



**Anglo-Turkish Society online lecture, 20 September 2022, 6.00 pm (UK time)**

Speaker: Giancarlo Casale

Platform: Zoom with link provided to those who register

Title: 'Prisoner of the Infidels: The Life and Adventures of Osman Agha of Timișoara, An Ottoman Muslim in 17th-Century Europe'

In 1688, in the tumultuous aftermath of the failed Ottoman siege of Vienna, a young soldier by the name of Osman of Timișoara fell prisoner to the Austrian Habsburgs, and spent over a decade in captivity. In this respect, he was no different from thousands of other Ottoman subjects who, during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fell into enemy hands for various reasons and spent time as enslaved captives in Christian Europe. What sets Osman apart, however, is that many years after his safe return to Ottoman territory, he decided to write a detailed account of his experience, resulting in the first book-length autobiography ever composed in Ottoman Turkish. Osman's account, now available in English translation for the first time, is not only a gripping adventure tale--of prison breaks, back-alley knife fights, and fleeting love affairs--but also a deeply original and evocative work of literature, addressing the profound themes of personhood, self-discovery through alienation, and the impossibility of every truly 'returning home' after an experience of enslavement.

Booking essential: <https://giancarlo-casale-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

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Giancarlo Casale is Chair of Early Modern Mediterranean History at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, as well as a permanent member of the history faculty at the University of Minnesota. His new book, *Prisoner of the Infidels: The Memoir of an Ottoman Muslim in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (University of California Press, 2022) was recently awarded the Mediterranean Seminar Triennial Book Prize for best translation or source edition. Casale is also author of the award-winning *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and since 2010 has served as executive editor of the *Journal of Early Modern History*.

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