

Philip II of Spain and his Italian Jewish Spy

Medieval Lecture Series
St. Jerome's University and the University of Waterloo

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT:

Come and enjoy cheese and pastries, relaxed conversation, and a discussion on Phillip II of Spain and his Italian Jewish spy.

WHEN: Thursday, 26 January 2017, 4:30-6:00

WHERE: St. Jerome's University, SJ2-1002
Reception: 4:30
Lecture: following the reception

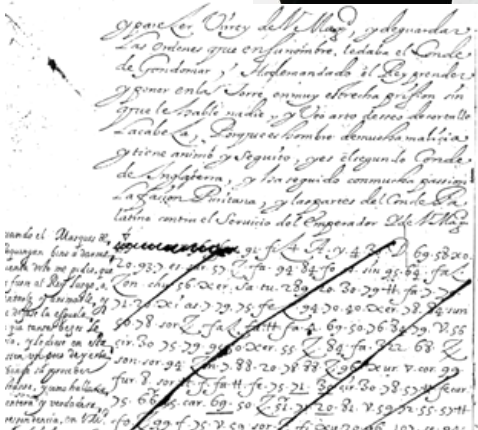
WHO: Dr. Flora Cassen



In the bitter sixteenth-century conflict between the Spanish and Ottoman empires, both sides relied on espionage. For Jewish men like Simon Sacerdoti (c.1540-1600), whose home had fallen to Spain, expulsion by King Philip II (1527 – 1598) was a very real risk. But Sacerdoti, scion to one of Milan's wealthiest Jewish families, had direct access to high-level information from the enemy Ottomans, information that was of great value to Philipp and to Spain. Sacerdoti, thus, found himself serving a king and an empire with a long history of harming the Jews, while spying on the Ottomans, a far more tolerant power. This talk explores Sacerdoti's actions and motivations and shines new light on early modern diplomacy and espionage, and on the place of the Jews in a time of competing empires and loyalties.



Flora Cassen is Assistant Professor of History and Van der Horst Fellow in Jewish History and Culture at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. Her forthcoming book with the University of Cambridge Press, *Marking the Jews in Renaissance Italy: Politics, Religion, and the Power of Symbols*, examines the roots of anti-Judaism through a study of discriminatory marks that the Jews were compelled to wear in 15th – and 16th C Italy.



This is the third event in the 2016 – 2017 *Medieval Lecture Series*. The lecture series highlights the forty-five-year history of Medieval Studies on our campus. It promotes communication, encourages collaboration, and enhances the interdisciplinary heart of Medieval Studies.

Steven Bednarski & David Porreca
Co-Directors, Medieval Studies