1. INTRODUCTION

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An interesting diplomatic incident transpired during the imperial circumcision festival in Istanbul in 1582—the largest and most ambitious public spectacle that the Ottomans ever organized, memorialized in numerous Ottoman as well as European observers' accounts.[1] Taking place against the background of an ongoing Ottoman-Safavid war (1578–1590), growing monetary problems, and disunity among Ottoman elites, the festival was an opportunity for sultan Murad III (1574–1595) to project the vision of his own domains and the world as he and those in his close circle wanted to see it. According to one of the key Ottoman sources on the event, the *Imperial Festival Book* of İntizami, the seating arrangements of the foreign envoys at the tribunes overlooking the festival grounds in the Hippodrome became contentious when the ambassador of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (referred to in the text as 'the evil-doing king of Vienna') refused to sit next to the Safavid envoy ('the ambassador of the ill-behaving Kizilbash'). He explained his refusal by the fact that the Ottoman chief jurist had issued a fatwa declaring the killing of one Kizilbash[2] more meritorious than the killing of seventy infidels (i.e. non-Muslims). The Habsburg ambassador's demonstrations were reinforced by the fact that the festival program featured an act of conversion—likely staged—of a Safavid nobleman and his entourage to Sunni Islam after delivering a blistering speech accusing the Safavid shah of 'leading his people astray' and praising the Ottoman sultan.[3] The lavish illustrations in the *Imperial Festival Book* capture the scene of conversion as well as the mockery of the Safavid turbans that buffoons in the Hippodrome balanced on

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[1] The episode is discussed by Derin Terzioğlu in her detailed study of the festival. The translations from the text are hers. See Terzioğlu, 'The Imperial Circumcision Festival', p. 85.

[2] 'Kizilbash' (lit. readhead, referring to the twelve-gored red headgear symbolizing allegiance to the Twelve Shiʿi Imams and to the Safavid sheikhs) was a derogatory term used in Ottoman sources for the followers of the Safavid shah in particular but also Shiʿites in general, depending on the context, type of a source, and period. On the nuances see Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, 'One Word, Many Connotations'. For the fatwas of the Ottoman chief jurists on the merits of killing the Kizilbash see Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik* and Atçıl, 'The Safavid Threat and Juristic Authority'.

[3] Terzioğlu, 'The Imperial Circumcision Festival', p. 86.

their behinds, while European envoys, recognizable in the miniature by their 'Frankish' berets, were looking on.[4]

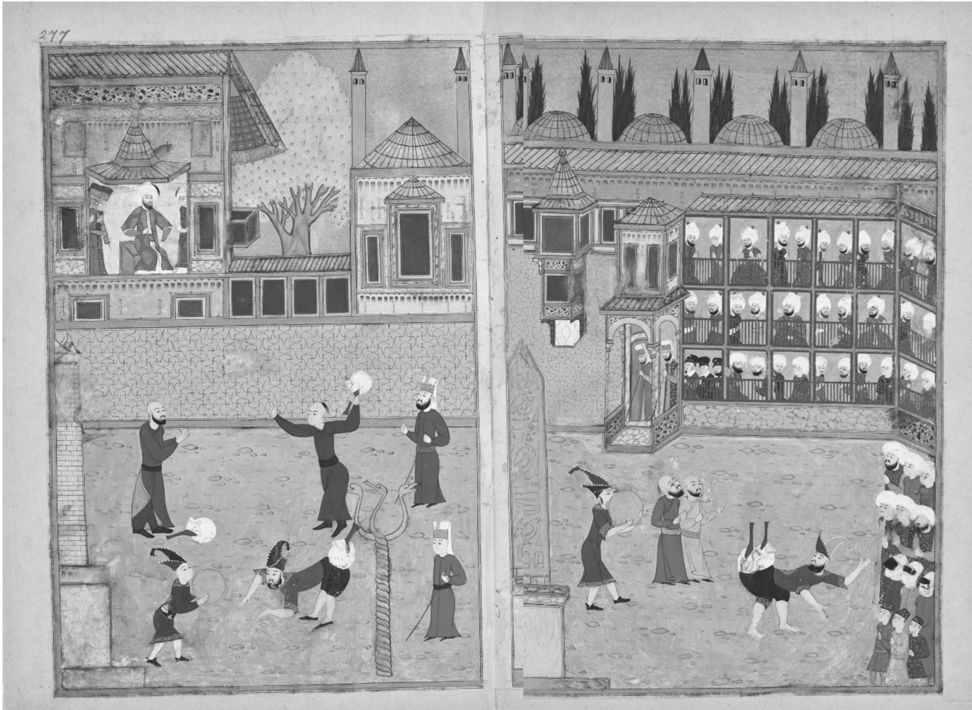

Image 1: İntizami, *The Imperial Festival Book* (*Surname-i Hümayun*), TSK, Hazine 1344, fols 276b–277a

The narrative and the miniatures from the *Imperial Festival Book* about the seating incident and the conversion of the Safavid envoys at the festival capture several important trends that converged in the Ottoman context in the sixteenth century: the growing importance of confessional politics, inter-imperial competition, and mobility of people, objects and ideas. These trends combined to cause intense comparisons and commensurations about which religion and/or confession was the 'true' one that would guarantee salvation, and which sovereign had the power to bring about its victory, negotiated by different types of intermediaries—converts, diplomats, travellers, religious refugees, missionaries, etc. For the Habsburg ambassador, the knowledge about the Ottoman fatwa on the Kizilbash—who were considered worse than any Christians—had a direct bearing on the Habsburg Emperor's honor and prestige of the Catholic faith he represented, since being seated next to the Safavid envoy would have been damaging to Habsburg status in this global competition, at least as it played itself out in the Ottoman festival arena. Agents of empire engaged in constant comparisons, calibrating their own categories and practices in the process based on the knowledge they acquired about the practices and beliefs of others.[5] As

[4] İntizami, *The Imperial Festival Book*, fols 276b–277a.

[5] See, in particular, Rothman, *Brokering Empire* and Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe*.

Ann Laura Stoler reminds us, 'Crossimperial knowledge acquisition and application included a poaching of practices, a searching for new technologies. Such cross-imperial scrutiny shares recognition of the portability of practices and ideas, be it in form or in goal, across imperial systems and within them.'[6] Speaking of early modern confessions, Thomas Kaufmann emphasized a similar aspect: 'The confessions divided themselves from each other and profiled themselves in competitive constellations. They interacted and influenced each other, or at least built up standards to which others had to respond.'[7] The present volume is about these inter-confessional comparisons, competition, dialogue, mimicry, borrowings and adaptations as they manifested themselves in the early modern Ottoman Empire within and between various groups of Muslims, Christians, and Jews and became entangled due to various intra- and inter-imperial dynamics.

Historians of the early modern Ottoman Empire have long been pointing out that in the early sixteenth century the religious outlook of the sultans and the imperially sponsored hierarchy of religious scholars underwent a shift: while heretofore they had been largely unconcerned with defining, observing or enforcing a Sunni 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy', they now became increasingly invested in precisely such a project.[8] Some scholars postulated that this was the effect of the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt—often seen as the 'core' lands of Sunni Islam—from the Mamluk Empire in 1516–17.[9] Others suggested that it was the contemporary challenge of the rising Safavid Empire, which in 1501 proclaimed conversion of heretofore Sunni Iran to Twelver Shiʿism, that prompted the Ottomans to increasingly profile themselves as the defenders of Sunnism and articulate more precise criteria of who does and does not belong to 'the people of the sunna and the community' (*ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamāʿa*; namely, Sunnis).[10] More recently, historians came to argue that this development built on the trend that started already in the second half of the fifteenth century and had much to do with the dynamics of building the Ottoman state and sultanic authority.[11] Research along all these lines of inquiry continues, with the emerging consensus that these intra- and inter-imperial dynamics had a mutually reinforcing effect on the Ottoman understanding of and concern with Sunni orthodoxy.[12] In the meantime, Derin Terzioğlu has suggested that we could think of this process of redefinition of Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy according to how

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[6] Stoler, 'Considerations on Imperial Comparisons', p. 39.

[7] In Forster et al, 'Forum: Religious History beyond Confessionalization', p. 591.

[8] On Ottomans' 'metadoxy' prior to the sixteenth century see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, p. 76; on the early sixteenth-century shift see, for instance, Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Le règne de Selīm Ier'; Üstün, *Heresy and Legitimacy*; Ocak, 'Les réactions socio-religieuses', among others.

[9] Literature is extensive but see for instance Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, pp. 115–130, who dates the end of 'Ottoman syncretism' to the conquest of Syria and Egypt.

[10] See, for example, Dressler, 'Inventing Orthodoxy'; al-Tikriti, 'Kalam in the Service of State'.

[11] Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize'; Kafescioğlu, 'Lives and Afterlives'.

[12] For the latest discussions of Ottoman Sunnism in a historical perspective and various factors that shaped it see Erginbaş ed., *Ottoman Sunnism*; Krstić and Terzioğlu eds, *Historicizing Sunni Islam*.

Ottoman jurists and administrators understood it as a sort of confessionalization of Sunnism (similarly to how Catholicism was rearticulated as a confession in the aftermath of the Reformation) or 'Sunnitization'.[13]

Numerous questions, however, remain to be explored in greater detail: how did the understanding of what constituted a Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy evolve across the spectrum of Ottoman society between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries? To what kinds of responses and possible pushbacks did the greater emphasis on correct belief and practice give rise, both among Muslims and non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire? Was it by chance or perhaps due to similar social and political processes that the growing polarization between Sunnism and Shiʿism, as well as contemporaneous building of Ottoman and Safavid empires, precisely coincided with the Catholic-Protestant (and later Calvinist) polarization and the rise of confessional states in Europe? Were these contemporaneous projects of defining correct belief and/or practice in some sort of dialogue, and is this dialogue traceable in the sources left by various individuals and communities living in or passing through Ottoman domains between c. 1500 and c. 1750?

In this volume, we explore these questions through empirical studies based on a vast array of early modern Muslim, Christian and Jewish sources, focusing on confessional dynamics within and between communities in various parts of the Ottoman Empire in an 'entangled' perspective.[14] The overall argument of the volume is that the reasons for the emergence of the discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy from Europe to Iran around 1500 were specific to the particular religio-political traditions and power configurations in different regional contexts. However, they were similarly motivated by the calls for religious and moral renewal and implicated in the redefinition of communal and political authority that fueled the processes of state and community building in a competitive and mimetic fashion across large parts of early modern Eurasia. Over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these discourses came to be visibly entangled in the Ottoman context as a result of inter-imperial and inter-communal rivalries, greater mobility of people across large distances and imperial as well as confessional boundaries, and continued comparisons and commensurations that this mobility provoked.[15]

Recent research has highlighted the effects of this new early modern mobility and movement of people, ideas, and objects, as well as the role of comparison,

[13] Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize', p. 305.

[14] The volume is based on the papers presented at the conference entitled 'Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on Community- and Confession-Building Initiatives in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries', which took place at Central European University in Budapest, June 1–3, 2018. It was organized within the framework of the ERC project entitled 'The Fashioning of a Sunni Orthodoxy and the Entangled Histories of Confession-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–17th Centuries' (OTTOCONFESSION, 2015–2020, project ID # 648498). For details on the project and related publications see https://cems.ceu.edu/otto-confession

[15] On the methodological approach of 'entangled histories' or, more precisely, of *histoire croisée*, which inspires this volume, see Werner and Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparisons'.

analogy, and ignorance in the production of new knowledge in post-Reformation Europe about the Quran, Islam, the Ottoman and Safavid Empires and different confessional groups that inhabited them.[16] These studies have duly emphasized the intellectual labor of various Ottoman subjects (typically Maronites, Jews and various converts from Islam) in the production of new knowledge about Islam or various Eastern Christian theologies and rituals, which was often employed in the context of inter-confessional polemics in Europe. However, there has been little recognition of the fact that the phenomenon of confessional polarization, polemics, and production of new knowledge about confessional others transcended the boundaries of early modern Europe, and that the reasons for this development were not limited to the fallout from the Reformation. Similarly, it is often forgotten that greater early modern mobility did not affect only Christians and Jews—Muslims were on the move as well, whether we are talking about Morisco refugees from Spain fleeing to North Africa and Europe, Sunni scholars from Anatolia and the Balkans encountering their counterparts from Damascus and Cairo in the aftermath of the Ottoman conquest of Mamluk domains, or Sunni scholars from Iran migrating into Ottoman lands under Safavid pressure, to mention just a few examples of dramatic early modern encounters among different groups of Muslims from rivaling empires.[17] Indeed, the period between c. 1500 and 1750 inaugurated profound but until now scarcely studied and understood changes in the way Ottoman Muslims, Jews, and Christians came to think about their own beliefs, rituals, and communal boundaries, generating important new knowledge about their own traditions as well as new takes on similarities and differences with the religious traditions and political cultures of rivaling communities and polities.

This volume—as well as the related sourcebook[18]—explores how the new Muslim, Jewish and Christian early modern discourses on communal belonging, orthodoxy and orthopraxy manifested themselves, intersected, and interacted in the Ottoman Empire and looks into the factors that informed the emerging Ottoman polemical milieu. The notions of 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' are here conceived not as fixed sets of beliefs or practices, but rather as discursive processes by which different social actors were seeking to impose as authoritative their own understanding of which beliefs and practices should be viewed as 'correct'. The volume adopts a wider Eurasian perspective that allows contributors to explore the repercussions of the developments within various Ottoman communities as far afield as the Safavid Empire, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Russia, and Europe, and vice versa. Our argument is that representatives of various confessional groups in the Ottoman Empire

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[16] See, for instance, Rothman, *Brokering Empire*; Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters*; Zwierlein, *Imperial Unknowns*; Loop, Hamilton and Burnett eds, *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic*; Malcom, *Useful Enemies*, etc.

[17] For instance, García-Arenal and Wiegers eds, *The Expulsion of the Moriscos*; Pfeifer, 'Encounter After Conquest'; Sohrweide, 'Dichter und Gelehrte', etc.

[18] Many of the primary sources discussed by authors in this volume will be published in English translation and made available in the sourcebook edited by Tijana Krstić, Derin Terzioğlu, Polina Ivanova and Hasan Umut (forthcoming, Gorgias Press).

articulated their notion of correct belief and practice through both 'vertical' (diachronic) engagement with their particular traditions, and through 'lateral' (synchronic) engagement with the normative claims of other confessional communities. The papers focus on specific people who disseminated ideas about ritual and creedal normativity and social clusters through which such ideas spread. At the same time, the papers also explore the limits of such normative discourses and their agents, as well as the role of alternative ideas about confessional and communal belonging informed by various forms of ambiguity.

One of the goals of the collection is also to examine whether and how the evolving Sunni sensibilities of the Ottoman administrators, religious authorities, and various middling agents of 'Sunnitization' affected communal affairs and confessional dynamics among the empire's Muslim and non-Muslim subjects; and vice versa, how different subject populations' religious outlook forced Ottoman authorities to adapt their approach to religious politics. However, rather than focusing only on the vertical, top-down and bottom-up relations between Ottoman authorities and their subjects, the papers also explore the less commonly examined lateral relations, between different Ottoman religious communities themselves, as well as their encounters with the external agents of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, such as Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist missionaries. In this way, the papers depart from traditional historiographical approaches to inter-faith dynamics in the Ottoman Empire, which are typically limited to examining a single 'ethno-confessional' community and its interactions with the Ottoman state. The key terms with which this traditional historiography has operated, such as *dhimma* ('covenant'; pact of protection for tax-paying non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim polity), *millet* (lit. religion, nation; but typically used in Ottomanist historiography to denote a self-governing non-Muslim religious community), *millet system* (a supposed system for management of non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman state) , and 'tolerance', also all explicitly or implicitly privilege the vertical approach to inter-communal relations and the role of the Ottoman state as the exclusive arbiter of religious politics.[19] The argument of the volume is that these terms are analytically inadequate to capture the complexity and multi-directionality of inter-confessional dynamics and the profound shifts in the meaning of being a Sunni, Orthodox, Catholic, Jew or affiliate of any other among the host of new religious communities that emerged in the early modern Ottoman context.

The essays focus on the following questions:

a) to what extent were various Muslim, Christian and Jewish groups and communities living in the empire (as either Ottoman subjects or temporary residents) concerned with articulating what constitutes a norm in terms of belief and/or ritual? If the concern did exist, where did it stem from? Through which strategies and genres was it expressed and how was it

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[19] A classical study on non-Muslims in Ottoman society and their relationships with the Ottoman government is Braude and Lewis eds, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*. For a recent re-evaluation of the approaches to interconfessional relations in the Ottoman Empire see Gara, 'Conceptualizing Interreligious'. For more detail on how the present collection seeks to reframe the discussion see the essay by Krstić in this volume.

enforced? How was it resisted and what margin of tolerance existed for confessional ambiguity and indifference?

b) what was the relationship between various Muslim, Christian or Jewish visions of 'orthodoxy' and/or 'orthopraxy' to respective intra-communal struggles for authority? Were these visions in any way related to the Ottoman imperial project or the state- and/or confession-building projects of the empire's rivals, particularly the Safavids and the Papal Curia?

c) to what extent and in which ways did individual and communal strategies of asserting particular visions of 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' intersect and mutually affect each other in the Ottoman context between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries?

In their discussion of how Ottoman Muslims', Jews' and Christians' attempts to define creedal and ritual norms affected their concepts of communal boundaries and political imagination, and how these attempts responded to (and emulated) one another, contributors were asked to engage with the notion of 'confessionalization' as a heuristic device. German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling developed this concept in the early 1980s in the context of the historiography of the Holy Roman Empire to explain the societal impact of the parallel formation of confessional churches—Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist—in the post-Reformation period.[20] They were particularly interested in how the disciplinary tools developed in the context of defining and policing the boundaries of confessional communities could be employed for state-making purposes and disciplining of the subject population. The 'confessionalization thesis' they articulated, which among other points argued that the process of confessionalization led to the formation of the modern German state, has been much criticized over the last forty years. However, historians have come to recognize that by highlighting the new alignment of religious and political authority and their respective disciplinary powers starting in the early sixteenth century, as well as the mimetic and competitive nature of the community- and confession-building projects that arose as a result, the concept of 'confessionalization' grasped at something fundamentally relevant to understanding early modern religious politics not only in Europe but possibly beyond as well. They have also cautioned that attempts to build and impose confessional boundaries coexisted with and highlighted equally important resistances, ambiguities and indifferences that also need to be analytically accounted for.[21]

As I stress in my essay that lays out the theoretical and methodological framework of the volume and the project it arises from, the goal of engaging with

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[20] Reinhard, 'Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?'; Reinhard, 'Reformation, Counter-Reformation'; Reinhard, 'Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?'; Schilling, 'Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich'; Schilling, 'Confessionalization'; Schilling, 'Confessional Europe'. For a detailed discussion of the 'confessionalization thesis' and criticisms against it see Krstić's essay in this volume.

[21] For a stimulating discussion of ambiguity and dissimulation in the early modern European context see the collection of essays in Pietsch and Stollberg-Rilinger eds, *Konfessionelle Ambiguität,* especially the introduction.

the 'confessionalization thesis' is not to 'apply' a concept from European historiography to the Ottoman context. Rather, the aim is to examine the heuristic utility of this concept—and the robust debate it generated about sources and methods of research into early modern religious politics in Europe—for posing new questions and stimulating research into traditionally neglected sources penned by early modern Ottoman authors of different confessional affiliations about religious beliefs and practices. Until recently, early modern forms of belief and ritual of Muslim, Jewish, and Eastern Christian communities have been imagined as simple continuations of medieval traditions or their 'perversions' unworthy of closer study. Such a perception has been in part consequence of the nationalist discourses that lamented the loss of independence of various medieval Christian polities to the Ottomans, as well as biases in Islamic studies that privilege the 'classical' or 'formative' period of Islam (up to 1300) to the postformative one, leading generations of historians to view the sources from the early modern era as derivative and indicative of an intellectual decline. As a result, in stark contrast to the research on the intellectual production of early modern Catholic, Lutheran or Calvinist authors, religious and intellectual history of the period between c. 1500 and 1800 in the case of all Ottoman communities is in many respects still in its infancy.

Contributors were also free to completely reject the concept of confessionalization if they did not find it useful, and propose alternative analytical vocabulary based on the features that arise from their specific sources and contexts. While most contributors found the exercise productive in the context of their materials and specific fields, some expressed reservations (see the essays by Carsten Wilke and Nenad Filipović) about the term's conceptual baggage and potential to tackle the peculiarities of early modern Jewish and Islamic traditions as they manifested themselves in the Ottoman context. Ultimately, the aspiration of the volume is to offer new insights into how forms of belief and devotional practice became embedded into social and political dynamics in the Ottoman Empire in order to facilitate reconsideration of the analytical vocabulary and frameworks which have been used until now to discuss politics of piety in early modern Eurasia. It particularly aims to challenge the view that Latin Christendom was the only one to be affected by the spirit of religious renewal and reformation, which then spread around the globe as the only vector of confessional polarization. As a step towards this reconsideration, my opening essay explores the analytical purchase of the volume's title phrase ('entangled confessionalizations') in an early modern Eurasian perspective, while Alexander Schunka's 'Afterword' engages with the volume's findings from the perspective of European historiography.

Rather than organizing the essays according to the communities which they primarily focus on, and thus perpetuating the mono-communal approach pervasive in the traditional scholarship, we have loosely grouped them into five thematic sections (although some essays address more than one chosen theme) to highlight the dialogue, common challenges, similarities as well as differences in various Ottoman communities' experiences during the age of confessional polarization. However, those readers who are interested in the changes in confessional dynamics within a

particular community could also read the collection in a different order. Thus, the dynamics within different Muslim communities (Sunni, Sufi, Kizilbash-Alevi, Yezidi and Twelver Shi'i) are addressed in the essays by Terzioğlu, Filipović, Antov, Yıldırım, Aykan, Gürkan-Anar and Güngörürler; in the Greek Orthodox communities by Tzedopoulos, Gara and Olar, Tchentsova, and Voulgaropolou; in Slavic-speaking Orthodox and Catholic communities by Muntán and Filipović; in Syrian Christian communities by Parker and Ghobrial; in Armenian communities by Shapiro, Lucca, Santus and Ohanjanyan; in Jewish communities by Wilke as well as Weinstein and Burak. In order to highlight how these essays contribute to the ongoing debates in their respective sub-fields as well as to the overall inquiry into early modern Eurasian politics of piety, in the first part of the volume my essay provides the necessary historiographical background and conceptual framework within which the essays speak to each other.

In Part II, named 'Visions and Realities of Authority', the essays explore how Jewish, Orthodox Christian, and Armenian communal leaders sought to fashion themselves, establish their authority, and discipline communities of believers amid a growing confessional polarization in the Ottoman and wider Eurasian context, with or without the support of Ottoman administrators. The paper by Roni Weinstein and Guy Burak examines two visions of rabbinic authority in the Ottoman Empire against the background of both the rise of Kabbalistic spirituality in the sixteenth and the messianic Sabbatean movement of the seventeenth century. By focusing on the writings of Rabbi Joseph Caro (d. 1575) in Safed, and Joseph Sambari (d. 1703), a Jewish scholar from Egypt, they raise the question of whether there was a meaningful dialogue between these intra-Jewish dynamics that profoundly affected understanding of rabbinic authority on the one hand, and the broader Ottoman imperial context on the other. In particular, they are interested in the overlap of the Jewish and Ottoman Muslim legal histories, with a focus on the 'political and redemptive function of law in constructing big communities'. They first juxtapose Joseph Caro's legal imagination and reforms to those of the mid-sixteenth-century Ottoman Sultan Süleyman (1520–1566). Inspired by mystical visions, Caro strove to produce a code of law that would unify different strands of the Jewish Halakhic tradition, Sephardi and Ashkenazi, into a legal standard for the entire Jewish *oikumene*. Moreover, he envisioned the legal court of Safed as the central legal body of this Jewish *oikumene*, over which he would preside as the leading jurist. A strong rabbinate was also central to Joseph Sambari's vision of Jewish history, especially in the aftermath of the messianic Sabbatean challenge. He saw rabbis as political leaders of the community, but he also seems to have yearned for sultanic support that would shore up rabbis' authority and standing against the encroachment of the lay Jewish leaders and various messianic pretenders. Interestingly, Sambari's account, which features episodes of the rabbis' close relationships with Ottoman sultans who appointed them as heads of the Jewish community, is roughly contemporaneous with the increasing tendency of the Ottoman authorities after 1700 to intervene into the affairs of dhimmi communities to shore up the authority of the communal leaders, especially against missionary proselytization, highlighted also in the papers by Santus, Ohanjanyan, and Olar and Gara.

Henry Shapiro's article examines how in the first three decades of the seventeenth century Armenian refugees fleeing Ottoman-Safavid theaters of war in eastern Anatolia as well as Celali revolts (re)constructed their ecclesiastical institutions in the new locations in western Anatolia and Istanbul in terms of both priestly authority and physical buildings of churches and monasteries. Shapiro points to the intense infighting in the process with both local Armenian and Greek communities but also with the newly arrived Catholic missionaries. He shines light on the strategies of a learned Armenian priest (*vardapet*) Grigor Daranałcʻi (1576–1643) to establish his own authority in the conditions of a 'wild west' where various opportunists could 'falsely' claim religious and moral authority. While Grigor's generation of Armenian Apostolic clergy did not yet engage in a coherent project of confession-building, it nevertheless began to realize the danger posed by 'global Catholicism' and the necessity of articulating the boundaries of 'correct' belief and practice in order to preserve communal cohesion.

Eleni Gara and Ovidiu Olar team up to offer a detailed study of the contentious Greek Orthodox Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris' (d. 1638) administrative activities and authority-building strategies. They focus in particular on the nature of his power as a church leader to bring about a much-needed reform at a time of profound economic crisis for both the Orthodox church and the Ottoman state. Starting with the idea that a renewal of Orthodoxy about which Loukaris dreamed could not be realized without an administrative reform, Gara and Olar look at the surviving documents from the patriarchal and Ottoman archives to examine his strategies for reviving the financial health of the church. They suggest that Loukaris successfully argued to Ottoman authorities that without the support of the Ottoman state in shoring up the patriarch's authority and ability to appoint bishops and metropolitans who had immediate access to cash, both the church and the state would suffer setbacks. They, thus, examine the role of the Ottoman state in creating the preconditions for the patriarchs to enhance their authority and initiate various community- and confession-building projects.

Vera Tchentsova sheds light on how the patronage of the Ottoman state as well as inter-imperial politics helped the Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople to establish and extend its jurisdiction beyond the boundaries of the empire. She examines how the dynamics between the Orthodox and Uniate churches in Kyiv, in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, resonated with the Orthodox ecclesiastical establishment in both the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Her essay focuses on the strategies devised by the Patriarchate of Constantinople to exert its jurisdictional oversight and influence in the Metropolitanate of Kyiv in the aftermath of the Ottoman conquest of Kamyanets-Podolskij in 1672 and demonstrates that it involved a triangulation with Moscow. Tchentsova also underscores the extent to which the boundaries of different Orthodox groups and their confessional cultures were determined by the combination of political factors—what she refers to as 'confessional absolutism' of early modern states. She also emphasizes that while we can speak of connected histories of Eastern Christians, we cannot assume any homogeneity of experience, even within the same confessional group.

Cesare Santus' paper focuses on the fallout from the aggressive late-seventeenth-century Catholic missionary strategies among Ottoman Christians backed by France and a particularly fascinating episode in the process of entrenchment between the Catholic and Apostolic Armenians between 1695 and 1703. He examines the joint efforts of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Awetikʿ Ewdokacʿi, and the Ottoman chief jurist (sheikh ül-islam) Feyzullah Efendi to curb the influence of Catholic missionaries among Ottoman Armenians and stop and reverse conversions to Catholicism. Delving into the motivation of the Ottoman chief jurist to get involved more decisively into the affairs of dhimmi communities and alter confessional dynamics in favor of Ottoman-appointed communal leaders and their traditions, Santus sheds light on the growing—although by no means universal—realization of the Ottoman administration that what was at stake in conversions to Catholicism was also, at least in part, Ottoman sovereignty. Like Ohanjanyan in her reading of polemical works by Istanbul-based Armenian intellectuals, Santus also highlights the shared conceptual vocabulary that the Patriarch and the sheikh ül-islam invoked in their official pronouncements to their communities, pointing to the entangled visions of confessional disciplining between the two communal leaders.

In Part III, entitled 'Varieties of Textual Communities in the Ottoman Arena of Confessional Polarization', papers examine various types of communities that emerged in the Ottoman Empire around texts that in some cases had normative aspirations (like Alevi *Buyruk*s or Catholic literature in Arabic and Syriac disseminated among communities of Eastern Christians) while in others they inspired group solidarity of a different kind that nevertheless reflected the broader confessional dynamics of the era and constituted a reaction to them. Thus, Carsten Wilke focuses on one of the major early modern Jewish diaspora-wide developments that emerged from the Ottoman Empire, namely the rise and spread of Kabbalistic spirituality and Kabbalistic fraternities. He underscores the fact that while Safed in Ottoman Galilee certainly became the center from which interpretations of the *Zohar*, the major work of Kabbalistic lore published in 1558, emerged and inspired a diaspora-wide messianic ideology, it was the inter-imperial mobility of the Jews between Ottoman Palestine and the major Jewish centers in Habsburg Central Europe, such as Prague and Buda, that enabled this phenomenon to happen. Wilke looks at the scholarly links, economic considerations, and religious practices of individuals such as the Moravian Kabbalist Shlomel ben Hayyim who travelled to Safed in the first decade of the 1600s and circulated news about the life of mystics in the Holy Land, gradually establishing the template for Kabbalistic hagiography and popularizing among the diaspora the view of Safed as the city of Kabbalists and the place of encounter of the Jews from all the world. Wilke argues that in Safed various strands of Jewish tradition, from Spain, Italy and the Habsburg Empire, merged into a new, more universal entity, which was symbolically captured in Joseph Caro's synthetic legal work discussed by Weinstein and Burak. In reflecting on the question of confessionalization, Wilke points out that Kabbalists displayed no obsession with converting religious others and conceived of their knowledge as something that should be available only to the select few. It was more of an inward turn towards moral discipline and piety, not

necessarily inspired by the trauma of the exile but rather by a variety of Jewish traditions entangled with both Reformation-era Christian sensibilities imbibed by the Conversos and the Sufi Muslim practices, all of which converged in Safed.

Rıza Yıldırım focuses on the central textual source of Kizilbash-Alevi piety known as *Buyruk* ('commandment' in Turkish) and historicizes this genre against the background of the evolving relationship of Kizilbash-Alevi communities with both Ottoman and Safavid authorities and their respective projects to define creedal and ritual norms. He draws analogy between the *Buyruk* and its role in the formation and standardization of a distinct Kizilbash-Alevi piety and communal authority structure, and the Christian catechisms' role in confession- and community-building projects in post-Reformation Europe, while emphasizing differences in their social usage. The earliest *Buyruk* text, according to Yıldırım, emerged from the attempt to write down, systematize, and standardize the teachings of the Safavid order for its Kizilbash followers, both in the Safavid Empire and Ottoman Anatolia, most likely in the reign of Shah Tahmasb I (1524–1576). He argues that the greater variety in *Buyruk* texts, which is evident today, can be traced to a later dynamic, namely the breaking of the Anatolian Kizilbash communities' connection with the shah in Iran after the demise of the Safavid state in the 1730s, and the subsequent rise of the regional and local recensions of the text reflecting the communities' new conditions and localized concerns.

The subject of Nikolay Antov's paper is closely related to that of Yıldırım and Terzioğlu because it focuses on the largely rural Sufi groups known as Abdals of Rum. Antov studies two saintly vitae (*vilayetname*) associated with the milieu of Abdals of Rum in Eastern Rumeli, produced at two critical points in the gradual process of Sunnitization of Ottoman society—mid-to late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. He argues that the two hagiographies reflect the Abdals' community-building efforts amidst the growing sectarian polarization in Ottoman domains as well as their changing relationship with Ottoman authorities and other non-conformist Sufi groups into which they were gradually absorbed, such as Bektashi and Kizilbash-Alevi communities. Antov's research suggests that as an example of 'failed' community-building in the age of confessional polarization the case of Abdals of Rum is instructive for understanding how the process of Sunnitization, which was ultimately more successful in urban centers, also rearranged dynamics in rural areas, leading to blending of smaller non-conformist groups into larger ones that were themselves prompted to articulate their creedal and ritual norms over the course of the sixteenth century.

Yorgos Tzedopoulos asks the question of whether the signs of a distinctly Orthodox confessional identity could be seen in Greek Orthodox neomartyrologies written between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. Pointing to the importance of martyrdom in the context of competing Catholic and Lutheran confessional projects and social scripts for enactment of confessional identities, Tzedopoulos examines whether Orthodox martyrdom was used to a similar effect, and whether it could serve as a lens through which to study an 'Orthodox confessionalization'. He argues that unlike Catholic and Lutheran narratives about martyrs, which were written in

vernacular and intended for wide dissemination, in the Ottoman Orthodox context between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries martyrdom suffered from an 'ecclesiastical diglossia'—the phenomenon whereby in vernacular texts for popular religious instruction martyrdom was discouraged and depicted as irrelevant under the 'tolerant' Ottoman rule, while in the texts written in archaizing Greek language for the ecclesiastical audiences, it was very much present as the 'holiest and best baptism'. Echoing the discursive distinction between the elite and commoner in Sunni Islam, highlighted by Terzioğlu and Filipović in their papers, and the idea that the elites could use certain concepts and expressions whose esoteric meaning they could comprehend unlike the masses who would inevitably take them literally and misunderstand them, Tzedopoulos builds a sophisticated case for the ambiguity of martyrdom in the Orthodox discourse. However, he also traces the process of its disambiguation and progressive confessionalization over the course of the seventeenth century in the hands of middling local actors and monastic circles, as a result of their interaction with Catholic missionaries and Ottoman Sunnitizing policies.

John-Paul Ghobrial's paper focuses on the Church of the East in Ottoman Mesopotamia c. 1674 to ask what it meant for Eastern Syrians to become Catholic at this time. He examines the literature published by the Propaganda Fide in Arabic and Syriac intended for the Catholic education of Eastern Christians and argues that this literature was not simply translated from Latin to Arabic or Syriac, but entailed a more complex process of mediation that included multiple agents in different locations in Europe and the Ottoman Empire. He shows that for Eastern Syrians in Diyarbakır, most of whom spoke Syriac and Kurdish, becoming Catholic and being exposed to confessional literature published by the Propaganda Fide could mean not only a progressive exposure to more Arabic but also to Maronite traditions and liturgical content due to the preponderance of Maronites in the translation efforts of the Propaganda Fide. Ghobrial thus points to an interesting geographic triangulation in Catholicization of Eastern Christians, while suggesting that by promoting Maronite traditions in Arabic, Catholic confessional literature acted as a unifying factor for numerous Uniate churches that emerged within different Eastern Christian traditions.

Part IV delves into different polemical encounters within and between communities in an inter-imperial perspective. Damla Gürkan-Anar's essay thus illustrates the importance of inter-imperial competition and polemics with the Ottomans in the Safavid molding of the Twelver Shiʿite tradition, now that Imami Twelver Shiʿite scholars, whose doctrines developed in the conditions of historical subjugation to the Sunnis, found themselves for the first time in a position to formulate policies necessary for establishing and ruling a Shiʿite state. Gürkan-Anar focuses specifically on the issue of Friday prayer, which was considered by medieval Imami scholars as temporarily suspended due to the absence of the Imam who was believed to be in occultation, as well as due to practical obstacles to his representatives (faqih or mujtahid) potentially carrying out this ritual under Sunni rule. With the Friday prayer and congregational prayers in general becoming key to the Ottoman sultan's claim of being the implementer of the divine law in his realm,

and the failure to uphold the Friday prayer and respect mosques becoming the marker of heresy in the Ottoman Sunni discourse, the Safavid shahs were put on the defensive and strove to reconsider the Imami tradition on the subject and reintroduce Friday prayers in order to counter Ottoman accusations. Gürkan-Anar explores this debate through both polemical treatises and architectural history—specifically, the function of mosques built by Safavid shahs in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. She argues that although Imami scholars never reached an agreement on the issue during the Safavid era, several shahs promoted the ritual and even built Friday congregational mosques, mirroring their Ottoman rivals. She reminds us that Shiʿi scholars hailing from the Ottoman realms, like Mirza Makhdum, were crucial for formulating new arguments in this respect and postulating that Friday prayer should be obligatory for each Shiʿite believer.

Lucy Parker's paper focuses on the 'Chaldean' branch of the Church of the East in Ottoman Mesopotamia whose patriarchs entered into union with Rome in 1552 and examines the textual evidence for polemics between them and the rest of the community that remained faithful to the 'traditional' teachings of the Church. Parker argues against continuity between the group that turned towards Rome in the sixteenth century and the Chaldean church that emerges in Diyarbakır in the later seventeenth century, discussed by Ghobrial in his paper. Rather, she emphasizes discontinuities and ruptures in what has often been imagined as a linear process of confession-building. She underlines that it is possible to speak of a process of 'soft confessionalization' in the Church of the East, in the sense of emergence of new communal boundaries as a consequence of contact with Rome and rivalries with splinter groups, but without a clear confessional content. At the same time, she emphasizes that there was much fluidity and ambiguity, both between the two branches of the Church of the East she discusses, and with other Syriac Christian communities, until the early eighteenth century when more clearly defined confessional loyalties emerge.

Paolo Lucca discusses the activities of a controversial Dominican missionary Paolo Piromalli (d. 1667) among Armenians of the Archdiocese of Nakhichevan and New Julfa in the Safavid Empire, in Ottoman Istanbul, and Lviv in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, between 1632 and 1664. His paper illustrates the complexity of relations among different Armenian ecclesiastical authorities and merchant communities in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth on the one hand and Catholic missionaries on the other, bringing the economic interests of various actors into the discussion of confessional polemics and conversion. Lucca emphasizes that Piromalli's strategies for bringing Armenians into union with Rome evolved in terms of practical political steps that he envisioned as necessary for the union but never in terms of theological approach, which remained intransigently Tridentine despite local exigencies. Thus, Piromalli never seized to view Apostolic Armenians as incorrigible schismatics, rather than exploring possible common points between Catholic and Apostolic theologies, like local Catholics (especially Mekhtariists) later did or as Gēorg Mxlayim Ōłli, discussed by Ohanjanyan in this volume, endeavored to do.

Anna Ohanjanyan highlights how the contact with Catholic missionaries and their confessional polemical vocabulary but also the wider polemical environment of Istanbul, in which Muslims simultaneously vied over the meaning of tradition and correct practices, affected the way Apostolic Armenian theologians began to think and write about their own creedal and ritual tradition. At the heart of her paper is a Jesuit-trained Armenian theologian, Gēorg Mxlayim Ōłli (d. 1758), who tried to rethink old theological terms in light of growing communal polarization and usher in new terms to capture traditional concepts in a way that would de-emphasize the theological rift between Catholic and Apostolic interpretations. Her paper traces a growing entrenchment between Catholic and Apostolic Armenians between the 1690s and 1730s and Mxlayim's own transformation from an ecumenist into a staunch anti-Catholic. Ohanjanyan's work highlights the richness of manuscript material in Armenian and Armeno-Turkish for the study of confessionalism in the Ottoman Empire and the new dynamics within Ottoman Armenian communities, especially in large urban centers.

Margarita Voulgaropoulou focuses on the process of Greek Orthodox clergymen's negotiation with and differentiation from the Catholics and Protestants between the 1670s and 1690s. She examines the network of Greek Orthodox, Orthodox philo-Catholic, Armenian, and other Eastern Christian clergy of various theological persuasions, as well as various lay individuals, who submitted their confessions of faith to the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Marquis de Nointel (d. 1685, ambassador 1670–1679). Engaged primarily in the task of renewing the Ottoman-French capitulations and reconfirming the French protectorate over Catholics in Ottoman domains, Nointel also worked on a side-mission of strengthening the cause of the French Jansenists in their debate with Calvinists over the Eucharist by obtaining confessions of faith by Eastern Christian clergy that demonstrated their siding with Catholics on the issue. Voulgaropoulou discusses a variety of agents who aided Nointel and their agendas, including financial and political ones, but she also asks the question of whether and how the Orthodox' participation in western Christian confessional polemics raised their confessional awareness and contributed to the formulation of explicitly Orthodox doctrinal and ritual norms. She demonstrates that, although the submitted confessions focused largely on liturgical issues and followed a particular format that was possibly based on a prepared questionnaire, they still played a role in raising awareness among the Orthodox that they should provide concrete answers to questions that were debated across the Christian denominational spectrum. These questions also contributed to the gradual realization among the Orthodox that they were only one group within that spectrum, while still claiming to be the one, true, universal church.

In Part V, entitled 'Contextual Limits of Confessional Ambiguities', papers turn away from the discussion of how various groups and individuals in Ottoman society sought to define authority and impose ideas of an 'orthodoxy' and/or 'orthopraxy' towards examples of confessional, ritual, and discursive ambiguities that coexisted with these attempts or emerged in reaction to them. Derin Terzioğlu sets the stage for this discussion with her essay that engages with the arguments articulated in

recent studies that the tolerance for ambiguity (as discussed by Thomas Bauer) and plurality of hermeneutical approaches (as discussed by Shahab Ahmed) were inherent in Islam prior to its 'religionization' and tendency to reduce it to legal discourse beginning in the early nineteenth century. She postulates that just like the attempts to define an orthodoxy within Sunni Islam, at no point was tolerance for ambiguity a static or timeless feature of Islamic tradition. She shows that while tolerance for confessional ambiguity—focused in particular around loyalty and love for the Prophet's family descended through his daughter Fatima and son-in-law ʿAli ibn Abi Talib—persisted among Ottoman Sunnis into the age of confessional polarization, its parameters were significantly circumscribed. This was as a result of the rivalry with the Safavids who derived their legitimacy precisely from the claim of being descendants of the Prophet through the line of the Twelve Imams headed by ʿAli ibn Abi Talib. Terzioğlu shows that the level of tolerance for philo-Alidism and blurred confessional boundaries depended very much on the social context and genre of writing. Namely, away from the public eye and the dangers of being misunderstood by commoners, whose intellectual capacities were considered sufficient for processing only the most basic, exoteric interpretations of the Quran and pithy formulations of belief as presented in catechetical literature, spiritual and intellectual elites steeped in the Sufi tradition could engage in the exploration of the more esoteric meanings of the divine message. More often than not these explorations of the higher truth by Ottoman Sufis and intellectuals led through the veneration of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib and even the Twelve Imams as the guardians of the highest spiritual insight and were articulated in a variety of poetic and mystical genres that strike one as an anomaly in the age of supposed confessional polarization. This rhetorical 'diglossia' made it possible for discourses of orthodoxy and ambiguity to coexist in the age of confessional polarization, not unlike in contemporary European contexts, but on a much larger scale.

In his essay in this volume Nenad Filipović also reminds us of the multiple hermeneutic approaches to the divine truth in Islam, especially when it comes to the spiritual outlook of the empire's elites like Grand Vizier Koca Sinan Pasha (d. 1596). He warns that the expectation that there could have been a uniform confessional outlook in the Ottoman empire—one articulated by the imperial scholar-bureaucrats—reflects a statist approach to religion. Instead of looking just for uniformity, as stipulated by the confessionalization thesis as originally conceived by Schilling and Reinhard, he calls for more flexibility in acknowledging forms of resistance and indifference to orthodoxy in Ottoman Islam. He also emphasizes the importance of the local dynamics—rather than some overarching Ottoman imperial policy vis-à-vis non-Muslims—for the way inter-confessional relations played out in particular contexts. Focusing on two cases of the Ottoman Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha's intervention into places of worship of the empire's Orthodox subjects—to deprive the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Mileševo of its relics of Saint Sava and to convert a Greek Orthodox church in Thessaloniki into a mosque—Filipović demonstrates that in both cases local circumstances and dynamics informed Sinan Pasha's decision to target these sites. Indeed, several participants in the original workshop from which this

volume emanates emphasized the importance of monasteries and monks as key brokers of local confessional dynamics and imperial politics in the Ottoman Balkans.[22]

Yavuz Aykan focuses on the Kurdish communities in eastern Anatolia and Iraq, exploring how confessional polarization and inter-imperial rivalry between the Ottomans and Safavids affected the religio-political outlook of the Kurdish tribes and their perception by the Ottoman authorities. He highlights the diversity among these tribes in terms of religious and political affiliation and examines the challenges this diversity posed both to the Ottomans and to the Sunni Kurds who sought their patronage. Among these tribes, Yezidis presented a particular conundrum to contemporary Ottoman administrators and their evolving understanding of 'Kurdistan'. Ottoman jurists had to deal with this group for the first time beginning in the first half of the sixteenth century, as Ottoman troops made advances in eastern Anatolia, and especially after Sultan Süleyman's conquest of Baghdad in 1534. As Aykan demonstrates, what appears to be the earliest Ottoman fatwa on Yezidis, ascribed to the legendary Ottoman sheikh ül-islam Ebüssuʿud (d. 1574), asserts that they are 'apostates', 'accursed unbelievers' who adhere to a completely different religion (namely, not Muslims), and habitual 'brigands'—all three qualifications referring to a particular legal status, two of which (apostasy and habitual brigandage) in theory necessitated capital punishment under certain conditions. However, as Aykan shows, legal theory and attempts to construct Yezidis as heretics and legal subjects ineligible for the protection of the Ottoman rulers tells only part of the story that obscures various types of engagements and arrangements that both the Ottoman state and Sunni Kurds had with the Yezidis over the course of the centuries. It also highlights the regional and spatial nature as well as limits of the Ottoman project of Sunnitization.

Emese Muntán takes up the issue of ambiguity in the context of ecclesiastical authority, legal pluralism, and the (in)ability of Catholic missionaries and clergy to implement Tridentine reforms in Ottoman 'northern Rumeli', by which she refers to the regions of Bosnia, Slavonia, Srem, and the Banat, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She focuses on the Catholic sacrament of marriage and how different legal and canonical jurisdictions and their agents—in particular Orthodox priests and Ottoman qadis (judges)—complicated Catholic clergy's attempts to enforce Tridentine norms by offering local Catholics different legal fora where they could contract and dissolve marriages. In this way, they forced missionaries and the Propaganda Fide in Rome to constantly negotiate and rethink the boundaries of what was allowable. Muntán underscores the importance of agents of other confessional cultures, Orthodox and Sunni Muslim, in shaping the local ways of being Catholic in northern Rumeli, while arguing that despite the inability of missionaries to impose Tridentine norms, one can label certain local dynamics as indicative of the growing

[22] Unfortunately, neither Molly Greene nor Ana Sekulić, whose papers addressed this topic, could contribute to the volume. Ana Sekulić' research on the Bosnian Franciscans' 'conversion' of the mountainous areas and pasture lands in the environs of the monastery of Fojnica eloquently demonstrates the importance of focusing not only on the local confessional dynamics but also on how they were mapped onto physical landscape. See Sekulić, *Conversion of the Landscape*.

importance of 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy'. She refers to common Catholic believers who on occasion strove to prove to missionaries that they were 'good Catholics' despite their idiosyncratic ways of doing things. However, she also points to Bosnian Franciscans' ongoing attempts to draw jurisdictional as well as spiritual boundaries with their non-Catholic competitors in the Ottoman sphere and demonstrate to the missionaries coming from Rome that their own as well as their flocks' Catholicism was sound.

Selim Güngörürler's essay discusses the ambiguities and their limits in the Ottoman administration's management of Safavid Shiʿite pilgrims en route to Mecca and Medina, which were under Ottoman rule, between the 1690s and 1710s. His work also underscores how particular genres of writing, in this case diplomatic correspondence, could employ different discursive approaches to the issue of confessional boundaries and orthodoxy. He demonstrates that even though the Ottoman state facilitated Safavid subjects' pilgrimage, and even allowed occasional donations of the shahs to the holy sites in Mecca and Medina, any requests or moves on the part of the Safavids that could be construed as undermining Ottoman sovereignty or aspiring to an alteration of the power balance between the two polities immediately led to a resurgence of animosity and rhetoric of religious deviance in diplomatic correspondence. He concludes that the rapprochement between the two states on the diplomatic level was unstable because it did not have the support of religious scholars nor were the latter involved in inter-state dialogue, despite the overtly Quranic language and principles that were invoked in diplomatic correspondence.

While the essays in this volume examine politics of piety in a wide variety of Ottoman religious groups and communities in both an inter-communal and inter-imperial perspective, like every edited collection this one also covers certain groups, periods, and issues in greater detail than others. For instance, there is no paper devoted exclusively to various Ottoman agents of Sunnitization in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although much of the research on the question of Sunnitization heretofore has focused precisely on such figures and groups, the issue is by no means exhaustively explored.[23] Furthermore, while the papers frequently refer to Sabbatai Sevi and the Sabbateans, none of the essays focus exclusively on them. These lacunae partially stem from the fact that some of the original participants in the conference had to withdraw from the volume due to other priorities or publish their essays elsewhere due to tenure and early career requirements. Thus, one should read Nir Shafir's article entitled 'Vernacular Legalism in the Ottoman Empire: Confession, Law, and Popular Politics in the Debate over the "Religion of Abraham (*millet-i Ibrāhīm*)"'[24] and Hadar Feldman's 'Ottoman Songs in Sabbatian Manuscripts:

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[23] In this respect, most work has focused on the legal opinions (fatwas) of sixteenth-century Ottoman jurists regarding the Kizilbash and various antinomian Sufis and their rituals; actions of the state against the Kizilbash and Shiʿite populations as reflected in the entries from the sixteenth-century records of important imperial affairs; and polemical works and social activism of various 'Kadizadeli' preachers and their sympathizers in the seventeenth century. For an overview and references see the essay by Krstić.

[24] *Islamic Law and Society* 28/1 (2020), pp. 1–44.

A Cross-Cultural Perspective on the Inner Writings of the "Ma'aminim"', [25] both originally presented at the conference, as contributions to the overall conversation and problematique at the center of this volume.[26] We would have also liked to have contributions on other groups of Eastern Christians; however, given that the study of Christianity in the early modern and modern Middle East (especially within the framework of 'Global Catholicism') has focused mostly on Syria and Egypt, we chose to focus on Ottoman Slavic-, Greek-, Syriac-, and Armenian-speaking Christians who have been less integrated into 'global' frameworks.

Despite these lacunae, certain conclusions present themselves in terms of overall dynamics and chronology. Based on the essays, no Ottoman community seems to have remained immune to the broader discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that emerged in the age of confessional polarization from Europe to Iran, roughly between the early 1500s and mid 1700s. However, significant differences existed in terms of chronology, key competitors in the politics of piety who drove a particular community's or individuals' desire to define their creedal and ritual norms, as well as ability and desire of communal leaders to discipline their communities to adhere to these norms. Based on the essays in the volume, the Ottoman panorama of confession-building and polarization features chronologically staggered but nevertheless dialogic emergence of discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that at times ran parallel but became entangled in certain points, only to run parallel again and converge and entangle at a later point. Thus, the Sunni and Shiʿi discourses of orthodoxy began to be articulated already in the early sixteenth century, only to evolve and adapt to the changing social dynamics within the Muslim communities in and between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. After the cessation of wars with the Safavids in 1639, Ottoman Sunni Muslims turned inwards to argue amongst themselves over what constituted orthopraxy and orthodoxy, with hostilities and attempts by different groups to impose their vision of normativity on others peaking in the mid to late seventeenth century. While some Ottoman Christians had been exposed to Catholic missionaries since the late fifteenth century, it was really in the early seventeenth century that the missionaries imbued with the spirit of Tridentine reforms and Catholic Reformation began to arrive in greater numbers and make deeper inroads into various Eastern Christian communities. This, in combination with the presence of some Lutheran and Calvinist missionaries as well as evolving discourses of Ottoman Sunnitization, triggered various attempts among Eastern Christians to define their own confessional outlook and distinguish themselves from others, both within the Ottoman Empire and beyond. As papers in the volume show on the example of the Greek Orthodox, Armenians, as well as the Church of the East, polarization within the communities that this engagement with the missionaries caused peaked in the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century. Incidentally (or perhaps not?), the Ottoman Jewish community experienced polarization and emergence of the new discourses of orthodoxy exactly at the same time as a reaction to Sabbatai Sevi's messianic quest.

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[25] *Jewish Quarterly Review* 109/4 (2019), pp. 567–597.

[26] On the subject of Ottoman Sabbatean communities the conference also featured contributions by Cengiz Şişman and Pawel Maciejko.

The early eighteenth century, thus, appears to be one point at which various communal discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, after emerging in different points and in response to various stimuli within and beyond the boundaries of the empire, seem to converge, with the result that divisions within each community became recognized by others. This convergence was particularly reflected in the newly-found willingness of some Ottoman dignitaries to get directly involved into the confessional politics of their non-Muslim communities—something that they previously avoided.

In this panorama, certain confessional projects seem to have had more ability to influence the overall dynamic of the age and trigger other normative discourses and community-building initiatives in response. For this reason, it may be helpful to think of certain confessional projects as primary drivers of polarization and others as more secondary and reactive. For instance, the Sunni-Shiʿi polarization appears to have stimulated attempts to standardize Alevi teachings and spiritual hierarchy (see the essay by Yıldırım). The process of Sunnitization also 'ordered' the Muslim confessional panorama in terms of what is and is not admissible in public, prompting the emergence of various crypto-groups and strategies of dissimulation (especially among Ottoman Shiʿite communities), and pushing others like Yezidis into the legal space of heresy and apostasy (see Aykan's essay). The process of Sunnitization also informed, although secondarily, the processes of confession-building among Ottoman Christians and possibly attempts at standardization of legal norms within certain Jewish circles (see the essay by Weinstein and Burak). However, with respect to Ottoman Christians, the primary driving force was the Catholic-Protestant split and the spirit of the Catholic Reformation brought to the empire by various Catholic missionaries.

Finally, the papers presented in this volume illustrate not only the existence of various discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that were legible across communal boundaries in the Ottoman Empire but also their limits, fragmentary nature, and continuing ambiguities. Papers highlight various Ottoman communal leaders' inability (and occasionally strategic choice not) to fully enforce a policy of confessional clarity within their communities. In some cases, this lack of enforcement stemmed from the capacity of Islam, Orthodoxy or Catholicism to accommodate ambiguity to varying degrees. In others, however, it underscored the absence of sufficient political and infrastructural power to enforce normativity in belief and worship, both on the part of various patriarchs, metropolitans, *vardapet*s, and rabbis, and the Ottoman administrative and religious authorities who strove to govern an empire of vast proportions, with its many rural and inaccessible regions and largely illiterate, ethnically and confessionally diverse populations. Legal pluralism also allowed Christians and Jews to evade to some extent the disciplinary reach of their own communal leaders, while the plurality of hermeneutic approaches to the Divine enabled Muslims to circumvent in certain social, spatial, and discursive contexts the normative claims of the Islamic law that came to regulate public expressions of Sunni piety. As Terzioğlu and Tzedopoulos show, ambiguities persisted in the Ottoman confessional age, but not as some timeless feature of Islam or Orthodox Christianity, but in a close dialogue with and circumscribed by the discourses of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that

were becoming increasingly central to early modern political imagination and community building.

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