



Seminar in Ottoman and Turkish Studies



Le Serail et les divers personnages turcs, BnF



İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri, Bab Mahkemesi, 11. Sicil (1081/1670-71)

Teagan Cameron (University of Toronto)

Janissaries, Slaves, and Witnesses in the Qadi Court Records of Istanbul, 1652-86

The transformation of the Ottoman janissary corps from a slave army to a major social group in civilian urban spaces has been well recognized by historians. From the late sixteenth century onwards, they entered guilds, opened coffeehouses, and turned to civilian channels of justice for their disputes, especially the qadi courts. Nevertheless, the impact of this transformation on their traditional status as “slaves of the sultan” remains obscure. Were they slave, free, or experiencing another form of unfreedom entirely? What can sharia court records of the period tell us about their status in relation to their civilian activities? This presentation will examine how janissaries appear in the Istanbul records and what these appearances reveal about their stature in the wider community.

Thursday | April 18, 2024 | 4:00-6:00 pm

Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations | Bancroft Building 200B | 4 Bancroft Ave., 2nd fl.