



IS-LE

CA18129 - Islamic Legacy: Narratives East,
West, South, North of the Mediterranean
(1350-1750)

MOOC PROJECT.

MATERIAL CULTURE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF ISLAM IN EUROPE. NARRATIVES AROUND THE PREMODERN MEDITERRANEAN (1350-1750) (working title)

The MOOC is a deliverable of the WG1, axe of research C, focused on the study of the role of Islamic heritage in Europe in the process of construction of figures of alterity and the perception of otherness. The MOOC will look at the mobility of people, knowledge, artifacts and visual elements between Islamic and Christian Europe, focusing on the consequences (cultural, artistic, scientific, etc.) of such mobility for the host countries. It will also look at how the material culture has been perceived or not as part of the European common heritage and how it has been integral part of complex constructions of otherness and identity.

Structure of the MOOC:

7 sessions: Introductory session; Faith and Conversion; Festivities and alterity; Commerce and exchange: spaces of encounters and confrontation; Islamic Heritage and identity constructions; Memory, Oblivion and Heritage; Discourses and contemporary narratives: Islamic heritage in European museums. [Scroll down for abstracts and drafts of each session]

Each session will have 3 or 4 videos (around 10-15 minutes each), plus links to other complementary multimedia material produced in the context of the Action.

Each session will include complementary readings chosen by the coordinator of the sessions (up to two hours of personal work per student) and at least one quiz.

Videos are expected to be choral contributions of several researchers addressing broad problems (you can see examples below). The main goal is to produce small introductions to general problems from a transnational and multidisciplinary point of view.

1 session: Introductory session. *Islamic Legacy: a problematic question*

This session will deal with the introductory concepts and historical framework the course will cover. It will present the specific goals of the MOOC, regarding the broader context



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of the CA 18129, and will set the ground of theoretical discussion regarding problematic concepts and terms usually employed in the study of the Islamic Legacy in Europe.

Example of videos:

1.- Introductory video: Introduction to the Action main goals and the specific goals of the MOOC.

2.- 2 videos (10 minutes each): questions of terminology and conceptualization of the theoretical framework. Including (but not limited) to problematize and discuss the use and abuse of terms such as “alterity”, “race”, “hybridity”, “arabization” and “islamization”, “islamophilia” and “islamophobia”, center and “periphery”...

Complementary material: readings and a quiz. Possibility to link other videos produced in the context of the MOOC (small informative videos hosted in the Is-Le site or the documentary)

2 session: Faith and Conversion

This session will introduce the complexities of medieval and early modern Mediterranean regarding the issues of faith and conversion. It will focus on the material and visual aspects of conversion: how the different visual arts served, opposed, were used to or reflected the different programs of conversion, the methods and techniques used for converting to one's faith, and the political impact of such actions.

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:

1.- Video: converts, *tornadizos*, slaves, translators, and captives around the Mediterranean

This video is conceived as introductory to the session and will be planned by an interdisciplinary team focusing specifically on history and literature.

2.- Video: Depicting conversion:

This video will introduce the depictions of the convert and the act of conversion. It is conceived as an art historical video, designed by a team combining studies of Western and Eastern Mediterranean.

3.- The Turk: representation and self-representation dynamics.

This video will deal with the iconographical construction of the image of the Turk, both from Christian European kingdoms and from the Ottoman Empire, looking at dynamics



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of dialogue, negotiation, tension or rupture. It will involve a small group of researchers working on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Complementary material: readings, quiz, other external videos.

3.- Festivities and alterity

Royal entries, parades, religious festivities or processions served as framework for different discourses regarding alterity. The political power seized those opportunities to visualize a legitimizing discourse in which minorities and otherness played an important role. In this session the potentiality of the comparative studies of those festivities will be introduced, both in Christian Europe and in the Ottoman Empire, since important similarities can be observed in both areas.

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:

1.- Video: Ceremonial and ceremonies in Christian Europe.

This video will introduce different festivities in the Medieval and Early Modern Christian Europe, focusing on the presence of minorities in rituals and parades, and their representation in theatrical spectacles, poetry and literature, music...

2.- Video: Ceremonial and ceremonies in the Ottoman Empire.

This video will introduce different festivities in the Medieval and Early Modern Ottoman Europe, focusing on the presence of minorities in rituals and parades, and their representation in theatrical spectacles, poetry and literature, music...

3.-Video: Material culture and festivities in Christian Europe.

This video will focus on the material culture related to the presence and visualization of alterity in the festivities in the Medieval and Early Modern Christian Europe. It will look at the presence and use of textiles and garments, weapons, musical instruments, ephemeral art...

4.- Video: Material culture and festivities in the Ottoman Empire

This video will focus on the material culture related to the presence and visualization of alterity in the festivities in the Medieval and Early Modern Ottoman Empire. It will look at the presence and use of textiles and garments, weapons, musical instruments, ephemeral art...



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Complementary material: Readings, quiz and other audiovisual material

4.- Commerce and exchange. Spaces of encounters and confrontation.

This session will present different specific products heavily commodified and commercialized in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean. The circulation of textiles, books, ceramics and weapons allowed the exchange of scientific ideas, artistic expertise, knowledge about the other culture, the spread of common fashion and trends, the share of ideals of representation of power or the dissemination and readaptation of formal features.

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:

- 1.- Video: Textiles (made by a small team looking at different chronologies and cultural areas)
- 2.- Video: Ornament (made by a small team looking at different chronologies and cultural areas)
- 3.- Video: Knowledge (made by a small team looking at different chronologies and cultural areas)

This video will include the circulation of books and manuscripts, scientific objects, people with specific knowledge (be it intellectuals travelling through the Mediterranean or slaves with specific skills and know-hows).

Complementary material: Readings, quiz, complementary audiovisual material.

5.- Islamic Heritage and identity constructions.

This session will be devoted to the analysis of heritage management after processes of conquest and change of political and religious affiliation. It will study the process of destruction or preservation of the artistic and visual heritage of the vanquished, conversion of religious spaces, changes in the urban plan and negotiation of the physical presence of the other.

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:



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1.- Video: Iberian Peninsula and Sicily

From 1085 (conquest of Toledo) to 1492 (conquest of Granada, last outpost of the Islamic rule on the Iberian Peninsula) very different strategies of negotiation of the visual landscape of al-Andalus were deployed.

The Norman conquest of Sicily (1061) was a turning point in the Mediterranean. Visual elections of the new ruling dynasty were not only linked to the previous presence of a Islamic society, but also looked at the contemporary competing Mediterranean powers, such as Fatimid Egypt.

This video will analyze the aesthetic choices for the representation of power, the circulation and new uses of artifacts and textiles, and the knowledge regarding artistic techniques (especially ceramics and textiles) in the post-conquest medieval spaces of both Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula.

2.- Video: Greece and the Balkans.

The conquest of the Ottoman Empire changed the political map of the Balkans and the dominant religion of the whole area. The conversion of churches, management of diversity (regarding languages, faiths or traditions) and the strategies of domination will be analyzed in this video.

3.- Central Europe:

This video will address different strategies of resistance, self-representation and identity formation in Central Europe, in relation with the Ottoman expansion.

Complementary material: Readings, quiz, complementary audiovisual material.

6.- Memory, Oblivion and, Heritage.

This session will be devoted to the analysis of *long-durée* historical processes of memory, oblivion and heritage management in the same areas. How intellectuals analyzed and negotiated the vestige of a conflictual past? How the processes of national identity dealt with their own transcultural past and how that was interpreted regarding the present? How these different strategies affected the way in which the architectural heritage was perceived and treated?

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:

1.- Video: Iberian Peninsula and Italy. The place of the Islamic past in the collective imaginary during the Early Modern Period.



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Whether negotiating the medieval past of al-Andalus and Norman Sicily or the more recent events of Lepanto, this video will approach the different processes of identity formation, the construction of the Other and the role of heritage in negotiating the place of the self and the other in such constructions.

2.- Video: Balkans: Ottomans and Habsburgs: imperial identities and visual strategies.

This video will address similar issues regarding identity formation processes and management of heritage and the physical remains of the constructed Other.

3.- Video: Central Europe.

This video will address similar issues regarding identity formation processes and management of heritage and the physical remains of the constructed Other.

Complementary material: Readings, quiz, complementary audiovisual material.

7.- Contemporary discourses and narratives: Islamic heritage in European museums.

This session will analyze the historical trends of display of Islamic collections in European museums, from private collections to archeological and national museums. It will study how museums contributed to the formation of the category of Islamic Art and how the strategies of display changed over time, in dialogue with the political circumstances, the development of Islamic studies or the elaboration of different identity discourses.

First draft of the session and possibilities for the videos:

1.- Video: The history of musealization of Islamic artifacts and the definition of “Islamic Art”.

2.- Video: Islamic collections in the 21st Century:

It will analyze new trends in the musealization of Islamic objects, the redefinition of several concepts, the renewal of many halls of Islamic Art in European museums, in parallel with the general renewal of museum studies and theory.

3.- Islamic collections: looking forward:

This video is conceived as a series of interviews with curators of Islamic collections over Europe, reflecting about the new challenges, ideas for the future, or new approaches still in progress that will define the redefinition of Islamic collections in European Museums in the near future.