

BURAK TAN

Department of Political Science, University of Chicago
5828 S University Ave, Pick Hall 502, Chicago, IL
buraktan@uchicago.edu | <http://www.buraktan.org/>

Academic Appointments

Teaching Fellow, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL), 2026 – *present*
Chicago Core: Democracy Core Sequence; Power, Identity, Resistance Core Sequence

Education

PhD, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL), Political Science, 2026
Exam Fields: Political Theory/Comparative Politics
Dissertation: *The Appeal of Authoritarianism: A Critical Theory of Citizen-Subject Formation in Turkey*
Committee: Linda Zerilli (chair), Lisa Wedeen, Jennifer Pitts, Cihan Tuğal (UC Berkeley)
Awards: Graduate Certificate in Gender and Sexuality Studies
Pozen Center for Human Rights Doctoral Fellow

MA, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL), Political Science, 2022
Thesis: “Self-Determination After the Empire: National Sovereignty, Local Autonomy, and Occupational Representation in the Anatolian Revolution”

MA, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL), Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences, 2018
Concentration: Political Science
Thesis: “Justification of Ethnic Violence in Turkey: Political Rhetoric After the Peace Process”

BA, Boğaziçi University (Istanbul, Turkey), Political Science and International Relations, 2017
Double Major in Sociology, High Honors
Erasmus study: Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (SciencesPo), Spring 2015

Research Interests

Anti-Democratic Politics (esp. Authoritarianism and Populism), Democratic Theory, Continental Political Theory, LGBTQ+ Politics, Qualitative Methods, Ethnography, Eastern Europe and Balkans, MENA.

Working Papers

- “After and Against Empire: Self-Determination in the Anatolian Revolution” (*submitted, MIH*)
Sakıp Sabancı International Research Awards essay winner (2023)
- “Political Homophobia as Authoritarian Strategy: The Case of Turkey” (*preparing for submission*)
William E. Connolly Award of the WPSA for the best paper in contemporary democratic thought (2026)
- “Between Statism and Populism: Authoritarian Neoliberalism and Welfare Politics” (*preparing for submission*)
- “Authoritarianism’s Claims to Authority: Towards a Particular Theory of Authoritarian Practices” (*draft stage*)

Conference Presentations

- “Welfare as Authoritarian Strategy: Economic Crisis and Regime Stability in Turkey”
2026 Association for Political Theory, Ann Arbor, MI (*upcoming*)
2026 Western Political Science Association, San Diego, CA
- “Political Homophobia: Regulation of Public Performance and Appearance in Turkey”
2025 Western Political Science Association, Seattle, WA
2024 Association for Political Theory, Blacksburg, VA
2024 American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA
2024 Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL
- “Self-Determination in the Anatolian Revolution: Local Autonomy and Occupational Representation”
2025 American Political Science Association, Vancouver, Canada
2022 Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL

2022 Western Political Science Association, Portland, OR

“Justification of Ethnic Violence in Turkey: Political Rhetoric After the Peace Process”

2020 Western Political Science Association, Los Angeles, CA

2019 Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL

2019 Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, NY

“Memory and Identity: Nostalgia and the Changing Urban Landscape of Istanbul”

2018 Memory Rebound, New School of Social Research, New York, NY

“From Arendt to Turkey: Totalitarianism as Politics of Identification”

2017 Istanbul Critical Theory Conference in Exile, Oldenburg, Germany

Invited Talks

“Authoritarian Politics and the Global Rise of Homophobic Movements”

2024 SPOD: Social Policy, Gender Identity and Sexuality Studies Association, Istanbul, Turkey

“Post-1980 Academic Autonomy in Turkey and the 2021 Boğaziçi Protests”

2021 NELC: Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Turkish Circle, Chicago, IL

Awards, Fellowships, Honors

- William E. Connolly Award for the best paper in contemporary democratic thought, 2026
Western Political Science Association (WPSA)
- Gabriel & Tatiana Eichler Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 2025 - 2026
University of Chicago, Division of Social Sciences (USD 5,000 award)
- Pozen Family Center for Human Rights Doctoral Fellowship, 2025 - 2026
University of Chicago (Research fellowship and USD 3,000 award)
- Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality Residential Fellowship, 2025 - 2026
University of Chicago (Residential fellowship and travel grant)
- Grodzins Prize Lectureship, 2024 - 2025
University of Chicago Department of Political Science (Lectureship with USD 5,000 award)
- APSA Status of LGBT Individuals Travel Grant, September 2024
APSA Committee on the Status of LGBT Individuals in the Profession (USD 300 grant)
- GGI Pitch Internship, June 2024
University of Chicago Grad Gargoyle (USD 6,000 fellowship)
- Davis Projects for Peace Grant, March 2024
International House New York and Middlebury College (USD 10,000 grant)
- CSGS Research & Travel Awards, Spring 2023; Fall 2024; Winter 2026
University of Chicago, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality (USD 1,000 grants)
- The Sakip Sabancı International Research Award Essay Prize, April 2023
Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey (USD 10,000 award)
- GLODEM Visiting Fellow, 2022 - 2023
Globalization, Peace, and Democratic Governance Center, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey
- International House Non-Resident Graduate Fellowship, 2021-22; 2023-24; 2024-25; 2025-26
University of Chicago International House (USD 3,000 fellowship)
- Bienen Summer Research Award, Summer 2022, Summer 2023
University of Chicago Department of Political Science (USD 500 and 800 grants)
- Graduate Council Travel Fund Award, Spring 2018; Winter 2022
University of Chicago (USD 600 grants)

Teaching Experience

University of Chicago, 2021 - *present*

- Instructor of Record: Approaches to Authoritarian Politics, Spring 2025
- Teaching Assistant: Advanced Theories of Gender and Sexuality (for Linda Zerilli), Winter 2025
- Teaching Assistant: Interpretive Methods in the Social Sciences (for Lisa Wedeen), Spring 2022
- College Core Intern: Power, Identity, Resistance II (for Gary Herrigel), Winter 2022
- College Core Intern: Power, Identity, Resistance I (for Paul Staniland), Fall 2021

Boğaziçi University, 2014 – 2015

- Teaching Assistant: Introduction to Social Statistics (Zeynep Kadirbeyoglu), Fall 2014
- Teaching Assistant: History of Political Thought I (Zeynep Gambetti), Fall 2014

Additional Work Experience

Research Assistant, University of Chicago, Department of Political Science, 2018 - *present*

- Conducts primary and secondary source research for faculty, acknowledged in books/articles.

Project Associate, University of Chicago, Booth School of Business, 2018-19

- Classified over 90 years' worth of internal documents to create the Chicago Booth Dean's Office Archives for research on institutional culture and future anti-discrimination policies

Temporary Assistant Director, University of Chicago, Knowledge Lab, Fall 2018

- Administered grants for four computational social science projects funded by NSF and DARPA

Research Assistant, Koç University, Department of International Relations, Summer 2016

- Coded data for triadic-level time-series dataset on non-state armed groups in the project: "Dangerous Companions," for Prof. Belgin San Akça

Research Assistant, Boğaziçi University, Department of Political Science and IR, 2014-17

- Conducted archival research on Turkish Parliamentary Papers in a project on post-2016 statutory decree lay-offs in Turkey for Prof. Yesim Arat
- Conducted a review of literature, NGO reports, and legislation for a project on the perception of migrants and economic inclusion in Turkey for Prof. Mine Eder
- Conducted archival research on city councils and local democracy in Turkey, for Prof. Gul Sosay
- Conducted a literature review for a project on Hannah Arendt for Prof. Zeynep Gambetti

Departmental Service

- **Coordinator**, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality (CSGS) and Center for the Study of Race, Politics & Culture (CSRPC) Dissertation Writing Group, University of Chicago, 2025 – 2026
- **Co-Coordinator**, Chicago Center for Contemporary Theory (3CT) Writing Group, 2024 – 2026
- **Coordinator**, Political Theory Workshop, University of Chicago, 2023 – 2025
- **Peer Mentor**, Division of Social Sciences, University of Chicago, 2021 – 2022
- **Peer Mentor**, Political Science Department, University of Chicago, 2020 – 2022

Skills and Languages

- Methodological Training: Interpretive, Ethnographic, and Archival Methods
- Data Analysis: NVivo, Qualtrics, R
- Languages: Turkish (native), English (fluent), French (research and writing proficiency)

Professional Affiliations

- American Political Science Association (APSA). Member. 2024-present
- Association for Political Theory (APT). Member. 2024-present
- Western Political Science Association (WPSA). Member. 2022-present

References

Linda M. G. Zerilli

Charles E. Merriam Distinguished Service Professor,
University of Chicago, Department of Political Science
+1 773 702 0522 | lmgerilli@uchicago.edu

Lisa Wedeen

Mary R. Morton Distinguished Service Professor,
University of Chicago, Department of Political Science
+1 773 702 8065 | lwedeen@uchicago.edu

Jennifer Pitts

David and Mary Winton Green Professor,
University of Chicago, Department of Political Science and Committee on Social Thought
+1 773 702 8868 | jpitts@uchicago.edu