

CFP: 1922: Political Transitions and Minority Strategies of Entrenchment in the Eastern Mediterranean (24 June: Athens)

Call for papers: Workshop for graduate students and junior scholars

1922: In the Wake of the Death of an Empire. Political Transitions and Minority Strategies of Entrenchment in the Eastern Mediterranean

1922 is a major turning point in the history of the Eastern Mediterranean. With the abolition of the Ottoman Sultanate, it marks the culminating point of a series of geopolitical upheavals that had been shaking the region ever since the early nineteenth century. Through war, demographic engineering and European colonization, the model of the nation-state is implemented on societies, which, as part of an Empire, had until then been profoundly multicultural. The liberal promise of the Wilsonian national self-determination principle is everywhere belied by the human cost of what Lord Curzon once described as the “unmixing of peoples.” Populations which are not “exchanged” across the new boundaries of post-Ottoman successor states, or simply massacred, become, within the latter, “minorities,” a legal invention of the international treaties settling the Great War.

The existing scholarship has for years meticulously documented these dramatic demographic transformations that made nations, or nations-in-the-making in the context of League of Nations mandates, out of former Ottoman provinces. The violence visited upon populations that no longer fitted the nationalist project of post-Ottoman successor states and the traumatic cultural, economic and social changes that this entailed has been and is still being rightfully studied. Instead this workshop proposes to shed light on a lesser known aspect of this defining moment in the history of the Eastern Mediterranean. Motivated by a desire to recover the agency of “minority” populations, we seek to understand their strategies of entrenchment within the newly-designed frontiers of post-Ottoman political entities, whether these be nation-states or European dependencies. Adopting a broad, instead of purely legalistic, understanding of the term “minority,” we therefore invite contributions from graduate students and young scholars working on populations designated as religious or ethnic others in the Eastern Mediterranean, writ-large.

Themes of interest for this workshop include, but are not limited to:

- - Individual strategies of minority historical actors, microhistorical approaches
- - Interstate minority institutions, religious and secular
- - Questions of property, labor and business within minority groups
- - Education, charity, patronage

This workshop, with its driving theme, is the launching event of a five years homonymous project funded by the Ecole française d'Athènes and run by Angelos Dalachanis (CNRS-IHMC) and Alexis Rappas (Koç University). Its central purpose is therefore to establish a network of young scholars working on interests germane to the project's main topic.

Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the organizers

Place: Athens, Greece (Ecole française d'Athènes)

Date: June 24, 2022

Deadline for sending abstract: February 15, 2022 to angelos.dalachanis@cnrs.fr ou arappas@ku.edu.tr

Response to participants : February 28, 2022

Language: English, French