Thabit A. J. Abdullah
(York University)

“Some Observations on the Nature of Slavery in Late Sixteenth-Century Aleppo”

Tues., 22 November 2016
4:00 p.m.

Senior Common Room,
Burwash Hall, Victoria College,
University of Toronto
(rear of 91 Charles St. West)

Summary: Our understanding of slavery in the Islamic World is still rudimentary. Contemporary Muslim writers rarely went beyond legal references while European travelers often focused more on fantasy than fact. This presentation will discuss what the late 16th-century court records of Aleppo reveal about slavery including the ethnic backgrounds, value, areas of employment, general treatment, and manumission.

Thabit A.J. Abdullah is an Associate Professor of Middle East History at York University. Prior to coming to York in 1999, he was the Director of the Middle East Studies Program at the American University in Cairo. His chief research interests are the medieval and early modern history of Iraq. His works have been translated into many languages including Arabic, Italian, Spanish and Chinese. In addition to historical scholarship he often appears on Canadian, US, and Arab media to comment about contemporary events in Iraq and the Arab World. His most recent book is A Short History of Iraq (2nd edition, 2011).