

## **Mediating between East and West: Ottoman Migrants in Medici Tuscany**

In this talk, I will explore the migration of merchants and artisans from the Ottoman Empire to the Tuscan free port of Livorno and Pisa in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this period, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany made significant efforts to entice merchants and artisans from various regions, including the Ottoman Empire, by offering substantial privileges to encourage their settlement and trade within Tuscan ports. Drawing on my current findings in the archival documents, I will illustrate how certain individuals and groups within the Ottoman Empire capitalized on these conditions and established themselves in these ports. Furthermore, I will examine the roles these migrants played in facilitating the flow of trade and disseminating information and technical expertise, particularly in the fields of clothing fashions and textile production, between Tuscany and the Ottoman Empire.

### **BIO:**

Özden Mercan is Assistant Professor at the Department of History at Hacettepe University in Ankara. She received her PhD from the European University Institute in Florence in 2017. She has held postdoctoral fellowships at Bonn University (2023), I Tatti The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies (2021-2022), the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University (2019-2020), and the European University Institute (2018-2019). Among her publications are “Medici-Ottoman Diplomatic Relations (1574-1578): What Went Wrong?” in *The Grand Ducal Medici and the Levant*, eds. M. Caroscio and M. Arfaïoli, (Brepols, 2016); “A Struggle for Survival: Genoese Diplomacy with the Sublime Porte in the Face of Spanish and French Opposition,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 23, no. 6 (2019): 542-565; “A diplomacy woven with textiles: Medici-Ottoman relations during the late Renaissance,” *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 35:2 (2020): 169-188; “An Ottoman Envoy at the Medici Court: Mustafa Agha’s Reception in Florence (1598)” *Annali dell’Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento* 49:1 (2023): 97-124.