



International Seminar Series:

Entangled Histories of Emotions in the Mediterranean World

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1. NAPLES, Società Nazionale di Scienze Lettere ed Arti (26 June 2017): Cultures in Movement: New Visions, New Conceptual Paradigms

The category of Orientalism, understood as a product of Western authors, artists and the like, has been superseded, and so too has a unitary vision of the vast and complex Eastern world of the Near East. However, a conception that is no longer static but the fruit of historic, spatiotemporal and emotional transformations has yet to be adequately placed at the centre of the 'Mediterranean World' in a culturally broad sense. Such a view requires the testing of new paradigms and investigative methodologies, and of new conceptual tools. In this seminar, the point of observation will be reciprocal legacies, the transfer and translation-appropriation of knowledge, objects and goods, and migrations of bodies, ideas, visions and emotions – all of which have made the Mediterranean not a barrier but a point of contact between different and plural cultures.

2. SPLIT, Palace Milesi (25 September 2017) (ECCE-Entangled Histories, Seminar 2): Ports and Portals: Spaces of Encounter, Entanglement and Exchange

South East Europe is a key historical contact zone for the encounter of Continental, Mediterranean and Steppe cultures from the classical world, through the Middle Ages and early modern period. This history of cultural and emotional entanglement is inscribed in many of the region's geographical features: from the Adriatic to the Black Sea; the Danube – the main artery of the region – and connected inland waterways; the complex landscapes of mountains, coastal strips, islands, river mouths, ravines and fertile river plains. These distinctive landscapes have created natural and imaginary liminal zones: a series of fluid borderlines and cultural portals that criss-cross the South East. This seminar explores these sites of encounter, asking what role topography and landscape might play in the shaping of cultural portals of conflict and exchange. It considers the spaces and media through which these various cultures communicated with each other in South East Europe, in terms of cultural, commercial, artistic and emotional exchange; in periods of peace, and of confrontation. How is emotion used to calibrate cultural differences and exchanges between groups? And how might the historical geographies of encounter and exchange – and their attendant emotional entanglements – provide useful terms or models for the study of cultural experience and expression of emotion?

3. PERTH, The University of Western Australia (14 December 2017): Entangled Histories of Things in the Mediterranean World

This workshop will have a particular focus on the interactions of subject, material and emotional formations, applying a 'new materialities' analytical paradigm to examine the entangled trajectories, transmissions and transfers of people, ideas and objects across Mediterranean spaces. It thus advances research on the interconnected histories of people, places and things in circulation in the Mediterranean world. The workshop seeks to apply new methodological lenses to the complex and entangled history of the geo-cultural space, the Mediterranean World. These new analytical frameworks demand that we consider people, places and things as having entangled subjective, affective, emotional and material lives that are mutually constitutive. As such, these theories suggest that we cannot study individuals and societies outside of their interactions with material entities such as spaces and places and affective experiences, but only in relation to them – and likewise, spaces, objects and emotional experience as relational constructs produced through interactions with people. Thus, people, places and things are 'entangled'.

4. FLORENCE, European University Institute (5 February 2018): People in Movement: Mediterranean Encounters

This workshop will look at contacts between different cultures in the Mediterranean world. Possible subjects include the perceptions of other cultures, which involved emotions such as curiosity or fear; emotions expressed, for example, in travel accounts describing other cultures; peoples and 'races', and also in their translations. A particularly interesting aspect of these intertwined cultures concerns the activities of Mediterranean 'pirates' and those taken captive – both Europeans held for ransom in North Africa, and North Africans forced to work as galley slaves in European countries – and the accounts of the sufferings of Christian 'slaves' in Barbary. Another fruitful path to explore involves a new approach to the activities of diplomats or merchants through the study of the emotions expressed in their memoirs or correspondence.

5. BUDAPEST, Central European University, Institute for Advanced Study (18 June 2018): Religious Sentiments Across Central and Eastern Europe

This workshop will look specifically at the relations between religion, religious sentiments and emotions across Central and Eastern Europe, Southeastern Europe and the Eastern Arab Mediterranean. The workshop will integrate two perspectives in terms of contact zones, by relating cross-imperial boundaries, contacts and transfers as well as religious boundaries within given multi-confessional societies. The central question will be what role religion played in shaping emotions and repertoires of emotion and perceptions thereof, including how to make sense of irrational emotions. How are similarities and differences of regimes of body language and emotional registers and economy explained in religious terms? How are religious traditions and formation in multi-confessional contexts inscribed in non-religious practices? When do such perceptions change and how do we as historians measure such change? To this end, the workshop will address issues of methodology and historical case studies, in which Islam will play a special, though not exclusive role. Methodologically, the focus will be on the tangibility or otherwise of religious sentiments in given materials and practices (Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic, and rejections thereof). As for empirical studies, the workshop will focus on case studies involving the complex relationship of body, religious practice and emotion, including sentiments disavowing the impact of religion on the economy of emotion and religious sentiments.

