

Ottoman History from the Margins: Reflections on Women and Dhimmis at Aleppo's Shari'a Court

A public talk by Dr. Elyse Semerdjian

November 7, 2016

5:00 – 7:00 pm

Smittcamp Alumni House

2625 E Matoian Way, Fresno, CA 93740

In the Ottoman Empire, relationships of power between Muslims and non-Muslims were regulated by the courts. Using court registers from the Syrian city of Aleppo, Dr. Semerdjian will discuss the ways in which laws policing interactions between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in public spaces were gendered. Examining courtroom proceedings on Syrian bathhouses, brothels, and conversion of Armenians to Islam, Semerdjian argues that the courtroom offered non-dominant groups both obstacles and opportunities to effect power within Ottoman society.

This talk is open to the public, and it is offered by the Department of History, the College of Social Sciences, and the Islamic Studies Symposia Series at Fresno State. A reception with light refreshments will follow.

Dr. Elyse Semerdjian is an Associate Professor of History and Islamic studies at Whitman College, where she is also the Director of Global Studies. She is the author of *Off the Straight Path: Illicit Sex, Law, and Community in Ottoman Aleppo* and a specialist on the history of Syria and the Ottoman Empire. She comes to us from Cornell University, where she is a 2016-17 Society for the Humanities Fellow doing research on a new book on Islamized Armenians in Syria during the Armenian Genocide.