In this talk, David Meza draws from his research exploring imperial history at the local scale in the city of Antioch and the surrounding region during the eighteenth century. He will focus on the stories of several specific individuals reconstructed from archival records which demonstrate how social, economic, administrative, military, and other aspects of life under Ottoman rule were often blurred to the point of inseparability. In line with an emerging body of scholarship historicizing our understanding of empires across the early modern world, David’s work argues that active identification and engagement with a broader ‘Ottoman society’ underpinned imperial rule in and around Antioch during the eighteenth century.

David Meza is a PhD candidate at the University of California Riverside working with Prof. Fariba Zarinebaf as his advisor. Previously, he received his BA from the University of Michigan double majoring in the History and Arab, Armenian, Persian, Turkish, and Islamic studies programs and his MA from the University of Chicago Center for Middle Eastern Studies. David is currently conducting research in Istanbul as part of a 2023-2024 Fulbright U.S. Student Research Grant under the sponsorship of the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT). His primary research interests center on the eastern Mediterranean provinces of the Ottoman Empire and their unique position at the crossroads of Afro-Eurasia.