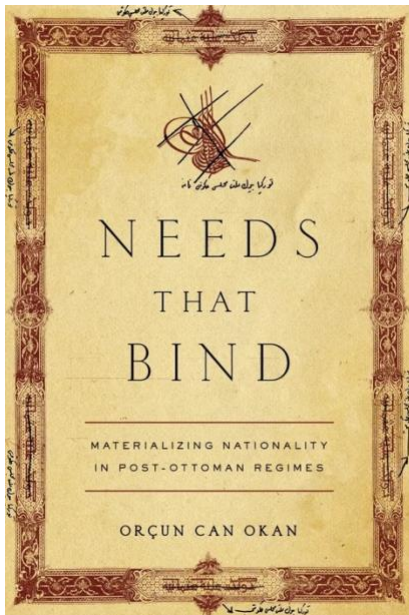


Needs that Bind: Materializing Nationality in Post-Ottoman Regimes

(Stanford University Press, 2026)

Orçun Can Okan



Needs That Bind reconsiders the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and the construction of new regimes in the decade after World War I, to understand the consequential connections that remained among the new republican regime in Turkey and neighbouring French and British Mandates in Syria-Lebanon and Iraq. Orçun Can Okan examines how these new states and their people managed problems of state succession through diplomatic, administrative, and legal interactions with and between bureaucracies. He foregrounds pressing questions of nationality as they were experienced by a diverse group of social actors, men and women, rich and poor.

Okan tracks previously untapped Ottoman records, now spread across multiple regimes, to investigate claims to retirement pensions, alimony cases between former spouses who became nationals of different states, and disputes over land, property, and assets held in pious endowments. It is through these types of interactions and connections, he argues, that newly emerged post-Ottoman regimes materialised basic norms and understandings about nationality—an understanding more similar to subjecthood to state authority than rights-based citizenship. With an engaging, grounded historical narrative, this book contributes to thinking historically and critically about the tangible stakes and practical significance of nationality in times of profound political change and institutional instability.

More Information

<https://www.sup.org/books/middle-east-studies/needs-bind>

About the Author

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