

Seminar Series 2026-2027

Emotional Grammars
of Globalization



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**RUBÉN
GONZÁLEZ
CUERVA**

Instituto de Historia – CSIC
**Stress in the Stronghold:
The Lives
of Spanish Soldiers
on the Tunisian Frontier
in the 16th Century**

**29 September 2026
11.30-13.00**

**University of Florence
Via Gino Capponi 9
Room 10**

meet.google.com/tvv-givu-vpu

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



SOCIETY FOR THE
**HISTORY of
EMOTIONS**

GLOBALHIS
NETWORK FOR GLOBAL HISTORY

Global History of the Early Modern Period
MA in Historical Studies / MA in Languages and
Civilisations of Asia and Africa
B033104 / B034888 · Prof. Giovanni Tarantino

ABSTRACT

Between 1535 and 1574, the Spanish Monarchy established a fragile protectorate over the Sultanate of Tunis and controlled several strategic coastal strongholds. The garrison of these strongholds came mainly from Spain, though there were also workers and inhabitants from across the Mediterranean, including Muslims from Tunis. However, for most of the time the soldiers were not free to move around and lived in a small, closed society, suffering huge material deprivation. In these stressful conditions, the captains recognised that understanding and managing the moods of the troops was one of their primary responsibilities. The handling of violence, punishments, and sexual desire relied on the loose enforcement of frontier rules, which took precedence over the royal instructions. This precarious balance was disrupted several times, leading to denunciations, desertions, suicides, and mutinies. Therefore, this lecture analyses how the military men portrayed the heated emotions of injustice, revenge, and despair, combined with a deep sense of comradeship, in their texts to justify the breach of the perceived natural order of events.

THE SPEAKER

Rubén González Cuerva is Permanent Scientist at the Spanish National Research Council. He directs the DIPLOINMED project, which analyses cross-confessional and global diplomacy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as the diplomatic relations between the Spanish Monarchy and Muslim polities. Among his latest books are (with M.A. Bunes) *Túnez 1535: voces de una campaña europea* (Madrid: CSIC, 2017); *Maria of Austria, Holy Roman Empress (1528-1603): Dynastic Networker* (London: Routledge, 2022), and (with F. Caprioli, eds.) *Beyond sovereign Courts: Agents and Practices in early modern Spanish and Habsburg Diplomacy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2025).