

Ersilia FRANCESCA

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Full Prof. of Islamic History at Univ. of Naples “L’Orientale” (UNIOR), dep. Asia Africa and Mediterranean (DAAM), where she teaches Gender Studies in Islamic Context and Contemporary History of Economics in the MENA region.

Academic qualifications

- 1994 PhD in Asian and African Studies, UNIOR
- 1985 MA in Political Sciences, Ist. Univ. Orientale, Naples

Biography

I have almost three decades’ worth of teaching and research experience in Islamic and Gender Studies in both International and Italian universities.

I am director of CeSMI (Centro Studi sul Mondo Islamico/Center of Islamic Studies) at the Asian and African Dep of my University and of the journal *Studi Magrebini* (peer reviewed/class A journal) published by Brill.

In 2015 I was visiting scholar at SOAS (London), and in 2018 I was [Directrice d’Études](#) at École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris).

I am member of the Scientific Committee of the Intern. Association on Ibadi Studies and chief editor with A. al-Salimi of the series *Studies on Ibadism and Oman*, Olms (Germany).

My scholarly activity focuses on Islamic law, gender studies in the Islamic context, and history of Islamic economics. I published 5 books and 3 edited books; and wrote over 20 articles in PR journals and contributions in edited books in the last 10 years. My 2002 book titled *Teoria e pratica del commercio nell’islam medievale* is considered a milestone in the field of studies on Ibadism and early Islam (s. review in *JSAI* 2004/29). My book *Economia, religione e morale nell’islam* (Carocci 2013) is the first attempt of a comprehensive reconstruction of the Islamic economic thinking in Italian.

In the field of gender studies I participated in the project “Musulmane d’Italia”; I co-edited the special issue of *Studi Magrebini* titled *Emerging Actors in Post-Revolutionary North Africa. Gender Mobility and Social Activism* (2017), and published several articles; the most recent is “Gender and Economics in Mediterranean: Looking for New Opportunities for North African Women” Palgrave (2021).

I am in the scientific board of the series *Donne, fedi, culture* (Women, faiths, cultures) ([Ed. di storia e letteratura](#)).

In 2018-2019 I was co-director of the UNIOR unit of the project [TrainTraining](#) (transfer radicalisation approaches in training), *EU Justice Program* (2014-2020), coordinated by DAP (Dep. of Prison Administration), aimed at reducing and monitoring the risks of Islamic radicalization in jails.

From 2022 I am co-director of the training course CONOSCERE L’ALTRO: aspetti socio-culturali, antropologici, giuridici e securitari delle migrazioni in Italia, organized by UNIOR in cooperation with Scuola dell’alta formazione, Italian Presidency of the council of Ministers.

In the last five years I supervised over 50 Master thesis, 6 PhD projects, 1 joint-supervision (cotutelle) with EPHE, Paris, and one Postdoctoral fellow.

Career summary

- From January 2022 full prof. of Islamic History. UNIOR, dep. DAAM. Courses in Gender Studies in Islamic Context (MA 8CFU) and Contemporary History of Economics in Middle East and North Africa (MA 8CFU)
- 2013-pres. Adjunct Prof. at the Master MISLAM (Economia e Istituzioni dei Paesi Islamici), Univ. LUISS, Rome
- 2015-pres. Adjunct Prof. at the Master in Middle Eastern Studies (MiMES), ASERI, Univ. Cattolica, Milan
- 2011-2021 Associated Prof. of Islamic History (ANVUR 2018 qualification as full professor)
- 2002-2011 Lecturer in Islamic History, UNIOR
- 1998-2002 Teaching assistant in Islamic History, UNIOR
- 1996-1997 Teach. assistant in Islamic History, Sapienza Univ., Rome

- Oct. 1994 – Feb. 1995 Temporary lecturer at the Oriental Dep.(Univ. of Köln)
- Oct. 1993 – Feb. 1994 Temp. lecturer at the Oriental Dep.(Univ. of Köln)

Selected papers and publications

Books (a selection of from 2013)

- *Economia, religione e morale nell'islam*, Carocci, Roma 2013.
- (ed. with A. M. Di Tolla), *Emerging Actors in Post- Revolutionary North Africa*, 2 vols. (I. *Gender Mobility and Social Activism*, 452pp.; II. *Berber Movements: Identity, New Issues and New Challenge*, 390pp.), special issues of *Studi Magrebini* 14-15/2016-2017, Napoli 2017 open access <http://hdl.handle.net/11574/176354> - <http://hdl.handle.net/11574/176355>
- (ed.) *Ibadi Theology. Rereading Sources and Scholarly Works*, Olms, Hildesheim, 2015, 352pp.

Articles in PR and class A journals and contribution in edited books (a selection of from 2011)

- “Gender and Economics in Mediterranean: Looking for New Opportunities for North African Women”, in F. Corrao & R. Redaelli (eds.), *States, Actors and Geopolitical Drivers in the Mediterranean*, London, Palgrave, 2021, pp. 157-173. <https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030689995>
- « “Put the Ocean between Them”: Fornication as Permanent Impediment to Marriage in Early Ibādī Islam», in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2021/50, pp. 101-137
- «Law and Politics in the Early Ibādī Communities: Abū ‘Ubayda al-Tamīmī’s *Risāla* to Abū ‘l-Khaṭṭāb al-Ma‘āfirī», in Cyrille Aillet (ed.), *L’ibadisme dans les sociétés de l’islam médiéval. Modèles et interactions*, De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston 2018, pp. 72-88. ISBN: 9783110583793
- «Diritti, lavoro e imprenditorialità femminile in Marocco», co-author with Razane Chrouqui, Abdelouahed Jittou and Renata Pepicelli, in Eugenia Ferragina (ed.) *Rapporto sulle economie del Mediterraneo. Edizione 2018*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2018, pp. 271-294.
- (Co-author with Renata Pepicelli), «Diritti, politica ed economia: processi di inclusione delle donne in Nord Africa nel decennio 2007-2017», in E. Ferragina (a cura di), *Rapporto sulle economie del Mediterraneo 2017*, ISBN 9788815273031 Il Mulino, Bologna 2017, pp. 141-160. Auth. of chap. 4 Introduction and conclusion co-auth. with Renata Pepicelli.
- «Religion and Politics in Contemporary Omani Ibadism», in Abdulrahman Al Salimi - Reinhard Eisener eds., *Oman, Ibadism and Modernity*, G. OLMS, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 2017, 416pp., ISBN: 978-3-487-15549-4, pp. 87-95
- «Economic Opportunities and Social Challenges in the North African Transition», in A. M. Di Tolla – E. Francesca (eds.), *Emerging Actors in Post-Revolutionary North Africa. Gender Mobility and Social Activism*, Tomo I, *Studi Magrebini*, N. S. 14-15/2016-2017, Università di Napoli “L’Orientale”, Napoli 2017, pp. 49-81.
- «La penisola araba, un mosaico di contraddizioni», *Il protagonismo delle donne in terra di Islam. Appunti per una lettura storico-politica*, in Leila Karami – Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti (eds.), Ediesse, Roma 2015 (novembre), pp. 266-272.
- «Empowerment delle donne in Nord Africa nell’ultimo decennio: riforme giuridiche, accesso all’istruzione e al mondo del lavoro», in Linda Lombardo (ed), *Africa, continente emergente. Il ruolo delle Africane nella transizione*, LUISS Academy/Scienze Politiche, Roma 2014, pp. 25-43.
- «Musulmane d’Italia e diritto italiano», in E. Pföstl (ed), *Musulmane d’Italia*, Istituto di Studi litici “S. Pio V”, Ed. Bordeaux, Roma 2014, pp. 57-102.
- «Genere e cittadinanza nell’area MENA», in E. Pföstl (ed), *Società civile e minoranze tra tradizione e trasformazione nell’area del Medio oriente e del Nord Africa*, Istituto di Studi Politici “S. Pio V”, Editrice Apes, Roma 2011, pp. 107-184.

Fellowships and Awards/Honours

- 2018-pres. Chief editor of the series Studies on Ibadism and Oman, Olms(Germany)
- 2018, Nov., Visiting Professor (Directrice d’Études) at EPHE, Paris, Section des Sciences Religieuses
- 2016, 5 July, lecture at Humboldt Universität, Berlin, on “Generosity versus Avarice in Medieval Islam”

- 2016, 16 Feb., lecture at London Middle East Institute, SOAS, London, on “Money and Value: From Qur'an to contemporary Islamic Economics”
- Sept.-Dec. 2015, Visiting scholar at SOAS (London), School of Law
- April 2012, invited to deliver the Block Seminar Challenging the “Conventional” System: Islamic Banking and Finance (21 hours, 6CFU) at Georg-Augustus-Universität, Göttingen

Participation in Italian and International Projects

- 2012 -2015, Member of the PRIN project no 201048XHTL State, plurality and change in Africa
- 2018-2019, Member of the project TrainTraining, EU Justice Program (2014-2020)
- 2011-2013, Member of the project “Musulmane d'Italia”, Ist. di Studi Politici “San Pio V”, Roma
- 2007-2008, Member of the project “Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World”, Ist. di Studi Politici “San Pio V”.

Organization of Scientific Events (the most relevant since 2011)

- Since 2017 co-organizer with A. Ziaka (Univ. of Thessaloniki) of the annual [Summer School on Ibadism](#)
- Since 2012 co-organizer with A. Al-Salimi and A. Ziaka of the series of conferences on Ibad Studies
- 2021, 8 Jan. organizer of the webinar “Artivism, Culture and Knowledge Production for Egalitarian Citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa post 2011”
- 2019, 3-5 Oct. co-organizer of the International Doctoral Workshop “The question of agency in African Studies”, UNIOR
- 2019, 24-25 Sept. co-organizer of the Conference “Riconoscere Il Radicalismo Islamico in Italia. Analisi, strategie e pratiche alternative”, financed by the project TrainTraining, UNIOR
- 2014, 23-25 Sept. co-organizer of the Int. Conference “North Africa Transition and Emerging Actors. Berber Movements, Gender Mobility and Social Activism”, UNIOR
- 2013, 25-27 Sept. co-organizer of the International Summer School, “Voices of Protest Engaging Political Power in North and Sub-Saharan Africa”, Scuola di Procida per l'Alta Formazione
- 2012, 7-9 Oct. co-organizer of the Int. Doctoral Workshop, “Citizenship rights, social movements and political change in Africa”, Scuola di Procida per l'Alta Formazione

Institutional Responsibilities

- 2022- co-director of the training course CONOSCERE L'ALTRO: aspetti socio-culturali, antropologici, giuridici e securitari delle migrazioni in Italia (on migration and security in Italy)
- 2022- Member of the board of the joint PhD programme in Religious Studies (Univ. of Modena and Reggio)
- 2019-pres. Director of CeSMI (Centro di Studi sul Mondo Islamico), DAAM
- 2019-pres. Member of the DAAM Joint Commission Teachers Students (Commissione paritetica docenti-studenti)
- 2018-pres. Director and chief editor of the scientific journal Studi Magrebini
- 2018-pres. Chief editor with A. al-Salimi of the series Studies on Ibadism and Oman, Olms (Germany)
- 2004-pres. Member of the board of the PhD programme in “Asia, Africa e Mediterraneo”, DAAM
- 2017-pres member of the Scientific Committee of the International Association on Ibad Studies
- 2017-2019 Member of the Univ. Quality Assurance Board (Presidio della Qualità)
- 2008-2011 Member of the Steering Committee of the journal Annali dell'Università di Napoli “L'Orientale”.

Editorial Board and Reviewing Activities

- 2018 – pres. Member of the Scientific Committee of the series Donne fedeli culture of [Edizioni di storia e letteratura](#)
- 2015 external evaluator for the ERC
- 2010 reviewer for the Oxford Univ. Press

- 2011-pres. reviewer for several PR journals, including Al-Qantara, Bulletin of SOAS, Oriente Moderno, Afriche e Orienti, Der Islam, Jerusalem Studies of Arabic and Islam.

Membership of Scientific Societies

- 2012-pres. Member of the Steering Committee of CESAC (Center of Studies on Contemporary Africa) and of Centro di Studi Berberi (Center of Berber Studies), UNIOR
- 2004-pres. Member of the International Society for Islamic Legal Studies
- 2001-pres. Member of SeSaMO (Società per gli Studi sul Medio Oriente)
- 1996-pres. Member of U.E.A.I. (Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants)

Invited Presentations to International Conferences (a selection of from 2010)

- 2021, 31 Aug.-2 Sep., 11th Int. Conference of Ibadi Studies “Sacred Texts and Social Context”. Univ. Tübingen. Paper: The emergence of encyclopaedical legal works and the definition of *usul al-fiqh* in Oman.
- 2019, 1-4 July, 14th Int. Colloquium “From Jāhiliyya to Islam”. Jerusalem, The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Paper: “Punishment for Fornication in Early Islam”
- 2019, 17-19 June, 10th Int. Conference on Ibadi Studies. “Ibadism and the Study of Islam: A view from the edge”, Univ. of Toronto. Paper: “Continuity and Change in Early Ibādī Family Law”
- 2017, 12-14 Jan., Business History in the Age of Globalization, Univ. Bocconi, Milan. Paper: “Reflection on Muslim culture as related to economic activities”
- 2016, 4-5 Nov., “Donne, cittadinanza, religioni nella storia del mediterraneo”, SIS (Società italiana delle storiche), Roma. Paper: “Tradizione giuridica islamica classica e riforme del diritto di famiglia”
- 2016, 23-25 May, 7th Int. Conference on Ibadi Studies “Religion and Policy in Oman”, Univ. of Oxford. Paper: “Religion and Politics in Contemporary Omani Ibadism”
- 2015, 1-3 June, 6th Int. Conference on Ibadi Studies, “Ibadi History: The Nahda Period”, Univ. of Saint Petersburg. Paper: “Ijtihād and Ibadi Reform Movement in North Africa”
- 2014, 20-21 March, La condizione giuridica e sociale delle donne in Libia. Sapienza Univ., Rome. Paper: “Evoluzione dei diritti civili e politici delle donne nell’area MENA”
- 2013, 8 April, “Africa continente emergente. Ruolo delle donne africane nella transizione”, LUISS Univ., Rome. Paper: “Empowerment delle donne in Nord Africa nell’ultimo decennio”
- 2010, 28-30 Jan., V Congresso della SIS, Univ. Federico II & UNIOR, Naples. Co-organizer of the panel: “Le sfide del nuovo millennio in Nord Africa e Medio Oriente: Gender, dinamiche socio-culturali, processi di trasformazione politica ed economica. Paper: “Formale o informale? Dinamiche dell’occupazione femminile nell’area MENA”.

18 June 2022