

Seminar Series 2025-2026

Emotional Grammars
of Globalization



Jean-Baptiste Joseph Pater, *La bonne aventure* (The Fortune Teller), ca. 1695-1736, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, CC BY-NC-ND.

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**Emotions
and Interactions
between Communities
in the Early Modern
Mediterranean**

20 April 2026

12.00-14.00

University of Florence
Via San Gallo 10
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dei Conflitti (LM-64/B242)



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
FIRENZE

Dipartimento di Storia,
Archeologia, Geografia,
Arte e Spettacolo
Eccellenza 2023-2027



SOCIETY FOR THE
**HISTORY of
EMOTIONS**



Religious Minorities' Funerary Rituals and Practices of Inclusion and Exclusion: Emotional and Institutional Responses in Eighteenth-Century Italy

This paper examines the relationship between dominant and minorities communities in early modern Italy through the lens of burials, funerary practices, emotions, and institutional responses. Canon law enforced strict practices of exclusion of the non-Catholic dead and forbade any type of public recognition and participation in their funerary rituals: non-Catholic burials were relegated to impure and peripheral urban spaces, mirroring the patterns of social and spatial exclusion imposed on the living; on the other hand, Catholics were forbidden from attending non-Catholic funerals.

The paper aims at presenting a complete picture of the ever-evolving relationship between dominant communities and minorities on different levels: first, by looking at different social strata and different minorities (Jews, Muslims, Protestants, settled communities, more transient individuals) and their everyday interaction with the dominant Catholic group; secondly by looking at the evolving attitudes of institutions that during the eighteenth century started to grant separate and official burial locations to different minority groups. In the first instance, the paper focuses on emotional responses linked to canon law violations: non-Catholics were buried in consecrated burial grounds thanks to the intercession of members of the Catholic community, while Catholics often attended religious minorities funerals. The paper then situates such behaviours and interactions arguing that they predate evolutions typical of the eighteenth century in which official recognition started to be granted through official burial grounds.

Marina Inì is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at Sapienza University of Rome working on her project titled *Spaces of Encounters and Burial Practices of the Other: Liminality, Cemeteries, and Funerary Rituals in Early Modern Italy* (SEPOLCRI). She is a cultural historian of the early modern Mediterranean and she has previously worked and published on Mediterranean quarantine centres in the eighteenth century. Her research interests include the entangled study of objects, visual sources, built environment, urban history, history of medicine, and religious diversity.

Fear, Fantasy, and Reason: Imagining the “Gypsy” in the Early Modern and Enlightenment Mediterranean

This paper explores the emotional and intellectual construction of “Gypsies” in early modern Europe, focusing in particular on the transition between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the transformations brought about by Enlightenment thought. It investigates how fear, curiosity, fascination, and ridicule shaped the ways in which European societies interpreted, classified, and governed a highly mobile minority.

The paper examines the proliferation of “fantastic genealogies”: competing hypotheses elaborated by humanists, jurists, and philosophers in order to explain their presence in Europe. From biblical descent (as children of Cain or Ham) to survivals of ancient Egyptian or Near Eastern cults, these narratives reveal less about the communities themselves than about the emotional and epistemic needs of European observers.

These narratives are interpreted as emotional strategies that transformed anxiety about mobility, alterity, and social disorder into intelligible categories. In early modern contexts, fear was closely linked to concerns over superstition and deception, especially in relation to divinatory practices associated with Gypsy women. The Enlightenment marked a crucial shift: thinkers such as Diderot and Voltaire redefined “Gypsies” not as a mysterious people but as a marginal social type, signalling a transition from moral to epistemic forms of exclusion.

Maria Gloria Tumminelli is a cultural historian, and her research centers on migration and diaspora studies, with particular attention to identity, integration, and circulation of ideas and stereotypes. She is an Associate Researcher at the University of Cambridge, where she recently completed a Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship. She is also the Reviews Editor of the journal *Cerae*. Tumminelli earned her PhD from the University of Pavia in Society, Politics and Institutions in Early Modern and Contemporary Age. Her doctoral research focused on *The Gypsy Diaspora in the Spanish Empire*.