Guardians of the Republic:
Youth, Social Inequality, and Politics in Turkey

In the ongoing revolution in the Middle East, Occupy Wall Street protests in the US and widespread youth riots in many European and Latin American cities, we see young people’s shared discontent and rage about the economy, politics, discrimination, and social inequality.

Despite these common laments across borders, analyses of Muslim youth are often locked into parochial religious and cultural identifications.

This talk will emphasize the centrality of social inequalities in understanding and explaining youth experiences and cultural practices with a focus on contemporary Turkey, a country that historically and politically imagined its youth as the guardians of its republic.

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Ayça Alemdaroğlu is a lecturer in the Introductory Studies Program at Stanford University. She completed her PhD in Sociology at the University of Cambridge. Her dissertation, Knowing your place: inequalities, subjectivities and youth in Turkey, is a study of social inequality and youth experiences in contemporary Ankara. She holds BSc and MA degrees in Political Science from the Middle East Technical and Bilkent Universities. She has published book chapters and articles on eugenics, nationalism, masculinity and youth. Her most recent projects focus on for-profit education and Turkey’s recent repatriation efforts of antiquities.

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