



Winter School

**Reading and Analysing  
Ottoman Manuscript Sources**

March 17-21, 2025  
Rethymno, Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH

*Call for Applications*

## Winter School

# Reading and Analysing Ottoman Manuscript Sources

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Rethymno (Greece), IMS/FORTH

We invite students to participate in an international winter school devoted to reading and analysing Ottoman manuscript sources, with a particular focus on archival documents. This is the seventh edition of this format, following the summer schools of 2016 in Amman (Jordan), 2017 in Beirut (Lebanon), 2018 in Aix-en-Provence (France) and Ankara (Turkey), 2022 in Wittenberg-Berlin (Germany), and 2024 in Cairo (Egypt).

The 2025 winter school is organised by the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH, in cooperation with the Islamic Studies Department of the University of Halle-Wittenberg, the French Institute of the Near East (Ifpo), the Center for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan and Central Asian Studies (CETOBaC), the Institute of Research and Study on the Arab and Islamic Worlds (IREMAM), the Seminar für Sprachen und Kulturen des Vorderen Orients, Abteilung Islamwissenschaft at Universität Heidelberg, the Social Sciences University of Ankara (ASBÜ) and the Orient-Institut Beirut (OIB).

The winter school aims to overcome the initial difficulties researchers often face when working with archival documents from the Ottoman period, one of which has to do with technical terminologies no longer in use today. Today, early-career scholars often feel helpless when faced with Ottoman archival material in Ottoman Turkish or other languages used in the Empire, and they need to develop their skills in palaeography and philology. Besides, dialogue and exchange remain limited between the different schools of Ottoman history, particularly between scholars focusing on the analysis of imperial dynamics (who are generally specialists in the Ottoman language) and those who concentrate on the provinces of the Empire and who therefore work on sources produced in local languages.

### How?

The five-day programme will introduce young researchers (mostly MA and Ph.D. candidates, though postdocs may also apply) to reading, combining and analysing manuscript sources from various archives of the Ottoman era, produced at the local, provincial and imperial levels. Materials from the 16th through the 20th centuries will receive most of our attention, but explorations into earlier archives are welcome.



Sessions will focus on the study of archives in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic and other languages so as to provide future historians with an idea of the skills necessary to use such sources within the framework of their research projects. The objective is to foster an exchange around theory and methodology among specialists of different regions of the empire. Coping with different languages is key to a comprehensive analysis of local dynamics in various provinces, be it on administrative, economic and social topics or in religious studies and belles-lettres. The five-day programme is however not a language course introducing beginners to Arabic or Ottoman Turkish.

An additional aim of the winter school is to encourage the use of manuscript sources in different languages by facilitating the identification and knowledge of diverse archival holdings. Bringing together specialists of different regions and subjects will encourage the exchange of information on archival repositories, their history, accessibility, and catalogues.

The winter school consists of small-group workshops allowing trainees to read and discuss archival documents with specialists familiar with different types of documents. During workshops, students will be asked to read and analyse a document of their choice.

Besides, presentations of Ottoman archives and research tools in palaeography, as well as discussions about methodology, will be provided. Furthermore we might explore some Ottoman remains near Rethymno.

The working language of the winter school is English.

## Who?

The winter school will accept up to 20 students depending on available funding. About 10 researchers and professors from Greek, French, German, Jordanian and Turkish institutions will participate in the winter school as instructors.

Students enrolled in a Master or Ph.D. programme as well as researchers at an early post-doctoral stage, regardless of nationality, can apply for this winter school, provided that his or her research project requires the use of Ottoman source materials in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic or other relevant languages.

## How Much?

No tuition fees will be charged. Selected students will be offered full coverage of the winter school costs, including accommodation and meals (breakfast), round-trip transportation from their country or place of residence to Rethymno, excursions and visits.

Applicants are welcome to mention in their file whether their home institution may (partly or fully) provide funding to cover for their travel and stay, as this may help select an additional student to attend the winter school.



## Application Guidelines

In order to be considered, applications must include:

- a proposal outlining the candidate's research project (maximum 600 words)
- a curriculum vitae, mentioning language skills (two pages maximum)
- name and contact of two referees that may be contacted for a recommendation.

The applications must be submitted in English.

Applications should be filled in online via the application form accessible through the following link: <https://forms.gle/jQoyL2uU2LSuBqLUA>

For further questions please use the following e-mail address: [contact@ottomanuschool.org](mailto:contact@ottomanuschool.org)

Applications must be submitted by **December 15, 2024**.

Reply from the organising committee will be forwarded before mid-January 2025.

## When?

The winter school will take place between March 17 and 21, 2025. Arrival is foreseen in Rethymno for Sunday, March 16, 2025; departure Saturday, March 22, 2025 at the earliest.

## Where?

The winter school will take place in Rethymno at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/gPmTAPp3r9R4K1cJ7>).

## List of potential instructors

Antonis ANASTASOPOULOS (University of Crete and IMS/FORTH), Metin ATMACA (ASBÜ), Marc AYMES (CNRS and EHESS / CETOBaC), Fatih ERMIŞ (OIB), Abdul-Hameed AL-KAYYALI (Ifpo), Astrid MEIER (Universität Halle-Wittenberg), Norig NEVEU (CNRS / IREMAM), Marinós SARIYANNIS (IMS/FORTH), Nicos SIGALAS (IMS/FORTH), Yannis SPYROPOULOS (IMS/FORTH), Henning SIEVERT (Universität Heidelberg), Işık TAMDOĞAN (CNRS / CETOBaC).

## Organisers

Metin ATMACA (ASBÜ), Marc AYMES (CNRS and EHESS / CETOBaC), Fatih ERMIŞ (OIB), Abdul-Hameed AL-KAYYALI (Ifpo), Astrid MEIER (Universität Halle-Wittenberg), Norig NEVEU (CNRS / IREMAM), Marinós SARIYANNIS (IMS/FORTH), Nicos SIGALAS (IMS/FORTH), Henning SIEVERT (Universität Heidelberg), Işık TAMDOĞAN (CNRS / CETOBaC).

