

Mohamad Ballan, who is currently an Assistant Professor of History at Stony Brook University in New York, studies the intellectual, cultural and political history of late medieval Iberia and North Africa. He received his PhD from the Department of History at the University of Chicago in 2019, and has previously held appointments as a Junior Fellow at the Dartmouth Society of Fellows (2018–2019) and as a Mellon Faculty Fellow at the Medieval Institute at the University of Notre Dame (2021–2022). In both his writing and his teaching, Ballan highlights the interconnected histories of Europe, Africa and Asia through a close examination of social, intellectual and political networks. In his first manuscript, *Lord of the Pen and Sword: Sovereignty and History in the Islamic West* (currently under review with Oxford University Press), Ballan explores the phenomenon of the “scholar-statesman” – figures who ascended to the highest offices of state – through the life and works of Lisan al-Din ibn al-Khatib (1313–1374), the most prominent Spanish Muslim historian, chancellor and philosopher of the 14th century. His book situates this figure within a broader “community of letters,” a network of Muslim, Jewish and Christian scholars that extended from Seville to Damascus, in order to illustrate how these scholar-officials played a major role in reshaping the political culture, social hierarchies and conceptions of sovereignty in Nasrid Granada and beyond.