

CFP International Conference: Emerging Historical Perspectives on Christian-Muslim Interactions in and around the Mediterranean (c. 630–1614)

Konstanz, 21–23 March 2024 (hybrid format)

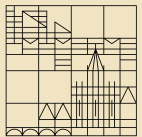
Conference organisers: Hossameldin Ali, Eric Böhme, Alejandro Peláez Martín, James Wilson
(University of Konstanz)



*Frederick II Hohenstaufen and the Ayyūbid Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil agree to the peaceful surrender of Jerusalem (1229),
Source: Vatican Library, Chig.L.VIII.296, fol. 75r.*

From the beginning of the Arab-Islamic expansion in the early seventh century, Muslim and Christian communities interacted daily for sustained periods in several different geographical areas, from Iberia to Sicily, southern Italy and the Near East. In the last three decades, a new wave of revisionist and interdisciplinary methodologies, ranging from gender and global history to medievalism and the history of emotions, have broadened our epistemological horizons, creating innovative avenues of enquiry that provide new ways of thinking about the historical roots of Christian-Muslim relations. However, despite recent methodological advances and the various ways in which they enhance our understanding of the pre-modern Mediterranean (c. 630–1614), few conferences have attempted to apply these new approaches in a trans-Mediterranean context. By exploring the complex and much-studied topic of Christian-Muslim relations through the changing lens of methodologies, this conference aims to foster an interdisciplinary debate that, through comparison and collaboration between scholars from different fields, bridges rigid geographical and temporal frameworks. Early career scholars and all others interested in participating are thus invited to help demonstrate the historical value of new or nuanced methodologies by applying them to specific case studies (to be presented in c. 20–25 min papers). The conference has three main themes:

- **Innovative approaches to the source material**
- **Revised, new, experimental methodologies**
- **Macro-historical perspectives**



1. Select list of possible methodologies

i) Sources

- ❖ Material culture
- ❖ Legal traditions
- ❖ Vernacular literature, poetry, liturgy, songs & music
- ❖ Bilingual manuscripts and codicology (Judeo-Arabic, Aljamiado, Coptic, Syriac etc.)
- ❖ The study of space, place and cartography
- ❖ Climate change and environmental history
- ❖ Human body/medical history

ii) Methodologies

- ❖ Gender history
- ❖ Medievalism, post-colonial studies, translation studies
- ❖ Questioning the value of 'eye-witness' testimonies
- ❖ Digital humanities (large scale analysis of text)
- ❖ Ceremonial interactions and rituals
- ❖ Manuscript studies, codicology
- ❖ Legal frameworks (charters, laws, treaties, court cases etc.)
- ❖ Historiographical approaches and the role of authorial 'agency'
- ❖ Emotions
- ❖ Trade and economic history
- ❖ Prosopography

iii) Macro-historical perspectives

- ❖ Comparative approaches – across regions or temporalities
- ❖ Network analysis
- ❖ Transregional / Mediterranean / Global history
- ❖ Legal sources & theories
- ❖ Micro-historical *Quellenkritik*
- ❖ Frontier theory
- ❖ Diplomacy and international relations

2. Potential topics for discussion

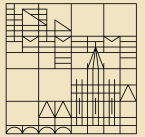
Please apply one or more of the above approaches to one or more of the topics outlined below. **Any other combinations of approaches and topics are highly welcomed as well.**

Q1 – Christian-Muslim relations during periods of transition or crisis

- To what extent are periods of transition or crisis discernible in the source materials and how might they have influenced Christian-Muslim ties?
- Did some crises / transitions increase or reduce tensions more than others? Were they a cause for renewed attention to historical episodes of conflict or oppression?
- Were there standardised practices or mechanisms for negotiating periods of crisis/transition, or did these alterations produce new modes of communication or collaboration?
- What were the linguistic, cultural and ceremonial practicalities of cross-cultural contact following periods of rupture? Did written material need to be translated, or provided in multiple languages, who translated it and how?

Q2 – Christian-Muslim relations during periods of stability

- Did periods of sustained contact facilitate new forms of communication, trade, settlement or political and military cooperation?



- Did behaviour around sites of devotional significance and shared sacred spaces change as a result to sustained periods of Christian-Muslim cohabitation? How did this compare to sites of strategic importance?
- Did periods of stability necessitate multi-cultural courts and shared mechanisms of legitimisation or diplomacy?
- Why was emphasis placed on translating scientific, medical and philosophical knowledge at the expense of historical writings? What does this suggest about the nature of Muslim-Christian contact in the Mediterranean? Was there any regional variation in this seemingly trans Mediterranean trend?

Q3 – The variation or preservation of political, legal, ceremonial or cultural norms in different geographical, topographical or temporal contexts

- Were there variations in attitudes towards Christian-Muslim interactions in rural and urban communities?
- What were the similarities and differences between Christians living under Muslim rule and Muslims living under Christian rule for sustained periods? Were any differences linked to local factors?
- How aware were communities of the customs of Christian-Muslim interactions in other geographical regions in the Mediterranean? How was this knowledge acquired?

3. Further details about the conference

The conference will take place at the University of Konstanz from 21–23 March 2024. The organisers plan to cover the full accommodation and travel costs (EU and UK) of all active participants. However, this is dependent upon securing sufficient funding. A publication of the conference proceedings is envisaged as well. Scholars interested in participating actively as speakers are invited to submit an abstract (about 250–500 words) as well as a short bio (about 150–250 words) to emerging-historical-perspectives@uni-konstanz.de by **31 March, 2023**. Any inquiries about the conference and the modalities of participation can also be directed to this address.