The Caspian Sea in the History of Early Modern and Modern Eurasia

April 6-8, 2018

The Program in Iranian Studies at Yale welcomes submissions for a workshop in April 2018 to explore the dimensions of the Caspian Sea as a geographical frame for historical study. The workshop asks whether the Caspian functions as a conceptual framework for various forms of exchange in commerce, diplomacy, political culture, forces of dissent and revolutionary movements, movement of peoples, material culture, art, and literature as well as ecology, disease, navigation and maritime culture. Are there tangible historical ties in the early modern and modern periods between regions of the Caspian littoral – Iran, the South Caucasus, Dagestan, Russia, and Central Asia? In what ways do exchanges in this region connect to neighboring, more established cultural and political spheres and with broader trends of global history? Can these ties create a viable field of study beyond Middle Eastern, Eurasian, and Russian studies to underscore interregional connections? Can the Caspian be conceptualized as an alternative or as a compliment to more established frames, such as the Persianate World or Central Eurasia and the steppe? To what extent can the links within this region be separated from state-centered histories of Iran and the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union?

Papers may explore novel conceptual and theoretical approaches as well as case studies with broader historical implications. **Please send proposals (synopsis and a resume) by August 15th via email to Lora LeMosy of the Yale Council for Middle Eastern Studies – lora.lemosy@yale.edu**