ABSTRACTS FOR "THE ENTANGLED CONFESSIONALIZATIONS?"
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LUCY PARKER (Research Associate, University of Oxford)

On the Margins of Empire: Syriac Christian Confessionalization in the Sixteenth Century

The Syriac-using Christian churches of Mesopotamia have too often been studied in isolation both from each other and from the other peoples among whom they lived. Yet their histories were inextricably linked with wider developments both within the Ottoman Empire and beyond its borders. In the sixteenth century, both the Church of the East and the Syrian Orthodox Church engaged in negotiations with the Catholic Church. In this context, processes of identity formation occurred which could well be termed 'confessionalization'. In 1552, the Church of the East underwent a schism between the 'traditionalist' party and a rebel faction which, in an historically unprecedented move, sent its new patriarch to Rome to be ordained by the pope. This innovation required the leaders of the breakaway church to invent traditions and to encourage a new sense of identity, by, for example, promoting their first patriarch, after his violent death, as a martyr. But, in response to this schism, the 'traditionalist' party also underwent changes, to strengthen its ideological cohesion: thus, for instance, the conventional professions of faith carved on the funeral monuments of the patriarchs became longer and more elaborate. This paper will analyse these developments, assessing them in the context of the Syriac Christian churches' competition with each other, of their interactions with western Christians, and of their liminal position near the eastern borders of the Ottoman Empire. It will also, however, consider the limits of this confessionalization. The different churches remained intertwined. Boundaries were loosely defined and porous, and members of 'rival' confessions maintained close relationships with each other. Contacts with the wider world could promote inter-confessional conflict, but could also, in some situations, encourage a broader eastern Christian identity.

JOHN-PAUL GHOBRIAL (University of Oxford)

The Conversion to Catholicism of the Christians of Mosul in the 17th Century

What did it mean for an Ottoman Christian to 'convert' to Catholicism? Despite the growing spate of works describing the momentum of 'global Catholicism' in the early modern period, the answer to this question really depended on very particular, local contexts that differed in important ways whether one considers communities of Eastern Christians living in, for example, Aleppo, Cairo, or Baghdad. This paper will explore the

view from Mosul and its hinterlands. For in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Christians in Mosul who had counted themselves as members of the Church of the East for over a millennium started to call themselves Catholics—or 'Chaldeans' in contemporary parlance. This new identity manifested itself in many new ways – from the adoption of new liturgical books (sometimes associated with other Eastern rites and often printed in Rome) to the reading of new sources of church history; from the consolidation of older practices of alms-collecting across an expanded geography stretching as far as Jerusalem, India and outwards to cities in Europe to the emergence of linguistic distinctions between the use of Arabic and Syriac within the community—and so much more. What were the motivations behind this process, and what impact did it have on the Christians of Mosul as well as the Ottoman and Kurdish overlords who ruled them? While some scholars have emphasised the role of missionaries and merchants in the emergence of Catholic identity in the Ottoman Empire, this paper seeks to understand how and why Chaldean confessional identity emerged in a context in which the actual presence of Catholic missionaries on the ground was in fact negligible, numbering only a handful of actual missionaries in Baghdad, Mosul and Diyarbakir. To this end, the paper adopts an entangled framework that links the East Syrian communities of Mosul to other East Syrian communities—for example in Jerusalem and Aleppo—as well as to other non-Chaldean Eastern Christian communities (e.g., the West Syrians, Armenians, Orthodox, and Maronites). The aim of this paper is to assess to what extent the current scholarly literature on 'confessionalization' offers a relevant and useful way of explaining the emergence of Chaldean identity within the wider context of Eastern Christianity in the Ottoman world.

BERNARD HEYBERGER (L' Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales)

The limits of Catholic and Orthodox confessionnalisation in the 18th Century

It is during the 18th Century that normativity has been systematically introduced into the Eastern Catholic Churches, under the pressing of Rome, and through Pontifical documents or through local synods which set the rules in various issues, like the relations between patriarch and bishops, the regulation of the monastic life, the sacraments, or the fasts and abstinences. This tendency to increase homogeneity within a denomination and to clearly establish the borders between one Christian flock and other Christian denominations or Muslims is not an exclusivity of Catholics. The Orthodox Church, in reaction and with similar instruments, aimed to work in the same direction of homogenization of the practice and control of the faithful, although with a weaker organization and a less efficient agency.

That development has to do with confessionalisation, as far as it raised borders among the people, signs of identification and differentiation among them, whereas previously ambiguity and confusion often prevailed. However, the ecclesiastical authorities never could completely achieve their scope, because a mix of denominations and practices prevailed among the Christians, and even improved during the 18th century, through migrations and mixed settlements, because the Ecclesiastical institutions remained weak and dependent from the secular, and because it was impossible to rely on the political power in order to enforce the pontifical, the patriarchal or the synodic decisions.

Moreover, there is also a question of cognition: the idea that homogenization would be achieved through a scholarly work on sources, in order to turn back to the genuine traditions considered corrupted by the manuscript copies, became an unattainable scope because as far as knowledge progressed, the unity and the homogeneity of the traditional rules were contested by scholarship.

YORGOS TZEDOPOULOS (Research Associate, Academy of Athens)

Martyrdom and Confessionalization among the Greek-Orthodox of the Ottoman Empire, late 15th – mid-17th centuries

Christian martyrdom in the Ottoman Empire has long been an object of study, from theological treatises and works of national historiography to more recent studies on conversion, identity, and Christian-Muslim relations. It has also started been explored from the viewpoint of Ottoman and Orthodox confessionalization within the broader European context. This paper focuses on the interpretation of martyrdom in the light of two important and interrelated ecclesiastical strategies. The first, known under the ancient term of oikonomia (accommodation, leniency), served to justify and legitimize the inclusion of the Church in the institutional framework of a non-Christian state; the second strategy concerns a double set of alternatives in identifying and addressing various audiences: the choice between the manuscript and the printed word, as well as that between the high language (a version of ancient Greek) and the vernacular.

In the paper I argue that from the late 15th to the early 17th century martyrdom is embedded in a "diglossic" context. Although it is sometimes used as a metonymy for the situation of Christians in the Muslim Ottoman Empire, actual events of martyrdom are not exploited in printed works written in the vernacular for promoting the forging of confessional identities. Such events are rather mentioned in the context of intra-Christian confessional strife, in order to repudiate charges of Orthodox compliance with the Ottoman rulers. Until the 18h century vitae and martyrologies are composed mostly in the high language and circulate in manuscript form. This ecclesiastical diglossia was challenged and re-shaped by "bottom-up" initiatives in the course of the 17th century, expressed in the emergence of "voluntary martyrdom."

The analysis of the strategies and alternatives concerning martyrdom sheds light on Greek-Orthodox confessionalization in relation to both Islam and Catholicism, as well as to the formation of social, political, and cultural cleavages inside Orthodox Christianity. Martyrdom, an act and a narrative with significant emotional and ideological power, is examined both as an indicator and a defining factor of confessional discourses, social practices, and agency.

OVIDIU OLAR (Research Associate, Ruhr University Bochum/ N. Iorga Institute of History – Bucharest)

"*Io se puotesse reformare la mia chiesa, lo farei molto volentieri...*" : Kyrillos Loukaris and the Confessionalization of the Orthodox Church (1620-1638)

The controversial Greek patriarch of Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris owes much of his fame to a "Calvinist" *Confession of faith*. Published in Latin, in 1629, and in Greek, in 1633, this confession was immediately translated into French, English, German, and Italian. Re-edited several times, it triggered passionate debates across Europe and forced Eastern Christianity to address theological issues never addressed before. Loukaris was condemned by a Constantinopolitan synod of 1638, while synods held in Constantinople, in 1642, and in Jerusalem, in 1672, anathematized the Confession attributed to him. However, while the catalytic role played by Loukaris in the shaping of Orthodoxy is generally acknowledged, his ecclesiastical policies are largely ignored. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to take a closer look at the minutes of the patriarchal synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople held in the "Codex B´" of the Patriarchate (1612-1646). Read against the background of the "juridical collection" of documents compiled for

patriarch Dositheos Notaras of Jerusalem, in 1680 – 168 (17%) out of the 981 documents of the *Νομικὴ Συναγωγὴ* were issued by Loukaris –, Codex Β´ allows us to study the institutional implications of the early 17th century fight for the "ecumenical" Patriarchate and for the "true faith". In addition, several documents from the Ottoman registers of important affairs (*Mühimme Defterleri)* help us place the reforming movement of Loukaris in its Ottoman context.

ELENI GARA (University of Aegean)

Struggling for Authority: Greek Orthodox Hierarchs, Their Flocks and the Ottoman Authorities in the Seventeenth Century

The strengthening of the power of religious authorities, for which the alliance between church and state proved crucial, was a cornerstone of the confessionalization process throughout Europe. In the Muslim Ottoman Empire, however, the Christian Churches could not rely on a similar understanding with the state. Hierarchs were officially recognized, but the support they enjoyed from the Ottoman authorities was subject to limitations. The clauses included in the ecclesiastical berats bear witness not only to the rights of the hierarchs but also to the obstacles they were likely to encounter. As concerns the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople, the picture that emerges from earlier and more recent research is that its power to enforce discipline and implement decisions was initially limited, and that the contenders for metropolitan sees and the patriarchal throne had to cope with fierce competition. It was only in the course of the 18th century that the position of the hierarchs was stabilized and their authority substantially increased. This paper is concerned with the 17th century, a period that has not yet been adequately researched in this respect. Faced with increased pressure by the efforts of Rome to promote the Union, acute economic problems, and a changing climate in her relationship with the Ottoman state due to the rise of the Kadızadeli, the Church went through a time of internal strife and instability. Based on Ottoman and Greek sources, the paper focuses on the limitations of the authority of the hierarchs, the challenges they faced, as well as on the extent and forms of state support they enjoyed. The aim is to understand the conditions within which the Greek Orthodox Church operated in the 17th century, a time of deep and multifaceted crisis, during which she was forced to redefine her tenets and re-conceptualize her orthodoxy.

MOLLY GREENE (Princeton University)

Anastasios Gordios and Christian Spiritual Authority in the Ottoman Empire

Anastasios Gordios was a cleric and scholar of the seventeenth century, born in the Pindus mountains in 1654, where he also died in 1729. He taught in Greek schools in western Greece and in Athens and he studied in Padua. He also left behind a voluminous correspondence.

Almost 700 letters have survived in the historical record, in addition to the ones he wrote for others. We are very fortunate that they have recently (2011) been published by the Academy of Athens. His correspondence stretches from 1675 to 1728 but great bulk of his letters were written during the period 1710-1729 and this is the period I will concentrate on in my talk. 1710 is the date when he returned to his birthplace, Vraniana, high up in the Pindus mountains (1060 meters/3477 feet.) He stayed there for the rest of his life, despite repeated entreaties for him to come and teach at the various Greek schools that had come into existence.

Most of his letters are of a private nature, as Gordios held no official position nor did he have political ambitions. He maintained a lively correspondence with a wide circle of friends. In addition, as a highly educated and well-traveled cleric in one of the most remote areas of the Empire, ordinary people routinely turned to him for help, both spiritual and material.

In my paper I will focus on this second group of letters, with the goal of understanding both the nature of spiritual guidance within Orthodox society at this time, as well as the relationship between ordinary Christians and a spiritual leader. In addition, I will use the correspondence to sketch out Gordios's network, one that was not based on familiar referents, whether the very local (such as a village) or the Empire wide (such as the ecclesiastical hierarchy.)

ALEX TUDORIE (Postdoctoral Fellow, CEU—OTTOCONFESSION project/University of Bucharest)

Towards the Confessionalization of the Orthodox 'confessio fidei': from Jeremias II Tranos (†1595) to Dositheos II (†1707)

Io se puotesse reformare la mia chiesa, lo farei molto volentieri; ma iddio sa che tractatur de impossibili…: these words of patriarch Kyrillos I Loukaris (1620-1638) clearly express a more widespread reluctance of the Orthodox world towards *novelty* or *innovation* (καινοτομία), perceived to be a breach of the Tradition (παράδοσης). This notwithstanding, the investigation of the *statements* – in letters, tracts and catechisms or as proper confessions of faith – expressed by the Orthodox theologians starting from Jeremias II of Constantinople and up to Dositheos II of Jerusalem reveals an obvious shift. Thus, the apophatic/negative expressions underlining what *we are not* – specific to the first encounters with Lutheran Protestants – are gradually replaced by more cataphatic/positive statements meant to express more precisely what *we are*. The aim of this paper is to emphasize the impact of several episodes of theological dialogues (characterized less by dogmatic exchanges and much more by diplomacy and political actions) on the Orthodox expression of *confessio fidei* up to the point where a certain degree of confessionalization becomes noticeable even as adversity towards *innovation* continues to be professed nominally. The Ottoman context is suggested as a decisive factor in compelling the Greek Orthodox authorities to secure political alliances with representatives of the Western powers, be they Roman-Catholics, Lutherans or Reformed/Calvinists, agreements that influenced the confessionalized expressions of the Orthodox faith.

MARGARITA VOULGAROPOULOU (Research Associate, CEU—OTTOCONFESSION project)

Orthodox Confession Building and the Greek Church between Protestantism and Catholicism: The Mission of the Marquis De Nointel to the Levant (1670-1673)

During the seventeenth century the confessional conflicts that had been troubling Western Europe since the outbreak of the Reformation were gradually spreading to the Eastern front. The Greek Church, which was previously but an interested bystander, had now become the theater of rivalry between Catholics and Protestants, who sought to bring it under their influence. Caught up in the middle of this confessional turmoil, the Greek Church oscillated between either side, in the hope of forging diplomatic alliances and obtaining political gains.

These religio-political dynamics became more complex in the wake of the War of Crete (1669), which radically rearranged the geo-strategic chessboard of the Eastern Mediterranean. With both Venice and the Ottoman Empire weakened, France was now attempting to establish its commercial and religious dominance in the Levant. In 1670 a new embassy was dispatched to the Porte, comprising of the ambassador Charles Olier marquis De Nointel and his secretary Antoine Galland. Their primary goal was to secure a French religious protectorate in the region, and provide the tools to resolve the ongoing Eucharistic controversy that was raging in seventeenth-century France. To achieve this, De Nointel set out to gather professions of faith from a multitude of Orthodox prelates and foreign agents, attesting to the agreement of the Oriental Churches with the Catholics in regard to the doctrine of transubstantiation and other articles of faith.

The proposed paper will assess De Nointel's expedition within its historical and confessional setting, attempting to reconstruct the vast network of agents involved, and trace their political and religious background. Moreover, this study will interpret the positions adopted by the Greek Church in light of its severe internal crisis, and its struggle to establish stability and confessional homogeneity. Lastly, by exploring the power dynamics between the Porte, the Orthodox Church and the different Western states, this paper will investigate Orthodox confession building in relation to its broader Ottoman and European context.

VERA TCHENTSOVA (Project Associate, University of Oxford)

Whose Realm, His Bishop: Orthodox Patriarchs and their flock beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century

The jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate over the Orthodox flock extended beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire resulting in serious problems for the dioceses situated in countries at wars with the Sublime Porte, such as the Venetian Republic, Polish-Lithuanian state or Muscovite Russia. The control of Constantinopolitan patriarchs over the daily dealings of local Orthodox Churches engendered suspicions against these, readily seen as instruments of the sultan's court. The demand for "national security" at the time of the assertion of the "nation states" triggered various policies: the orthodox community was either forced to enter union with the Catholics, thus breaking their tie with their "Ottoman" Mother church, as exemplified by various episodes in the Polish-Lithuanian state, or to obtain complete independence as a self-governing autocephalous church, as achieved in the Tsardom of Moscow in 1589-1593. Therefore, the usual church canonical discipline or even the doctrinal positions accepted by the various Orthodox communities were highly influenced by the politics and a complex process of "confession-building" inside the sphere of influence of the ecumenical church headed by Constantinople went alongside the better known process of "nation-building" in the Eastern part of Europe. Faced with new challenges, the Great Church of Christ devised new solutions to insure a properly orthodox religious life for the faithful living under the ecumenical patriarch's omophorion, but beyond the Ottoman borders.

Between 1672 and 1699, a protracted state of war between the Ottoman empire and the Polish-Lithuanian resulted in a prohibition for the Orthodox clergy of this last polity to be ordained in Constantinople. This ban intended to prevent the potentially detrimental influence of the ecumenical patriarchs, subjects of the sultans, on the flock of the metropolitan see of Kyiv. The vacancy of the see and the secret adhesion of its Orthodox locum tenens, the bishop of Lviv Joseph Shumlyansky, to the Union with the Roman church (1677), forced the Patriarchate of Constantinople to devise new ways to

reestablish its spiritual control over the eparchy. As such, in the second half of the 17th century, the metropolitan see of Kyiv saw a variety of canonical solutions experimented in order to reassess the control of Constantinople over the local orthodox communities. An attempt to solve the problem through the transfer of a degree of jurisdictional control over the chair of Kyiv to the patriarchate of Moscow in 1686 has already attracted considerable attention from scholars. Less known is Constantinople's previous effort to settle the problem thanks to the creation of a new metropolitan see in the areas of the diocese of Kyiv readily accessible to the patriarch's representatives. Thus, Kamianets-Podolsky, conquered in 1672 by the Sultan's troops and established as the administrative centre of the new eyalet of Podolia, received in 1681 its own metropolitan bishop under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Patriarch Jakobos' foundation act, conserved in the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, mentions the name of the first incumbent of the chair of Kamianets, Pancratius, the ex-bishop of Lidorici. This last piece of information allowed to discover some important new archival material in the Russian state archive of ancient acts documenting the visit of Pancratius of Lidorici in Moscow in 1670. Furthermore, two letters revealing that Pancratius had to borrow money after his nomination to the new see have been identified in one of the codices from the Beinecke Library (Yale University). This material paved the way to a detailed reassessment of the status of the metropolitan see of Kamianet / Galich and of various expedients devised by the patriarchate of Constantinople to tackle delicate canonical issues. Ultimately, new light would be shed on the place of the new vladyka in the tangled web of political cliques jockeying for control of ecclesiastical policies in 17th century Constantinople.

HASAN ÇOLAK (TOBB University of Economics and Technology)

Building a Church and Building a Community in Amsterdam: Greek Orthodox and Armenian Merchants between Ottoman and European Worlds

The role of a common religion organised around a place of worship is an oft-mentioned criterion in keeping diaspora merchants as part of a closely-knit community. A comparative and connected analysis of the Ottoman Armenian and Greek Orthodox merchants who moved to Amsterdam for the purposes of trade during the 17th and 18th centuries offers useful perspectives as they shared some similar and different experiences in two close neighbourhoods in the city. The members of the two communities originated from different regions of the Ottoman Empire, and as part of their worldviews, they had different perceptions of religion. Until the establishment of Armenian and Greek Orthodox churches in 1715 and 1764 respectively, religious ceremonies of the two communities had been held in private houses and led by priests who visited the city from time to time. The members of the two communities also had different channels of entanglement with their home and host cultures. Focusing on the similarities and differences between the two communities, this paper will fall into two parts. First, it will analyse whether and how the diaspora experience—involving elements such as debates on religion in Europe—influenced these merchants' understanding of religion. Second, it will analyse the role of an ecclesiastical body—involving a resident priest and a church—over the formation of a community along religious lines.

HENRY SHAPIRO (PhD Candidate, Princeton University/OTTOCONFESSION project)

Grigor Daranałts'i: An Ottoman-Armenian Priest in the Age of Confessionalization

Grigor Daranaḷtsʻi was an Armenian priest from Kemah, Erzincan who wrote a memoir and history in Armenian in the mid-seventeenth century. Grigor had just completed his religious education when Celali banditry forced him to flee from Eastern Anatolia for Istanbul and subsequently Rodosto (Tekirdağ), where he became a bishop. His chronicle is a description of the chaos unleashed by the Celalis on Armenian life in Anatolia and one of the most important narrative records of the "Great Armenian Flight" and resettlement in Western Anatolia, Istanbul, and Thrace.

Until the mass migrations of the turn of the seventeenth century, the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus had mainly been peasants living in the eastern peripheries of the Ottoman Empire. With their mass arrival in the coastal cities of Istanbul, Izmir, and Rodosto, however, they became more exposed to networks of trade and circulation with the broader early modern world, and their economic activities and culture transformed as a result. Grigor Daranaltsʻi was a politician and infrastructure builder for the newly emerging Western Armenian society. He was officially appointed by the Ottoman state to lead refugees from the Celalis, he travelled from village to village ministering to refugee communities, and he took a direct role in fundraising and overseeing diverse infrastructure projects, as Armenians lacked sufficient churches and monasteries to serve the masses of migrants who arrived at the turn of the seventeenth century. Recent research on religious history in the early modern Ottoman Empire has noted gradual confessional polarization, part of a broader movement of confession building that spanned religions and empires. Grigor Daranaltsʻi's career is best understood within this framework, as he worked tirelessly to preserve religious norms for his community during a time of inter-religious competitions. This talk will focus on Grigor's politics and vision of history.

PAOLO LUCCA (Ca' Foscari University)

From Doctrinal Persuasion to Economic Inducement. Paolo Piromalli's Missionary Work among the Armenians and His Conversion Strategies

Between the 1630s and the 1660s Dominican Missionary Paolo Piromalli preached and toiled among Apostolic and Catholic Armenians, trying to convert the former and to eradicate from among the latter unorthodox liturgical practices and doctrinal beliefs. Piromalli left several letters and writings, among which are three accounts, written respectively in 1635, 1637, and 1654, where he lists the «errors» of the Armenians and apologetically reports to the Roman hierarchy the results of his missionary work. While his doctrinal and theological approach stayed the same over the years – the Armenians, as he wrote, «were mistaken in their grammar, philosophy, historiography, theology, and Scripture» because of later corruptions of their original orthodox faith –, his converting efforts apparently underwent a radical paradigm shift. In his 1637 «Account of his own successes» Piromalli clearly follows what at the time was a classic approach: to discuss first the matter of union with hierarchies; then, when failing at it, to gather some disciples among the Schismatics who would preach the orthodox faith while feigning to be still adhering to the Apostolic faith. But in the account that he wrote in 1654, at the time when he was the elected Archbishop of the Diocese of Naxiǰewan, while claiming that the Armenian «clergy was already educated and enlightened in the Catholic truths», he strongly advocates that only the conversion of the rich Armenian merchant families of New Julfa could persuade other Armenians to embrace Catholicism. To attain this goal, since, as he writes, «all missionary efforts are useless» in converting Julfan Armenians, he argues the necessity for the Pope to ask «the Princes of Venice and Tuscany» to threaten to close their ports to them, unless they chose to convert. This paper follows this shift by discussing Piromalli's attempts to bring the whole Armenian Church into the union of the Catholic faith, including his role in the union of the Polish Armenian Church

with Rome, and analyzing his embracing of a more realpolitik approach in the light of the emergence of the Armenian merchant colony of New Julfa and the tensions between Catholic missionaries and the Armenian Church in Isfahan.

CESARE SANTUS (Postodoctoral Fellow, l'Ecole Française de Rome)

The Şeyhülislam, the Patriarch and the Ambassador: A Case of Entangled Confessionalization (1692-1703)

Among the *Şeyhülislam*s, the chief religious authority of the Ottoman Empire, Feyzullah Efendi is one of the best known and most studied. This is certainly due to the incredible amount of power and wealth he was able to obtain during his tenure, as well as to his sudden and tragic end during the Rebellion of 1703. What is less known is that he played a central role in the religious and social turmoil which affected the Eastern Christian communities of the Empire at the turn of the Eighteenth century, interfering directly in the ecclesiastical organization of the Syriac and especially Armenian Church. Already in 1692, when he was still a *kadi* in Erzurum, he meddled in the disputes between Catholic missionaries and Armenian Apostolic prelates, supporting the latter against the former and provoking the intervention of the French Ambassador, who obtained the exile of the local Armenian bishop. Few years later, once reached the summit of power, he resumed his fight against Catholic propaganda by appointing as Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople (and later of Jerusalem too) the very same bishop he had sided with in Erzurum, Avetikʻ Evdokiacʻi. The condition behind these appointments was that Avedikʻ would have directed his efforts to stop the work of Catholic missionaries among the Armenians, punishing those who had been converted to the «Frank» religion. But why a high-ranking Ottoman officer should have been concerned by the doctrinal quarrels going on within the Eastern Christian communities? My paper will address this question, highlighting the political and entangled dimension of the Ottoman Confessionalization.

ANNA OHANJANYAN (Postdoctoral Fellow, CEU—OTTOCONFESSION project/ The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Matanadaran)

Gevorg Mxlayim Ōłli: An Overlooked Agent of Confessionalization

Despite his immense contribution to the reassertion of Armenian Apostolic belief, Gevorg of Constantinople, known as Mxlayim Ōłli (1681-1758), has so far received little attention. He was an erudite Armenian theologian, prolific author and polyglot polemicist engaged in the debates on orthodoxy with Catholics at the turn of the eighteenth century. While pursuing his education in the royal college of Paris, Mxlayim was imprisoned in Bastille because of his probable relations with Armenian patriarch of Constantinople and Jerusalem Awetikʻ Evdokacʻi, the compatriot protégé of Sheik-ul-Islam Feyzullah Efendi. The patriarch played pivotal role in the clashes between Apostolic and Catholic Armenians in the Ottoman Empire leading to his confinement in Bastille with the intervention of Catholic authorities. In his debut treatise on the interpretation of Christian faith, written in Paris, Mxlayim was seeking for consensus with other Christian confessions by pointing to linguistic differences in doctrinal formulas and indexing the ways to overcome them in favour of unanimity. After the patriarch's forced conversion to Catholicism and death, and his own imprisonment in the same year, Mxlayim leaned towards the drawing of dividing line between Armenian Apostolic belief and other Christian confessions, particularly Catholicism. Yet in prison, he actively employed himself with the framing and reaffirmation of the confession of Armenian church, which found its manifestation in his works written in jail and after his release. This paper discusses the intricate political and social context behind the

confessional ambiguity of Mxlayim's oeuvre and the mechanisms of confession-building through which he was aspiring towards the filtration of doctrine and (re)fashioning of Armenian orthodoxy in the Ottoman Empire and beyond its borders.

EMESE MUNTAN (PhD Candidate, CEU—Junior Research Fellow OTTOCONFESSION project)

Non-Catholic Agents of Tridentine Confessionalization—Baptisms and Marriages in Northern Ottoman Rumeli in the Seventeenth Century

After the council of Trent (1546-63) the promulgation and local implementation of its decrees was assigned to missionaries belonging to different religious orders and a smaller number of lay priests, who became the key agents in the hands of the papacy in promoting an accentuated type of Catholic religiosity. Already from 1570s the religiously, ethnically, and linguistically diverse territories of Northern Ottoman Rumeli were in the focus Rome-directed Catholic missionary endeavors and after the foundation of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1622 this missionary activity increased even more. The papacy's main goal was to penetrate into essential segments of everyday life, seeking to reinforce and rewrite confessional boundaries of coexistence with missionary agency. The main focus of this missionary work, imbued with recharged Catholic fervor and informed by convoluted political, confessional, ethnic, and familial affiliations was centered around the acceptance and correct administration of the seven sacraments.

This paper will examine the role of non-Catholic agents, i.e. Orthodox priests and Ottoman kadis in the administration of marriages and baptisms in the studied regions during the seventeenth century. On the micro level it will analyze those cases when the Orthodox priest or the kadi acted as a "surrogate Catholic priest", the strategies they employed, and the way Catholic missionaries responded to such cases. On the macro level it will seek to understand the intra- and inter-communal dynamics of this cross-institutional and cross-confessional dialogue and the way it (re)articulated both the local and imperial image of the "Orthodox priest", the "Ottoman kadi", and the "Catholic missionary" on the one hand and of "Tridentine confessionalization" on the other.

ANA SEKULIĆ (PhD Candidate, Princeton University)

"Çitlerimi hedm ederler:" Franciscan Monastery, Confession Building, and Land Accumulation in an Ottoman Bosnian Town (16th-19th c.)

In this paper, I discuss the confession building practices of the Bosnian Franciscans as well as Catholic-Muslim confessional relations in the central Bosnian town of Fojnica from the 16th to the 19th centuries. By drawing particularly on the rich archival material from the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, my paper explores the strategies of religious disciplining and control in Fojnica by mapping them onto the local landscape. More specifically, I focus on the ways in which the Franciscan order defined the local Catholic community by accumulating, marking, and distributing land in and around the town, thus examining the convergence between confession building and control of the lived environment. I suggest that in Fojnica, religious loyalties and practices as well as inter-confessional competition were governed by the use of space and resources, namely the extraction of metals and movement of people and animals across the surrounding mountains. The growing importance of the monastery and the strengthening of the Catholic community were closely related to the gradual privatization of land, illustrated by the fact that, in contrast to the early centuries of the Ottoman rule that pastureland as

well as land rich in ore were claimed to be communally owned, by the 19th century majority of that land was concentrated in the hands of Franciscans and a handful of Muslim families. These developments reflected the long term, albeit contested, project of Franciscan communal building and confessionalization efforts revolving around people as well as landscape. This in turn calls for a reassessment of the history of Franciscans in particular and Catholics in general in the Ottoman Bosnia. The development of monastic institutions as reflected in the monastery of Fojnica shows that Franciscan confessional strategies and communal authority developed in conjunction with the Ottoman governing methods and administrative logic rather than in spite of it.

MARIJANA MIŠEVIĆ (PhD Candidate, Harvard University)

Writing Slavic in Arabic Script: An Expression of a New Way of Being Ottoman in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Rumeli?

Early Modern South-Eastern Europe was not simply a political or religious contact zone, but also a linguistic one. In this essay, I aim to contribute to the scholarly discussion of the seventeenth-century initiatives involved in the process of "confessionalisation-from-below" by focusing on the themes of literacy and language use, their ideological aspects and the role contemporary ideas about languages and scripts could have played in the competing discursive practices aimed at (re)definitions of communal boundaries. From this perspective, I will first analyze the work of Mehmed Hevai Uskufi (d. after 1651), a middlebrow Muslim literatus whose extant work consists of the first Bosnian/Turkish dictionary (1631) and a few texts in Bosnian/Slavic dialect recorded by the use of the Arabic script. I will then juxtapose Hevai's work with a group of other contemporary texts comparable in terms of the form, contents and language employed by their authors. My argument is three-fold. For one, I assume that Uskufi's dictionary was much more than a token of a newly felt Muslim-Bosnian identity forming at that time, as previous scholarship would say, and go on to examine its broader, imperial context. Secondly, I argue that formal and linguistic choices Uskufi made signal a novel way of thinking about what it meant to be an Ottoman in the seventeenth-century Ottoman empire. I consider this alternative to be a product of a locale which was, due to its linguistic complexity, open for the influences of both internal and external ideological paradigms (Ottoman and Habsburg state absolutisms, Counter-Reformation, Ottoman "confessionalising" initiatives originating in the urban cultural centers of the empire, and last but not least, the various contemporary articulations of Illyrism). Finally, I conclude that this alternative could be described an articulation of "confessionalization from below," which, albeit it never came to its full fruition, kept recurring in centuries to come.

NENAD FILIPOVIĆ (Oriental Institute, Sarajevo University)

Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha and the Ottoman Non-Muslims

The Ottoman Grand Vizier Sinān Pāşā (d. 1596) belonged to the Ottoman statesmen of the 16th century with the longest career portfolio. Nonetheless, soon after his passing away he became the object of attacks of the Ottoman chroniclers, and their narratives passed into the Western historiography via influential reading of the Ottoman chroniclers by the Nestor of the Ottoman studies, Josef von Hammer-Purgstall, penned during the first half of the 19th century. The main narrative simply ascribe allmost all problems of the Ottoman Empire after 1590s to the misconduct and misuse of power Sinān Pāşā was supposed to have entertained. His dealing with the non-Muslims were generally interpreted as a part and parcel of that lacrimodic story. The rare exceptions like writings of Christine Woodhead generally did fall on the deaf ears. This paper shall

try to describe Sinān Pāşā's dealing with the non-Muslims sine ira et studio and without preconceptions. The main starting points shall be the word of the primary sources of the various origins (Ottoman, Venetian, Habsburg, local Slavonic, local Greek etc.). We hope to offer more diversified an answer to the simple question: how did this well-known Ottoman Grand Vizier treated the non-Muslim subjects of the state he was one of the leading executives. Besides, the paper shall try to contribute to the debate how to conceptualise the interpretation of the complex Ottoman history of the 16th and 17th centuries. Should one seek for the wisdom west of Istanbul, or east of Istanbul, or, perhaps, in the very city of Istanbul? Or should one seek interpretative wisdom at all?

RONI WEINSTEIN (Independent Scholar) AND GUY BURAK (Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, New York University)

Jewish Rabbis at the Intersection of Legal Traditions: A Note on the Legal Worldviews of Jossef Karo (d. 1575) and Jossef Sambari (d. c. 1703)

In the chronicle he completed in 1673, the seventeenth-century Egyptian rabbi Yossef Sambari records an intriguing anecdote: upon the conquest of Istanbul, Mehmet II installed three seats in his Divan for the chief imperial mufti, the Greek patriarch and the "Rabbi of the Jews", because "this is where the thrones of justice are established, so that each nation [Muslims, Greeks and Jews] will judge itself in justice." In his study of this passage, Jossef Hacker devoted much attention to its historical inaccuracies. Indeed, as Hacker notes, there was no rabbi in Mehmet II's Divan. However, one may offer another reading of this passage. According to this reading, Sambari (and possibly many of his predecessors) were responding to the legal claims made by the Ottoman dynasty since the first third of the fifteenth century. Based on these legal claims, the Ottoman dynasty sought to regulate and organize the legal landscape of its domains. At the same time, other Jewish scholars and rabbis rejected these claims. Their different responses were not unlike those of their Muslim counterparts.

In sixteenth-century Palestine, in the town of Safed, another rabbi seems to have been inspired by the Ottoman legal claims and legal worldview, albeit in a very different manner. In a relatively marginal place in the Jewish world - and certainly in the wider Ottoman context - prospered the eminent Jewish legal Scholar Joseph Karo (1488-1575). Karo was a leading Jurist and an active mystic. He composed a double legal Summa: the comprehensive *Beit-Yosef* (The House of Joseph), and the shortened version *Shulchan Aruch* (A Well-Organized/Set Table). Both are impressive from the formal juridical perspective of positive law, but they are innovative primarily due Karo's vision regarding the role of law in a changing world. Originating from the Sephardic diaspora, Karo was familiar with European legal traditions as well as with the Ottoman administrative practices. His double code of law undoubtedly relate to codification projects taking place both in nascent European states - such as Spain, Holy Roman Empire, France, Holland – and the Ottoman lands. Karo's work presents a new role of law in large political units (increasingly centralized states, large empires), and relates to the role of major and leading juridical exerts in shaping this law in tight cooperation with the political authorities. In his mystical visions and legal projects Karo promoted the notion of a leading legalistic authority for the entire Jewish collective.

By looking at these sixteenth and seventeenth-century instances, the paper seeks to expand the implications of the Ottoman dynastic legal claims beyond the Muslim sphere, and draw attention to the manner in which they shaped, directly and indirectly the legal worldview of other denominational communities throughout the Ottoman domains. It also seeks to highlight the overlapping geographies of the European, Jewish and Ottoman legal traditions/projects.

CENGİZ ŞİŞMAN, University of Houston-CL

Confession-Building among the Crypto-Communities: The Cases of Early Modern Ottoman Jews and Christians

Confessionalism is generally described as a collaboration between religious and political authorities who aimed to discipline their believers with various means, and urged them to be the adherents of certain set of homogeneous belief systems in early modern period. To the scholars of confessionalism, this collaboration paved the way to the the birth of modern believer and modern state. The theory assumes that religious authorities, representing the mainstream belief systems have an access to the political authorities in order form such a collaboration. Some other scholars argue that confession-building was important also for minorities who did not have the same means to access into politics. It still however, inversely affected them in such a a way that they developed their belief systems as a reaction to the rising confessionalist tendencies in larger society. For example, it was shown by several scholars that the Ottoman empire was going through a process of islamic "orthodoxisation" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and other religious communities had to define the content and borders their faith in response to the rise of confessional identities. In this process, believers who were linked to the Muslims, Jewish and Christian communities were not only by participating in cults and sacraments, but also by a profession of faith which turned them professional believers in the creed of their respective traditions.

One of the other major results of the islamic "orthodoxisation" in the Ottoman empire was an increase in the number of Jewish and Christian converts to Islam. Literary and archival documents demonstrate us that some of these new converts kept their original belief inside and formed crypto-communities in urban and rural areas they lived. With regards to the theory of confessionalism, can we make the same argument about the cyrpto-communities? In other words, did confessional developments make an impact on the formation of their political and religious identities in early modern settings? The goal of this presentation is to discuss the confessionalism theory in the context of the crypto believers and communities, with a particular emphasis on the seventeenth century Sabbateans (Jewish cyrpto-community) and eighteen century Hemshinlis and Istavris (Christian crypto-communities). My preliminary works strongly suggests that the Ottoman confessionalism was one of the main reasons of the rise of the crypto-communities in the Ottoman empire

PAWEL MACIEJKO (Johns Hopkins University)

Sabbatai Tsevi's understanding of Islam and his conversion

In September 1666, Sabbatai Tsevi, the most important Jewish messiah claimant since the period of the Second Temple, faced Sultan Mehmed IV and - in a move completely unexpected and profoundly shocking even to his most faithful followers—he performed the most bizarre of many bizarre acts he was known for: he cast off his Jewish garb and donned a turban, thereby signaling that he had embraced Islam. The act put an end to a large religious movement that had formed around Sabbatai: most of his followers parted ways with the apostate and proclaimed him yet another false messiah. They undertook penitence and returned to their daily lives. But some did not. Sabbatianism did not die with Sabbatai's conversion to Islam, but that act radically altered its social profile. After the conversion, Sabbatianism as a public messianic movement gave way to sectarian crypto-Sabbatianism: a secret creed observed by clandestine believers who pretended to be perfectly orthodox Jews or in some cases Muslims but continued to regard Sabbatai

Tsevi as the true messiah, redeemer of Israel. The classical texts of Judaism were searched for esoteric hints that the messiah would have to apostatise. The most important of these was proposed by Sabbatai Tsevi's prophet, Nathan of Gaza, who interpreted the conversion as a descent of the powers of righteousness embodied in the messiah into the world of evil and impurity (kelippot, husks, in the terminology of Kabbalah). The purpose of this descent was further expounded as an endeavour to bring about the total destruction of the kelippot. This paper shall discuss an alternative explanation proposed by the messiah himself. Sabbatai Tsevi interpreted his conversion to Islam not as an application of kabbalistic teachings about the liberation of the holy from the impure, but as a leap of faith, the response to the unfathomable order of the living God. Islam is not seen here as a realm of demonic forces, but as a true (if temporary) dwelling of God. This positive attitude to Islam (and later also to Christianity) had one important consequence. In Sabbatianism, Judaism ceased to be self-referential: Sabbatian thought developed in conscious dialogue with the tenets of other religions. The Ottoman Empire's religious and cultural diversity was explored and explained

HADAR FELDMAN, PhD Candidate, The Hebrew Unuversity of Jerusalem

Confessionalization and the Sabbatian Ma'aminim

The current scholarly discourse regarding confessionalization in the Ottoman Empire raises interesting questions as to the role of interfaith dynamics in the early modern period. This paper proposes to examine these processes as they are reflected in the Sabbatian faith and ritual of the *Ma'aminim*. The *Ma'aminim* are followers of Sabbatai Zevi, who converted to Islam in the wake of their messiah and maintained a distinct community in Ottoman Salonica. The *Ma'aminim* were formally and outwardly Sunni Muslims, yet they kept a hidden messianic religion which combined Jewish mystical traditions and components from surrounding religious communities. Their religion is exposed in inner-communal manuscript, meant for members only and written in the 18th and 19th centuries. During this period, they were naturally affected by general cultural developments which resulted from the tensions between conservativeness and innovative tendencies; however, perhaps unlike other religious groups, they were free of concerns about confrontation with the religious establishment-neither Muslim, nor Jewish. Hence, exploring the *Ma'aminim*s' confessional-building via their esoteric sources, may reveal a unique model of the ways in which religious identities were formed and reshaped in the pre-modern Ottoman society.

DERIN TERZIOĞLU (Alexander-von-Humboldt Kolleg for Islamicate Intellectual History, University of Bonn/Boğaziçi University/OTTOCONFESSION Project)

Containing Confessional Ambiguity in the Confessional Age: Sunnism, Sufism and Alid loyalty in the Ottoman Empire, ca. 1500-1700

This paper both draws on and addresses some of the problems that arise when we apply the concept of "confessionalization" to analyze the transformation of religious culture in the early modern Ottoman Empire. How possible was it really to transform the different discursive traditions that made up early modern Islam into a set of well-delineated beliefs and practices that we might reasonably call a "confession"? What about those discursive traditions that were an integral part of early modern Islamic piety, but which defied easy categorization as "Sunni" or "Shii" or as "orthodox" or "heterodox"?

In this paper, I examine how Sufis, a heterogeneous group that engaged with the heterogeneous discursive religious tradition that we call Sufism or Islamic mysticism, sought to adapt to the Sunnitizing policies of the Ottoman state and the learned hierarchy in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I look specifically at how Sufis from different *tarikat*s negotiated the parameters of acceptable expressions of Alid loyalty, after Sunnism became the only publicly admissible confessional identity for Ottoman Muslims. My initial findings suggest that the new restrictions that were placed on Alid loyalty during the sixteenth century posed challenges not only to the antinomian dervish groups but also to members of the more mainstream Sufi brotherhoods such as the Mevlevis, Halvetis and even Nakshbandis. However, the Sufis, whatever their *tarikat*s, or confessional inclinations, were not just at the receiving end of the policies of Sunnitization, but also helped determine the contours of Ottoman Sunnism in their own right by variously adopting and adjusting to, or circumventing, subverting or otherwise modifying the officially-promoted confessional line. From this perspective, it is possible to say that the practitioners of Sufism did not remain immune to, but were also significantly confessionalized in the course of the early modern era. At the same time, however, the widespread acceptance of a dual religious and moral code for small "elite" groups and for "common" publics ensured the survival of spaces (whether material or metaphorical) in which individuals could express forms of piety that were at odds with the officially sponsored and publicly upheld versions of religion.

RIZA YILDIRIM (Emory University)

Formation of the Qizilbash/Alevi as a Confessional Community: Emergence of the *Buyruk* Genre as the Catechistic Guidebook of the Qizilbash Path

That the Ottoman empire went through a substantial political and religious transformation between the mid-fifteenth and the late sixteenth century has been long acknowledged by Ottoman historians. Over the last decade, a promising new avenue of scholarship that will potentially broaden our understanding of the religious and political developments of the era emerged. A group of young historians suggested that bringing the confessionalization paradigm, originally developed by historians of the Reformation Europe, into debates in Ottoman historiography would open up new avenues of intellectual inquiry. Although I have my own caveats that I discussed elsewhere, I believe that this new strand of scholarship will enrich the debate on Otoman religious orthodoxy, among many other subjects.

My focus in this paper, however, is not the Ottoman orthodoxy itself, but the Qizilbash "heterodoxy" that came into existence as a result of a dialectal interaction with the rise of the orthodoxy. Contingent to the rise of the "Ottoman Sunnism", there appeared a number of heresies in the course of the fifteenth- and the sixteenth-centuries. Nonetheless, the heresy par excellence was by far the Qizilbash movement, which became the archenemy of the Ottoman politico-religious order. In many aspects, the Qizilbash identity emerged as the antidote of the Ottoman Sunnism. Therefore, the more the latter assumed Sunni character, the more the former acquired Shi'ite attributes. In a similar vein, the more the Ottomans created a centrally organized religious order, the more the Qizilbash were pushed out of the whole politico-religious system and built their own subaltern socioreligious order within the Ottoman ecumene. In terms of its religious traits, I vision the establishment of the Ottoman imperial regime, roughly between 1453-156, an ambitious project of creating an empire-wide "confessional community" under the rubric of "Muslim millet" as opposed to the "Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish, etc. millets."

This whole-scale confessionalization inevitably entailed harmonization of religious practices and creeds within each "millet" including the ruling one, the "millet-i hâkime". Within the process those groups who could not pass through the threshold for any reasons were shifted to the status of heresy, the Qizilbash/Alevi being the largest and the longest-lasting among those groups. Eventually, there appeared basically two socio-religious groups in the Ottoman politico-religious regime: 1) those groups whose status were well-defined within the political, religious, and legal system of the empire, that is, *millets;* and 2) those groups whose statues were undefined, hence deprived of legal basis of existence, that is, heresies. The important point to underline here is that in this confessional reorientation of the religion-political landscape, not only those groups that situated themselves in the system were confessionalized but also the ones who were pushed out of the system. It is to say that as they were excommunicated from the "Ottoman Muslim millet" the Qizilbash/Alevi community assumed more and more confessional traits and eventually turned into an alternative confessional community. In a sense, this process might be called "counter-confessionalization" or "paralel confessionalization," depending on the point of view.

As a counter process to the Ottoman confessionalization, the Qizilbah/Alevi movement transmuted into a village religion that sustained the sociopolitical order of closed knit, isolated communities. In the meantime, earlier tribal comrade constellations called *uymaq* transformed into confessional communities. Religious, social, and political order merged into one system in the Qizilbash/Alevi society. My preliminary conclusions suggest that this order rested on four fundamental institutions: 1) the *cem* ritual, 2) the *Ocak-Talip* system or the institution of *Dede*, 3) the Institution of *Musahip*, and 4) the *Buyruk*. The history of these institutions has not been studied in any extent and hence is virtually unknown yet. This paper is a part of my bigger research agenda to contribute filling up this gap. Basing primarily on Alevi written and oral sources, I have been researching the emergence of these four institutions, which, I claim, happened in the same era of confessionalization.

As it happens, establishment and dissemination of a confession accompany emergence of standardized religious texts that would serve the canons of the confession. In the Qizilbash/Alevi case, these texts happened to be the *Buyruk* genre. We know by now about more than one hundred copies of *buyruk* manuscripts, a few of which have been published recently. However, a thorough study of these texts is to be done yet. Most of all, questions regarding to the origin of these texts remain to be addressed in a systematical study. It is the specific aim of my paper to address these questions and to come up with some preliminary answers. The paper is predicated on the presumption that the emergence of the *Buyruk* was a part of the broader confessionalization process of the Qizilbash/Alevi community. I argue that these catechistic guidebooks were composed at the aim of disseminating the basic premises of the Qizilbash/Alevi Path during the sixteenth century. Therefore, they functioned as textual basis of creedal and practical standardization, i.e. confessionalization of the community.

A. DAMLA GÜRKAN-ANAR (PhD Candidate, Boğaziçi University—OTTCONFESSION Project)

Masjid-e Jame-ye Abbasi: A Twelver Shiite Congregational Mosque in the Context of the Question of Friday Prayer in the Safavid World

This paper aims to explore and contextualize the construction and the architecture of the royal Safavid Friday mosque, Masjed-e Jâme-ye Abbasî, which was erected in Isfahan between 1612 and 1629 by the order of Shah Abbas I (r.1587-1629). Better known as Masjed-e Shah, this mosque has come to be known as the first royal Friday mosque that

was constructed by a Safavid monarch. The common argument suggests that before Abbas I, the Safavid shahs had not constructed any Friday mosques because of the debatable state of the observance of Friday prayer during the Occultation in the eyes of Twelver Shiite clerics. The observance of the Friday prayer had never been acknowledged as obligatory by any Twelver Shi'ite clerics until the first decades of the seventeenth century, when Sheikh Lotfollah al-Maysi, the jurisconsult of the Safavid court, argued for the obligation of Friday prayer. Accordingly, the first royal congregational mosque of the Safavid dynasty was erected with the legal support of the jurisconsult of the court of Abbas I.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss Shah Abbas' patronage of a royal congregational mosque in relation with the question of Friday prayer, and Shah Abbas' religio-political initiatives. Furthermore, I attempt to present an interpretative description and contextual interpretation of the mosque's construction and architecture. Relying on new evidence, I question the common assumption that Masjed-e Shah was the first royal Friday mosque that was commissioned by a Safavid monarch. The evidence suggests that it was not Abbas I, but Tahmasb who was responsable for the construction of the first royal Friday mosque in the Safavid realms. Further, in contrast to the common assumption in the literature on the subject, I claim that the construction of Shah Abbas' Friday mosque was not the result of a final resolution of the debate regarding the subject of Friday prayer during the Occultation, for this jurisprudential problem had not been solved, and would continue to be debated throughout the history of Twelver Shi'ism, including the Safavid period. I attempt to interpret Shah Abbas' endeavors for legalizing the Friday prayer and his architectural undertakings as a part of his confessional policies that aimed to enroot the Shi'ite religio-political order within his realms, as well as to confront the political and religious challenges of Sunni Ottomans and Uzbeks. I make use of Safavid and Ottoman narrative sources and jurisprudential treatises; the contemporary Western travelogues; architectural and urban evidence, as well as the studies of a series of Western, Iranian and Turkish researchers.

SELIM GÜNGÖRÜRLER (Postdoctoral Fellow, Boğaziçi University—OTTOCONFESSION project)

Iranian-Shiite Pilgrim Convoys in Iraq and Hejaz, 1639-1722: A Joint Ottoman-Safavid Organization?

Sectarian confrontation provided a base for hostilities between the Ottoman and the Safavid states after the rise of the latter and the Middle-Eastern conquests of the former in the early sixteenth century. As in several other matters, the performance of the hajj in Mecca as well as the pilgrimage rituals in Medina, Najaf, Kerbelâ, Kâzımiye, and Sâmerra became a matter of contention between the parties, for the pilgrims involved were Iranian Shiites whereas these secred sites were the Sunni empire's sovereign territory. This paper aims to uncover the story of the Sublime Porte's easing its earlier regulations against Iranian Shiite's traveling to Hejaz through Iraq. It will also introduce sources which indicate that the political rapprochement of the era led to a sort of joint organization of these convoys, as examplified in the appointment process of convoy leaders that involved the Safavid authorities cooperating with and petitioning to their Ottoman addressees. The paper will shed light on other consequences of this initiative as well, such as the establishment and officialization of new regulations for the Iranian-Shiite pilgrim convoys in Ottoman territory. Apart from the pilgrims themselves, the paper will also discuss to what extent the imperial government permitted or tolerated the permanent presence of Shiite elements at these pilgrimage sites.

NIKOLAY ANTOV (Arkansas University)

The Abdals of Rum and the Development of Competing Muslim Confessional Identities in the Early Modern Eastern Balkans

This paper will focus on the development of confessional identities among Muslims in the eastern Balkans from the fifteenth into the seventeenth century in the context of the Ottoman polity's transformation from a frontier enterprise into an increasingly mature centralized bureaucratic regime in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A major aspect of this transformation was the articulation of a state-endorsed "Sunni Orthodoxy," not only in competition with the Shi'itizing Safavid Empire of Iran (founded in 1501), but also because of the organic relationship between the building of a centralized imperial order and the formulation and endorsement of "right belief" (a rising centralizing imperial state operating along the tenets of Islamic political theory could not afford to be "latitudinarian" or "indifferent" to matters of "right belief," "heresy," etc., at least in principle, if not always in practice).

From the mid-fourteenth through the mid-sixteenth centuries, the eastern Balkans had assimilated numerous Turcoman migrants from Anatolia, first as part of the Ottoman conquest and socio-economic utilization of the area, and later, more specifically in the first half of the sixteenth century, in the context of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict. Most of these migrants and their immediate descendants were of semi-nomadic stock and played a formative role in the shaping and early expansion of the Ottoman frontier principality (and specifically in the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans) in power-sharing partnership with the early Ottoman dynasty and Ottoman frontier lords. By the late fifteenth/early sixteenth century century the descendants of these early semi-nomadic conquerors and colonizers of the Balkans, as well as some new arrivals from Ottoman Anatolia (in the context of state-sponsored persecutions of perceived Safavid sympathizers in the first half of the sixteenth century) were feeling the assimilative pressure of the emerging centralizing Ottoman imperial regime. This pressure entailed a state-directed drive toward sedentarization, the political marginalization of such groups via their gradual exclusion from the Ottoman military (in favor of paid regular forces of non-nomadic origin under the tighter control of the imperial center), as well as their religious marginalization, whereby the largely latitudinarian, non-Sharia-minded " (and not firmly rooted in scriptural knowledge) Islam that they espoused under the guidance of charismatic dervishes came to be at odds with the "scriptural orthodoxy" increasingly endorsed by the emerging Ottoman imperial regime (that some of them might also be perceived by the imperial center as Safavid sympathizers could only compound the problem).

The Abdals of Rum shaped up as one of the most prominent "heterodox," non-Sharia-minded collectivities in Ottoman Anatolia and the Eastern Balkans in the second half of the fifteenth century and catered to the religious sensibilities of many of these gradually marginalized rural semi-nomads. The focus of this paper will be the development of the confessional identity and sensibilities of the members of what one may term the (eastern) Balkan branch of the Abdals of Rum, which shaped under the leadership and around the saintly cult of Otman Baba, a charismatic antinomian dervish in the second half of the fifteenth century, who claimed the status of qutb (pole, axis) in a perceived hierarchy of saints. Otman Baba had two immediate successors from the end of the fifteenth through the sixteenth centuries, who also claimed the same status – Akyazılı Baba and Demir Baba.

The paper will trace the development of the collectivity's confessional identity through an examination of its worldview, theological doctrine, and ritual, largely on the basis of the two voluminous vitae of Otman Baba and Demir Baba and Rum Abdal mystical poetry. Moreover, and adding Ottoman administrative and legal materials (e.g. tax-registers and leading Ottoman jurists' fatwas) into the mix of sources, I will also explore how the identity and worldview of the Abdals of Rum evolved in competition and in an (often uneasy) dialogue vis-à-vis the emerging state-endorsed "Sunni Orthodoxy" as well as the "heterodox" Bektashi order, which the Abdals of Rum viewed as their direct rival and a threat to their very existence (which proved to be justified as, historically, the collectivity was eventually assimilated, and most of the descendants of the original Abdals of Rum, if not gradually "Sunnitized," are part of "Alevi-Bektashi" communities today). In this relation, a major issue that will be discussed will be the changing ways in which the Abdals of Rum saw their integration into the emerging Ottoman imperial order. While the focus of the paper will be on rural communities, the role of urban centers in the eastern Balkans as centers of Ottoman imperial authority and "Sunni Orthodoxy" will also be paid due attention.

HELEN PFEIFER (University of Cambridge)

The Traditions of the Prophet and the Influence of Arabs on Confessional Dynamics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

There is an older historiographical tradition according to which the incorporation of Arab lands after 1516-7 caused the Ottoman Empire to veer off of its path of openness and tolerance into a more rigid, if not downright fanatic, form of Islam. Yet recent accounts of Ottoman confessionalization, which arguably seek to account for the same set of religious dynamics, have largely sidelined the impact of the conquest in favor of a focus on the rise of the Safavids. What was the role of Arab scholars in the shifting religious dynamics of the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire? How can we account for the influence of Arab Muslims without falling into simplistic dichotomies between tolerant Turkish Islam and dogmatic Arab Islam?

This paper seeks to develop answers to these questions by studying one particular sphere of contact between Turcophone and Arabophone Muslims in the post-conquest period: the study and transmission of hadith, the reports of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad. Since these traditions are important sources for Islamic law, devotional practice and proper comportment more broadly, they have considerable relevance for issues related to both the fixing of dogma and the enforcement of social discipline.

Although too little is still known about Ottoman hadith scholarship, some research suggests that aspects of the discipline generated less interest in fifteenth-century Anatolia than they did in Mamluk Syria and Egypt. If true, this seems to have changed in the sixteenth century. This paper will focus on two mid-century *ijaza*s in which Arab scholars granted their Rumi colleagues permission to transmit particular hadith texts, and on the degree to which such transmission can be said to have contributed to a process of "confessionalization."

YAVUZ AYKAN (Université Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Fragile Loyalties: The Process of Confessionalization and Empire-building From the Perspective of the Sixteenth-Century Kurdistan

In his chronicle entitled *Nüzhet-i esrâr* Feridun Bey, the scribe of Sokullu Mehmed Paşa (d. 1579) details the story of a homicide committed by a Kurdish prince named Han Abdal who killed a janissary in the courtyard of the *Üç şerefeli* mosque in Edirne. Feridun is not the only author who gives an account of this scandalous event. Şerafeddin Khan Bîdlîsî (d. 1603) describes it in detail in his *Sharafnama* as well, the most important source on the history of the Kurdish dynasties. Yet, there is an important difference in both narratives with regard to the confessional identity of the murderer. While Şerafeddin Bîdlîsî depicts an ideal Sunni Abdal Han in his text, Feridun Bey portrays him as not a real Sunni Muslim, and thus, as a disloyal person. Such a depiction stems from a historical doubt that the Ottoman center accumulated *vis-à-vis* the Kurdish chieftains whose intimate relations with the Safavids and various syncretic religions of Islamic origin shaped the Ottoman attitudes towards them. The representation of Han Abdal as a villain by Feridun Bey had close links with the geographical location, confessional plurality, and political dynamics of Kurdistan.

In this paper I will situate the Han Abdal's story in the larger context of the human geography and policies of confession-building in the sixteenth-century Kurdistan. As is well known, since the period of Selim I, Sunnism was the keystone of the political alliance between the Ottomans and the Kurds against the Safavid threat. However, as I will argue in this paper, the confessional plurality and the political tensions in the region made these loyalties fragile and at times impossible. The widespread existence of the Yezidis within different Kurdish communities and the occasional alliance of the Kurdish chieftains with the Safavids created an ongoing political tension between the Ottomans and the Sunni Kurds. This tension was also one of the reasons for the, at times, over-zealous Sunni tenor adopted by several Kurdish authors and muftis eager to achieve the Ottoman-Kurdish alliance and contribute to the *sunnitization* of the region. By drawing on the chronicles, fatwas, *mühimme* registers, geographical sources and Kurdish *ilmi hâl*-s this paper will chart the Ottoman and Kurdish policies of confession- and state-building in the sixteenth century.

NIR SHAFIR (University of California, San Diego/Postdoctoral Fellow, CEU—OTTOCONFESSION project)

Rejecting confession: "Millet-i Ibrahim" and the question of religion in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire

Over the second half of the seventeenth century, Ottoman government muftis and scholars repeatedly tried to stop Muslims from stating that they were "of the religion of Abraham (*millet-i Ibrāhīm'danim*)." Not only did a young Minḳārīzāde Yahya Efendi, a future *şeyhülislâm*, write two popular works arguing against the phrase in the 1650s but even in the 1720s the *şeyhülislâm* Yenisehirli Abdullah Efendi made the *fetva* banning the practice the very first piece of his compilation of legal rulings. This attempt to end such statements is surprising however because major catchemismic works of the sixteenth century, like *Risâle* of Lutfi Paşa, made it a core part of the confessional declarations of Muslims. Why did the phrase carry such weight and what accounted for the change in attitude by the government?

I argue here that by the seventeenth century declaring oneself part of the "*millet-i Ibrāhīm*" was an attempt to employ the vagueness of a Quranic verse's wording in order to create multiple spaces of confessional Muslim identity and escape from the increasingly constricted meaning of religion emerged. An utterance that was a generic statement to foster confessional communities in the sixteenth century became a way to evade confessional confines by the seventeenth century. Although to the modern ear the phrase suggests that they were professing to be Jews, the Muslims who said it never

denied Islam nor had any express interest in Judaism. The latent power and threat of the phrase resided in its ability to question the separation between Islam and the other religions given that they were all technically "religions of Abraham." Moreover, the ambiguous meaning of the word "*millet* (tr.)/*milla* (ar.)" forced scholars at the time to attempt to begin to delineate a concept we would call "religion" today and what particular aspects of life it controlled. For this reason, legal scholars associated with the Ottoman government, chief among them the future *şeyhülislam* Minḳārīzāde Yahya Efendi, argued against the practice, and were forced to declare in the popular legal literature of the period that the act was illicit, mostly due to the fact that the phrase was being used by commoners and the unlearned. The story of *millet-i Ibrāhīm* thus demonstrates how the same conceptual tools could be used both to build confessional and to dismantle it (in different historical contexts), allowing us to write non-teleological histories of religion in the early modern Middle East.