



THE INSTITUTE *of* TURKISH STUDIES

REFORM & REALITY: PUNISHMENT AND PRISONS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Prof. Kent Schull

Department of History, SUNY Binghamton



Thursday, October 1

12:30-2:00 PM

**McGhee Library
(ICC 301)**

Georgetown University

This talk discusses criminal justice policy and practice, particularly prisons in the late Ottoman Empire by juxtaposing the ideology of reform with the reality of implementation and lived experience within the empire's prison system. This juxtaposition provides valuable insights into various aspects of Ottoman modernity, particularly regarding issues of administrative reform and regulation, professionalization of prison personnel, the codification of Islamic criminal law, gender and childhood, the rehabilitation of prisoners, the prevention of corruption and prisoner abuse, and the conceptualization of crime and punishment within Ottoman culture and society. It also complicates notions of Ottoman modernization by challenging assumptions that Ottoman reform was a failed process of Westernization and secularization.

Dr. Kent Schull is Associate Professor in the Department of History at SUNY Binghamton. He received a Doctorate and MA in history from UCLA and a Graduate Diploma in Jewish Studies from the University of Oxford. He is also a twice Fulbright Scholar to Turkey. Schull's general research and teaching endeavors focus on the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East during the 19th & 20th centuries. Research specializations include socio-legal history, state formation, criminal justice, incarceration, identity, and Islamic criminal law in the Ottoman Empire and broader Middle East. His first book, *Prisons in the Late Ottoman Empire: Microcosms of Modernity* (Edinburgh University Press, 2014), investigates the intersection between Ottoman prison reform and the everyday lives of prisoners and prison officials. His second book, a co-edited volume entitled *Living in the Ottoman Realm: Sultans, Subjects, and Elites* (Indiana University Press, 2015), looks at the transformation of what it meant to be Ottoman during the empire's long existence as it transformed from a pastoral-nomadic polity, to a conquest state, world empire, and nation-state by the end of its existence. His current research projects include comparative criminal justice between the Ottoman Empire and its Eurasian contemporaries during the long nineteenth century; an investigation of Ottoman POWs and "Enemy Alien" expatriates during WWI; the role of prisons and prisoners in the Ottoman war effort during WWI; and the codification and transformation of Islamic criminal law and practice during the late Ottoman Empire. Kent Schull is currently the editor of the *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* (JOTSA).

Light Snacks will be served



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