the average time people spend on social media has surpassed two hours. Studies on household information technologies conducted by TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) reveal that these trends are also applicable to Türkiye. Accordingly, 88.8% of the Turkish population has internet access, and approximately 70% use social media. In fact, the country surpasses the global average in terms of social media participation and time spent. At this point, several questions arise: What needs does social media fulfill for individuals? What problems does it solve? What ideals does it help people achieve? It is not only possible but also necessary to ask similar questions in relation to religious beliefs and the experience of religiosity.

Social media, which is suited for displaying text, sound, photographs, and videos—or, in other words, for exhibition—does not support centralization or institutionalization due to its decentralized structure; instead, it promotes individualization and particularity. The unique operational dynamics of social media erode and relativize concepts such as time, space, distance, authority, hierarchy, culture, art, entertainment, and even human nature. How can these processes, driven by social media platforms, be evaluated in terms of religious experiences? It is widely acknowledged that works produced with the intention of being "seen and heard" hold no religious value. Despite this, how should the psychology of a devout Muslim individual be understood when they share a selfie with the Kaaba in the background, even at the cost of turning their back on it? Similarly, how should we interpret religious social media figures who are more active than the average content creator, motivated by their strong desire to spread their beloved faith? To what extent is it possible to explain the supporter or opposition identities and audiences formed by such representations through their internal disputes using Islamic sciences and classical social sciences?

In addition to the environmental pollution caused during the production processes of smart devices, numerous new concepts and issues have emerged in the agendas of social sciences, including digital democracy, digital fascism, digital oligarchy, deceptive and manipulative digital advertising, echo chambers, the digital panopticon, the consumption of privacy, surveillance, and control. What do these discussions mean for religious consciousness? Is it

sufficient to simply say, “Social media technologies provide a new opportunity to learn, convey, and represent Islam”? What risks and pitfalls exist within the opportunities offered by social media? Within this framework, the High Board of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs will organize a symposium titled "International Symposium on the Exploitation of Religion in Media" to discuss these and similar issues.

Objective of the Symposium

The aim of the symposium is to analyze the dimensions of the exploitation of religion in the media from an interdisciplinary perspective. The symposium seeks to address the issues arising from increasing instances of exploitation while fostering an academic discussion on religion’s explanatory, interpretative, and problem-solving potential. Another key objective is to discuss the findings of relevant studies and provide recommendations to social policymakers and practitioners.

Symposium Topics

Potential topics include, but are not limited to;

1. Digital exploitation of religion
2. The transformation of religious language in media
3. Othering, takfir, and lynch culture as a form of religious exploitation in media
4. The exploitation of Tasawwuf in media
5. The exploitation of religious authority
6. The exploitation of radical religious movements
7. The exploitation of privacy in media
8. Examples of exploitation in astrology, healing practices, etc.
9. Ideology, propaganda, religion, and social media
10. Atheist and orientalist trends in media
11. The exploitation of religion by atheist movements
12. Islamophobia in media
13. (Self-)orientalism in media
14. The vulgarization of Turkish-Islamic cultural arts in media
15. Representation of religious identity in media
16. Examples of exploitation by social media influencers
17. Religious groups and virtual communities in media
18. Consumerist and performative piety in media
19. Representation of disadvantaged groups on social media
20. Identities exploited in subscriptions, likes, and comments
21. Religious disinformation and social media as a news source

22. Examples of exploitation of religion by social media preachers
23. Perception of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in media
24. Child exploitation in media
25. Strategies for coping with exploitation of religion
26. Othering and hate speech in media
27. The exploitation of family and values in media
28. Religious manipulation and perception formation in media
29. Social media addiction and religion
30. The isolation of religion in media

Honorary President of the Symposium

- Professor Ali ERBAŞ, President of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

Scientific Committee of the Symposium

- Professor Abdurrahman HAÇKALI, Presidency of Religious Affairs, President of the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Professor Huriye MARTI, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Vice President
- Professor İbrahim Hilmi KARSLI, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Vice President
- Associate Professor Selim ARGUN, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Vice President
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- Kadir DİNÇ, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Vice President
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- Professor Soner GÜNDÜZÖZ, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Member of the High Board of Religious Affairs

- Professor Halit ÇALIŞ, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Member of the High Board of Religious Affairs
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- Ildar ALYAUTDINOV, Deputy Chairman of the Religious Administration of Muslims of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Religious Administration of Muslims of Moscow, Mufti of Moscow, Russia
- Ilyas GANIYEV, Secretary of the Council of Scholars of the Religious Administration of Muslims of the Russian Federation, Lecturer at the Moscow Islamic College, Russia
- Professor Yusuf ADIGÜZEL, Rector of Eskişehir Anadolu University, Turkey
- Professor Shukran Abdul RAHMAN, International Islamic University, Malaysia
- Professor Hasan GÜÇLÜ, TOBB University, Faculty of Engineering, Turkey
- Professor Mehmet Emin BABACAN, Dean, Faculty of Communication, Marmara University, Turkey
- Professor Zuhdija HASANOVIĆ, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Professor Mustafa MACİT, Atatürk University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey
- Professor Nevzat ÖZEL, Ankara University, Faculty of Language, History, and Geography, Turkey
- Professor Hediyetullah AYDENİZ, Marmara University, Faculty of Communication, Turkey
- Professor Azra ZAIMOVIC, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Professor Cemal TOSUN, Ankara University, Faculty of Divinity, Turkey
- Professor Matthew William KING, University of California, Riverside, USA
- Professor Şener BİLALLİ, International Balkan University, North Macedonia
- Professor Şevki IŞIKLI, Marmara University, Faculty of Communication, Turkey
- Professor Nevzat TARHAN, Üsküdar University, Turkey
- Professor Recai DOĞAN, Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University, Kyrgyzstan
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- Professor Asım YAPICI, Social Sciences University of Ankara, Faculty of Theology, Turkey
- Professor Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN, Ankara University, Faculty of Divinity, Turkey
- Professor Noureddine MILADI, Qatar University, Qatar
- Professor Ali AYTEN, Marmara University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey
- Professor Bahset KARSLI, Akdeniz University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey
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- Associate Professor Tuba Nur UMUT, Ankara University, Faculty of Divinity, Turkey
- Associate Professor Gülüşan GÖCEN, Istanbul University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey
- Assistant Professor Paul H. CHANG, University of California, Riverside, USA
- Assistant Professor Vahdettin ŞİMŞEK, Kırıkkale University, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Turkey

Organizing Committee of the Symposium

- Professor Abdurrahman HAÇKALI, Presidency of Religious Affairs, President of the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Professor İhsan ÇAPCIOĞLU, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Member of the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Yunus AKKAYA, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Secretary of the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Lokman ARSLAN, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Expert at the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Fadime APAYDIN, University of California, Riverside, Ph.D. Student

Symposium Secretariat

- Nuriye ARSLAN, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Assistant Expert at the High Board of Religious Affairs
- Feyza KORKMAZ, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Religious Services Expert
- Davut ALTIYAPRAK, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Education Expert
- Salim Abdülhamid KELEŞ, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Data Entry Clerk

Symposium Language

Turkish – English

Symposium Website

https://etkinlik.diyanet.gov.tr/

Abstract Submission Guidelines

- Abstracts should be submitted via email to kurulsekreterya@diyanet.gov.tr using the designated application form.
- Abstracts should be written in **Turkish** or **English** (for international participants).
- Abstracts should provide a concise overview of the topic and be between **200–400 words**.

- **Page layout**: Submissions should be formatted on **A4-sized paper** with **2.5 cm margins on all sides** (top, bottom, right, and left).
- The **abstract title** should be in **Times New Roman**, **12-point font, bold, and centered**.
- The **abstract text** should be in **Times New Roman, 11-point font, with 1.15 line spacing**.
- If an **ethical statement** is required (e.g., if the study is derived from a thesis or supported by an institution), it should be indicated with a footnote marked by an **(*)** next to the abstract title.
- **For Turkish abstracts**, citations, references, and formatting should follow the **İSNAD citation system (2nd edition, footnote format)**. See: http://www.isnadsistemi.org/guide/
- **For English abstracts**, citations, references, and formatting should follow the **Chicago citation system (17th edition)**. See: https://www.mvcc.edu/learning-commons/pdf/Chicago_Manual_of_Style_17_Notes_and_Bibliography.pdf

Paper Submission Guidelines

- Full papers should be submitted via email to kurulsekreterya@diyanet.gov.tr.
- Papers should be written in **Turkish** or **English** (for international participants).
- Papers should be **scholarly, original**, and between **5,000–8,000 words** in length.
- **Page layout**: The page size should be **A4**, with **2.5 cm margins** on all sides (**top, bottom, left, and right**).
- The **paper title** should be **centered** on the page.
- Following the title, the **author(s)' academic title, full name, institutional affiliation, email address, and ORCID number** should be written in **10-point font size**.
- Papers must include:
  - A **Turkish-English abstract** ('English' for international participants)
  - An **English title** above the English abstract
  - **Turkish-English keywords** (**minimum 5, maximum 8**) – ('English' for international participants)
  - A **"References" section** listing the sources used
- The main text should be written in **Times New Roman, 11-point font size, with 1.15 line spacing**.
- **Headings** within the main text should be in the **same font (Times New Roman), bold, and 12-point font size**.
- **Arabic texts** should be written in **Traditional Arabic font**.
- The **"Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi"** should be used as a reference for the spelling of names and concepts.
- For **Turkish texts**, citations, references, and formatting should follow the **İSNAD citation system (2nd edition, footnote format)**. See: http://www.isnadsistemi.org/guide/
- For **English texts**, citations, references, and formatting should follow the **Chicago citation style (17th edition)**. See: https://www.mvcc.edu/learning-commons/pdf/Chicago_Manual_of_Style_17_Notes_and_Bibliography.pdf