

Zeynep Arda

Ph.D. in Communication Sciences | Educator | Designer

8029 Nashua Lane 32817 Orlando Florida, U.S.A.

zey@zeyneparda.com | +1 407 274 5620 | www.zeyneparda.com



Communication scholar, designer, and educator with a Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and almost two decades of university teaching experience. Her research examines how digital and emerging technologies transform communication, identity, visual representation, and human experience, with current work extending into artificial intelligence and AI literacy. Her interdisciplinary formation spans communication sciences, interaction design, graphic design, and urban planning, complemented by extensive international research and professional practice.

She worked as an Assistant/Associate Professor in the Visual Communication Design Department at the Izmir University of Economics, Turkey (2012-2025), where she also served as the Department Chair for eight years.

She received her Ph.D. degree, and the title Doctor Europaeus Cum Laude in Communication Sciences at Universidad Jaime I, Castellón, Spain, in 2011, with her dissertation “Image Becomes Identity 2.0”, on online social networks, how they are shaping who we are and how we communicate with one another.

She holds an M.A. in Interaction Design from Domus Academy, Italy, M.F.A. in Graphic Design from Bilkent University, Turkey. Her alma mater is the City Planning Department, Faculty of Architecture, Middle East Technical University.

Her research interests include virtual worlds, cyberspace and metaverse, artificial intelligence, visual representation, new media, city branding, and cultural diversity.

Her latest publications cover issues on AI, democracy and education: “Designing Not to Sell: Inverted Briefs as a Critical Thinking Pedagogy in Visual Communication Design Education” (2025) and “Defending Truth and Democracy in the Age of AI: A Framework for Empowering Voters Against Persuasion and Misinformation with AI Literacy” (2024).

Besides her academic work, she has worked professionally as a designer and consultant with various international teams, companies and brands.

In the academic year 2022-23, on sabbatical leave from her current position in Turkey, she collaborated with the Global Perspectives and International Initiatives Office at the University of Central Florida, as a visiting scholar.

She speaks English and Spanish fluently, she is intermediate in Italian and native in Turkish.

Academic Roles & Duties

Assistant + Associate Professor Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

Taught various Undergraduate/Graduate courses [2012-2025]

- Graduate Design Studio (FFD 506)
- Graduate Seminar (FFD 695-GS 595)
- Master Thesis (GS 599)
- Design Studio V (MMD 401)
- Graduation Project (MMD 498)
- Interaction Design Fundamentals (VCD 331)
- Design Semiotics (VCD 340)
- Understanding Digital Media (VCD 320)
- Graphic Design Studio I-II (VCD 201-202)
- Art and Design Studio I-II (FFD 101-102)

Department Chair Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

Visual Communication Design Department [2014 - 2022]

Visiting Scholar & Research Fellow University of Central Florida, U.S.A.

Global Perspectives & International Initiatives Office [09/2022 - 09/ 2023]

Research, seminars, workshops, and public-facing academic engagement focused on intercultural communication, digital identity, migration, and emerging technologies. [On sabbatical leave from IUE]

Seminar | Image Becomes Identity: Who Are We on the Face of Technology?

Workshop | Breaking Bread: An Intercultural Conversation

Seminar | Designing for Interaction and Integration: Artists in Exile

TV interview | PBS/WUCF's Global Perspectives

Workshop | The Power of AI Visuals: Reimagining Peace and Human Connection

Project Coordinator Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

Trans-making H2020-MSCA-RISE-2016, funded by the European Union.
[2017 - 2022] - extended two years due to Covid-19.

Graduate Thesis Supervisor Izmir University of Economics, Turkey

Hakan Özler (2021). Enhancing User Experience on Smart Mobile Assistants' Multimedia Notifications in Apple Siri & Google Assistant

Ali Nazım Beşikçi (2018). Role of Uncommissioned Graphic Installations on Riot Places: Taksim Square as a Body without Organs in the Course of Gezi Resistance.

Zeynep Vaizoğlu (2014). Hacking Urban Space: Parkour and Squatting.

Damla İşbilen (2014). Gender Representation in the League of Legends.

Research

Current Research Agenda

AI, Communication & Human Identity

How artificial intelligence is reshaping visual communication, authorship, identity, creativity, persuasion, misinformation, and education, with particular attention to AI literacy and the human dimensions of communication.

Digital Media, Identity & Representation

Social media, visual culture, self-representation, gender, and the construction of identity in networked environments.

Communication, Migration & Cultural Diversity

Intercultural communication, migrant creative identities, transnational narratives, and the role of creative practice in cultural integration.

Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs)

Examining digital games as communicative, visual, and interactive environments, with particular attention to representation, identity, narrative, player experience, and the ways game systems shape how people perceive, interact, and make meaning.

Visual Communication and Representation

Exploring how visual communication constructs, mediates, and challenges representations of identity, culture, gender, and society across contemporary media.

Virtual Worlds, Transmedia Storytelling

Investigating virtual worlds and transmedia storytelling as expanded communicative environments, exploring how narratives, identities, and experiences are constructed across interconnected media, platforms, and physical-digital spaces.

Educational Background

Ph.D. in Communication Sciences

2008 - 2011 | Universitat Jaume I [Castellón, Spain](#)

Completed with European mention and gained the title Dr. Europaeus Cum Laude
Ph.D. dissertation titled "Image Becomes Identity 2.0" on the contemporary human identity, which concerns our changing habits of communication and self-expression using the current social media, digital and real mediums [w/ Dr. Cesar Fernandez]

M. A. in Interaction Design

2003 - 2004 | Domus Academy [Milan, Italy](#)

%90 scholarship on the tuition fee and monthly scholarship from The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Stato Italiano Ministero degli Affari Esteri] + Validated by the University of Wales

Interaction Design, Human-Technology Interfaces, Interface Design

"Radioactive Lamp" for Cappellini (Italy)

"Interactive Concepts for Interhaptic Indoor/Outdoor Robotics" for University of Siena & University of South Denmark

"Soundsphere" for Pioneer (Japan)

"Pickpocket" for Mitsubishi (Japan)

"Atlantique Anywhere" for Cafe L'Atlantique (Italy).

Final Project: Experience Space with Fujitsu (Japan) [w/ Claudio Moderini]

M. F. A. in Graphic Design

1998 - 2000 | Bilkent University [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Full scholarship on the tuition fee.

Master Thesis: "From Space to Cyberspace" [w/ Dr. Lewis Johnson]

B. Sc. in City Planning

1994 - 1998 | Middle East Technical University [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Licenses & Certifications

Introduction to Screenwriting

2025 | University of Central Florida [Orlando, U.S.A.](#)

Artificial Intelligence for Designers

2024 | The Interaction Design Foundation [Aarhus, Denmark](#)

Design for the 21st Century with Don Norman

2021 | The Interaction Design Foundation [Aarhus, Denmark](#)

Professional Experience

Founder & Chief Creative

September 2025 - to date

ZADS | Zeynep Arda Design Studio [Istanbul, Turkey](#)

Visiting Scholar & Research Fellow

Sep 2022 - Sep 2023 [On sabbatical leave from IUE] / Sep 2025 - to date

University of Central Florida [Orlando, U.S.A.](#)

Global Perspectives and International Initiatives Office

Associate Professor

Mar 2018 - September 2025

Assistant Professor

Sep 2013 - Mar 2018

Department Chair

Oct 2014 - Apr 2022

Izmir University of Economics [Izmir, Turkey](#)

Visual Communication Design Department

Researcher & PhD Candidate

Nov 2008 - Nov 2011

Universitat Jaume I [Castellón, Spain](#)

Communication Sciences Department

Founder & Creative Director

Nov 2008 - Sep 2010

Innova Design [Castellón, Spain](#)

Design and communication projects developed for a wide range of clients in IT, petrol, hospitality, entertainment and medical sectors.

Founder & Creative Director

Nov 2005 - Sep 2010

I-DSGN [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Digital and print work developed for clients such as Genel Enerji, TTOPCO, Addax Petroleum, Inta Spaceturk, GNL Entertainment, Çelebi Consulting, Ankara Cyberpark, Bektaşlar Turizm, Artı Elektronik, Amara Hotels, Serba Medikal, FunCard, Event Atelier among others.

Part-time Instructor

Sep 2001 - June 2002 | Feb 2005 - Jun 2007

Bilkent University [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Communication and Design Department

Design Consultant

Jan 2004 - Oct 2005

Çelebi Strategic Consulting and Management [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Land Development Specialist

Mar 2002 - Dec 2002

Ankara Cyberpark [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Was part of the initial team to start-up Ankara Cyberpark.

City Planner

Oct 1998 - Jan 2002

Tepe Group | Tepe Land Development [Ankara, Turkey](#)

Development of various shopping malls and commercial centers around Turkey, as partners of Metro AG, Carrefour, Real and Praktiker.

Invited Speaker

January, 2025 University of Central Florida, U.S.A.

The Power of AI Visuals: Reimagining Peace and Human Connection

March, 2023 LIFE: Learning Institute for Elders, UCF, Orlando, U.S.A.

Image Becomes Identity: Who Are We on the Face of Technology?

February, 2023 PBS - WUCF TV Global Perspectives, Orlando, U.S.A.

TV Programme hosted by David Dumke | Season 2022 | Episode 22

Image Becomes Identity 2.0

November, 2022 University of Central Florida, U.S.A.

Breaking Bread: An Intercultural Conversation

February, 2022 School of Visual Art and Design, UCF, Orlando, U.S.A.

Designing for Interaction and Integration: Artists in Exile

September, 2022 Workshops of Culture, Lublin, Poland

How This Project Trans-made Me into a Cultural Worker?

December, 2021 RCE, Cite International des Arts, Paris, France

Breaking Bread: An Intercultural Conversation

October, 2021 Asociación Española de Cerámicos, Castellon, Spain

Identidad Digital, Comunicacion y Diseno Contemporanea

February, 2020 Università degli Studi di Palermo, Palermo, Italy

Trans-making: Timeline Workshop

December, 2019 Universidad Jaume I, Castellon de la Plana, Spain

The Unbearable Lightness of Going to the Bathroom without Your Phone

October, 2019 Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul, Turkey

Human-making (Moderator)

March, 2017 Universidad Jaume I, Castellon de la Plana, Spain

Social Media, Digital Narratives and Transmedia Storytelling

November, 2016 Universidad Jaume I, Castellon de la Plana, Spain

Creatividad, diseno y nuevas tecnologias en los preparativos del evento tradicional y en procesos de hibridacion (Moderator)

October, 2015 Universidad Jaume I, Castellon de la Plana, Spain

Fundamentals of Visual Communication Design and Visual Storytelling

April, 2015 Universidad Jaume I, Castellon de la Plana, Spain

Creativity and Open-Mindedness: Designing Experiences