

Final Conference MARE Project

Beyond Migrations:

People and Human Mobilities Across Contemporary Mediterranean History

Pavia, March 2 and 3, 2026

Keynote speaker: Prof. Eric Calderwood, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Call for papers

Over the past two decades, migration studies have expanded significantly, particularly with regard to the Mediterranean region – North Africa, Europe, Near and Middle East – and the increasing securitization of the flows from the Global South to Europe (Miller and Castles, 1993; Atak Idil and Simeon, 2018). The MARE Conference aims to foster the nexus between the critical study of present migration and the political, social and cultural history of migration between 19th and 20th centuries. History matters for understanding not just the current migration dynamics, but also and mainly to go beyond a mere spatial paradigm where migration is understood as and limited to movement from one place to another.

In methodological terms, moving beyond – and through – “migration” means shifting migration into the broader analytical framework of human mobility, its trajectories and aspirations as well as projects and goals. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, imperial formations, colonial restructurings, state-building processes, and postcolonial transformations produced differentiated mobility regimes (Schiller and Salazar, 2013). These regimes built borders, shaped spaces and organized who could move, under what conditions, and with which resources. On the opposite side labour relations, household strategies, community memberships, cross-border affiliations and relational contexts were

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means to maneuver in avoiding the violence of governments and their rules and regulations, or even to resist imposed orders.

The mobility of Africans has been marked historically by patterns of inequality, cultural imaginaries, and forms of political authority and contestation in their relations with European States and societies, especially as regards the participation of the African continent in the global economy in the era of European colonialism. The study of the structures and everyday dynamics that shaped access to labour, protection and resources in Africa is also connected to the present by way of the legacy of past social relations that shaped collective strategies to build identities, a sense of belonging and cultural repertoires in the colonial era, as well as the mobility projects of individuals to achieve recognition, aspiration, or autonomy (Clancy-Smith, 2011). Cultural and symbolic processes such as memory, identity, and efforts to belong shaped how individuals and groups understood mobility, mediated conflict and articulated claims to recognition.

Processes of violence, conflict and minoritization further illuminate how mobility was produced, constrained or channelled from the colonial era to the present. Gendered, racialized and socioeconomic hierarchies structured access to rights and resources, influencing how individuals and groups mobilized kinship, occupational ties or communal affiliations. A focus on exclusion and coercion reveals the concrete social worlds in which households negotiated mobility and immobility in coping with displacement to communities reshaped by coercion, circulation, or marginalization. The same processes also led to a real process of liberation, to the point of forming new ruling elites and political configurations, and exiting from colonial or, more recently, national rule.

Approaching mobilities through social, economic, political, religious, or infrastructural networks shifts the focus from movement alone to the connections that make circulation possible. Such perspectives highlight forms of interaction that go beyond narrow migration lenses to shed light on how people navigate the present while invoking, reworking or

contesting their past across an interconnected planetary Mediterranean (Medici and Neve, 2019).

The program committee of the MARE conference welcomes paper proposals that touch upon, but are not limited to, the followings themes:

- **Social and Cultural trajectories of mobility, circulation and cross-border negotiation**
- **Circulation of material objects along or against human mobility**
- **Violence, conflict, and practices of protection or resistance across contemporary history**
- **Memory, belonging, and identity-making across space and time**

Submission Guidelines:

The deadline for submission is **January 30, 2026**. Notification of acceptance or rejection will be sent by **February 2, 2026**. The working language of the conference is **English**.

Please submit an abstract of **maximum 500 words**, including your full name and academic affiliation, to Antonio M. Morone, antmorone@hotmail.com

Participation is free of charge for partner universities of the MARE Consortium listed below. Travel expenses and accommodation will be also covered by the organization.

Iraq: University of Halabja; University of Duhok; University of Zakho

Libya: Misurata University; University of Tripoli

Morocco: University Hassan II Casablanca; University Sultan Moulay Slimane di Beni Mellal; International University of Rabat; University Mohamed V Rabat; Abdelmalek Esaadi University;

Tunisia: University of Gabès; University of Monastir; University of Kairouan; University of Sfax; University of Sousse; University of Tunis El Manar

Scientific Committee: Antonio M. Morone (convenor), Eleonora Angella, Ettore Chiorra, Federica Ferrero, Emanuela Mangiarotti, Chiara Pagano.