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.

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