



## WORKSHOP CALL

### **PEOPLE, TRADE, GIFTS AND BEYOND: THE CIRCULATION OF GOODS AND PRACTICES BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND EUROPE IN 16-19TH CENTURIES**

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#### OUTLINE

From the last decades of the 20th century objects have become a subject of study among anthropologists and historians. During the 1970s material culture of everyday life slowly became the centerpiece of a new kind of social history among the members of the French Annales school (e.g. Roche: 1981); by the late 1980s consumption, taste, and market were already keywords in the vocabulary of early modern historians (Brewer, Porter (eds.): 1993). More recently, the history of material culture has started to be seen as an essential component of global history with historians paying increasing attention to the geography of objects (Stearns: 2001).

This historiographical trend has also inspired numerous researches on the circulation of goods and commodities in the framework of the relationships between the Ottoman Empire and Central and Western Europe (Quataert (ed.): 2000). In addition to the numerous works that focus on trade (Faroqhi: 2005), scholars have also highlighted how certain goods acquired an important signification in the diplomatic relations. Indeed, rich Venetian fabrics, clocks, oriental textiles, carpets or certain foods were used in the intercultural diplomatic gift-giving (Peter Burschel: 2013).

In spite of the abundance of secondary literature on the circulation of objects and commodities between the Central and Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire, the different ways and means by which things crossed the Mediterranean have not all been

given the same attention. Indeed, up to now historians have mostly been concerned with trade and gifts. Less attention has been devoted to the circulation of goods within different networks and for motivations other than commercial exchange and gift-giving. Consistently research has mainly been focused on global commodities (coffee, tea, cotton) and on luxury items, whereas daily objects have mostly been neglected. However, some of the objects that circulated were also everyday items. Missionaries and diplomats, for example, often decided to carry into foreign lands things that were meant for their personal use. Moreover a distinction between daily and luxury items is not always satisfactory, since the status of many items changed according to time and place. For example in the 16th century the coffee was considered a luxury item but by the 17th century it had already become a common drink (Quataert (ed.): 2000).

Based on these considerations, the aim of the workshop is to break new grounds in the research on the circulation of objects and commodities between the Ottoman Empire and the Christian world, by fostering a discussion that incorporate daily objects in the main historiographical debate on the topic. In order to do this, the workshop will thus investigate the relationship between the flow of luxury items and global commodities, on the one hand, and the movement of daily objects on the other.

More specifically, the following research questions will be addressed: What is the relationship between different forms of circulation of objects, such as luxury items and daily objects? Is there any complementarity? Did they circulate within the same networks? What can the suggested enlarged perspective add to the study of the circulation of objects between the Ottoman Empire and Europe and to the study of the relationships between the two worlds? And, more generally, how did objects change the world that they transited? How were they received and integrated in the daily life practices?

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