

Prof. Selcuk Esenbel (Bogazici Univ/Istanbul)

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Bio:

Dr. Selçuk Esenbel is Professor em. of History at Boğaziçi University, and the Director of the Asian Studies Center at the same institution. After studying at International Christian University Tokyo and George Washington University, she obtained her Ph.D. in Japanese history from the Columbia University. Since 1982, she has been teaching Japanese and Asian history at Boğaziçi University, where she is also in charge of the Asian Studies Center, Asian studies graduate program and Asian language courses. Esenbel has published many articles in various professional journals as well as a number of books on history of Asia with particular focus on Japanese history. Her research interests cover Japan and the world of Islam, Japanese pan-Asianism, modernization in Japan and Ottoman Turkey, peasant uprisings in Meiji Japan, and Japanese-Ottoman/Turkish relations. Esenbel is the recipient of various awards, like the Order of the Rising Sun, Japan Foundation Special Prize for Japanese Studies, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs special award for the promotion of Japanese-Turkish academic relations, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation George Forster research award.

Project: Legal Transformation, Contemporary Civilization, and Sovereignty: Global Perspectives on the Quest for Modernity in Japan, China, and Turkey

The talk and Göttingen course discusses some key experiences of Japan, Turkey, and China during the nineteenth century, but primarily focuses on a comparative discussion of Japan and Turkey for the twentieth century and possibly the early years of the new millennium. It will offer reflections particularly on the conjuncture that was related to the adoption of European codes and constitutionalism, coupled with the larger aim of catching up with contemporary civilization and regaining sovereignty. Despite the fact that the perception of the West throughout this long history kept shifting between a friend or foe, the West has remained to be the "Un-forgettable Other."

Date of Stay: May 2023

