

Call for Papers

The Making of Law in the Ottoman Space, 1800-1914

Interdisciplinary/International Workshop

Centre d'Études Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques (CETOBAC, UMR 8032), Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales, Paris.

May 25-26, 2015

Deadline: 15/02/2015

This 2-day workshop will bring together historians, anthropologists and linguists working on the making of law in the Ottoman space. The aim of the workshop is to problematize the legal phenomena from a multidisciplinary aspect and beyond the normative and descriptive dimensions of laws and legislations. Considering law as a multi-layered dynamic process, presentations may include but will not be limited to the following topics:

- a) Law as a social process: we intend to explore here the complex relationship between law, legal institutions and social dynamics ranging from culture to religion and from community to the wider society. We aim to problematize law within the social landscape and the particular cultural settings in which it emerges within a multi-ethnic imperial context. This aspect also includes the investigation of law in relation to a variety of social actors (lawyers, judges, jurists, bureaucrats, diplomats, consuls, scholars, intellectuals, journalists, etc.).
- b) Law as an epistemological process: normative approaches investigating Ottoman law only understand it within the context of legal reforms and are far from reflecting the public debate and the epistemological process, which preceded the final textual production. Without leaving aside the making of state laws and other forms of normativity, the epistemological dimension of the workshop aims to focus on law in all its variety, in the form of ideas, ways of reasoning, doctrines emerging in textbooks, erudite journals or monographs and to analyze the role of education in the development of legal thought in the Ottoman space.
- c) Local laws/universal discourses: local laws often refer to universal ideals in order to gain more prestige in the eyes of the people they rule as well as in the international arena. The relationship between local laws/universal discourses implies to investigate how local actors make sense of universality in their statements. This relationship also necessitates the investigation of legal transfers and cultural translations in the Ottoman space in relation with global contexts without neglecting the contemporary legal culture of the surrounding geography (Russia, Iran, the Balkans, etc.).
- d) Local laws and global contexts: this aspect of the workshop will highlight the impact of global movements (such as constitutionalism), diplomatic turning points, dynamics of imperialism, revolutions, etc. on the making of Ottoman law.
- e) Studies of legal language: Law is not only what legal authorities communicate to us as directives. Departing from the relationship between language and legal philosophy, we intend to investigate the role of language in articulating a certain understanding of law beyond its authoritative statements. Our objective is to explore the ways in which language and political terminology frame the terms and spirit of legal codification, reflect references to time and modernity, the ideologies and emotions of lawmakers and their political culture. By examining the making of law as a linguistic process as well as a social process, we aim to highlight the changing equivalents of legal concepts in accordance with particular cultural settings as bearers of a certain legal philosophy. We also aim to approach the issue of vagueness in normative frameworks and how linguistic ambiguity gives way to new negotiations, interpretations and compromises between legal authorities and the various segments of the society.

Practical Information

The languages of the workshop will be English and French. Please email proposals of approximately 300 words with updated CVs for a 20-minute paper to Aylin Koçunyan (aylin.besiryan@eui.eu) no later than February 15th, 2015. E-mails should be entitled "Making of Law Submission". Proposals should be in Word

format with the following information and in this order: a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in the program, c) email address, d) title of abstract, e) body of abstract.

Participants will be notified of the Steering Committee's decision in early March. The Steering Committee is composed of the following members: Nathalie Clayer (Centre d'Etudes Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques, EHESS, Paris), Benjamin Fortna (SOAS, University of London), Bernard Heyberger (Centre d'Etudes Interdisciplinaires des Faits Religieux, EHESS, Paris), Huricihan İslamoğlu (Bosphorus University, Istanbul), Dina Khoury (Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University), Laurent Mignon (Oriental Institute, Oxford University), Avi Rubin (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), Kent Schull (Binghamton University, SUNY, New York), Michel Tissier (University Rennes 2-Centre de Recherches historiques de l'Ouest/Collegium of Lyon).

We intend to publish selected papers from the workshop as a themed-hard copy collective volume. Consequently, if an abstract is accepted for the workshop, a full draft paper should be submitted by May 15th, 2015.

Limited help with travel funding is available on application to postgraduate students and early career researchers, who will submit a paper. If you would like to be considered for funding, please inform us when you submit your abstract.

The workshop is a part of the project entitled "Trans-acting Matters: Areas and Eras of a (post-)Ottoman Globalization", funded by the French National Research Agency (ANR-12-GLOB-003) and supervised by Marc Aymes (CNRS, CETOBAC, Paris). To know more about the project, see <http://cetobac.ehess.fr/index.php?1257>.