



SRII AUTUMN LECTURE

November 20, 2018, 19:00

Istiklal Caddesi 247 (Beyoğlu – Tünel)

Lisa Hellman

Uppsala University

The knitting-instructor and the map-maker: Swedish prisoners in eighteenth-century Dungarna

In the early 18th century, both Sweden and the Ottoman Empire were embroiled in the Great Northern War, and fought against the Russian empire. Having been defeated at the battle of Poltava, King Charles XII fled to Bender. But what happened to the rest of the army? Over 20,000 men and women were captured, and most were sent to prison camps in Russia. For many prisoners, however, that was just the beginning. They were then sent eastwards, not only to eastern Siberia, but also to Central Asian groups such as the Torghuts, the Kazaks and the Dzungars; some were sent all the way to China.

This talk will explore questions such as who is to be considered free, or unfree, who can be considered a diplomat or a trader, and the role of non-European empires in the changing political landscape of the 18th century. At the same time, it will try to put a human face on war captives in the past, by following two of them in detail. One is Brigitta Scherzenfeldt, who was a slave in Dzungaria for seventeen years, and secured a position at the Khan's court, where she met another Swedish prisoner and mapmaker. Their stories help explore the idea that not only were forcibly displaced people affected by political disruptions – they also changed the world they met. Thus, is a microhistorical study of imperial connections and expansion tying together Swedish, Russian, Chinese and Central Asian history.

Lisa Hellman holds a PhD from Stockholm University, and is currently working at Freie Universität Berlin and Uppsala University, where she explores the circulation of knowledge between Russia, China and the Central Asian states. She formerly worked at the University of Tokyo, where she wrote her book *This house is not a home: European everyday life in Canton and Macao 1750–1850* (Brill: 2018). She works in the intersection between cultural, maritime and world/global history, with a special focus on gender. Her regional focus is on Japan, China and the Central Asia, and she has presented on five continents on how early modern intercultural interaction changed the lives of the men and women involved.

Admission only after registration to event@sri.org.tr !