Research Seminar: The Islamic Mediterranean

Instructors: Giancarlo Casale and Tommaso Stefini
Spring Semester 2022

Seminar Description:
Recent approaches to the history of the early modern Mediterranean have highlighted its role as a shared space, a contact zone and a zone of encounter. In many ways, however, these approaches remain embedded in assumptions—regarding the availability of sources, the norms of statecraft, the nature of confessional identity, and so forth—that reflect the realities of its Christian half much more closely than its Islamic one.

With this in mind, this seminar proposes to revisit recent scholarship on the Mediterranean in a way that privileges a view from its southern and eastern shores. Themes to be addressed include religious conversion, intellectual life, slavery, land tenure, commercial practices, and legal cultures, among others.

Calendar of Meetings:
Please note that, with the exception of session #1 and session #3, all sessions are 3 hours, to be divided between a research presentation from a visiting scholar, and a separate session devoted to discussion of the week’s readings. Session #3 will be organized as a “field trip” to the PIMO Translators in Motion workshop to be held on Jan 31st and Feb. 1st.

Session #1: Introductory Session, 18/01/2022 11:00-13:00
Readings:

Session #2: Science, 25/01/2022
Research Presentation by Duygu Yıldırım
Readings:

**Session #3 Translation, 1/2/2022**
Instead of scheduled session: students will attend Natalie Rothman’s lecture on previous evening, and at least one session of PIMO translation workshop during the same day as the scheduled seminar. Details to follow.
Readings:
--Rothman, *Dragoman Renaissance: Diplomatic Interpreters and the Routes of Orientalism* (Cornell, 2021), pages TBD

**Session #4: Captives and Slavery, 08/02/2022**
Research Presentation by Emanuel Buttegieg, University of Malta
Readings:

**Session #5: Commerce and the Law, 15/02/2022**
Research Presentation by Francisco Apellaniz, Universita’ l’Orientale di Napoli
Readings:
--Francisco Apellániz, Breaching the Bronze Wall: Franks at Mamluk and Ottoman Courts and Markets. (Leiden: Brill, 2020), Chapter 4, especially 206-234.

**Session #6: Mobility and Diplomacy, 22/02/2022 11:00-14:00**
Research Presentation by Mercan Özden, Villa I Tatti
Readings:
--Hathaway, Ian “Layers of Protection: Safe-Conduct Practices and Diplomacy in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean,” (unpublished article, to be distributed)
Session #7: Absences, 01/03/2022  
Research Presentation by Prof. Catarina Bori, Universita’ di Bologna  
Readings:  
-- C. Bori C. “Conclusive or clue? Reading unexpected silences in our sources (Joseph Schacht; Marc Bloch)” in: La Rivista degli Studi Orientali 2022 (forthcoming).  