

<b>Institution:</b> St Mary's University College
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 30: History
<b>Title of case study:</b> A Shared World? Muslim-Christian interactions in the early modern Mediterranean and their relevance for today
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The impact within this case study is two-fold. Firstly through the dissemination of her research, which focuses on the political, cultural and economic interactions, co-operation and conflict between Muslim and Christian communities in the early modern Mediterranean world, Dr Claire Norton seeks to create impact by challenging current negative media stereotypes of Muslims and Islamic cultures. This has been achieved through a variety of public lectures, academic and more popular publications, media appearances and pedagogical workshops with teachers. Beneficiaries of the impact include interested members of the public, teachers, schools, and non-academic community stakeholders – both religious and non-religious. Secondly Norton is currently working with teachers with the aim of converting academic research into subject knowledge and usable classroom resources, thus enabling teachers to integrate knowledge of Islamic cultures into mainstream educational contexts with the aim of challenging negative misconceptions.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The underpinning research for this case study is Norton's work on the close cultural, economic, political and military interactions between the early modern Ottoman Empire and western European states undertaken in the past 10-15 years. Much of her research is manuscript based using Ottoman-language sources, but she also uses modern Turkish texts and early modern English-language printed books. The research has provided key material that has, and will continue to form the basis of workshop sessions for teachers and other members of the public, will be used as possible classroom resources, and has provided material for public talks and media appearances.</p> <p>Norton organised an international conference entitled '<i>The Renaissance and the Ottoman World</i>' (in conjunction with Prof. Charles Burnett of Warburg Institute, and Prof. Anna Contadini of the School of Oriental and African Studies) on 26-27<sup>th</sup> April 2006 to which highly regarded academics from the fields of Renaissance and Ottoman Studies gave original papers that explored the complex intellectual, diplomatic, and artistic interactions between Christian Europe and the Islamic Ottoman Empire in the Renaissance period. Together with Contadini, Norton edited a book of papers from this conference <i>The Renaissance and the Ottoman World</i> and authored an article that explored the close artistic, intellectual, economic, and diplomatic relations between western European states and the Ottoman Empire in the Renaissance period. Theoretically she highlighted the problems with using a clash of civilisations interpretative frame to narrate the histories of Mediterranean and western European states and instead suggested that a 'shared world' model might have more explanatory and heuristic force.</p> <p>In June 2013 Dr Norton organised another international conference on early modern conversion in the Mediterranean entitled '<i>The Lure of the 'Other': Religious Conversion and Reversion in the Early Modern Mediterranean and Beyond</i>' at St Mary's University College,</p>

Twickenham, 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June 2013 which analysed how early modern converts traversed not only religious divisions, but also political, cultural and geographic boundaries. It also explored the role conversion played in the fabrication of cosmopolitan Mediterranean identities and how it intersected with trading networks, wider patterns of voluntary or involuntary economic migration, and the dissemination of ideas, intellectual traditions, cultural practices and material goods. Norton is currently editing a volume of selected papers from this conference and writing an introductory essay for it. Again it stresses the heuristic benefit of conceiving of the Mediterranean world as a shared geo-political and cultural space.

Norton has also written a number of articles during the REF assessment period that explore interactions between Christian and Muslim communities in the western Mediterranean and central European borderlands and which further problematize, through a series of case studies based on primary sources, the notion that an iron curtain divided Christendom from the Islamic world and that these peoples inhabited different intellectual, political and economic worlds.

Dr Claire Norton has been employed at St Mary's since 2005. She is currently Co-director of the Centre for the Philosophy of History, and is a Senior Lecturer and Research Fellow in History.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Contadini, A. and Norton C.(eds), *The Renaissance and the Ottoman World*. London: Ashgate, 2013.

Norton, C. "Blurring the Boundaries: intellectual and cultural interactions between the eastern and western; Christian and Muslim worlds," in Contadini, Anna and Claire Norton (eds), *The Renaissance and the Ottoman World*. London: Ashgate, 2013.

Norton, C. "Lust, Greed, Torture and Identity: Narrations of Conversion and the Creation of the Early Modern 'Renegade'" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 29/2 (2009), 259-268.

Norton, C. "Conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire," *Wiener zeitschrift zur geschichte der neuzeit* 7/2, (2007), 25-39.

Norton, C. "Nationalism and the Re-Invention of Early-Modern Identities in the Ottoman-Habsburg Borderlands," *Ethnologia Balkanica*, 11 (2008), 79-101.

Norton, C. "The Lutheran is the Turks' Luck': Imagining Religious Identity, Alliance and Conflict on the Habsburg-Ottoman Marches in an Account of the Sieges of Nagykanizsa 1600 and 1601", in Marlene Kurz, Martin Scheutz, Karl Vocelka and Thomas Winkelbauer (eds), *Das Osmanische Reich und die Habsburgermonarchie in der Neuzeit. Akten des internationalen Kongresses zum 150-jährigen Bestehen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Wien, 22.-25. September 2004* MIOG Erg. Bd. 49, (Wien: Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, 2005), 67-81.

### Research Grants

2006 British Academy Grant of £1995, British Institute at Ankara Grant of £500, and Society of Renaissance Studies Grant of £1000 to support *Renaissance and Ottoman World* Conference. In addition, to these grants my co-organisers (Prof. Anna Contadini and Prof. Charles Burnett) and myself raised more than £8000 in grants from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation and the Kress Foundation to support the conference.

2013 Society of Renaissance Studies Grant of £1000 to support *Lure of the Other Conference*

### **4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

Norton's research has been disseminated through books, journal articles, public conferences, workshops with teachers, and on the radio, all of which has led to enhanced public awareness of the close interactions and mutually beneficial co-existence between Islamic and Christian communities in the early-modern Mediterranean World, something particularly relevant in today's political and cultural environment. In this context the role of Norton's research is to challenge the negative stereotypes of Muslims and Islamic cultures and through its dissemination to enhance the cultural and religious understanding, thoughts and behaviour of individuals and groups, with the aim of promoting a more informed public discourse.

As a result of her research Norton has been elected to the Society for Renaissance Studies council and also to the managing council of the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA) – the BIAA plays a key role in fostering positive relations between Turkey and the UK and in disseminating knowledge about Turkey to the general public.

Norton was invited on Radio 4's *In Our Time* hosted by Melvyn Bragg (14<sup>th</sup> May 2009) to discuss the second Ottoman siege of Vienna (1683). Here again she challenged the idea of a fundamental, hostile divide between the Christian west and Muslim east and instead argued for the conflict to be seen in the context of local political and economic, rather than religious, rivalries. She has given talks to local history associations, schools and to students visiting the university on similar topics.

Norton's most recent project involves working with primary and secondary school teachers and PGCE students on a project entitled '*Translating Cultures: exchange, acculturation, inclusion*'. The project provides tangible benefits to non-academic community stakeholders, in particular schools and local community groups. By providing alternative narratives of what it means to be Muslim in both a cultural and religious sense, and by exploring the fundamental role that Islamic communities have played in the politico-cultural and scientific development of the modern world, the project is challenging negative stereotypes of Muslims and Islamic cultures. It also helps develop community cohesion and encourages the imagination of more inclusive, plural British identities. Specifically it aims to produce educational materials and provide teachers with the relevant subject knowledge to facilitate the integration of knowledge of Islamic cultures (particularly the Ottoman Empire) into mainstream educational contexts.

As a pilot for this project an interactive pedagogical workshop for teachers and PGCE students in the London area was held with support from a colleague at the British Library (Nur Sobers-Khan) on 7th March 2013 entitled '*Promoting Inclusion and Critical Engagement through Education*'. It sought to encourage small but significant changes in an educational context (primarily in the fields of history and religious studies) in order to foster a greater sense of

cohesion between different British ethno-cultural and religious communities and an enriching of possible imaginations of British-ness. It attracted a number of PGCE students, teachers and head teachers who engaged in lively discussion with the various academics, public policy advisors, and members of the police who presented papers. Dr Norton also gave a paper derived from her research for her article in the edited volume *The Renaissance and the Ottoman World*.

Participants commented in the workshop feedback that they thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and felt that they could easily incorporate the information contained in a number of the papers into their teaching, most notably that on Islamic science and the input of Islamic cultures to the Renaissance. Those involved with teacher training also said they would use the information when teaching PGCE students whom they believed would pass on the information to their students in turn.

The intention is to develop '*Translating Cultures*' further in collaboration with primary and secondary school teachers (and in association with colleagues in the School of Education, Theology and Leadership at SMUC, and the Department of Education at the University of Cambridge) and to design and pilot materials that can be used by teachers in the classroom to foster public understanding of the rich heritage of Islamic societies and civilisations. The reach of these various activities among different non-academic audiences is significant and will increase as the project continues into its second phase.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

*In our Time* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00k9h9g>

Link to pedagogical workshop

<http://www.smuc.ac.uk/religion-and-history/promoting-inclusion-and-critical-engagement-through-education.htm>

Primary Education Lecturer at SMUC and participant in *Promoting Inclusion and Critical Engagement* workshop