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Religious Studies

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MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

cordially invite you to  
a lecture by

**Mercedes García-Arenal Rodríguez**  
(Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales)

# Voice and Testimony

## Graffiti in the Prisons of the Inquisition in Palermo

**Abstract:** Research at the core of this presentation is inspired by the graffiti and drawings left by the prisoners of the Inquisition in Palermo on the walls of their cells, especially in Palazzo Steri where the Holy Office was located, which were discovered in the early years of the twentieth century and recently restored and made available for public viewing. In this talk García-Arenal will choose one of the cells, room number 3, and cross reference the visual and textual evidence on its walls, which includes dates, names and initials, with the trial records of the people who engraved them. In particular, she will focus on the trial of an English Calvinist converted to Islam in North Africa, Juan Andrés, who wrote in the wall the Credo according to the Book of Prayer, and a converted Muslim from Algiers, Gabriel Tudesco. García-Arenal will try to show how the voices and testimony of the accused as expressed in different sessions of their trials and in the conversations that they had among themselves, also reported in the trial, when crossed with the graffiti, provide a powerful new dimension to our understanding of the impact of the Inquisition on the lives and consciences of the accused.

**Mercedes García-Arenal** is Research Professor at the Spanish Council for Scientific Research in Madrid and Principal Investigator of the ERC project “Conversion, Overlapping Religiosities, Polemics, Interaction: Early Modern Iberia and Beyond” (CORPI). Her research focuses on the religious history of Iberia and the Muslim West, mainly on religious minorities: conversion, polemics, messianism, religious dissidence and dissimulation. Among her latest publications are the collective volumes *After Conversion: Iberia and the Emergence of Modernity* (Brill, 2016); *A Mediterranean Diaspora. The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain* (ed. with G. Wiegers, Brill, 2014); and *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada and the Beginnings of Orientalism* (ed. with F. Rodríguez Mediano, Brill, 2013).



**Thursday,  
February 8, 2018  
5:30 PM**

**CEU, Nador 9  
MB Room 201**

*Reception to follow*

