2. Can We Speak of 'Confessionalization' beyond the Reformation? Ottoman Communities, Politics of Piety, and Empire-Building in an Early Modern Eurasian Perspective

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> Thus, Ismaʿil Sofi came to Persia, conquered it, so that the faith that first his father had taught, spread in all those lands. It had started in 1499. Short time later Luther emerged too and started sowing the seeds of his pernicious and infamous heresy in the German lands. And it is truly an astonishing thing, that at the time when among the Mohammedans the heresy of Haydar [Safavid shah Ismaʿil's father] arose, at the same time the heresy of Luther arose among the Christians. And not only in our own hemisphere, of both West and East, heresies emerged at the same time, but also in the southern hemisphere, in the New Indies, where many people abandoned their old religion and believed in Christ. Thus, at the same period everywhere occurred some kind of change in faith.
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> Paolo Giovio, *Historiarum sui temporis* I (1550)

This observation of the Catholic bishop and historian Paolo Giovio (d. 1552), made in the mid-sixteenth century, evidently rang true to the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Nektarios (d. 1676), who repeated it verbatim in his own *Compendium of Sacred World Histories* (1677), written at St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai more than a century later.[1] They both seem to have been of the opinion that the early sixteenth

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century ushered in some kind of a 'global' moment in the politics of faith, epitomized by the simultaneous outbreak of the Protestant Reformation and its consequences on the one hand, and the rise of the Safavids and their impact on the Islamic world, on the other. Is there something to this idea or were our early modern observers reading too much into the concurrent emergence of Luther's and Shah Ismaʿil's 'heresies'?

Recent studies on the concept of 'early modernity' have built a loose consensus around a set of post-1450 developments that seem to define the period up to the late 1700s as a distinct historical era on a global scale. Those developments are said to have included a much greater mobility and connectedness thanks to sea passages that for the first time connected Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans; accelerating bureaucratization and administrative centralization of early modern states; monetization and growing market specialization; rising literacy and textuality that went hand in hand with vernacularization; and firearm based warfare, among others.[2] Anything pertaining to religion is rarely included in the list of criteria, let alone systematically elaborated. However, some notable exceptions have provided inspiration for the new and growing research into the politics of piety in a global early modern perspective, including for the essays in this volume.

A pioneering effort in this respect has been Joseph F. Fletcher's essay on 'integrative' early modern history in which he suggested that the rise of the urban classes across Eurasia between 1500 and 1800 led to the re-examination of religion and religious values, triggering everywhere reform movements that saturated society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and inspiring far-flung missionary movements.[3] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, building in part also on Cornell Fleischer's insights, drew attention to an early modern Eurasian 'millenarian conjuncture' and the importance of elite circulation for the emergence of 'vocabularies that cut across local religious traditions'.[4] Victor Lieberman, in turn, postulated in his ambitious endeavor to place South Asia into a global early modern context that during this period various 'disciplinary revolutions' exemplified by religious reforms in different parts of the world caused political pacification and broader social integration that led to the

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[1] I am very grateful to Nikolas Pissis for bringing this passage from Nektarios's *Compendium of Sacred World Histories* to my attention and translating it from Greek (for the passage see Manousakas, '"Hē epitomē"', p. 317). He also pointed out that Nektarios was here borrowing verbatim from Paolo Giovio's *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 1, pp. 527–528. On Nektarios, see Sarris, 'Nektarios'.

[2] For the list of developments, as well as discussion of the concept of early modernity in a global perspective, see Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories'; Parker, *Global Interactions*, pp. 1–13; Porter, 'Introduction'; Bentley, 'Early Modern'; Pollock, 'Introduction', p. 3; Strathern, 'Global Early Modernity', pp. 324–325.

[3] Fletcher, 'Integrative History', esp. p. 25.

[4] Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories', p. 748; Fleischer, 'Lawgiver as Messiah.' See also Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse', which will be discussed in more detail below.

expansion of the political and moral community and the rise of politicized ethnicities.[5] More recently, in a review article dedicated to the global turn in the scholarship on the Reformation, Charles Parker observed that studies on early modern religious dynamics have been pointing to the similar ways in which forms of belief and devotional practice became embedded into social and political contexts across large parts of early modern Eurasia. This led him to pose the hypothetical question of whether it is 'possible that the Reformation was part of a global religious conjuncture', and whether we should rather think of a 'global age of reformations'.[6]

While Parker reflected mostly on the literature emanating from missionary studies, his question was also informed by the recent trend in Ottoman studies where over the last decade research into early modern Muslims' beliefs and practices as well as politics of piety surged, generating new insights into the nature of Ottoman Islam and its relationship to the processes of social change and imperial state-building.[7] In fact, this surge is part of a broader recent scholarly effort to shed light on the so-called post-formative or post-classical (post-1200s) Islamic discourses, the neglect of which has led scholars to overlook novel and distinct developments in early modern Islam.[8] Recent research has also highlighted the fact that in the aftermath of the Mongol destruction of the caliphate in 1258, the Islamic world underwent significant changes in terms of understanding the nature of sovereignty and experimentation with various models of legitimacy, which culminated in the period between the mid-fifteenth and mid-sixteenth century when the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires came into existence. The concepts of millennium and renewal of Islam played a pivotal role in the processes that led to the formation of these empires and competition among them.[9] In the context of the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry, the notion of confessional allegiance (Sunni vs. Shi'i) eventually became central to the empires' mutual differentiation as well as disciplining of their respective subjects, in a way reminiscent of confessional polarization that accompanied the formation of territorial states in Europe during the very same period.

In the past, these similarities, if considered at all, were dismissed as purely coincidental on the grounds that early modern 'Christendom' and 'Islamdom' had

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[5] Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, esp. p. 359. See also the insightful extended review of Lieberman's book by Strathern, 'Featured Review Article', esp. pp. 136–139.

[6] Parker, 'The Reformation in Global Perspective', p. 931. In a recent book, Heinz Schilling argued for the global importance of the year 1517 not only in Europe but worldwide, gesturing towards simultaneous 'epoch-making' developments in Latin America and the Islamic world. However, his book is an attempt to place the Reformation in a global context rather than explore the global nature of the reformations. See Schilling, *1517*.

[7] For an overview of the literature see the section below on the Ottomanists' discussions of the 'confessionalization thesis'.

[8] See, for instance, Bauer, *Die Kultur*; Ahmed, *What Is Islam?*; El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*; Burak, *The Second Formation*; Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*.

[9] See especially Fleischer, 'Lawgiver as Messiah'; Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse'; Moin, *The Millenial Sovereign*; Melvin-Koushki, 'Early Modern Islamicate Empire'; Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*. On related dynamics in the Western Mediterranean see García-Arenal, *Messianism*.

profoundly different historical trajectories, and that, therefore, any parallels in the sphere of religious politics could not possibly stem from related causes or be analyzed within the same framework. However, as the above-quoted passage from Paolo Giovio's and Nektarios' histories suggest, at least some of the more perspicacious contemporaries intuited that something more 'global' was going on. This raises the question: what if the Reformation was, in fact, a peculiar articulation of a broader trend in which the notion of religious renewal and disputes over what constituted the only 'correct' belief and ritual that guaranteed salvation fueled the processes of state and community-building in a competitive fashion across large parts of early modern Eurasia? In the first half of the sixteenth century, sovereigns and community leaders across Eurasia began to articulate their claims to authority and legitimacy in terms of their ability to set and protect the boundaries of 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' on the one hand and exterminate 'heresy' on the other. While they did so for different reasons arising from the specific political traditions and equations of power in different polities or regions, the result was similar and pointed to the closer alignment of various early modern states and their rulers with particular religio-normative projects. Exclusive claims to the representation of the only true belief and/or only correct ritual were increasingly calibrated in a competitive and comparative perspective, with growing mobility ushered in by the early modern era—of traders, diplomats, missionaries, soldiers, refugees, converts, laborers—triggering and occasioning ongoing and ever-new entanglements, comparisons, and commensurations.[10] At the same time, these normative claims also faced various forms of resistance, ranging from open rejection to ambiguation, dissimulation and even indifference.

Recent studies have pointed out that this trend can be identified not only in Europe but across early modern Eurasia, including in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, and suggested that the concept of 'confessionalization' might be a useful heuristic device to discuss the phenomenon.[11] The goal of this essay is to examine the limits and potentials of this concept and the historiographical debate it has generated for the study of religious politics, piety, and state- and/or community-building in a broader early modern Eurasian perspective. As such, this essay aspires to provide a conceptual framework both for the present volume and for the project that it emerged from.[12] The focus of my discussion will be on the relevance of the concept of confessionalization for discussing the histories of various Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities living in the early modern Ottoman Empire. Like this entire

[10] Particularly important for the approach to comparisons and commensurations in this essay have been Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*; Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*; Stoler, 'Considerations on Imperial Comparisons'; Hennings, *Russia and Courtly Europe*; Graf, *The Sultan's Renegades*; Hennings, 'Rang und Kultur'.

[11] For different takes see Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, p. 359; Krstić, 'Illuminated'; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*; Terzioğlu, 'Where Catechism Meets *ʿİlm-i Ḥāl*'.

[12] This volume is one of the 'deliverables' 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/ottoconfession

volume, I approach communal relations in the Ottoman Empire in an 'entangled' and dynamic rather than mono-communal and static perspective, radiating out to the neighboring and connected spaces and polities through various forms of mobility and connectedness.[13] As a result, the discussion below will also take into consideration relevant dynamics in the Russian, Safavid and Mughal Empires as well as in Europe, to the extent that they shed important light on the processes and communities living in the Ottoman Empire. However, the entangled approach does not apply only to the trans-imperial dimension of the present inquiry; instead of focusing only on the vertical relations between various state and communal authorities and their subjects and flocks, the discussion will emphasize the lateral, inter- and cross-communal entanglements within the empires themselves, which highlight the competitive and mimetic nature of co-existence in multi-confessional contexts.

With these goals in mind, in Part I, I first discuss the current state of debate on the concept of confessionalization in the historiography on Europe and recent attempts to recast it as a term of analysis for global early modern history, arguing that they have failed to appreciate the dynamics in the Ottoman Empire in general and in early modern Islam in particular. In Part II, I turn to those dynamics and argue that various religious groups living in the Ottoman Empire and early modern Eurasia more broadly experienced changing conditions for belief resulting from competing imperial/dynastic projects and new strategies of community-building that they triggered. In Part III, I examine how recent research in Eastern Christian Studies, Jewish Studies, and Ottoman Studies has evaluated and analyzed these changing conditions for belief, with particular attention to whether and how they have engaged with the concept of confessionalization to explain the new developments in early modern Christian, Jewish, and Muslim traditions. Finally, in the Conclusion I return to the question of terminology and re-evaluate the utility of the concept of confessionalization as a heuristic device for the study of early modern Ottoman and broader Eurasian religious politics while also considering potential alternatives, such as the notion of 'normative centering'.

PART I—THE CONCEPT OF 'CONFESSIONALIZATION'—CAN'T LIVE WITH IT, CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT?

The notion of 'confessionalization' is a historiographical construct that emerged in the early 1980s in the context of the German scholarship on the Holy Roman Empire. Historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling put forward the 'confessionalization thesis' to denote a particular post-Reformation alignment between the strategies of confessional churches to build a community around a standardized form of belief and practice on the one hand, and the steps taken by territorial governments to accelerate an integrating and unifying dynamic in society with the goal of building a

[13] In terms of the methodological approach, both the volume and this essay are inspired by the *histoire croisée* approach as discussed in Werner and Zimmermann, 'Beyond Comparisons'.

state on the other.[14] The thesis built on the work of E. W. Zeeden, who argued that beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century Catholicism, Lutheranism and Calvinism underwent a simultaneous, parallel process of 'confession-building', which entailed the fashioning of clearly defined, textually determined doctrinal 'orthodoxies' as the basis for the formation of confessional communities.[15] Seeking to integrate the study of religion into social history, Reinhard and Schilling argued that this process in fact had consequences beyond doctrinal and church history and that it fundamentally affected all areas of social life, from politics to family and gender relations. They termed this phenomenon 'confessionalization' and postulated that the building of confessional communities entailed 'social disciplining'[16] that could be used for political purposes, particularly for the goal of building a territorial state. They also argued that the consequences of this phenomenon were modernization and the formation of the German nation state.

Over forty years since its promulgation, the thesis has been extensively debated, tested and criticized, primarily among German historians,[17] and these exchanges have engendered an enormous volume of research. As Ute Lotz-Heumann has summarized, scholars have attacked the thesis for its:

a) macro-historical claims: i.e. the claims that confessionalization was a fundamental process in early modern society, without sufficiently taking into consideration non-confessional, de-theologizing (in law, for instance) or explicitly anti-confessional phenomena (secularization, skepticism, unbelief, etc.); claims that confessionalization process was directly related to the process of 'modernization' (imagined as a positive and homogenous phenomenon under the influence of modernization theory) and formation of the modern German nation-state
b) proposed periodization: while Schilling saw the 'age of confessionalization' as starting in the 1570s and lasting until the beginning of the Thirty Years' War (1618), Reinhard implied that it began already in the 1520s and lasted until the early eighteenth century (1730s). These differences prompted other historians to suggest alternative periodizations, undermining the idea that

[14] For an overview of the theory and its theoretical claims see Reinhard, 'Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung?'; Reinhard, 'Reformation, Counter-Reformation'; Reinhard, 'Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?'; Schilling, 'Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich'; Schilling, 'Confessionalization'; Schilling, 'Confessional Europe'.

[15] See Zeeden, 'Grundlagen und Wege'; Zeeden, *Die Entstehung der Konfessionen*. For a detailed discussion of the meaning of the term 'confession' and its evolution through the history of Christianity see Pelikan, *Credo*, especially pp. 1–5.

[16] This concept was articulated by the German sociologist G. Oestreich. See Oestreich, 'Strukturprobleme des europäischen Absolutismus'.

[17] As the thesis was introduced into various historiographical traditions around Europe, different takes on it emerged. For the discussion of this issue see the 'Focal Point/Themenschwerpunkt: Confessionalization and Social Discipline in France, Italy and Spain' in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 94/1 (2003).

the 'age of confessionalization' can be precisely chronologically defined and calling into question the criteria based on which periodization is to be made

c) insufficient attention to the role of theological 'truth' and the specific characteristics of different confessions: by likening and levelling the processes of building the three confessions (Protestant, Catholic, Reformed), the concept of confessionalization is said to have neglected their *propria* or particular theological and organizational principles that differed considerably from one another

d) 'top-to-bottom approach' leading to 'étatistic narrowing': the thesis was criticized for putting too much emphasis on the relationship between confession- and state-building, being overly top-down and overlooking the ways in which social disciplining and confessional formation can arise from 'below', for example in various rural contexts where the pressures of the state were secondary to communal self-disciplining; furthermore, research has indicated that attempts of the state to confessionally discipline was more often than not a failure and entailed much resistance.[18]

These criticisms have led many scholars in Germany to argue that the confessionalization thesis has exhausted its heuristic potential and should be laid to rest. However, in international scholarship on the Reformation and its aftermath a consensus seems to have emerged that although confessionalization may not be *the* defining trend of early modern European history and hold a paradigmatic value, as the fathers of the concept argued, it still constitutes a useful analytical tool for discussing certain dynamics that were an important part of the early modern European experience. The argument this scholarship advances is that what is necessary is not so much a full rejection of the notion of confessionalization but a restoration of the balance in research on early modern piety that would examine the interplay of various new normative discourses with lived experience, especially in the situations of inter-confessional coexistence, transconfessionality, and plurality within confessions, as well as a greater appreciation of non-confessional trends.[19] As one move towards a more diversified analytical toolbox, scholars have dubbed Reinhard's and Schilling's idea about the mutually reinforcing role of state- and confession-building as the 'strong' theory of confessionalization, suggesting that it may have been operative in some contexts in Europe but certainly not all. They have juxtaposed it to the 'weak' theory of confessionalization, which Philip Benedict defined as 'a process of rivalry and emulation by which the religions that emerged from the upheavals of the Reformation defined and enforced their particular versions of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, demonized their rivals, and built group cohesion and identity', which is seen as more

[18] Lotz-Heumann, 'The Concept of "Confessionalization"'; Lotz-Heumann, 'Confessionalization'.

[19] Dixon, 'Introduction'; Kaufmann, 'Einleitung: Transkonfessionalität'; Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Einleitung'; Forster, Gordon, Harrington, Kaufmann, Lotz-Heumann,'Forum'.

broadly relevant.[20] Recent studies have suggested that our toolbox should also include concepts such as 'confession-building' to denote a more limited legal/theological process articulated by scholars, jurists, and clergymen that may not have affected society at large, as well as various terms that challenge the idea of clear-cut boundaries and identities, such as 'confessional ambiguity', 'confessional indifferentism', and 'situational confessionalism'.[21]

Reformulating the concept of confessionalization also raised the possibility of its greater relevance beyond Latin Europe. In 2004, Heinz Schilling himself expressed regret that until now the research on confessionalization has been largely intra-cultural (remaining within the framework of Latin Christendom). Arguing for his thesis' comparative potential, he specifically underlined the need for comparisons with Eastern Christianity and Islam, but until recently his call largely remained unanswered.[22] Taking up Schilling's plea as well as responding to the global turn in the research on the Reformation, in a recent article Cornel A. Zwierlein attempted to tackle the question of how the concept of confessionalization could be useful for the study of global history. He argued that at its core confessionalization was an epistemic phenomenon and that it had to do with ignorance (or as he puts it, non-knowledge), which led Catholic and Protestant theologians to draw on their own experience of confession-building or polemical needs in the European context to pose questions to their eastern Christian counterparts, pushing them to answer queries that the latter had never had to ponder before. These questions, in turn, induced the latter to articulate more clearly their own beliefs and practices, thus sparking a processes of confession-building, which may or may not have been accompanied by concerted attempts to discipline society, as envisioned by the fathers of the concept of confessionalization. Zwierlein sees confessionalization as an essentially empirical project of constantly asking and verifying how the actual ritual practice and held beliefs compared to theologically normative expectations.[23]

While Zwierlein's reconceptualization of confessionalization as an epistemological and empirical project is highly insightful and useful, he explicitly denies that

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[20] See Lotz-Heumann, 'Confessionalization', p. 41; Benedict, 'Confessionalization in France?' p. 48.

[21] For an insightful discussion of the how place, time, context, perspective, and intention should be reflected in the analytical terminology of confessional dynamics see Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Einleitung' as well as the essays in that volume.

[22] He wrote: 'Such a comparative perspective will, on the other hand, sharpen the understanding of the special role of early modern confessionalization in European cultural typology, while on the other hand it will prompt an understanding for the historical precondition for a fruitful collaboration between different cultures in a world that is steadily growing together'. Schilling, 'Confessionalization', p. 27.

[23] Zwierlein, '"Konfessionalisierung" europäisch, global'. It should be noted that Zwierlein was not the first one to highlight the importance of the encounter with Catholic and Protestant clergy or their questions for the Orthodox church's reconsideration of its positions and theological lexicon in the early modern period; his contribution is, rather, in using this dynamic of 'questioning' to rethink the concept of confessionalization as a global and epistemic phenomenon. See also his *Imperial Unknowns*.

Islam can be part of the discussion. For him, in order to be understood under the rubric of 'confessionalization', a phenomenon must be a result of or related to the European Reformation (namely, without Reformation, no confessionalization), which is why he sees the merit of talking about it in the Greek Orthodox and Armenian, and even Jewish contexts in the Ottoman Empire, but not in the Muslim one. While he makes an attempt to engage with the recent studies by Ottomanists, Zwierlein ultimately argues that, in addition to the fact that Muslims were largely impervious to missionary overtures, there is no evidence of any truly confessional dynamics in the Ottoman-Safavid or wider early modern Islamic world, and he declares that it cannot, therefore, be included into analysis.[24]

However, as it was already suggested above and will be further elucidated below, there is neither need nor basis for crediting the Reformation for confessional dynamics among early modern Muslims. While the Reformation and its fallout certainly affected Ottoman Christians, it was only one of several discursive vectors informed by notions of the 'true' faith and 'correct' ritual that became entangled in the Ottoman Empire and made the reality of differentiation along confessional or sectarian lines legible across communal boundaries, but not *the* factor that directly affected or caused these dynamics among Ottoman Muslims. In a nutshell, the argument presented here is that one can dissociate processes of confessional polarization from the Reformation and study them as a broader early modern phenomenon of which the Reformation is but one prominent manifestation. Thus, in order to understand the contemporaneous emergence of discourses on 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' in large parts of early modern Eurasia (as well as their absence in others) and examine the effects of their intermingling in the Ottoman context in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries one needs a different, broader analytical framework. The goal of this framework would be to elucidate not only parallel but also dialogic and entangled processes of thinking about ritual and creedal normativity and its relationship to communal and political imagination across early modern Eurasia, without erasing or denying differences and specificities of particular contexts, traditions, and temporalities. With this purpose in mind, the following section will briefly outline the historical processes that led to the rearticulation of older Sunni-Shi'i differences in the early modern Turco-Iranian context. Then it will point to how subsequent attempts to define Sunni and Shi'i orthodoxy and orthopraxy came to coexist, interact, and compete in the Ottoman context with other normative confessional projects as well as various strategies of resistance to them, making the empire a meaningful 'laboratory' for examining the utility of the concept of confessionalization beyond post-Reformation Europe.

Before moving on, it is necessary to address the question of whether the term 'confessionalization' with its unmistakably Christian and European roots can be helpful in constructing this broader framework. Some scholars of the Ottoman Empire and Russia have argued that as such the term carries too much risk of normativizing (western) Christian and Eurocentric terminology and thus distorting or levelling the

[24] Ibid., p. 44.

peculiar embeddedness of ritual and belief in the lives of Muslims, Jews, and various groups of Eastern Christians.[25] Indeed, it stands to reason that a more global analytical framework to discuss the changes in the historical conditions that informed beliefs and ritual practices of Muslims, Jews, and Christians living in the Ottoman Empire and beyond between c. 1450 and 1750 would require a different vocabulary—preferably less laden with Christian- and Eurocentric connotations. With this caveat in mind, in the ensuing discussion, just as in this volume as a whole, the notion of 'confessionalization' is used reflexively and its utility as a heuristic device is continuously questioned. The goal is decidedly not to 'apply' it to the Ottoman or early modern Eurasian context but rather to examine how it can help us pose new questions to traditionally neglected sources and genres, while in the process generating new insights about the early modern period as a whole and potentially a new vocabulary to discuss it.[26] Similar to the term 'early modern', the concept of 'confessionalization' thus serves here as a tool to interrogate and/or facilitate the commensurability of different past experiences but does not automatically imply their homogeneity or equality.[27] In line with this, the question of terminology will be revisited at the end of this essay, having considered recent scholarship on the subject.

PART II—OTTOMAN EMPIRE-BUILDING, INTER-IMPERIAL RIVALRY, AND THE CHANGING CONDITIONS FOR BELIEF IN EARLY MODERN EURASIA

At first glance, the notion of confessionalization appears incompatible with the Ottoman Empire's multiconfessional make-up and reputation for institutionalized 'tolerance' towards 'religious minorities', the like of which was unknown in contemporary early modern Europe.[28] As a Muslim-ruled state, the Ottoman Empire had a legal

[25] For skeptical reactions among Ottomanists, see Baer, 'Contested Conversions'; Şahin, *Empire and Power,* pp. 208–209; Erginbaş, 'Introduction', p. 3; among scholars working on Russia and Poland see references below in the section on Eastern Christianity. For a recent consideration of the idea in the Safavid context see Tiburcio, *Muslim-Christian Polemics*. It should be mentioned that in all of these cases the authors understand the concept as originally formulated by Reinhard and Schilling.

[26] As Alan Strathern points out in his review of Lieberman's *Strange Parallels*, an unreflexive adoption of the confessionalization model (in Lieberman's case, of a model formulated by the historical sociologist Philip Gorski in his *The Disciplinary Revolution*) and its projection on a global context would result in a 'confessionalization writ large' rather than a deeper engagement with and understanding of religio-political dynamics in different parts of early modern Eurasia. See Strathern, 'Featured Review', p. 139.

[27] On 'early modernity' as a term that facilitates commensurability without rendering pasts equal see Conrad, *What is Global History?*, p. 202.

[28] This approach and vocabulary is widespread in both popular and scholarly publications about the Ottoman Empire. However, as Aaron Rodrigue has argued, the notion of religious 'minority', associated with liberal political systems and the possibility of achieving equal rights and eradicating difference, is inadequate for the analysis of the Ottoman social context where

framework to accommodate the 'people of the Book', Jews and Christians, who were considered protected subjects (Ar. *dhimmī*; Tr. *zimmi*), and their freedom of belief and worship was guaranteed as long as they paid the poll-tax. However, the nature of inter-confessional relations in the Ottoman Empire throughout the six centuries of its existence can hardly be comprehensively explained only by referring to the general framework of the *dhimma* pact.[29] This framework is also of very limited utility if one is interested in how the meaning of being a 'Muslim', a 'Christian' or a 'Jew' changed over time in relation to the vicissitudes of the Ottoman imperial project and inter-imperial configurations of power in the early modern period.[30] Furthermore, if we go beyond the habit of measuring Ottoman 'tolerance' by how they treated Christians and Jews, we discover that, starting in the sixteenth century, Ottomans ceased to be as accommodating as before to groups of Muslims who did not subscribe to what was understood as a Sunni orthodoxy in this particular historical moment. After all, while the *dhimma* pact conceived of difference among Ottoman non-Muslim subjects, it did not stipulate anything about alterity within the Muslim community itself or envision rights and autonomies for non-Sunni groups.

Although there has long been a consensus among the Ottomanists that by the early sixteenth century Ottoman religious politics changed from what Cemal Kafadar aptly described as a state of 'metadoxy' (or lack of concern with any specific belief) to a greater concern with defining and enforcing a Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy, it was only in the late 1990s and early 2000s that scholars began to explore the meaning and implications of this shift.[31] Two developments have been cited as possible reasons for change in the Ottoman outlook in the early 1500s: the conquest in 1516–1517 of Syria and Egypt, depicted by scholars as the 'core lands' of Sunni Islam, on the one hand, and the onset of the rivalry with the Safavids, who in 1501 proclaimed conversion of Iran to Shi'ism, on the other. However, until very recently, the 'Sunni orthodoxy' that the Ottomans came to embrace has been understood as something inherited from previous Islamic polities in a more or less unchanged form and transmitted to the Ottomans by Sunni religious scholars coming from Mamluk domains after 1516–1517 or scholars fleeing the persecution in the Safavid Empire after 1514. A more concerted effort to understand the nature of Ottoman Sunniness in a historical context and the new concern with setting and enforcing the boundaries

'difference' rather than 'sameness' was the norm. As he suggests, in the Ottoman Empire, 'tolerance was predicated on the notion of acceptance of difference, but it did not imply a lack of discrimination'. See Rodrigue, 'Difference and Tolerance'.

[29] Friedmann, 'Dhimma'.

[30] Studies on medieval and early modern Iberia, in contrast, have long adopted a more dialogic, interactive, and polyphonic perspective on relations among Iberian Muslims, Jews, and Christians, and moved beyond conceptualizing them as stable and homogenous groups. See especially García-Arenal and Wiegers eds, *Polemical Encounters.*

[31] See Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, p. 76; for pioneering studies on early sixteenth century shift see Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Le règne de Selīm Ier' and Ocak, 'Les réactions socio-religieuses', among others. For a detailed discussion of historiography since the 1990s see Krstić, 'Historicizing the Study'.

of an 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' against the background of complex dynamics of the post-Mongol Islamic world accelerated in the 2010s.[32] The onset of this discussion coincided with another trend that greatly amplified the volume and quality of research, namely the larger shift in the field of Islamic Studies towards a greater recognition of and curiosity about postclassical or postformative Islamic discourses and intellectual history broadly conceived, which had long been dismissed as derivative and therefore inferior to its classical counterpart.[33]

As this new research has highlighted, in the aftermath of the Mongol destruction of the Abbasid caliphate in 1258, Sufi mystical discourse became the key hermeneutical resource powering alternative conceptualizations of universal authority in polities across the Islamic world by offering what Azfar Moin has described as 'inhabitable cosmologies and performative narratives of sovereignty'.[34] Sufis imagined a cosmic government where the ultimate authority rested in the most perfect human being (a mystical *axis mundi*; Ar. *quṭb*) who possesses the spiritual authority (*walāya*) but is at the same time the caliph on earth. But Sufi sheikhs were not the only ones claiming *walāya*. The same type of spiritual authority was associated with Shi'i imams who claimed both spiritual and temporal rulership, tracing this prerogative through the lineage of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, and her husband ʿAli ibn Abi Talib (d. 661), whom they believed to be the only rightful heir of Muhammad as the leader of all Muslims and the recipient of esoteric wisdom that explained the true meaning of God's commands. ʿAli ibn Abi Talib was also perceived by many Sufis as the holder of the key to the esoteric meaning of the Quran. This made Alid genealogy—i.e., descent from ʿAli and Fatima—a coveted trait among political contenders and the veneration of the House of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) a widespread feature of piety across the late medieval Turco-Iranian world. As such, it in some cases blurred while in others accentuated the boundaries between Sunni and Shi'i Islam (both of which were different at this point in time from the modern phenomena we understand by these terms today).[35]

Another prestigious source of legitimacy in the Islamic world after 1258 was Chinghisid lineage. Through his rapid, extensive, and cruel conquests Chinghis Khan (d. 1227) cut a larger-than-life persona of a conqueror that attained mythical

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[32] Of particular importance for understanding how religious dynamics in the Ottoman period relate to previous developments has been the ERC-sponsored project on the Islamisation of Anatolia between c. 1100 and 1500 (IslamAnatolia, 2012–2016) led by Andrew Peacock at the University of St Andrews, with important contributions of Sara Nur Yıldız and Bruno De Nicola. See especially the essays in Peacock, De Nicola, Yıldız eds, *Islam and Christianity*; Peacock ed., *Islamisation*; and Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*.

[33] See especially Ahmed, *What Is Islam?*; El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*. For a more detailed historiographical discussion see Krstić, 'Historicizing the Study'.

[34] Moin, *The Millenial Sovereign*, p. 8.

[35] For the medieval Central Asian context see McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia*, pp. 268–269; Woods, *The Akkoyunlu,* pp. 1–23; Pfeiffer, 'Confessional Ambiguity'; Moin, 'Sovereign Violence'; for the medieval Anatolian context see Yıldırım, 'Sunni Orthodox vs. Shi'ite Heterodox?' and Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*.

proportions across Eurasia, including among Muslims. His charisma of a world conqueror was most convincingly embodied later by Timur (d. 1405), in whose reign and its aftermath the Chinghisid legacy began to merge with the Alid and Sufi modes of legitimation. The result was a powerful model of universal authority and sacred kingship that envisioned a ruler with both spiritual and temporal prerogatives whose divine blessing and chosen status was evident in his martial prowess and the scale of his territorial conquests.[36] It is against this confessionally ambiguous background, in which the elements of Sufi, Sunni, and Shi'i Islam were blended into a religious sensibility that favored notions of sovereignty embodied in a persona of a perfect human being with supreme martial qualities and preferably from the blood line of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib, that the empires of the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals began to rise.

Cornell Fleischer has convincingly argued that from the mid-fifteenth to the mid-to-late sixteenth century one can observe a Mediterranean-wide apocalyptic conjuncture reflected in numerous previously neglected texts relating to Muslim, Christian, and Jewish millenarian beliefs. He posited that these apocalyptic texts reacted to revolutionary events and developments all around the Mediterranean and beyond. In the European context these included divisions within the church, natural disasters, rivalry between the French Valois and Spanish Habsburgs for the imperial title, calls for spiritual and political renovation, the outbreak of the Reformation, the discovery of the 'New World', and the rise of the Ottomans. They informed the proliferation of apocalyptic literature, which was also validated by astrological prognostication, anticipating the end of days and the final 'conflict between universal religions and universalizing empires'.[37] On the eve of the tenth century of the Muslim era (1494–1592), Muslims were also contemplating the coming of the Last Days and the renovation of Islam and its political institutions in a continued attempt to re-conceptualize universal authority under the new historical conditions in the aftermath of the collapse of the Caliphate.[38]

It was, arguably, the Safavid shahs who, as leaders of a Sufi order and claimants of Alid descent, could best 'convert' their millennial, messianic charisma into an empire-building project by 1500, forcing the Ottomans and the Mughals who were competing in the same post-Timurid landscape to experiment with other discourses of sovereignty, depending on their subject populations and moral communities to which they sought to legitimize themselves. Although the Mughal rulers were themselves nominally Sunni and Hanafi, they ruled not only over various Muslim communities but also over a vast population of Hindus, which required different strategies of state-building and sovereign self-fashioning. Thus, for instance, Akbar (1556–1605) used the expectations of the millennium to articulate a syncretic 'divine religion' (*dīn-i ilāhī*) that allowed him to style himself as a millennial being and a

[36] On this phenomenon see Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*.

[37] Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse', p. 19.

[38] Ibid. On the continued importance of the figure of caliph in the post-1258 Islamic world from Morocco to India see García-Arenal, *Messianism and Puritanical Reform*, pp. 217–295; Moin, 'Sovereign Violence'; Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*; Güngörürler, 'Islamic Discourse'.

universal sovereign whose authority, like rays of the sun, transcended any religious or sectarian barriers.[39]

For the Ottomans, the decisive event that distinguished them from other post-Timurid dynasties was the conquest of Constantinople in 1453: by delivering a conquest coveted by the Muslims since the time of the Prophet, the Ottoman sultans could now style themselves not only as the greatest vanquishers of the infidels but also the heirs of Roman emperors, integrating themselves into a different historical scheme and vision of sovereignty. As Matthew Melvin-Koushki has pointed out, 'Mughal and Safavid millenarianisms were cyclical and reincarnationist in orientation, while their Ottoman cognate was linear and teleological…Danielic prophecies current in the Mediterranean were crucial for this orientation that allowed the Ottomans to style themselves as the New Rome—so it was an empire in equal measure European and Asian'.[40] By claiming the title of the Roman Emperor, the Ottoman Sultans soon came into direct competition with Habsburg emperors who aspired to the same dignity, in part based on their role of protecting Christendom from the Ottomans. This act of balancing different discourses of sovereignty and legitimacy for multiple audiences culminated in (and is best documented for) the reign of Sultan Süleyman (1520–1566) who faced Habsburg Charles V (emperor 1530–1558) on one side and Safavid Shah Tahmasb I (1524–1576) on the other, both contesting Ottoman claims to universal sovereignty.[41] In this respect, the Ottoman Empire represented the lynchpin of a vast Eurasian space that became connected in a new way through competing and mutually-defining dynastic projects and imperial ideologies.

Unable to comprehensively and convincingly wrest the claims to spiritual authority (*walāya*) from the Safavid shahs who had a vast following among the Anatolian Turkmen population, in the 1530s Süleyman and his ideologues pivoted to refashion the sultan as the renewer of Islam based not on messianic charisma but on ushering in an era of perfect justice, implementation of divine law, and protection of the true faith.[42] In Alan Strathern's insightful analysis of sacred kingship, this meant that the Ottoman ruler transitioned from an 'immanentist' to a 'transcendentalist' form of sovereignty, whereby he ceased to be styled as 'sacred' *per se* but came to play a role in the soteriological scenario regulated by law and 'clerisy', in which he became the 'righteous' executor of God's commands on earth.[43] Part of this pivoting

[39] On the importance of the subject moral communities for the ruler's religious outlook and the nature of the early modern state in Southeast Asia see Strathern, 'Transcendentalist Intransigence', esp. p. 370; Moin, 'Sovereign Violence'; on Akbar's *din-i ilahi* see Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, pp. 130–169.

[40] Melvin-Koushki, 'Early Modern Islamicate Empire', pp. 368–369; Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*, pp. 246–248.

[41] See Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse'; Şahin, *Empire and Power*; Kolodziejczyk, 'Khan, caliph, tsar'.

[42] On this process see Fleischer, 'Lawgiver as Messiah'.

[43] For his theory on 'immanentist' and 'transcendentalist' forms of religion and their relationship to the nature of kingship and state centralization see Strathern, *Unearthly Powers*, pp. 27–218.

act was a progressive articulation of difference between Sunnism—defined by the Ottoman legal scholars as the 'true' faith—and the faith of the Safavid shahs and their followers, who were labelled by different terms, such as Kizilbash (Tr. *Kızılbaş*, meaning 'redhead', referring to the red headgear of the Safavid followers), *Rafızi* (Ar. *al-Rāfiḍa*, literally 'rejectionists', referring to their rejection of the first three caliphs accepted by Sunnis), and (less frequently) *Şi'i* (Shi'ite), and thus decisively otherized.[44] Over the sixteenth century, the Safavid shahs also underwent a progressive 'transcendentalization' of their rule, as they moved away from the messianic beliefs of their Kizilbash followers towards the scriptural Twelver Shi'ism, interpreted by a newly established scholarly hierarchy, as the basis of their rule.[45] In the Ottoman-Safavid context, thus, the process of empire-building and competition over spiritual authority led to the exacerbation of pre-existing sectarian differences and their progressive articulation in new terms reflecting the respective priorities of the two rivaling empires as well as the profile of their subject populations.[46] This re-thinking and re-formulation of what it meant to be a Sunni or Shi'i, and teaching it to vast Muslim populations in both empires, was a long-term process that unfolded in many different phases and received a variety of responses between the early sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries. The Mughals, whose subject population overwhelmingly did not belong to what the Quran referred to as the 'people of the book' depended on legitimating themselves in the ways that went beyond the authority of Muslim scriptures and religious scholars (at least until the reign of Aurangzeb (1658–1707)),

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[44] In the state documents such as the 'records of important imperial affairs' (*mühimme defterleri*), as well as in juridical opinions (fatwas), the term *Kızılbaş* was most frequently used to denote the Safavid followers. Although some Ottoman jurists, most notably Ebüssu'ud Efendi (d. 1574), maintained that the Kizilbash were not Shi'ites but a new heresy that combined all previous heresies, most Ottoman literati used the term *Rafizi* when referring to the Safavid followers, which by the early sixteenth century was already a well-established reference to the Shi'ites. Nevertheless, by not explicitly referring to the Shi'ites as such, Ottoman scholars and jurists left some space for the semantic slippage and differentiation between the sharia-abiding Shi'ites and the Kizilbash, whose primary characteristic was said to be the rejection of the sharia. On the evolution of the terminology and its conceptual complexity see Kohlberg, 'al-Rāfiḍa'; Üstün, *Heresy and Legitimacy*; Baltacıoğlu, 'One Word, Many Implications'; Atçıl, 'The Safavid Threat'; Karakaya-Stump, *The Kizilbash-Alevis*, pp. 262–272.

[45] On the process of conversion of heretofore Sunni Iran to Shi'ism, recruitment of the Twelver Shi'i ulema from Mt. Lebanon and other medieval Shi'i scholarly centers, and progressive establishment of the Twelver Shi'i law as the basis for Safavid rule see Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; on the development of the Twelver Shi'ite legal system under the Safavid rule see Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy*; on the distancing of the Safavid shahs from their Kizilbash followers see Babayan, 'The Safavid Synthesis'; Babayan *Mystics, Monarchs, Messiahs*, esp. pp. 245–295; 349–437.

[46] Despite their 'transcendentalist' turn, both Ottoman and Safavid rulers continued to foster aspects of immanentist kingship. As Alan Strathern points out in his analysis of sacred kingship, this was a very common phenomenon. See Strathern, *Unearthly Powers*, pp. 81–218, especially 204–218.

and thus did not make a similar transcendentalist transition that constituted the basis for a sectarian, normative turn evident in the Ottoman and Safavid contexts.[47]

One should not underestimate the extent to which this normative turn together with geopolitical pressures, both from the east and from the west, played a role in Ottoman state-building—similar to that of their Habsburg and Safavid foes.[48] Rapid military expansion and preparation for war required a more efficient extraction of resources from the subject population, which in turn highlighted the importance of the coordinating role of the state in managing territorial unity, especially in an empire cobbled together from many formerly independent entities with different customary laws. The need to extract resources for war and regulate duties and rights, including distribution of land and resources resulting from conquests, together with the growing monetization of economy, generated the need among various segments of society for explicit laws and led to the enhancement of the ruler's 'infrastructural power' (as Michael Mann terms it) as well as to the growing importance of the religious scholars with the requisite legal know-how.[49] The promotion of Sunni legal norms (selected and adapted to suit the needs of the Ottoman enterprise), which regulated legal transactions, public order, as well as ritual practice, directly aided the consolidation of the Ottoman domains with its linguistically and otherwise heterogenous Muslim (let alone non-Muslim) population. This process started already in the mid-fifteenth century with Mehmed II's (1451–1481) empire-building efforts but attained a new dimension and meaning in the early sixteenth century as a result

[47] Azfar Moin made this point in his presentation entitled 'Mughal Religious Policy of *Sulh-i Kull* (Total Peace) and the Biblical Problem of Oaths' delivered at the conference on *Imperial Mysticisms: Piety and Power in Early Modern Empires from a Global Perspective* (Budapest, Central European University, November 28, 2019). The quote from the memoirs of the Mughal emperor Jahangir is indicative in this respect. Talking about his father Akbar's reign, he says: 'Followers of various religions had a place in the broad scope of his peerless empire—unlike other countries of the world, like Iran, where there is room only for Shiites, and Rum, Turan and Hindustan, where there is room for only Sunnis. Just as all groups and the practitioners of all religions have a place within the spacious circle of God's mercy, in accordance with the dictum that shadow must follow its sources, in my father's realm…there was room for practitioners of various sects and beliefs, both true and imperfect, and strife and altercation were not allowed.' Thackston ed., *The Jahangirnama*, p. 40.

[48] Most to the point see MacHardy, *War, Religion, and Court* on Habsburg state-building in the age of confessional polarization, while on the Safavid case see Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; Matthee, 'Was Safavid Iran an Empire?' and Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*.

[49] Mann defines two different ways in which state elites might be powerful. One he labels as 'despotic' or 'autocratic', by which he understands the ability of the ruler/state elites to take a range of actions without routine, institutionalized negotiation with other 'stakeholders'/power players in the society. The other one he labels as 'infrastructural power', which denotes the ability of the ruler/state elites to penetrate the structures of the society and 'implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm' in cooperation with other stakeholders. A state that has the former type of power does not necessarily have the latter, and vice versa. See Mann, 'The autonomous power of the state', pp. 188–189. On monetization of Ottoman economy and the rise of the 'Lords of Law' see Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire.*

of the clash with the Safavids, endowing the sultan with a moral aura of a protector of the Sunni community and the implementor of the divine plan on earth.[50] By the 1550s the initiative to promote and implement what the sultan and imperially sponsored jurists defined as a Sunni orthodoxy generated a tentative consensus among the Ottoman Rumi (that is, from Anatolia and the Balkans) administrative and military elites, religious scholars, middling literati and preachers, as well as urban artisans and tradesmen who all benefited from the state's expanded coordinating role and new patronage patterns, while it alienated certain groups that stood to lose from the process.

Indeed, the processes of Sunnitization and Shi'itization, and attempts to impose clarity where ambiguity prevailed for a long time, put into spotlight various Muslim communities not observing the newly-promoted creedal and ritual norms, many of them steeped in Sufi beliefs and practices and inhabiting the lands contested between the two empires, and singled them out for persecution and/or disciplining and/or close monitoring.[51] As Ayfer Karakaya-Stump points out, the emergence of the Ottoman Sunni and Safavid Shi'i confession-building projects was not the only outcome of the inter-imperial conflict—given the centrality of the notion of spiritual authority (*walāya*) to it, Sufism (and Alid loyalty, as Derin Terzioğlu shows in this volume) was the primary arena in which the conflict played out. The articulation of the Sunni and Shi'i confessional projects was, thus, inextricably interwoven with the rethinking of the Sufi tradition to define 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' forms of following the mystical path, with the question of whether or not one showed respect for the divine law (sharia) being the primary criterion.[52] As a result of being pushed beyond the margins of 'acceptable' and being externally defined as 'deviant' and non-sharia abiding, various heretofore loosely organized groups began to evolve into more formal 'confessional' communities—the Kizilbash-Alevi case being the most prominent one—with their own spiritual genealogies and rituals.[53] Reflecting the logic of this increasingly polarized landscape, the Kurdish tribes in the Ottoman-Safavid borderlands were also increasingly 'read' as 'Sunni', 'Kizilbash', or 'Yezidi' based on their political allegiances and practices, as Yavuz Aykan shows in his paper in this volume.[54]

By the mid-sixteenth century, major lines of polarization between rivaling normative projects, Catholic and Lutheran, Sunni and Shi'i, backed by various imperial and princely powers, became indelible. It also became clear that the final victory of one 'true faith', while remaining the coveted goal, could not be achieved (only) by

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[50] On the fifteenth-century attempts by Ottoman jurists and Mehmed II to set ritual norms see Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize'.

[51] On Sufis in the Safavid Empire and their relationship with the Safavid political as well as Shii clerical establishment see Babayan, 'The Safavid Synthesis'; Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; Anzali, *Mysticism in Iran*. On Sufis in the Ottoman context see below.

[52] Karakaya-Stump, *The Kizilbash-Alevis*, pp. 257–258.

[53] Yıldırım, 'Literary Foundations'; Karakaya-Stump, *The Kizilbash-Alevis*, pp. 295–302. See also the papers by Rıza Yıldırım and Nikolay Antov in this volume.

[54] See also Aykan, *Rendre la justice à Amid*, pp. 193–230.

military means but potentially through theological disputation and persuasion, while striving to clarify the boundaries in the meantime. This situation was acknowledged by Charles V's agreement with the Lutheran princes at the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, epitomized by the motto of *cuius regio, eius religio*. In the Ottoman-Safavid context, in the same year the Treaty of Amasya was signed that ratified the sultan's and the shah's mutual recognition of the other's sovereign rule within his own territories, at least until the next salvo of warfare between the two empires in the late 1570s.[55] In both Christian and Muslim polities in question, however, from the mid-sixteenth century onwards (with tempo and intensity varying from context to context) we see more concerted efforts of the authorities to build communities around more precisely defined sets of beliefs and ritual and enforce these communal boundaries in public by various means of disciplining.

This growing sensibility across Ottoman society and institutions towards the issues of Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy gave rise by the early seventeenth century to the first wave of the so-called Kadizadeli movement. It started from the pulpits of Istanbul's mosques by preachers who decried what they perceived as deviations from the custom of the Prophet (sunna) and the divine law (sharia), and turned the moral tenet of 'commanding right and forbidding wrong', found in a number of Quranic verses, into social activism. The onset of this puritan discourse is associated with Kadızade Mehmed (d. 1635), who in turn drew inspiration from a mid-sixteenth century Ottoman scholar Mehmed Birgivi (d. 1573), the author of some of the most popular Ottoman catechetical texts.[56] In the cross-hairs of Kadızade's and his followers' critique were various forms of what they perceived as 'harmful innovations', in particular popular customs and beliefs (like the performance of supererogatory prayers in congregation or veneration of saints), and Sufi practices like the use of singing and dancing in the *dhikr* ritual. Coinciding with the cessation of the conflict with the Safavids in the 1630s, the Kadizadeli movement marks an inward turn of the Rumi Muslim society—by now more thoroughly informed about Sunni norms and sensitized to the issues of orthodoxy and orthopraxy—to become less concerned with heresy without and more focused on deviations in belief and ritual within.[57] Intermittently endorsed by Ottoman sultans, Kadizadeli preaching generated polemics and social polarization among Sunni Muslims across the empire (in some cases even physical violence) that can be traced in contemporary sources, forcing even those contemporaries who did not agree with their views on orthodoxy and orthopraxy—like Sufi sheikhs and their disciples from various orders—to be on defense and demonstrate compliance with Sunna and sharia, at least in public or in their writings for common readership.[58] Although the influence of the Kadizadeli-type preachers on the imperial policies subsided after the failure of the Ottoman campaign to Vienna

[55] For a discussion of the treaties of Augsburg and Amasya in a comparative perspective see Şahin, *Empire and Power* pp. 131–136.

[56] On Kadizadelis see Terzioğlu, *Sufi and Dissident*; Zilfi, 'The Kadizadelis'; on Birgivi see Ivanyi, *Virtue, Piety and the Law*; on Kadızade Mehmed see Tezcan, 'The Portrait'.

[57] On this dynamic see Shafir, 'How to Read Heresy'.

[58] Le Gall, 'Kadızadelis, Nakşbendis'; Terzioğlu, 'Sunna-Minded Sufi'.

in 1683, which they promoted, their views reverberated across the empire for decades to come. While their overall impact on everyday worship and beliefs of common people—especially those in rural areas—remains to be examined, in the cities they managed to create a polarizing atmosphere throughout the seventeenth century in which both Muslim and non-Muslim groups grew much more concerned with clearly demarcating and policing communal boundaries.[59]

Hundreds of thousands of Jews and eastern Christians of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds inhabiting Ottoman territories were also affected by the dynamics between and within Ottoman and Safavid empires, making the notion of empire and the emperor's religion central to their own political imagination and salvation narratives. However, non-Muslims also reacted to and were affected by the dynamics in other non-Muslim communities in the empire as well as by various religious and political factors beyond Ottoman borders. Thus, rather than focusing only on vertical, top-down relations between the Ottoman authorities and their subjects, it is imperative to also look at less commonly examined lateral relations between the Ottoman subject communities themselves, as well as between various Ottoman groups and external agents of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, such as Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist missionaries. So far, however, Ottomanist historiography has largely focused on the vertical, top-down model of relations among the empire's religious communities (often referred to as *millet*s), juxtaposing Muslim rulers to their non-Muslim subjects.

The term *millet* had three basic meanings in the Ottoman context prior to the nineteenth century: 1) that of 'religion, confession, or rite', based on the Quranic usage of the term where it most frequently appears in the phrase *millat Ibrahīm* (religion or community of Abraham) that is meant to denote the only true monotheistic religion;[60] 2) 'religious community, community of the same confession or rite', whether Muslim or non-Muslim; and 3) 'nation, part of a people'.[61] Additional complication to the term was added by historians who, following the publication of Gibb and Bowen's landmark volume *Islamic Society and the West* (1950), began to speak of a '*millet* system', which was imagined as a 'rigorous hierarchy in which the Sultan assigned the management of non-Muslim communities to their ecclesiastical leaders, the Greek and Armenian Patriarchs and the Jewish Chief rabbi, who were granted legal jurisdiction and to whom the collection of communal taxes was delegated'.[62] This institutional arrangement supposedly began upon the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, when Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror is said to have appointed Gennadios Scholarios as the Orthodox patriarch, rabbi Moses Kapsali as the chief rabbi, and Yovakim of Bursa as the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, thus creating three official *millet*s with empire-wide jurisdictions.[63] As a consequence of this

[59] Krstić, *Contested Conversions*; Shafir, *The Road*.
[60] On the changing connotations of the phrase *millat Ibrahīm* see Shafir, 'Vernacular Legalism'.
[61] Ursinus, 'Millet'.
[62] Boogert, 'Millets', p. 28.
[63] This historiographical narrative and the existence of a 'system' was first challenged by Braude, in his 'Foundation Myths'.

historiographical narrative, the leaders of the three *millet*s came to be imagined as ethnarchs, heads of state within a state, whereas *millet* acquired a meaning of a self-governing, autonomous religious community with its own courts (unless the case involved a Muslim). At the same time, the notion of a '*millet* system' became the corner stone of the narrative about the institutionalized nature of Ottoman tolerance towards non-Muslims.[64]

Recent scholarship, however, has demonstrated that there was no Ottoman 'system' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for the indirect rule of various religious communities, the number of which began to proliferate at this time under the impact of missionary activity and confessional polarization. Patriarchs and rabbis often acted as tax-collectors and transmitted collectively-assessed tax duties to Ottoman authorities, but they were not administrative heads of their communities, nor was their spiritual leadership uncontested by their own community members.[65] Similarly, while communal courts existed in certain places, they were not universally available to all non-Muslims.[66] By looking at a variety of administrative genres from different regions of the empire, scholars have shown that *millet* was indeed one among various terms in Ottoman Turkish used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to refer to religious groups and communities, others being *taife* (Ar. *ṭāʾifa*), *cemaat* (Ar. *jamāʿa*) and *mezheb* (Ar. *madhhab*), without evidence of a standardization of terminology either in the documents produced by the central administration in Istanbul or by scribes and administrators in various locales.[67] Indeed, this diversified vocabulary went hand in hand with new splinter confessional communities seeking to achieve recognition as separate entities from old established ones, assert control over the places of worship in competition with other communities, levy taxes on their own members, and appoint their own communal leaders.[68] It was only in the course of the eighteenth century that institutional arrangements were put in place which can be described as a '*millet* system', although the term was not systematically used until the next century.[69] Michael Ursinus has suggested that the progressive evolution of the idea of a *millet* as a formally recognized religious community led

[64] In 1991 Halil İnalcık was still suggesting that the 'system' was in place from the very beginning of the Ottoman polity: see İnalcık, 'The Status'. For a more nuanced approach to Ottoman 'tolerance' that nevertheless retains the notion of the '*millet* system' see Barkey, *Empire of Difference*.

[65] Braude, 'Foundation Myths'; Masters, *Christians and Jews*, pp. 61–67; Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*, esp. pp. 19–62; Ayalon, 'Rethinking Rabbinical Leadership'; Hadjikyriacou, 'Beyond the *Millet* Debate'.

[66] Kermeli, 'The Right to Choice'.

[67] Goffman, 'Ottoman Millets'; Konortas, 'From Tâ'ife to Millet'; Kursar, 'Non-Muslim Communal Divisions'.

[68] Examples abound but see, for instance, Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians*, pp. 263–293 on the competition among various communities of Eastern Christians in the Holy Land; Henry Shapiro's essay in this volume for the competition among Greek Orthodox and Armenians in early seventeenth-century Tekirdağ; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, p. 149; Ginio, 'Coping with Decline', for the competition among Jews and Greeks.

[69] Gara, 'Conceptualizing Interreligious'; Hadjikyriacou, 'Beyond the *Millet* Debate'.

and represented by the patriarch or rabbi whose authorities were more precisely defined and supported by the Ottoman government may have been a reaction to the havoc wreaked by missionary activity among Ottoman Christians, which undermined not only the authority of Christian prelates but also Christian subjects' loyalty to the empire.[70] This makes a closer look at the nature of lateral relations among Ottoman communities, and their interaction with both Ottoman authorities and external agents of confessional initiatives, imperative for understanding Ottoman social history.

Sources suggest that some Orthodox clerics became aware of the Reformation and its fallout already in the first half of the sixteenth century, while the patriarchs in the Ottoman capital became exposed to both Catholic and Lutheran overtures for union already in the 1570s.[71] Catholic communities and a small number of Catholic missionaries existed in several parts of the empire since the late medieval period, most notably in Bosnia, in the Cyclades, and in the neighborhood of Galata in Constantinople. However, it was only in the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century, especially after the establishment of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1622, that post-Tridentine missionary efforts in the Ottoman Empire intensified, both in terms of attempts to provide better pastoral care for the existing Catholic communities and efforts to expand them by proselytizing to various Eastern Christians.[72] After this point, Catholic missionaries—above all Jesuits but also Franciscans, Capuchins, and Dominicans in specific locations—could be found in varying numbers (mostly in clusters of two, sometimes more), in different locations across the Ottoman domains, with larger groups in bigger port or transit cities like Istanbul, Aleppo, and Izmir. Except for Bosnian Franciscans, who became Ottoman subjects after the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia in 1456, most missionaries, regardless of denomination, arrived under the pretext of providing pastoral care for the communities of foreign residents, tradesmen and diplomats of the nations that successfully petitioned the Ottoman government for commercial privileges ('capitulations'). These nations received a document affirming peace and friendship (Tr. *ahidname*) with the Ottoman empire, which bestowed the right of trade and residence in the empire, legal autonomy, and freedom of worship on their representatives. As early recipients of *ahidnames*, Dubrovnik, Venice, and later France (1569) were protectors of the

[70] Ursinus, 'Millet'. For an elaboration of this argument based on further sources see Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*, pp. 53–65, esp. p. 64.

[71] Pachomios Roussanos (d. 1553) was one of the first Orthodox clerics to mention Luther, thanks primarily to his education in Venice. See Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, p. 100. On Protestant and Catholic overtures to the Orthodox see Mastrantonis, *Augsburg and Constantinople*; Wendebourg, *Reformation und Orthodoxie*; Ben-Tov, *Lutheran Humanists*; Frazee, *Catholic and Sultans*.

[72] Belin, *Histoire de la latinite*; Džaja, *Konfessionalität*; Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*; Molnár, *Le Saint-Siège*.

Catholic missionaries in different parts of the Empire, while England (1580) and the Dutch Republic (1612) promoted the Anglican and Calvinist efforts, respectively.[73]

In addition to diplomats and missionaries, religious sensibilities and ideas about orthodoxy as well as resistance to it were also disseminated in the Ottoman Empire by converts to Islam from different backgrounds and the religious refugees fleeing persecutions in various European—especially Catholic—polities, from Iberian Jews and Muslims, to Protestants and anti-Trinitarians, many of whom sought protection and settled in Ottoman territories. In some cases these religious refugees entered the service of Ottoman elites—with or without converting to Islam—and imparted important information about political, economic, confessional, artistic and other dynamics in Europe to the administrators of the empire and its leading scholars. Although Ottoman sources rarely talk about it, spy reports as well as diplomatic and travel accounts suggest that Ottoman authorities were well aware of Luther, the Reformation, and the polarization that it caused among European polities, as well as that they were ready to take advantage of it for their own purposes, just as Europeans hoped to take advantage of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict.[74] This growing mobility and contact through trade, diplomacy, conversion or otherwise triggered constant comparisons and commensurations, not least in the domain of religious sensibilities.[75] For instance, the Habsburg envoy Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq famously reported that during a conversation with the Ottoman Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha in 1560 the latter asked him whether the kings of Spain and France were still fighting, only to wonder what right they had to do so given that they belonged to the same religion. When Busbecq remarked that they did so by the same right that the Ottomans waged war with the Persians, Rüstem Pasha retorted that the two cases cannot be compared and that the Ottomans hated Persians much more than they hated Christians and considered them more impious than any non-Muslim.[76]

This anecdote also sheds light on the question why the Ottomans showed lenience towards Christian missionaries. Apart from the fact that their presence in the empire was seen as part and parcel of capitulatory agreements, the Ottoman establishment's guiding principle in this respect was the saying sometimes ascribed to Prophet Muhammad that 'unbelief (*kufr*) is one nation (*milla*)', meaning that all non-

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[73] On Venetian capitulations and residents see Theunissen, *Ottoman-Venetian Diplomatics*; Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*; on Dubrovnik see Molnár, *Le Saint-Siège*; on France see Veinstein, 'Les capitulations' and Eldem, *French Trade*; on England see Skilliter ed., *William Harborne*; on the Dutch Republic de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic*.

[74] See Isom-Verhaaren, 'An Ottoman Report'; Feridun Bey, *Correspondence of Sultans*, vol. 2, pp. 450–452; for European attempts to take advantage of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict see García Hernan, Cutillas Ferrer, Matthee eds, *The Spanish Monarchy and Safavid Persia*.

[75] On the production of new knowledge about Islam and Muslims among European literati of the confessional era, and the role of comparison and analogy in it, see Bevilaqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters*.

[76] Forster and Daniel eds., *The Life and Letters*, vol. 1, pp. 235–236. See also Ben-Tov, "'Turks and Persians'", on European humanists' perception of the Sunni-Shi'i split.

Muslims belonged to a single category and thus it mattered not whether a Christian was a Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant or something else, as long as he or she was an infidel. However, over time, the views of the Ottoman administrators on this issue evolved, and by the end of the seventeenth century, as papers by Olar and Gara, Santus, and Ohanjanyan in this volume demonstrate, a realization began to set in that conversions between different Christian denominations were not simply infidels' internal business but could affect political loyalty of the Ottoman subjects, shifting it away from the sultan to one of the rivaling European sovereigns.[77] At this point, the Ottoman state began to intervene more decisively into the affairs of its own *zimmi* (especially Christian) communities in order to shore up the authority of communal leaders against Catholic missionaries and better define the patriarchs' rights and powers in order to enable them to discipline their communities and raise taxes more effectively. Patriarchal letters of appointment (berat) suggest that by the late seventeenth century it became clearer to the Ottoman administrators that the interests of the state and sultanic authority were not defended only through regulating the piety of its Muslim but also its non-Muslim subjects as well, insofar as it enabled the latter's communal leaders—appointed by the sultan—to maintain the boundaries of their own confessional communities, ensure their loyalty to the sultan, and curb foreign influence. This goal of limiting missionary influence, and with it, various Western polities' impact on the political imagination of Ottoman Christians and Jews, was one of the principal concerns of the Ottoman state in the coming centuries, but against the background of the changed equations of power with its European rivals. Whereas prior to the eighteenth century, Ottoman sultans graciously 'allowed' the presence and 'bestowed' privileges on foreign residents, diplomats, and missionaries, after 1700 they were increasingly unable to refuse foreign diplomats' requests.[78]

These were the broader political and confessional developments against the background of which the beliefs and rituals of various Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Ottoman communities came to be rethought and redefined in the period between c. 1450 and c. 1750. It is somewhat paradoxical that it is precisely the attempts to explore the global relevance of the confessionalization thesis that have recently given boost to the much needed research into the specific theological and confessional developments in early modern Greek Orthodoxy, Armenian Apostolic Christianity, and other Eastern Christian churches, Judaism, as well as Sunni and Shi'i Islam, recognizing that they adapted to the changing historical conditions. After all, the thesis has been criticized by some scholars for leveling the theological *propria* of various confessions and for emptying the notion of 'confession' of its theological and spiritual content, which is why some considered it pointless to 'extend' the concept of confessionalization to Islam and Judaism.[79] And yet, rather than extending it, the effect of engaging with it as a tool to think with and ask new questions has been most fruitful and began to shed important new light on the evolution and meaning of particular terms, concepts, and legal and theological discourses that emerged during the early

[77] On this point see also Ursinus, 'Millet' and Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*.
[78] See, for instance, van den Boogert, *Capitulations*; Eldem, 'Capitulations and Western Trade'.
[79] Schindling, 'Konfessionalisierung und Grenzen', p. 12.

modern era in Eastern Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and the extent to which they constituted a continuation and/or departure from the medieval tradition. In the next section, I review some of the most important outcomes of this research, including reflections on the relevance of the concept of 'confession' in different traditions. In contrast to Part II, the discussion here descends into particularities of different traditions, groups, regions, and locales, highlighting the dialectic between the global, regional, and local perspectives on confessional belonging.

PART III—ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE CONCEPT OF CONFESSIONALIZATION BEYOND LATIN EUROPE: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Eastern Christianity

Scholars focusing on various Eastern Christian communities in the early modern era were among the first to start engaging—albeit cautiously—with the concept of confessionalization and its relevance beyond the 'great confessions' (Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicanism) of Latin Christendom. Initially, these were isolated and unconnected attempts by historians studying mutually distant parts of the Eastern Christian world, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (more specifically, parts that are today Ukraine and Belarus) and Russia, on the one hand, and the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, on the other. However, with the recent consolidation and growth of the field of Eastern Christian studies, the question of relevance of the confessionalization thesis to various early modern Orthodox (namely, in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople), 'Oriental Orthodox' (not in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople; e.g., Coptic, Armenian, and the Church of the East) and 'Uniate' or Eastern Catholic (in communion with Rome; e.g., Maronite, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, and so forth) churches and their flocks has moved to the center of the research agenda.

Some of the earliest studies exploring the heuristic relevance of the confessionalization thesis in the context of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* argued that the developments leading to the division of the Kyivan metropolitanate into Orthodox and Uniate branches, made official by the Union of Brest in 1596, and the subsequent confessionally articulated clashes in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, including the Cossacks' interventions into them in the first half of the seventeenth century, must be understood as a part of the upheaval caused by the European Reformation and can be analyzed under the rubric of 'confessionalization'.[80] However, subsequent

[80] Dimitriev, *Pravoslavie i reformaciia*; Plokhy, *The Cossacks and Religion*. In addition to focusing on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Russia, early attempts to examine the relevance of the concept of confessionalization beyond Latin Europe also focused on Bohemia and Transylvania. However, latter studies will be taken into consideration in this discussion only inasmuch as they bear relevance to the dynamics in the Ottoman Empire and communities living in it. For an overview of this scholarship see Plaggenborg, 'Konfessionalisierung in Osteuropa'; Deventer, '"Confessionalization"'. See also Louthan, *Converting Bohemia*; Craciun, Ghitta, Murdoch eds, *Confessional Identity*.

discussions and comparisons with the thesis as originally formulated by Schilling and Reinhard raised various questions, most notably whether Orthodox Christianity can be considered a 'confession' in a more technical sense of the word—that is, as a community formed around a precisely formulated written creed—given Orthodoxy's preference for ritual over theology, and apophatic (or negative) theology at that.[81] Scholars have also pointed out that the role of the state in the building of the Orthodox confessional consciousness in Ukraine is not analogous to the model envisioned by the confessionalization thesis, given that the Orthodox church mostly existed in tension with Polish Catholic authorities, rather than working in cooperation with them. Another question that emerged was whether one can actually speak of a confessionalization of society, as envisioned by the original thesis, in the apparent absence of any concerted efforts or inability to discipline the flocks—Cossacks' aggressive interventions on the side of the Orthodox notwithstanding—beyond the very top level of the clergy, both Uniate and Orthodox.[82] In general, 'lived Orthodoxy' remains a poorly researched subject for the early modern period that poses a considerable methodological conundrum.[83]

More explicit references to the concept of confessionalization—although with a caveat that Orthodoxy is a 'religion of the sign, not of the word'—and exploration of analogies and differences with developments in post-Reformation Europe are found in the literature on the reform movement of the so-called Zealots of Piety, Patriarch Nikon's (1652–1666) liturgical reforms, and the subsequent schism within the Russian Orthodox Church in the mid-seventeenth century.[84] Supported by Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich (1645–1676), an informal group of priests and preachers—whose aspirations Robert O. Crummey has likened to that of reformers in Western and Central Europe—set out to establish order in liturgy, root out the remnants of pre-Christian beliefs in popular piety, reform the sinful behavior of the parishioners both during and outside church services, and 'correct' practices such as making the sign of cross.[85]

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[81] For an overview of the early literature on confessionalization in this context see Brüning, 'Confessionalization in the *Slavia Orthodoxa*'. For a more recent discussion see Brüning, 'Die Orthodoxie im konfessionellen Zeitalter' and Makrides, 'Konfessionalisierungsprozesse in der orthodox-christlichen Welt'. Both Brüning and Makrides emphasize variety within Orthodoxy and suggest that rather than talking about it as a 'confession', it would be more productive to conceive of it as a 'confessional culture' along the lines outlined by Thomas Kaufmann for Lutheranism (see Kaufmann, 'What is Lutheran'). For a very helpful discussion of Orthodoxy as a confession see also Pissis, *Russland in den politschen Vorstellungen.*

[82] Brüning, 'Confessionalization in the *Slavia Orthodoxa*'; Brüning, 'Social Discipline'.

[83] On day-to-day lives of monks see Spock, 'The Cornucopia'. For a discussion of the historiography on 'lived Orthodoxy' see the special issue of *Cahiers du monde russe* 58/3 (2017), especially the introduction by P. Bushkovitch, N. A. Chrissidis and R. G. Păun. On the advancements made in the study of religion in early modern Russia and overview of historiography see also Bushkovitch, 'Introduction: Rethinking Religion'.

[84] See especially Crummey, 'Ecclesiastical Elites'. Crummey asserts that for the historians of Russia the concept of confessionalization has long been 'axiomatic', but that appears to be an overstatement.

[85] Crummey, 'Ecclesiastical Elites', p. 56.

The Zealots were influenced in this endeavor by Orthodox clergy from Ukraine, who were much more sensitized to the issues of 'orthodoxy' through their interactions with Catholics and Protestants, and whose ideas began to gain more ground in Russia after the Cossack Revolt in 1648.[86] They focused on liturgical books, and they sought to establish authoritative standardized texts free of mistakes introduced by copyists over centuries. As the basis of their reforms and model for normative liturgical texts they took Greek Orthodox liturgical books, supplied to Nikon by Greek and Arab Orthodox clergy from the Ottoman Empire, in a move that signaled both Nikon's and emperor's intension to make Moscow the center of Orthodoxy and a new openness to the idea of an Orthodox ecumene.[87] At the same time, Nikon's aggressive attack on Russian customary practices caused a rift within the Orthodox church, giving rise to the formation of the communities of Old Believers, which were consistently anathemized as heretics by the Russian Orthodox church until the 1970s. Despite apparent similarities between Nikon's reforms and contemporary reforms in Catholic and Reformed polities in Europe, especially the fact that the state strongly supported them, historians have cautioned that while in the long run changes to the liturgy persisted, attempts to eradicate alternative popular practices, improve the education of the clergy, and reform the moral life of the parishioners were largely unsuccessful until the nineteenth century.[88]

While on the whole historians of early modern Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth have been cautious when engaging with the concept of confessionalization,[89] over time comparative questions and a less narrow understanding of the thesis inspired a new wave of research. It focused, for instance, on previously unstudied Orthodox and Uniate confraternities and monastic orders, striving to better understand the peculiarities of the local variants of Christianity resulting from their encounter with Catholicism and Protestantism (as well as with Polish Tatars' Islam), and their power to mobilize and discipline society around newly formulated categories of belonging.[90] Special attention has been devoted to the reforms of Peter Mohila, the Orthodox metropolitan of Kyiv (1633–1646) who drew extensively on Catholic tools of the post-Tridentine reforms—especially Jesuit educational methods—to produce a program of educational, liturgical and doctrinal innovation 'aimed at the legal and political emancipation of the Orthodox Church in the Polish-Lithuanian

[86] Bushkovitch, *Religion & Society in Russia*, p. 58. See also Sysyn, 'Orthodoxy and Revolt'; Plokhy, *The Cossacks and Religion.*

[87] Bushkovitch, *Religion & Society in Russia*, pp. 51–73, and Sysyn, 'Orthodoxy and Revolt' for the background; for details see Meyendorff, *Russia, Ritual and Reform*.

[88] For a discussion of confessionalization in nineteenth-century Russia see Crews, 'Empire and the Confessional State'.

[89] See for instance Steindorf ed., *Religion und Integration*, esp. p. 14. One should say, though, that the engagement here is mostly with the original paradigm rather than the possibility of rethinking it through the Russian case.

[90] Tatarenko, 'Confesser l'Union'; Tatarenko, *Une réforme orientale*; Pavlish, *Confessionalization from Below*; Brüning, 'Social Discipline'; Suter, *Alfurkan Tatarski*, pp. 94–108.

Commonwealth'.[91] This program included founding a *Collegium* (1632) and producing the first Orthodox confession of faith (1638 or 1640) on the model of Latin confessions, which was endorsed in a slightly modified form by the patriarchs of the Orthodox church at the Council of Jassy in 1642 and declared canonical in 1643.[92] The mere existence of Mohila's confession and its endorsement by the council convened by the Patriarch of Constantinople seems to suggest that, similarly to the case of post-Tridentine Catholicism, Orthodoxy could also be 'confessionalized', as a consequence of the interactions with the Catholic and Protestant theologies during the era under discussion. Adoption of Mohila's confession by other leaders of the Orthodox church also demonstrates that they recognized the merit of having a universally-agreed-upon articulation of the Orthodox creed. At the same time, however, Alfons Brüning warned that there are grounds for not equating Mohila's confession to, for instance, *Confessio Augustana*, in terms of its community-constituting intentions and capacities. He argued that by rooting itself in the text of the Nicaean creed and not including an explicit mention of who has the authority to set the teachings of the Orthodox faith or specifically anathemizing other groups, Mohila's confession did not present explicit lines along which a community could profile and distinguish itself from others.[93] Furthermore, Brüning argued that it is not clear how far this new confessional consciousness extended beyond the highest clergy and possibly urban elites in Ukraine or elsewhere, given the preponderant evidence of the lack of education among the lower Orthodox clergy and rural populations in general, at least until the Orthodox church reforms in the 1660s.[94]

Raising the question of whether we can speak of either parallel or connected histories of confessionalization, Brüning warns that what may at first glance appear as a Western influence in *Slavia Orthodoxa* does not in fact have to be so, since the tools of reform in the Christian East and West essentially go to the same roots. For instance, just as the Council of Trent was taking place (1545–1563), in 1551 the so-called Stoglav Synod was convened by the newly crowned Tsar Ivan IV (1547–1584) in Moscow in response to the need for a reform, especially in light of deviations in liturgy. The Synod used similar tools of church reform inherited from the late antique era that were also at the disposal of their colleagues in Trent: the strengthening of central authority, greater clarity and unity in matters of ritual and doctrine, buttressing of the administrative structures, and disciplinary measures towards both clergy and the flock. But, as Brüning emphasizes, similar tools of reform do not necessarily lead to the same outcomes; thus, in the East we do not see the confessionalization of the society along the lines one arguably finds in Latin Europe. However, these kinds of cognate mechanisms of reform and shared heritage make it difficult to distinguish between historical parallelisms and connected histories in the case of confessional

[91] Charipova, 'Orthodox Reform in Seventeenth-Century Kiev', p. 277.
[92] Sharipova, 'Orthodox Reform in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth'. Pelikan and Hotchkiss date Mohila's confession to 1638 (*Creeds & Confessions*, p. 559) while Sharipova and Brüning date it to 1640.
[93] See Brüning, 'Confessio Orthodoxa und europäischer Konfessionalismus'.
[94] Brüning, 'Social Discipline'.

developments in Eastern and Western Christianity. Similarly, Mohila's reforms in the 1630s may have simply reflected, as contemporary sources suggest, consternation with the chaos in the church and the real and present danger from 'heretics' rather than an 'influence' of post-Tridentine Catholicism. Brüning thus puts forward the idea of 'multiple confessionalisms' on the model of Eisenstadt's 'multiple modernities', which recognizes the fact that in the early modern period in both Western and Eastern Christianity religion attained a new collective-building function but with different outcomes depending on the particular combination of factors. In the case of Poland and Russia the outcomes were informed by a combination of regional religio-political conditions, occidental influences, and Byzantine heritage.[95]

In contrast to the *Slavia Orthodoxa*, where scholars have been more circumspect in approaching confessional developments within the analytical framework of the Reformation and its consequences, in the case of the churches on the other side of the Eastern Christian world, in the Middle East, precisely this framework has become prominent in recent years, although without necessarily engaging with the confessionalization thesis. The most systematic study on the subject, focusing on Ottoman Syria, Lebanon and Palestine primarily through the Catholic missionary sources and narratives produced by Arab Christians, has been undertaken by Bernard Heyberger.[96] Without explicitly discussing German historiography on the concept of confessionalization, and speaking more from the vantage point of French historiography, Heyberger suggested that confessional developments among Middle Eastern Christians should be approached through an 'histoire croisée de la confessionnalisation' that would re-connect their histories with those of European Catholics after the separation in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography.[97] This historiography was affected both by early modern Catholic views of the Maronites, Armenians, and Assyrians, among others, as 'less civilized' schismatics, and colonial-era images of them as theocratic and fanatical communities overly attached to their patriarchs and 'unchanging' beliefs and practices. In contrast, Heyberger has called for the recognition of great diversity and segmentation within these communities, between urban and rural populations, sedentary and tribal, as well as among various factions within the communal and church elites, which were exacerbated by the arrival of the Catholic missionaries in the early seventeenth century.[98] In recent years, these nuances have been recognized and historicized in the context of Ottoman Syria and Egypt by scholars like Bruce Masters, Alastair Hamilton, Helen Murre-Van den Berg, Herman G. B. Teule, Febe Armanios, Aurélien Girard, Cesare Santus, Felicita Tramontana, Magdi Guirgis, John-Paul Ghobrial, Lucy Parker and others who have

[95] Brüning, 'Die Orthodoxie'.

[96] Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient*.

[97] It should be noted that in the preface to the second edition of his *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient* (2014) and in the recent overview of the literature on Eastern Christianity since the 1960s (Heyberger, 'Le christianisme oriental') Heyberger reflects in greater detail on the concept of confessonalization and the scholarship it engendered.

[98] Heyberger, 'Pour une "histoire croisée"'; Heyberger, 'Eastern Christians, Islam, and the West'.

examined the impact of the Catholic missions on local Christian communities, the complex and multi-faceted processes that led to the creation of several new splinter churches that entered into union with Rome, and the new mobility of Eastern Christians that these contacts with Rome facilitated.[99]

Unlike Reinhard and Schilling, Heyberger and other scholars focusing on Eastern Christians in the Middle East have used the notion of 'confessionalization' in a more general sense of creation of a new confessional consciousness among local groups as an outcome of their engagement with Catholic missionaries, often with unintended consequences. At the same time, they have also emphasized that the engagement with various groups of Eastern Christians contributed not only to the constant rethinking of Catholic missionary goals and tools but also to the expansion of knowledge about the history of Christian theology and ritual, as well as the study of the Bible—knowledge that was used in real time for polemical discussions with Lutherans and Calvinists in Europe. An essential component of this exchange of knowledge with Eastern Christians was also the latter's role in the teaching of Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, Chaldean, and Armenian languages to European missionaries and scholars—a topic that has recently received considerable attention and generated excellent research.[100] The role of printing presses and various agents (including Eastern Christians who traveled to Europe) who translated Catholic confessional literature to be printed in Rome, Florence, Venice, Paris and other Catholic centers of learning into Arabic, Greek, Armenian, Illyrian, Syriac and other languages of the Eastern Christians, is still insufficiently explored. The printing activities of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and its network of translators and mediators deserve particular attention in further research on the utility and limits of the concept of confessionalization in the context of Eastern Christian studies.[101]

Over the last two decades, the field of Eastern Christian Studies has grown to become increasingly transregional, trans-communal, and trans-imperial, and various studies have highlighted the new mobility of Eastern Christian groups and individuals in the early modern period, from a member of the Church of the East who traveled all the way to the New World or Armenian merchants who spanned the

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[99] See Masters, *Christians and Jews*; Murre-Van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 21–78; Teule, *Les Assyro-chaldéens*; Girard, 'Le christianisme oriental'; Girard, 'Nihil esse innovandum?'; Tramontana, *Passages of Faith*; Parker, 'The Ambiguities of Belief'; Guirgis, 'The Coptic Community'; Hamilton, *The Copts*; Armanios, *Coptic Christianity*, especially pp. 117–146; Santus, 'Conflicting Views'; Ghobrial's ERC project entitled *Stories of Survival: Recovering the Connected Histories of Eastern Christianity in the Early Modern World* also sheds light on important aspects of this dynamic (see https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/stories-of-survival)

[100] See, for instance, Heyberger ed., *Orientalisme, science et controverse*; Ghobrial, 'The Life'; Girard, 'Teaching and Learning', etc.

[101] Henkel, 'The Polyglot Printing-office'; Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*; Pizzorusso, 'I satelliti di Propaganda Fide; Girard, 'Une traduction arabe'; Kilpatrick, 'From Venice to Aleppo'; Ayalon, 'Richelieu in Arabic'; Ambrosiani, 'Slavic Alphabets and Languages', Radonić, *Štamparije i škole rimske kurije* to mention just a few relevant background studies.

Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.[102] Within this increasingly global outlook, it has also become clearer how the Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria interacted not only with the Patriarchates of Istanbul and Moscow, all of which were previously treated as discrete units, but also how they were entangled with European Christians of various denominations as well.[103] However, while the outer edges of the Eastern Christian, and especially Orthodox world—from Russia to the Middle East—have become increasingly better connected in recent scholarship on early modern confessional dynamics, this has not been the case (yet) for the geographical 'middle', inhabited by the diverse groups of Slavic-, Greek-, and Albanian-speaking Ottoman Orthodox Christian subjects in Rumeli and Anatolia, with their atomized historiographical traditions 'neatly' separated along the confessional, ethnic, and geographical lines.[104]

It is indicative of this atomized state of research that we know very little even about the relationship among the three major Orthodox ecclesiastical seats with jurisdictional powers in Ottoman Rumeli—the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the renewed Serbian Patriarchate of Peć (1557–1766), and the Archbishopric of Ohrid (which was created in the Byzantine era but vied for the jurisdiction with the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Peć, especially in Epirus and Western Macedonia, until its abolition in 1766).[105] Each of these Orthodox ecclesiastical seats had a complicated relationship both with the Ottoman authorities and the Catholic states and institutions, which still awaits a systematic study and is generally overlooked in the mainstream scholarship.[106] Most studies focus on the institutional history of each individual patriarchate, typically woven into a Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian or Macedonian national framework, respectively. The institutional lens has also been prominent in the scholarship on Catholicism in the Slavic-speaking parts of Ottoman

[102] See, for instance, Aslanian, *From the Indian*; Ghobrial, 'The Secret Life'; Ghobrial, 'Migration from Within'; Santus, 'Wandering Lives'. Ghobrial's ERC project entitled 'Stories of Survival' and the publications arising from it have shed further light on the global nature of early modern Eastern Christians' experience.

[103] Most important studies in this respect are Tchentsova, 'Le premier voyage'; Tchentsova, 'Moscou face a la tentation' and many of her other studies; Çolak, *The Orthodox Church*; and Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians*.

[104] Least studied has been the history of the early modern Albanian tribes, most of which were Christian—Orthodox or Catholic—until the end of the seventeenth century when conversion to Islam as well as their sedentarization picks up pace. Important studies on the subject include Malcolm, *A Short History of Kosovo*, Malcolm, *Agents of Empire,* Murzaku, *Returning Home to Rome*; Molnár, 'A Forgotten Bridgehead'; Zhelyazkova, 'Islamization'; Malcolm, *Rebels, Believers, Survivors*.

[105] On the Patriarchate of Peć see Hadrovics, *Le peuple serbe*; Djurdjev, *Uloga crkve*, Mirković, *Pravni položaj*; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*; Tričković, 'Srpska crkva'; most of the literature on the Archbishopric of Ohrid is in Greek, Macedonian, and Bulgarian but see also Gelzer, *Der Patriarchat von Achrida*; Tsirpanlis, 'La posizione della comunità'; Greene, *The Edinburgh History of Greeks,* pp. 144–146; 182–183.

[106] On the relationship of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć with the Catholics in the eighteenth century, around the time of its abolition, see Pletuhina-Tonev, *The Patriarchate of Peć*.

Rumeli, which has focused on the history of the Catholic church in the region and the role of particular missionary orders, like Jesuits and Bosnian Franciscans, while largely ignoring both the Orthodox church and the Ottoman legal landscape.[107]

The polar opposite of this historiography based on institutional sources, which conjure up the image of confessional communities in Ottoman Rumeli as living apart, are studies that emphasize confessional fluidity, disregard for theological detail, and futility of looking for any clear-cut boundaries among Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam, especially in the contexts of Ottoman Bosnia, Kosovo and Albania.[108] Drawing on anecdotal evidence from missionary letters and travel accounts, as well as folk traditions and anthropological studies about shared places of worship, the operative terms in these kinds of historiographical accounts, which often seek to counter polarizing ethno-confessionalist frameworks, are 'popular religion', 'syncretism', 'fluidity', 'crypto-Christianity' and 'dissimulation'. Unfortunately, while alerting us to the importance of crypto-religion and dissimulation (to which I will return below) in studying confessional dynamics in this region, studies in this vein have largely failed to critically assess the politics of the sources on which they have drawn and historically contextualize the phenomena they labeled in this way.[109]

However, when it comes to Slavic-speaking groups in Ottoman Rumeli, in recent years important strides have been made in the direction of a more integrated research that transgresses confessional boundaries without either denying their importance or essentializing them. Building on the rich tradition in Ottoman studies from former Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, and complementing it with extensive research in the archives in Istanbul and elsewhere, since the 1990s Ottomanists hailing from the region, like Rossitsa Gradeva, Svetlana Ivanova, Aleksandar Fotić, Nenad Moačanin, and Vjeran Kursar, have been shining light on the productive dialogue of the Ottoman administrative and local sources in Slavic languages for the study of inter-confessional dynamics in the empire. Thus, considerable progress has been made on understanding Ottoman authorities' administrative policies vis-à-vis various Orthodox monasteries and churches, clerical appointments, and jurisdictions, as well as modes of Orthodox Christians' engagement with the Ottoman courts. Ottoman sources have also highlighted the jurisdictional competition between the Serbian Patriarchate and Bosnian Franciscans who, as Ottoman subjects themselves, were the

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[107] Key studies include Batinić, *Djelovanje Franjevaca*; Jelenić, *Kultura i bosanski franjevci*; Radonić, *Rimska kurija i južnoslovenske zemlje*; Miletich, *Iz istorijata*; Molnár, *Le Saint-Siège*; Vassileva, 'Les missions des franciscains'. Important collections of primary sources relevant to the history of the Catholic missions in Ottoman Rumeli are Fermendžin, *Acta Bulgariae,* Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*; Jačov, *Spisi Kongregacije*; idem, *I Balcani*; idem, *Le missioni cattoliche*; Tóth, *Litterae missionariorum* I; idem., *Litterae missionariorum* II.

[108] Stadtmuller, 'Die Islamisierung'; Skendi, 'Crypto Christianity', Bartl, 'Kryptochristentum'; Balivet, 'Aux origines', Norris, *Islam in the Balkans*.

[109] The exception is Malcolm, 'Crypto-Christianity,' which suggests a concrete chronology and historical reasons for the phenomenon. For a lucid analysis of the phenomenon of crypto-religion in the Ottoman context, on which more below, see also Reinkowski, 'Hidden Believers'; Reinkowski, 'Keine Kryptoreligion'.

most active representatives of Catholic interests in the Slavic-speaking parts of Rumeli.[110]

Furthermore, the concepts of confessionalization and confession-building, as used in German historiography, have also recently entered the vocabulary of scholars working in and on the region. This is an interesting lag given the importance of confessional identity to the historiography of Ottoman Rumeli.[111] In the context of literary studies, Croatian scholar Zrinka Blažević has explored the relationship between confessionalization and literary production by focusing on 'Illyrian' (Slavic-speaking) Jesuits and Franciscans active in the Catholic missionary effort in Ottoman Rumeli between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries (although she is less interested in the Ottoman context itself). Blažević has examined their theological and literary works to see how they related to the larger discursive frameworks of the Catholic Reformation, and how these 'Illyrian' intellectuals viewed their place at the intersection of the papal, Venetian, Habsburg and Ottoman imperial and confessional agendas. However, she has also highlighted these Catholic authors' inter-confessional discursive strategies meant to appeal to the Orthodox 'Illyrians' and bring them into union with the Papacy.[112] By contextualizing the theological works of the early modern Catholic intellectuals writing in Illyrian in the larger story of Catholic Reformation, Blažević and her colleagues have also provided an important impetus for the growth of cultural history of early modern Slavdom, which has been sorely missing. Part of that cultural turn has also been a renewed attention to the importance of Rome-sponsored printing of religious texts in 'Illyrian' for the language politics in the region; the usage of different scripts and types of literacy among different social and ethnic groups; as well as the processes of vernacularization, translation and cultural mediation.[113]

The greatest connoisseur of the Roman archives when it comes to Catholic missions in Ottoman Rumeli, Ántal Molnár, has also recently ventured into the discussion of the concept of confessionalization. Focusing on Bosnia and Ottoman parts of Hungary, he has argued for what he dubs a 'Franciscan confessionalization', namely a special Ottoman-structured confessionalization model that was not parallel to that of the post-Tridentine Catholic or Protestant churches but to that of the Orthodox

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[110] See, for instance, Gradeva's numerous articles collected in *Rumeli under Ottomans* and *Frontiers of Ottoman Space*, Ivanova's many studies on women and marriage as well as Christian women in Ottoman courts (for instance, 'Judicial Treatment'); Fotić' numerous articles and his *Sveta Gora i Hilandar*; Moačanin's articles collected in *Town and Country*; Kursar 'Non-Muslim communal divisions'.

[111] Although the acclaimed 1984 study by Srećko Džaja (*Konfessionalität und Nationalität Bosniens und der Herzegowina*) used the concept of confession and juxtaposed the three Bosnian confessions in the Ottoman period, it was not affected by the discussions by Schilling and Reinhard that were just starting at this time. The book was translated into Bosnian only in 1992.

[112] Blažević, *Ilirizam prije Ilirizma*; Blažević, 'Konfesionalni identitet'; Blažević, 'Reformation Studies'.

[113] See, for instance, Nakaš, *Jezik i grafija*.

church. He has outlined parallels and strategic mimicry between the Orthodox church and Bosnian Franciscans in a specific Ottoman religious-political environment, arguing that both churches played a crucial role in creating and preserving confessional and national 'consciousness'.[114] For Molnár, thus, 'confessionalization' refers primarily to the particular structures of ecclesiastical authority rather than to a process of building a community around a particular, well-defined expression of creed. This appears to be a distinctly Ottoman manifestation of the 'weak' confessionalization in the sense that it entailed 'a process of rivalry and emulation' as well as 'demonization' of rivals and 'building of group cohesion and identity', but without ability to enforce a particular version of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the context of legal pluralism in which neither Catholicism nor Orthodoxy had the upper hand. Emese Muntán recently pursued this problem further by bringing not only Catholic and Orthodox clergy but Ottoman judges into the picture.[115]

Confessional dynamics are also at the center of recent research on the cultural and intellectual history of Greek Orthodox communities in the early modern Ottoman Empire. Until recently, the rich collections of manuscripts and printed books in Greek from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries have been largely ignored by historians who believed this period to be one of intellectual barrenness and decline compared to the glorious days of Byzantium or the modern Greek nation state.[116] However, new research delving precisely into these kinds of sources has begun to expand our understanding of early modern developments in lay learning, theology, and canon law. In this context, the question of Greek Orthodox confessionalization and how it should or could be conceptualized has also come up, with a number of recent articles, conferences, and edited volumes being dedicated to the subject.[117] Unsurprisingly, these growing debates in the field of religious and cultural history and engagements with the confessionalization thesis have put the questions of book culture and printing in the Greek language, as well as the nature of the Greek language used in these publications, into the focus of research, highlighting the networks of transmission of knowledge and cultural mediation.[118] Although various

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[114] See Molnár, 'Bosnian Franciscans'.

[115] Muntán, 'Uneasy Agents of Tridentine Reforms'.

[116] Key classical studies are Runciman, *The Great Church*; Hering, *Ökumenisches Patriarchat*; Ware, *Eustratios Argenti;* Argyriou, *Les exégèses grecques*; Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*. Over the last two decades, important work has been done on cataloguing major manuscript collections. See, for instance, Kouroupou and Géhin eds, *Catalogue des manuscrits* and Binggeli et al. eds, *Catalogue des manuscrits*.

[117] See, in particular, Brüning, 'Die Orthodoxie im konfessionellen Zeitalter' and Makrides, 'Konfessionalisierungsprozesse in der orthodox-christlichen Welt'; as well as the edited volume by Sarris, Pissis and Pechlivanos, eds, *Confessionalization and/as Knowledge Transfer in Eastern Christianity*.

[118] More recently scholars have begun to explore the 'semiotic labor' of various brokers of the Orthodox dialogue with the Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, such as the Greek dragomans

presses in Catholic, Protestant and Calvinist centers of learning, from Rome and Venice to Tübingen and Geneva, printed books in Greek script in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Greek Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, including the top echelons of the clergy, were largely steeped in an oral and manuscript culture, with occasional access to books in Greek and other languages printed beyond the borders of the Empire.[119] Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris' (d. 1638) attempt to set up a Greek press in Istanbul and print religious texts in a vernacular eventually failed, with the most important Greek Orthodox printing enterprise being established in the Romanian principalities only in the late seventeenth century by Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem (d. 1707).[120]

The texts that have drawn most attention in the context of the discussion on Greek Orthodox confessionalization are various 'confessions' written and eventually published by the Greek Orthodox patriarchs and clergymen entangled in the debate with the Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist and other theologians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[121] All of the major texts of Orthodox confessions of faith have been published and translated into English and other languages, greatly facilitating the discussion.[122] In addition to Peter Mohila's confession (c. 1640, approved with emendations by the Synod of Jassy in 1642), which was mentioned above in the context of the Orthodox-Uniate struggle in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, it is the confessions of Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris (1629 in Latin, 1633 in Greek) and Patriarch Dositheos II (in 1672 and 1690) that have received most scholarly attention. While Ovidiu Olar and Vasileios Tsakiris have explored in depth the intellectual itinerary and production of the 'Calvinist' Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris who has been tentatively credited with initiating the process of confessionalization of Orthodox theology and whose confession was repeatedly condemned by the ecumenical synods from the late 1630s to the 1670s, Vassa Kontouma has shed important new light on Dositheos' theological views and how they evolved over time, in part as a reaction

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of the Ottoman Porte, Panagiotes Nikousios and Nikolaos Maurokordatos, various book printers, and clergymen traversing confessional boundaries. See, for instance, Hartnup, *'On the Beliefs of the Greeks'*; Paun, "'Well-born of the Polis'"; Koutzakiotis, *Attendre la fin du monde*; Chrissidis, *An Academy*; as well as the forthcoming studies by Pechlivanos, ed., *Intellectual Entanglements*; Pissis and Sarris eds, *The Libraries of Nikolaos Mavrokordatos*.

[119] For the reconstruction of a collection of books that the Calvinist minister and chaplain of the Dutch Embassy to Istanbul, Antoine Léger, a friend and interlocutor of Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris, ordered to be sent to the Ottoman capital in the late 1620s–early 1630s in order to create a Protestant 'public library' see Olar, "'Io se puotesse'".

[120] On Loukaris's printing project see Pektas, *The First Greek Printing Press*; Khokhar, 'The "Calvinist Patriarch"'; on Dositheos' see Olar, "'A Time to Speak'", Russell, 'From the "Shield of Orthodoxy"'; Chrisiddis, *An Academy*, pp. 62–68.

[121] Tsakiris, *Die gedruckten griechischen Beichtbücher*.

[122] For English translation see Pelikan and Hotchkiss eds, *Creeds & Confessions*, pp. 385–638. An important collection of essays on the historical development of the profession of faith in the Eastern Christian tradition in the late medieval and early modern eras is Blanchet and Gabriel eds, *L'union à l'épreuve du formulaire*.

to Loukaris' confession.[123] One of the most important points raised by this recent research on confessional dynamics within the Greek Orthodox community is that these texts cannot be treated simply as constitutive elements in a linear process that eventually culminated in a promulgation of the Orthodox confession, but that each text has to be examined in the context in which it was produced, and that any notion of continuity between them—let alone their confession-building intent and potential—should be questioned.[124] Even less can we generalize about confessional dynamics in all contexts where Greek Orthodox Christians lived. When it comes to the Greek Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire, sources suggest that as a result of the dialogue with the Catholic and various Reformed interlocutors during the seventeenth century, explored in this volume by Margarita Voulgaropoulou, the Greek Orthodox ecclesiastical establishment had to articulate its position on issues such as purgatory, indulgences, the doctrine of transubstantiation, cult of saints and the veneration of relics, as well as numerous other theological questions that became point of contention among Latin confessions.[125] This process of differentiation culminated in the tenure of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem and the publication of his two confessions of faith, in 1672 and 1690, with the latter becoming canonized as the official creed of the Orthodox church.[126] However, elsewhere, from Venice to Moscow, Greek Orthodox clergy's engagements with Catholicism, Lutheranism or Calvinism could also result in various forms of confessional ambiguity, 'inter-confessionality' (in the sense of exchanges with reciprocal impact) and 'transconfessionality' (in the sense of openness to other confessions).[127]

Recent studies have also highlighted the fact that the broader Ottoman social context, including the relationship between the Orthodox Patriarchate and the Ottoman government, and even the developments in contemporary Muslim communities, may shed further light on confessional developments among the Greek Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire. Studies by Ottomanists like Elizabeth Zachariadou, Eleni Gara, Marinos Sariyannis, Phokion Kotzageorgis, Elias Kolovos, Evgenia Kermeli, Tom Papademetriou and Molly Greene have particularly enriched our understanding of the dynamics between various Orthodox monasteries, the Patriarchate, and local Greek communities and individuals on the one hand, and the Ottoman provincial and central authorities on the other in the period between the fifteenth and early eighteenth

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[123] Tsakiris, 'The "Ecclesiarum Belgicarum Confessio"'; Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*; Olar, 'Les confessions'; Kontouma, 'La Confession de foi'; Kontouma, 'Christianisme orthodoxe'. On Dositheos' theological views see also Russell, 'From '"The Shield of Orthodoxy"'.

[124] For such skepticism about Mohila's confession see Brüning, 'Confessio Orthodoxa'; for discussion of Loukaris' confession and its confession-building intent, or lack thereof, see Gara and Olar in this volume.

[125] Chrissidis, 'The World of Eastern Orthodoxy', p. 639.

[126] See Kontouma, 'La Confession de foi'.

[127] See various articles in Sarris, Pissis and Pechlivanos eds, *Confessionalization and/as Knowledge Transfer*.

centuries.[128] Specifically regarding the question of confessionalization, Evgenia Kermeli raised the question of the extent to which the reforms of Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris should be viewed as an outcome of a dialogue not only with the confessional developments among Catholics and various Reformed confessions, but also with Ottoman Sunni normative discourses and debate over ritual and creedal innovations raging in the Ottoman capital in the 1630s.[129] The phenomenon of Orthodox neomartyrdom has also been highlighted as an arena in which Orthodox, Catholic, and Sunni orthodoxizing discourses became entangled—a topic explored in this volume in greater detail by Yorgos Tzedopoulos.[130] Finally, historians have pointed to the Ottoman confiscation of Orthodox and Catholic monastic properties between 1567 and 1571 as an example of how the process of normativization and pursuit of orthopraxy in the Ottoman Sunni community directly (and in this case negatively) affected the lives of Orthodox institutions and subjects.[131] The problem that scholars are experiencing in this effort to identify specific contexts in which various Muslims' and non-Muslims' understanding of religious politics intersected and became entangled are poignant silences in the sources when it comes to religious others and 'inconvenient truths' related to them, which requires one to consult a wide variety of sources in different languages.[132]

Recent historiography has also highlighted the importance of the period between the 1720s and 1750s for understanding the entanglements among the Orthodox and Catholic confessional projects as well as the role of the Ottoman state in the determination of the boundaries between them within the empire. In 1729, in the midst of the growing disputes and discussions, the Propaganda Fide issued the first general prohibition of *communicatio in sacris*, i.e. the practice whereby some newly converted Catholics attended the liturgy and participated in the sacraments administered by the priests of other denominations, such as Greek Orthodox or Apostolic Armenian.[133] This effectively forced the Catholics in the Ottoman Empire to openly declare their confessional belonging, separating them from their former coreligionists and attempting to eliminate the blurring of confessional boundaries, signaling a more aggressive phase of Catholic proselytization in the Ottoman domains that

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[128] All of these scholars have authored numerous relevant studies, but see, for instance, Zachariadou, 'Ottoman Documents'; Gara, 'Neomartyr'; Sariyannis, 'Aspects of "Neomartyrdom"'; Kotzageorgis, 'To Hagion Oros'; Kolovos, 'Christian Vakıfs'; Kermeli, 'The Confiscation'; Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*; Greene, *The Edinburgh History*.

[129] Kermeli, 'Kyrillos Loukaris' Legacy'.

[130] See Sariyannis, 'Aspects of "Neomartyrdom"'; Krstić, *Contested Conversions*, Chapter 5.

[131] On the monastic confiscation affair or 'crisis of the monasteries' see Kermeli, 'The Confiscation'; Fotić, 'The Official Explanations'; Greene, *The Edinburgh History*, pp. 66–69; Sekulić, *Conversion of Landscape*.

[132] On such 'inconvenient truths' suppressed in Ottoman sources see, for instance, Gara, 'Prophecy, Rebellion, Suppression'; in contrast, on sources placing various religious groups sharing the same space and language into a common framework, see Ivanova, 'Armenians in Urban Order'.

[133] On *communicatio in sacris* see Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*; Windler, *Missionare in Persien*; Windler, 'Ambiguous Belongings'; Santus, 'Conflicting Views'.

subsided in the 1770s (when Jesuits were suppressed by the papal bull), at least until the nineteenth century.[134] The affirmation of boundaries was in turn echoed from the Orthodox side when in 1755 Patriarch Kyrillos V (1748–1751; 1752–1757) promulgated a decree signed also by Patriarchs Matthew of Alexandria and Parthenios of Jerusalem that the 'heretics' converting to Orthodoxy must be rebaptized, making the Catholic baptism invalid. The decree abrogated the order of 1484 that had allowed for the Latins to be received by chrism (rather than rebaptism) after abjuring their innovations, signaling a sharp change of course and causing much controversy in Istanbul.[135] Half a century later, Nikodemos Hagiorites (d. 1809) explained this change in canonical reasoning by stating that in the earlier period the Orthodox church had used *oikonomia* (flexibility in dispensation of canonical matters) in accepting baptism of Latins so that the popes would not authorize Western rulers to wage wars on Eastern Christians but that such compromise was not necessary anymore given that the 'divine providence has granted the Eastern Christians the protection of the Ottoman Empire'.[136] Indeed, scholars have argued that by the mid-eighteenth century the Orthodox Patriarchate consolidated its authority by absorbing the Patriarchate of Peć and the Archbishopric of Ohrid, and becoming much more integrated in and supported by the Ottoman state, as well as confident and effective in disciplining the believers through traditional methods of penitence, anathema, interdiction and excommunication.[137] As Gara and Olar show in this volume by drawing both on new sources and the work of Paraskevas Konortas, Elif Bayraktar Tellan and Hasan Çolak,[138] over the course of the second half of the seventeenth century the Ottoman administration began to include a growing number of clauses into the patriarchs' letters of appointment. The new clauses specified the patriarchs' rights, jurisdictions, and nature of authority, thus enabling them to more effectively initiate reforms, including a program of explicit differentiation with the Catholics (and various Reformed denominations).

A similar chronology of confessional dynamics, which peak in the Greek Orthodox community in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, although against the background of a very different history of communal presence in Ottoman

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[134] For an overview of the tensions and clashes see Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 153–222; Masters, *Christians and Jews*, pp. 98–118; see also Bayraktar Tellan, *The Patriarch and the Sultan*, p. 123.

[135] On the decree, its canonical basis, and role of various polemicists see Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*; Heith-Stade, 'Receiving Converts'. The decree of 1755 has been published, examined, and contextualized in Kontouma, 'The so-called Synod of Constantinople'. On the Catholic reaction to the decree, see Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*, pp. 228, 231.

[136] Heith-Stade, 'Receiving Converts', pp. 106–107.

[137] Petmézas, 'L'organisation ecclésiastique', pp. 499–504. See Bayraktar Tellan, *The Patriarch and the Sultan*, for a systematic study of the transformation of the Orthodox Patriarchate in the eighteenth century. Pletuhina-Tonev has also demonstrated that the abolition of the Serbian Patriarchate in 1766 had much to do with the accusations that the last patriarch Vasilije Brkić allegedly converted to Catholicism and received material support from the Habsburg lands.

[138] Konortas, *Ottoman Considerations*; Çolak and Bayraktar Tellan, *The Orthodox Church.*

domains, is visible in the Armenian case. The religious and intellectual history of early modern Armenians has been virtually a *terra incognita*, despite the availability of important groundwork studies cataloguing Armenian book production during this period, the existence of numerous manuscripts produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in both Armenian and Armeno-Turkish, and the richness of information provided by both book and manuscript colophons.[139] Privileging the study of medieval and modern eras, when Armenians lived or strove to live in independent polities, Armenian historians have largely ignored the early modern period, which ushered in not only division and subjugation of Greater Armenia to the Ottoman and Safavid Empires but also a growing confessional polarization within the Armenian community. As a consequence, until very recently, few monograph-length studies existed that were devoted specifically to the history of Armenian communities between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries.[140] Fewer studies yet have sought to integrate the cultural and intellectual history of Armenians into early modern Ottoman or Mediterranean history.

However, in recent years, important strides have been made towards introducing some of the early modern material on Armenian communities to the wider scholarly public, together with opening up the debate on religious and confessional dynamics within these communities. Peter Cowe has published a series of short articles on Armenian neo-martyrs and other polemical texts by authors living in the Ottoman and Safavid empires, while Cesare Santus examined the martyrdom of a later Catholic Armenian neomartyr, Komitas K'ēōmiwrčean, executed in Istanbul in 1707.[141] Santus and Christian Windler have explored the archives of the Propaganda Fide and the Holy Office in Rome to examine Catholic missionary strategies for proselytizing to Armenians in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, respectively, raising the question of confessional polarization as well as confessional ambiguity between the Armenian Catholics and Apostolics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[142] In a series of recent articles, Sebouh Aslanian has focused on the entanglement between the activity of early modern Armenian printers and merchants in port cities from the Italian peninsula all the way to India, examining how merchant networks influenced the choice of books to be printed in various locations.[143] Building on this, in his forthcoming book, he engages with the relevance of the concept of confessionalization for the study of early modern Armenian history in general and book production in particular.[144] Furthermore, in a work that embodies the desideratum of moving

[139] Kévorkian, *Catalogue des «incunables»* and Kévorkian, *Les imprimés arméniens*.

[140] Literature is more abundant in Armenian, but in English see Sanjian, *The Armenian Communities in Syria*; Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, pp. 46–58; 178–189; 256–274. An overview of the period is also provided in Cowe, 'Church and Diaspora'.

[141] See Cowe's entries in *CMR,* Vol. 7; Santus, 'Un beato martire'.

[142] Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*; Santus, 'Conflicting Views'; Windler, 'Ambiguous Belongings'; Windler, *Missionare in Persien*.

[143] Aslanian, 'Port Cities and Printers'; Aslanian, 'The Early Arrival of Print'.

[144] See his forthcoming *Mobility and Early Modernity: Port Cities and Printers across the Armenian Diaspora, 1512–1800*. I thank the author for sharing a draft of his opening chapter.

from 'autonomous' to 'interactive' Armenian history,[145] Henry Shapiro has drawn on both Armenian and Ottoman sources to document the migration of Armenians from the Greater Armenian plateau contested by the Ottomans and Safavids as well as from across Anatolia ravaged by the Celali revolts in the late 1590s and early 1600s towards the cities of western Anatolia, Thrace, and Istanbul. He has traced the rise of the 'Western Armenian' society to this development and begun to analyze its cultural achievements and repercussions on Ottoman culture, and vice versa, the impact of assimilation on Armenian communities in both cultural and linguistic sense (such as the rise of Armeno-Turkish).[146] In a recent article, Polina Ivanova has shed important light on the extent of Armenians' integration into the urban fiber of Istanbul in the seventeenth century.[147]

Relatively little is still known about the ecclesiastical organization and hierarchy among early modern Armenian prelates and institutions they represented. The period between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, with warfare and population shifts that it brought, significantly altered dynamics among medieval centers of Armenian spirituality and gave rise to new ones. While Sis, formerly the capital of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (1198–1375), and Etchmiadzin in Greater Armenia, which laid claims to being the new center of the Armenian Apostolic church after 1441, vied for the status of the catholicosate (i.e. for being considered the Mother Church) between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, two further ecclesiastical entities played an important role during this period—the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, also of medieval origin, and Patriarchate of Constantinople, established most likely sometime in the sixteenth century.[148] By the end of the seventeenth century, Etchmiadzin, which was located in Safavid territory, was able to assert itself as the seat of the catholicos, but the Patriarch of Constantinople, by the virtue of residing in the Ottoman capital, played a crucial role in Armenian ecclesiastical affairs throughout the seventeenth and especially eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In her recent articles, Anna Ohanjanyan captures this ongoing rivalry among the prelates of Constantinople, Jerusalem and Etchmiadzin.[149] She demonstrates that this rivalry was further complicated by Catholic missionary activity among Ottoman Armenians. Contact between Rome and the Armenian Apostolic church started already in the middle ages, both in the context of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia

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[145] On this issue see Aslanian, 'From "Autonomous"'.

[146] Shapiro, *The Great Armenian Flight*; Shapiro, 'The Great Armenian Flight: Migration and Cultural Change'.

[147] Ivanova, 'Armenians in Urban Order'.

[148] Kouymjian, 'Armenia from the Fall'. He points out that while there was certainly an Armenian prelate in the Ottoman capital since the fifteenth century, the elevation of his seat to a Patriarchate was likely a later development, possibly dating to the reign of Sultan Süleyman (1520–1566), while the clout of this office increased significantly only in the seventeenth century, after the growth of the Armenian community in Istanbul in the aftermath of the Celali revolts and the Ottoman-Safavid wars between the 1580s and 1639. See also Bardakjian, 'The rise of the Armenian Patriarchate'.

[149] See Ohanjanyan, 'Creedal Controversies'.

during the Crusader period, and further west, on the Great Armenian Plateau, where in the 1340s an Armenian Catholic monastic order, known as Fratres Unitores, was founded in Nakhichevan as a suborder of the Dominicans, only to be absorbed into the Dominican order and lose its autonomy in 1582.[150] After the foundation of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1622, the missionary activity of Rome in this area intensified again, personified in the figure of the Dominican friar Paolo Piromalli (d. 1667), whose activities are discussed in this volume by Paolo Lucca. As Ohanjanyan shows, by the 1690s, encounters with the missionaries across the Ottoman domains and a growing number of converts to Catholicism gave rise to polemics over what constituted the correct creed and ritual of the Armenian church, especially among Istanbul-based literati like Eremia K'ēōmiwrčean and Gēorg Mxlayim Ōłli.[151] Growing tensions between Armenian Apostolics and Catholics were also evident in late seventeenth-century Isfahan in the Safavid Empire, driving the production of new polemical literature that sought to prove their respective cases not only to each other but to Twelver Shi'ites as well.[152]

Despite some efforts within the Armenian community to bring about the reconciliation of the opposing confessional groups, from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards both the Ottoman and Catholic authorities in Rome contributed to their growing distancing and disambiguation. As Santus and Windler have demonstrated by focusing on the problem of *communicatio in sacris*, up to 1729 there was considerable ambiguity in the implementation of Tridentine reforms and administration of sacraments within Ottoman and Safavid Armenian communities, with newly converted Catholics participating in sacraments administered by Armenian Apostolic priests.[153] The practice challenged the notion of clear denominational boundaries and was thus generally opposed by the Holy Office and Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith throughout the seventeenth century while at the same time being tacitly or explicitly tolerated. However, in 1729 it was finally prohibited, forcing Armenian Catholics to start worshipping separately and to some extent clandestinely, until they were recognized by the Ottoman administration as a separate *millet* in 1830. As Cesare Santus' paper in this volume suggests, from the late seventeenth century onwards, these efforts at confessional disambiguation and disciplining of Armenian Apostolic and Catholic communities were occasionally supported by the Ottoman authorities eager to limit the influence of Catholic missionaries and the European polities that patronized them.

As this extensive overview of confessional dynamics among Eastern Christian communities both within and beyond the Ottoman Empire suggests, the experiences of individual communities and groups within larger traditions (whether Greek

[150] Atamian, *The Archdiocese of Naxjewan*.

[151] On K'ēōmiwrčean see Ohanjanyan, 'Creedal Controversies'. On Mxlayim, see her article in this volume.

[152] On this polemical literature see Halft, 'Hovhannes Mrk'uz Jułayec'i'; Ohanjanyan, 'Narratives of Armenian Polemics'; on the wider polemical context in Safavid Iran see Tiburcio, *Muslim-Christian Polemics*.

[153] Windler, 'Ambiguous Belongings'; Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*.

Orthodoxy, Apostolic Armenian Christianity, Syriac Christianity) varied greatly depending on the political framework and local social and inter-confessional dynamics. However, when focusing on the Eastern Christian groups under Ottoman rule, a pattern does emerge. Although all of these groups were exposed to the missionary—in particular Catholic—proselytization at the latest from the late sixteenth century onwards, and various developments indicative of an awareness of new confessional differences if not of a new confessional awareness itself can be identified between the 1550s and 1650s, for most communities it was the period between the 1670s and 1740s that ushered in a more decisive differentiation and disambiguation between convert and traditional communities. It also brought a greater concern with orthodoxy and a turn towards formulation of normative, confession-building texts, along with measures of social disciplining designed to guard communal boundaries and generate a sense of centeredness.[154] While this shift must have been in a close dialogue with the social and political transformation at the very core of Ottoman power and administration, papers in this volume suggest that they also stemmed from an accumulation of experience on the part of both church leadership and Ottoman administration with Catholic and Protestant missions and their effects.

Judaism

Historians have long begun to integrate histories of various Jewish communities into their geographical and religious settings, recognize the competitive and mimetic nature of co-existence in the contexts where Jews lived, including those of early modern European and Middle Eastern polities, and engage with the historiographical debates in relevant fields.[155] However, the question of whether the notion of confessionalization is relevant to the Jewish tradition and history cropped up only recently. One of the principal reasons for the absence of the debate on the issue is that many Jewish scholars—both Orthodox and secular—maintain that it is primarily what you *do* rather than what you *believe* that matters—and is more strictly regulated—in Judaism. That does not mean that Judaism does not have a number of essential beliefs that need to be affirmed;[156] rather, these affirmations were never ordered in a system which attained the authority of its parts, unlike early modern confessions. Instead of a set of dogmatic precepts, it was the *Halakhah* or law, which regulated liturgical expressions of dogma, that has historically served as a source of normativity in Judaism. Similarly to the Muslim case, attempts to articulate a system of beliefs were considered instances of individual insight and did not attain a universal communal

[154] For similar dynamics in Coptic communities in Ottoman Egypt see Armanios, *Coptic Christianity*, esp. chapter 5.

[155] For an overview of historiography on and developments in early modern Jewish communities across diaspora see Bell, 'Early Modern Religious', Bell, 'Early Modern Comparative'; Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*.

[156] For instance, in many publications one comes across the claim that *Shema Yisrael*, a prayer that is supposed to be recited twice a day and that consists of three passages (Deut. 6: 4–9; Deut. 11:13–21; Numb. 15: 37–41) emphasizing God's oneness, love for God, and Jewish unity, respectively—constitutes the ancient Jewish creed.

authority.[157] For example, while Moses Maimonides (d. 1205) identified thirteen articles of Jewish dogma that became the basis of a popular liturgical hymn called *Yigdal Elohim* recited on the eve of the Sabbath beginning in the fifteenth century, it was not universally accepted by all Jews as the epitome of Jewish beliefs.[158] Furthermore, although there were some attempts to compile a Jewish catechism, such as Abraham Jagel's *Lekah Tob*, which was published in Venice in 1587, they were exceptional until the eighteenth century when Jewish catechetical literature boomed as a result of greater Jewish-Christian philosophical engagement in the Mendelssohnian era.[159] However, as will become clearer below, this does not mean that the early modern era did not witness new manifestations of Jewish self-awareness or Jews' awareness of confessional differences in the world around them, which became expressed in new ways through legal and theological discourse.

Another feature of the original confessionalization theory that acted as a particular stumbling block to inquiries into the Jewish context was the putative relationship between confession- and state-building: since the early modern Jewry was in no position to create a state, the theory was presumed irrelevant. However, with the advancement of the debate about the dynamics that informed processes of early modern confessional polarization, and numerous case studies suggesting that confession-building did not necessarily transpire only with the support of state authorities but also despite and against them, the question of whether the theory can shed light on some aspects of early modern Jewish history was taken up by several scholars in recent years.[160]

In his pioneering effort in this direction, Gerhard Lauer argued that the field of early modern Jewish history can greatly benefit from engaging with the concept of confessionalization to go beyond internal debates in Jewish studies. However, Lauer emphasized, for the confessionalization framework to be of any heuristic utility, it cannot simply be relevant to the context in which Jewish communities lived but rather to the developments within the Jewish tradition itself as it evolved from the medieval into the early modern era. He set out, therefore, to identify those features and developments that would suggest that early modern Judaism should not be

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[157] For an insightful discussion on the relationship between law and theology in Judaism see Novak, 'The Role'.

[158] For an important overview of the issue and historical examples of formulating the dogmas of the Jewish faith see Schechter, 'The Dogmas of Judaism' and Kellner, *Dogma in Medieval Jewish Thought*. The work that played an important role in creating dissent from Maimonides' philosophical approach to Judaism was Isaac Abravanel's *Rosh Amana* (Constantinople, 1506) which maintained that every word of the Torah must be believed, and that thus formulation of dogmatic principles is unnecessary. On Abravanel's work see Kellner, 'Isaac Abravanel' and Wilke, 'Rosch Amanah'.

[159] Kohler and Schreiber, 'Catechisms'.

[160] Studies on confessional dynamics in the Dutch Republic, in particular, have pointed out that confessionalization processes did not have to be initiated by the state or lead to state formation. See, for instance, Mörke, 'Die politische Bedeutung'; Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines*.

considered only a religion but a confession on par with other contemporary Christian confessions. In calling for the inquiry into the *propria* of the early modern Jewish tradition, Lauer also rejected the objections of those historians who see the extension of the confessionalization debate to Judaism and Islam as meaningless on the grounds that the concept of 'confession' is foreign to them.[161]

In recent years, Lauer's call has been followed up by several other scholars, like Dean Phillip Bell and Yoseph Kaplan, who have also found confessionalization theory a meaningful heuristic framework for approaching early modern Jewish history, although mostly of the Jewish communities in the Christian West.[162] What, according to Lauer and other scholars, are the developments in early modern Judaism that could be broadly qualified as 'confessional' and 'confessionalizing'? And within what chronological framework are these developments observable? Lauer identified as the inaugural event of the confessional era within the Jewish tradition the printing and the subsequent diaspora-wide impact of Rabbi Joseph Caro's (1488–1575) legal compendium *Shulḥan 'Arukh* (published in Venice in 1565). Caro was a Sephardic rabbi who migrated to the Ottoman city of Safed, where he authored this compendium that for the first time conceived of a universal lawcode for the Jewish community. It synthesized Sephardi and Ashkenazi legal traditions, and ushered in the systematization and sacralization of everyday life.[163] Lauer argued that Caro's lawcode, which was embraced by many Jewish communities across Europe within a generation—albeit with the commentary of Moses Isserles (c. 1525–1572), the Rabbi of Krakow, who retained the distinctions between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi legal interpretations—represented a redefinition of tradition as orthodoxy in the sense that it denoted a move to fix, systematize and define something that had previously been more fluid and fragmented.[164] Several other scholars, like Roni Weinstein, Dean Phillip Bell and Michael Driedger, have agreed with Lauer that the discourse of renewal and radical reform of religious inheritance that informed Caro's legislative thought, and that was also central to the post-Reformation religious life, may be interpreted as a confessional turn in Judaism.[165] In this volume, Carsten Wilke takes a more

[161] Lauer, 'Die Konfessionalisierung des Judentums'.

[162] Bell, 'Confessionalization'; Kaplan, 'Between Christianity and Judaism'; Kaplan, 'Confessionalization, Discipline and Religious Authority'. For an argument for Jewish confessionalization from the perspective of Prague see Ramon, 'Konfesyonalizatsyah'.

[163] Caro based his major legal work entitled *Beit Yosef* (House of Joseph) on Jacob ben Asher's authoritative (among both Sephardim and Ashkenazim) *Arba'ah Turim* (Four Pillars) (1340), the code that had for the first time incorporated multiple opinions of Talmudic scholars, grounded them in relevant textual passages, and reached decisive conclusions. Caro sought to expand *Turim* to include subsequent scholarly views and chose the method of consensus of major scholars to reach normative conclusions. He then presented his decisions from *Beit Yosef* in a terse form of a code, without sources or analysis, in his popular reference work *Shulḥan 'Arukh* (Set Table). See Berger, 'The Centrality of Talmud', pp. 327–329.

[164] On the reception of Caro's lawcode by the communities beyond Safed see Davis, 'The Reception of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh*'.

[165] See especially Weinstein, 'Jewish Modern Law'; Bell, 'Confessionalization'; and Driedger, 'The Intensification', esp. pp. 277–278.

circumspect approach. On the one hand, he maintains that engaging with the notion of confessionalization has a great potential for sketching-out and historicizing—without essentializing—the pan-Judaic developments that have been obfuscated by historians' seemingly universal acceptance of the idea that 'there was always an irreducible plurality of the Jewish diaspora'. On the other, he emphasizes that Kabbalistic spirituality, as one such pan-Judaic phenomenon among others, did not generate an 'outwardly enforceable confessional model'.

Lauer interpreted the mystical turn that informed Caro's law-based reform and the growing popularity of the Kabbalah from the mid-sixteenth century onwards as the outcome of a need to renew and rethink the tradition in the aftermath of the expulsions of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula and the turmoil of the preceding fifty years. However, these attempts at the renewal of piety and religious commitment were not limited to elites but affected a broader swath of the population, spreading from Safed in the Ottoman Empire across the Jewish diaspora and leading to the formation of numerous Jewish confraternities and other forms of sacralization of everyday life facilitated not only by the spread of Kabbalistic learning but also by the rise of new, printed forms of Jewish literature in vernaculars. As David B. Ruderman has pointed out, print made Jews more aware of other Jews, led to the intermingling of Sephardi and Ashkenazi traditions, and helped generate a shared, more unified cultural experience of early modern Jewry.[166]

Lauer and other scholars of early modern Jewry have also pointed to the ongoing struggle of the rabbinate since the late fifteenth century to assert its own authority in the midst of the growing influence of the secular Jewish authorities across the diaspora; the appearance of printed book that undermined their authority; the rise of voluntary, often mystically-inspired fraternities; and in the aftermath of the Sabbatai Sevi (d. 1676) phenomenon, self-styled messiahs who claimed authority of a different order.[167] One among the strategies of re-sacralization of rabbinical authority and organizational retrenchment attempted by Joseph Caro's teacher Jacob Berab (d. 1546) and like-minded rabbis informed by the messianic fervor in the 1530s Safed, was the reintroduction of rabbinical ordination—an ancient Jewish practice that was abandoned in late antiquity—which was nevertheless met with a mixed response by rabbis in both the Ottoman Empire and Europe.[168] Although this idea ultimately failed, the early modern rabbinate did become more professionalized and organized, much like the clergy in post-Reformation Europe or the ulema in Ottoman lands. Some scholars have surmised that rabbis in the Ottoman Empire commanded comparatively more authority over their communities then their counterparts in Europe.[169] However, recent studies suggest that the idea of a strong rabbinical authority and leadership that sets agenda for the community was largely an aspiration by the rabbis in the Ottoman Empire prior to the emergence of the formal hierarchical

[166] Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*, pp. 99–110.
[167] Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*, pp. 58–59. On the models of rabbinical authority see also Sagi, 'Models of Authority'.
[168] See Cover, 'Bringing the Messiah'.
[169] Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*, pp. 58–59.

structures in the first half of the nineteenth century. In reality, similarly to the Orthodox patriarchs, Jewish rabbis depended both on the cooperation of their communities (which were themselves often disunited) and the support of the Ottoman authorities, neither of which could be taken for granted, in enforcing their preferred legal framework or rulings.[170]

Be it as it may, Sabbatean controversies, which were a trans-regional Jewish phenomenon, appear to have triggered a more concerted rabbinical opposition and attempts to define Jewish norms and beliefs as well as mechanisms of defending them, thus giving rise in the early eighteenth century to what, as Ruderman suggests, we might label first 'orthodox' rabbis.[171] Although in the context of the Jewish tradition the notion of orthodoxy is typically associated with nineteenth-century reactions to the Enlightenment, more recent scholarship views the emergence of 'orthodoxy' not in terms of specific content but as a post-Sabbatean dynamic that is evident already by the early eighteenth century.[172] Sabbatai Sevi's appearance and the subsequent spread of Sabbatean networks galvanized the rabbinic establishment in a new way, leading to organized and unified ways across the diaspora to determine and defend Jewish norms and beliefs. These 'orthodoxizing' initiatives were epitomized in the attempts of rabbinate to extirpate 'deviance', combat 'heresy', and enforce conformity by using tools such as *herem* (excommunication), *haskamah* (approbation of books), and acerbic polemics.[173] A byproduct of these mechanisms of exclusion and polarization were also various modes of community- (and possibly confession-) building, including among various Sabbatean groups (which could be outwardly Jewish, Christian, or Muslim), [174] that were also coupled with vigorous social disciplining within the communities themselves.

Marc Baer and Cengiz Şişman have done much to elucidate the importance of the Ottoman context and the role of Ottoman authorities in the messianic career of Sabbatai Sevi, the dissemination of his teachings across Eurasia, and the emergence of different Sabbatean (or Dönme, as they are known in Turkish) communities with the center in Ottoman Salonica in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[175] Setting off in the early 1660s, Sabbatai Sevi's meteoric rise to prominence as the expected Jewish messiah coincided with the ongoing and occasionally violent debates about orthodoxy and orthopraxy among Ottoman Muslims stirred by

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[170] Ayalon, 'Rethinking Rabbinical Leadership'.

[171] Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*, p. 146–147.

[172] On this point, see especially Carlebach, *The Pursuit of Heresy* and Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry,* pp. 146–155.

[173] See Carlebach, *The Pursuit of Heresy*. She also discusses the attempts of Rabbis Jacob and Moses Hagiz to establish Jerusalem as the center of rabbinic authority in the second half of the seventeenth century and combat the Sabbatean influence.

[174] On Sabbateans in Poland and the Habsburg Empire, led by Jacob Frank (d. 1791) who challenged normative Judaism, Islam, and various denominations of Christianity, see Maciejko, *Mixed Multitude.*

[175] See Baer, *Honored by the Glory*, pp. 121–138, and Sisman, *The Burden of Silence*; on the Sabbateans in the late Ottoman and Turkish contexts see Baer, *The Dönme*.

Kadizadeli preachers in Istanbul and other major cities. His career then took an unexpected turn with his conversion to Islam under duress in 1666, which figures as an example *par excellence* of imposition of Sunni normativity on a messianic discourse potentially threatening public order. Indeed, Sevi's and his followers' visibility in the Ottoman society already sensitized to various messianic discourses and apocalyptic expectations anticipating the end of the Ottoman dynasty or otherwise delegitimizing it was what informed Ottoman authorities' actions against him.[176] Şişman has emphasized that the seventeenth century was the century of a marked proliferation of crypto-communities in the Ottoman Empire that were tolerated by imperial authorities as long as they did not flaunt their beliefs and practices in public. He has shown that the Sabbateans publicly performed Sunni Muslim rituals, but privately adhered to a secret messianic subculture at the core of which were Eighteen Commandments that aimed to organize their daily life as believers.[177] Their beliefs revolved around the credo which had much in common with the Jewish articles of faith formulated by Maimonides and later celebrated by *Yigdal Elohim*, while their liturgy was in Ladino and Hebrew and drew heavily on Turkish music and poetic vocabulary.[178] Communal boundaries and secrecy were strictly enforced through measures of social disciplining. Endogamy was one of the pillars of the community's integrity and secrecy, and punishments for transgressors ranged from various material and spiritual measures (such as excommunication) to private execution.[179] As ostensible Muslims, Sabbateans were supposed to go to the sharia courts, but one of the Eighteen Commandments specifically instructed them never to do so; instead, community rabbis set up their own court system that decided on necessary measures of communal discipline.[180]

While this dialogic hardening of the boundaries among the Jewish and Sabbatean communities in the early eighteenth century was above all an outcome of the developments within the Jewish tradition itself, it also became entangled with Muslims and Christian messianic and confessional sensibilities both within the Ottoman Empire and beyond it. Indeed, both Ottoman Christians and Muslims were well aware of the appearance of the self-proclaimed Jewish Messiah: prominent contemporaries such as Panagiotes Nikousios (d. 1673), the Grand Dragoman of the Ottoman Porte who was himself highly active in Greek Orthodox confessional debates with the Catholics, and Eremia K'ēōmiwrčean, the most prolific Armenian scholar of the time and author of several anti-Catholic polemical works, both left works on Sabbatai Sevi's messianic mission, while the famous Sufi Halveti sheikh and mystic Niyazi-i Mısri (d. 1694) (whose direct comments on the Jewish messiah are yet to surface), was

[176] On reaction to Sevi's messianic claims beyond the Jewish community see below.
[177] Sisman, *The Burden of Silence*, pp. 172–175.
[178] Ibid., 177–178. On Sabbatean hymns see also Feldman, 'Ottoman Songs in Sabbatian Manuscripts'.
[179] Sisman, *The Burden of Silence*, pp. 192–194.
[180] Ibid., p. 203. Each Dönme community had its own houses of prayer in which they prayed together (having also performed their prayers in the local mosque), since they believed not in individual but in communal salvation. Ibid., pp. 200–201.

rumored to be his intimate acquaintance.[181] Together with other sources, these testimonies to the cross-communal reverberations of the Jewish messianic fervor point to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a period of convergence of various community-building projects as well as growing legibility and sharing of community-building strategies, registers of piety, and even vocabularies for expressing polemical issues (as illustrated by the importance and negative connotations of the concept of 'innovation' in belief and practice in the polemical discourse of all Ottoman communities at the time).[182]

Islam

The concept of confessionalization appeared in the context of Ottoman historiography only recently, although it inevitably built on the growing discussion, especially since the early 1990s, about the nature of Islam in medieval Anatolia and early modern 'lands of Rum' (Ottoman Anatolia and the Balkans).[183] Based on apparent parallels in the timing and social processes that inter-imperial and inter-confessional polarization triggered in both the Ottoman-Safavid context and post-Reformation Europe, in an essay from 2009 I raised the question of whether it would be possible to speak of connected histories of confessionalization that spanned Europe and parts of the Middle East.[184] Making preliminary remarks on the characteristics of an Ottoman 'confessionalization' based on the sources relevant to the process of conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire as well as the dynamics of empire-building, I suggested that the greater concern with articulating and enforcing a Sunni orthodoxy started in the early sixteenth century, as a consequence of the Safavid challenge, and was initiated largely by the scholars affiliated by the Ottoman state. I postulated that the process of Sunni confessionalization lasted until the late seventeenth century and went through different phases involving a variety of social actors beyond the state. By looking simultaneously at the Christian sources such as neomartyrologies, I argued that this process of Sunni confessionalization affected both Muslim and Christian communities in the empire and intersected in various ways with the confessionalizing initiatives from post-Reformation Europe, introduced to Ottoman Christians by Catholic and Protestant missionaries.[185]

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[181] On Nikousios see Koutzakiotis, *Attendre la fin*; on Eremia Kʿēōmiwrčean see Lucca, 'Šabbetay Ṣewi and the Messianic Temptations of Ottoman Jews'; on Niyazi-i Mısri see Terzioğlu, *Sufi and Dissident*; Graetz, 'Ueberbleibsel', p. 60.

[182] On the importance of the notion of 'innovation' and the negative connotations it had in polemical discourse of specific communities see Terzioğlu, '*Bidʿat*, Custom and the Mutability of Legal Judgments'; Kermeli, 'Kyrillos Loukaris' Legacy'; and Ohanjanyan, 'Creedal Controversies'.

[183] For the relevant literature see Part I of this essay as well as the overview of historiography in Peacock, De Nicola and Yıldız, 'Introduction'; Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize'; Krstić, 'Historicizing the Study'.

[184] Krstić, 'Illuminated by the Light'.

[185] Krstić, *Contested Conversions.*

In a series of articles Derin Terzioğlu addressed the question through other genres of sources, including Ottoman manuals for religious instruction (Ott. Tr. *ʿilm-i ḥāl*, Tr. *ilmihal*) and Sufi writings from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, suggesting that the concept of confessionalization may be useful with some qualifications. She argued that it is possible to speak of a confessionalization of Ottoman Sunnism—the process she termed 'Sunnitization'[186]—which she characterized as 'the adoption by the Ottoman religious and political authorities of a series of policies to modify the behavior (and to a lesser extent the beliefs) of all their Muslim subjects in line with the precepts of Sunni Islam, as they were understood at the time'.[187] She pointed out, however, that these measures worked best on already nominally Sunni Muslims in urban environments and that the limits of the Ottoman power to police and discipline its vast imperial domains have to be kept in mind when thinking about the impact of these measures, especially in rural settings, or engaging in comparison with European states.[188] She called for looking beyond the state's agency in the process and examining the role of multiple other social actors, including Sufis, in the process of articulating and popularizing what constituted Sunni tradition.[189] Terzioğlu also proposed a different chronology, arguing that the onset of Sunnitizing initiatives cannot be tied exclusively to the Ottoman rivalry with the Safavids, but that it started earlier, with the formation of an increasingly self-confident imperial learned hierarchy in the second half of the fifteenth century. Likewise, she pointed out that the debates over the boundaries between Sunnism and Shi'ism continued in the eighteenth century, as did controversies over Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy, which made her raise the question of whether, perhaps, the entire Ottoman era, until the later nineteenth century, could be conceptualized in terms of ebbs and flows of confessionalizing initiatives.[190]

Since these initial forays into the question, important studies, some of which directly engaged with the concept and some that did not, were published that shed light on various issues related to the debate. A number of important recent monographs, most notably by Snježana Buzov, Guy Burak, and Abdurrahman Atçıl, examined the formation, beginning in the mid-fifteenth century, of an Ottoman imperial learned hierarchy (*ilmiye*) topped by a state-appointed chief jurist, which went hand in hand with the promotion of the Hanafi school of law (Ar. *madhhab*; Tr. *mezheb*) into the state school of law.[191] These studies have shown that the level of integration of the ulema into the structures of the state was unprecedented in Islamic history

[186] Nathalie Clayer previously used the term 'sunnitization' to speak about the dynamic of denunciation of the heretics, imposition of shariatic norms, and propagation of central Ottoman power in Rumeli by the Halveti dervishes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See her *Mystiques, état et societe*, p. 97.

[187] Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize', p. 313.

[188] See ibid., as well as her 'Where Catechism Meets *ʿİlm-i Ḥāl*', pp. 107–114.

[189] Terzioğlu, 'Sufis in the Age of State-Building'.

[190] Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize', pp. 320–324.

[191] Buzov, *The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers*; Burak, *The Second Formation*; Atçıl, *Scholars and Sultans*.

and began to explore the implications of this phenomenon on the relationship between political and religious authority in the empire. The fact that the sultan had the prerogative to appoint the chief jurist of the empire particularly stood out as an innovation compared to the medieval Islamic period, although it was in line with the new practice by 'post-Mongol' Muslim rulers, who, starting in the first half of the fifteenth century, not only began to appoint chief jurists of the realm but also picked a particular school of Islamic law and promoted it as a state school of law.[192] Although more detailed research into the consequences of these developments awaits, studies so far have shown that in the sixteenth-century Ottoman context the result of this integration of scholarly and administrative structures was both the greater influence of the sultan on the interpretation of the shariatic norms—to the extent that he could even influence the selection of particular opinions within the Hanafi tradition that were more beneficial to the needs of the state—and a greater ability, in principle, of the ulema to influence imperial governance and decision making. While in this arrangement the ulema could certainly assert their independent opinion, they also had every incentive to shore up the sultan's and Ottoman dynasty's legitimacy.[193] Thus, although in Islam there is no equivalent of the church, clergy or councils deciding on matters of doctrine, in the Ottoman Empire the integration of the traditionally independent Muslim ulema into the structures of the state created conditions that were conducive for a group of social actors backed by political power to impose their opinion of what constitutes correct belief and practice of Islam—i.e., the conditions for the definition of 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy'.

The process of defining a Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the Ottoman context thus began already in the mid-fifteenth century with the formation of an imperial scholarly class but took on a different tone and set of priorities beginning in the early 1500s, with the participation not only of empire's intellectual and administrative elites but also various middling literati and preachers not affiliated with the state as well as urban Muslims engaged in trade and crafts.[194] In terms of the intellectual labor that went into the production of this new Sunni normativity, the efforts of Rumi (i.e. from the Ottoman Balkans and Anatolia) scholars were significantly augmented from two directions that show the extent to which the trajectories of the early modern Islamic empires and production of orthodoxies were entangled. One source was first-hand information on the beliefs of the Safavid followers they

[192] Burak uses the term 'post Mongol' to draw attention 'to the ongoing dialogues—despite their different manifestations over time and space—that sultans, emperors, and dynasties held with their real and imagined Mongol past and Chinggisid heritage'. See Burak, 'The Second Formation', p. 594.

[193] On the studies that emphasize the continued independence of the ulema see especially Buzov, *The Lawgiver and His Lawmakers;* Atçıl, 'The Safavid Threat'; Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire*, pp. 46–152.

[194] Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, p. 48; Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize'; Krstić, 'State and Sunnitization'.

received from the Sunni scholars fleeing the Safavid territories in the early 1500s.[195] This process was mirrored by the actions of the Safavid shahs who drew on the expertise of Shi'ite scholars from Mt. Lebanon in Ottoman territories who were intimately familiar with Sunni law and theology.[196] Their intellectual labor was necessary for the articulation of Twelver Shi'ite beliefs and practices that were used in a progressive Shi'itization of Sunni Iran that started in 1501 with Shah Tahmasp's conquest of Tabriz and continued throughout the entire sixteenth century and beyond.[197]

The second source for Ottoman scholars' articulation of Sunni normativity were exchanges—either in person or through the reception of written works—with the scholars from the Mamluk territories in Syria and Egypt that Ottomans conquered in 1516–1517, where anti-Shi'i sentiment was much more pronounced since the thirteenth century and expressed in various military campaigns against the Shi'i population and heresy trials against individuals with Shi'ite leanings who were seen as a threat to public order.[198] Nevertheless, in the Mamluk context this anti-Shi'i sentiment never reached the level of a concerted anti-Shi'i policy, and while the Mamluk sultans and ulema from the four different schools of law certainly shared the goal of protecting public order, there was a variety of opinions on how 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy' should be defined and sanctioned. In the Ottoman context, this traditional plurality of Islamic law, and even the plurality of opinions within a single school of law—in this case, the Hanafi school—was beginning to be considerably circumscribed according to a particularly Rumi, imperial vision, starting in the mid-fifteenth century. As recent research suggests, Rumi scholars' understanding of Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxy—in which an exclusively Hanafi imperial scholarly hierarchy and the sultan himself had the ultimate authority to set the boundaries of correct belief and practice—began to diverge from that of their Arab colleagues in the former Mamluk provinces, even when the latter belonged to the Hanafi school of law.[199]

How, concretely, did Ottoman Rumi authors' understanding of Sunni and Hanafi Islam differ from that of previous generations of Hanafis (as well as, in some respects, from contemporary Hanafi scholars living in the Arab-speaking provinces of the empire)? Recently scholars have begun to examine different genres of Ottoman writing, from legal treatises and hadith works, to prayer manuals, theological and heresiographical treatises, in order to understand the discursive shifts that both articulated

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[195] Eberhard, *Osmanische Polemik*; Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined*, p. 257; Karakaya-Stump, *The Kizilbash-Alevis*, pp. 267, 272.

[196] On this phenomenon see Stewart, 'Notes on the Migration'; Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, pp. 10–30.

[197] On 'imperialization' and consolidation of Shi'ism in the Safavid Empire as reflected through madrasa curriculum and learning see Moazzen, *Formation of a Religious Landscape*.

[198] Al-Tikriti, 'Ibn-i Kemal's confessionalism'; Kaplan, *An Anti-Ibn 'Arabi*; on heresy trials see Levanoni, 'Takfir in Egypt and Syria'.

[199] Meshal, 'Antagonistic Sharias'; Burak, 'Faith, Law and Empire'; Burak, *The Second Formation*; on attempted Hanafization of Egypt and resistance to it see Ibrahim, 'Al-Sharānī's Response'; Atçıl, 'Memlükler'den Osmanlılar'a'.

and sought to shape a particular Rumi Sunni and Hanafi *madhhab* consciousness.[200] For instance, Evren Sünnetçioğlu has examined Ottoman jurists' treatises and opinions discussing the issue of whether regular attendance at the five daily congregational prayers was a 'confirmed *sunna*' (and thus by definition not obligatory but 'strongly recommended') or a duty (Ar. *wujūb*)—a legal distinction that was directly related to the question of necessity of penal sanctions for non-attendance as well as authority to discipline male believers. The Hanafi jurisprudential tradition considered the regular attendance at the five daily congregational prayers as 'confirmed sunna' (Ar. *sunna muʾakkada*); however, majority of jurists maintained that prayer in congregation was one of the 'distinguishing marks of religion' whose abandonment leads astray and thus must be sanctioned, leading the jurists to progressively equate it with a duty. Sünnetçioğlu traces the crystallization of the consensus on this issue among the Ottoman Hanafi jurists over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The Ottoman jurists' consensus that five daily congregational prayers constituted a duty and thus necessitated sanctions for non-compliance opened the door for the Ottoman sultan to intervene into the regulation of piety at the communal level to ensure that this defining marker of Sunniness was upheld throughout the empire. This was epitomized not only by a boom in building Friday mosques in the cities across Ottoman domains, as Gülru Necipoğlu has shown,[201] but also by the decree promulgated by Sultan Süleyman in 1537–1538 (and reconfirmed as a law throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), which stipulated that each village in the empire must have a designated prayer space (masjid) or face sanctions. Sünnetçioğlu also demonstrated that a corollary development of the period was the raised standard of moral probity and piety for both prayer leaders and communities.[202] This, of course, is what the prescriptive sources tell us—how this stipulation was realized in practice, especially in the villages, is a matter of further research that requires us to resolve the methodological conundrum of how to gauge the effect and reception of Sunnitizing policies.

Derin Terzioğlu has provided further insight into a distinctively Rumi approach to prayer and piety in her article on the seventeenth-century debate regarding the congregational performance of supererogatory (Tr. *nafile*) prayers, i.e. additional prayers that could be performed either before or after obligatory ones. She demonstrated that while in principle medieval Hanafi jurists recommended that such prayers be performed at home in order not to be confused with obligatory worship, since the fifteenth century it became a custom in Rum that the nocturnal prayers on the five holy nights (Tr. *kandil*) during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday (Tr. *Mevlid*) be performed with the congregation. While the practice itself was old and heavily criticized already by the Mamluk-era scholars, most Rumi jurists and Sufi authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth century were inclined to see it as a beneficial innovation that raised the level of public piety and devotion to the Prophet in

[200] For a collection of studies addressing in particular this *problematique* through the traditional genres of Islamic learning see Krstić and Terzioğlu eds, *Historicizing Sunni Islam*.
[201] Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 47–70.
[202] Sünnetçioğlu, 'Imams and Their Communities'.

'the age of corruption'. Furthermore, in the late sixteenth century Ottoman dynasty began to sponsor the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and popular participation in it was encouraged, including in the communal performance of the associated supererogatory prayers. The fact that the Ottoman sultans supported it was cited as a proof of its soundness, underlying the deep connection between communal piety and sultanic legitimacy. However, that does not mean that the practice went uncontested: taking inspiration from the critiques by Mamluk-era scholars, Kadizadeli preachers made the congregational performance of supererogatory prayers a target of their crusade against innovations (Tr. *bidat*).[203] Furthermore, as Nir Shafir has demonstrated, by the early eighteenth century, it was precisely the connection between piety and legitimacy of the state apparatus that some believers sought to sever by withdrawing from public life and the performance of communal prayers.[204] Overall, as recent research shows, Sunni Muslims across Ottoman domains, even those belonging to the Hanafi school of law, did not necessarily agree on which practices were most correct or constituted the best basis for reinforcing the sense of a Sunni community.

Building a Sunni community through prayer was accompanied by communicating a clearer definition of who belongs to that community and who does not, in a language understandable to the common folk. I examined various Ottoman manuals of faith (Tr. *ilmihal*), which can be likened to catechisms, written by Rumi authors in simple Turkish between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries and compared them to the medieval Sunni creeds to demonstrate both the novel features of the genre itself and its theological content. My research suggested that when it comes to the definitions of who belongs to the 'People of the Sunna and the Community' (Tr. *ehl-i sünnet ve'l-cemaat*; namely Sunnis), Ottoman *ilmihal*s used the articles existing already in medieval Sunni creeds but singled out and prioritized those, among many, that directly distinguished Sunnis from Shi'ites.[205] These *ilmihal*s also insisted that the faithful acknowledge the *mezheb* (Ar. *madhhab*; literally, path but also often glossed as doctrine, sect, school, or denomination) of the Sunnis as the only true path in terms of belief, and the *mezheb* of Abu Hanifa (i.e. the Hanafi school of law) as the most correct one in terms of ritual practice, thus articulating a particularly Rumi Sunni and Hanafi consciousness. In that sense, if we look for the terminology used by the early modern Ottoman Muslim authors to indicate belonging to different communities of belief and practice, it may be more fitting to label the dynamic under discussion here as *madhhabization* rather than Sunnitization or confessionalization.

Moreover, in contrast to medieval Sunni creeds, none of which included legal stipulations of any sort, Ottoman *ilmihal*s typically combined discussion of the articles of faith, the divine attributes, and the defining features of the Sunnis, with an extensive list of blasphemous utterances and actions that required one's renewal of faith and marriage—a legal stipulation that had its roots in the post-classical Eastern Hanafi legal discourse but was elaborated and promoted in a new way by Ottoman

[203] Terzioğlu, '*Bid'at*, Custom and the Mutability'.
[204] Shafir, 'Moral Revolutions'.
[205] Krstić, 'State and Religion'.

Rumi jurists.[206] By combining articles of faith and communal belonging with a list of utterances and actions that placed an individual legally outside the boundaries of faith, Ottoman catechists presented a much narrower understanding of Sunni Islam, effectively articulating their vision of orthodoxy and orthopraxy that was to be enforced by legal sanctions.[207]

This building of a Rumi Sunni-Hanafi consciousness did not entail attention only to the outward markers of communal belonging; it also focused on the internal forum (namely, personal beliefs). As my research has shown, there was also an important difference in the Ottoman catechists' views on the individual believer's understanding of faith and responsibility for salvation compared to medieval Hanafi and Maturidi tradition. The latter generally maintained that it was sufficient for a believer to profess faith in general terms, epitomized by the *shahāda* ('There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Messenger'), in order to be considered a true believer (Tr. *mümin*) and attain a place in Heaven; a detailed knowledge, understood as ability to enumerate the six articles of faith, was not considered necessary. However, from the mid sixteenth century onwards and especially in the seventeenth century, most Ottoman catechists began to insist that while general faith may technically make one a Muslim and save him/her from paying the poll-tax obligatory for non-Muslims (Tr. *cizye*), it does not guarantee a place in Heaven. As they explain, this is because if one asks you what faith is and you respond with 'I don't know', you have committed blasphemy (Tr. *küfr*) and are to be considered an unbeliever (Tr. *kafir*), which automatically triggers further legal consequences. In this case, Ottoman catechists stipulate, you have to be taught the articles of faith and then renew your faith (and your marriage vow, if married) by professing the *shahāda* again, which effectively restores one to the community of the believers.[208] This shift in the emphasis may be partly explained by the fact that the process of conversions to Islam in the Ottoman Empire peaked by the mid sixteenth century, and that the catechisms from the sixteenth and seventeenth century reflect the concerns of a more established Muslim society in which a bare minimum of familiarity with the ritual and creedal norms was not sufficient anymore.[209] However, greater emphasis on the detailed knowledge of one's faith and practice, and the need to raise the ability of the common folk to distinguish between the correct and false teachings of Islam is also consistent with the goals of agents of confession-building in other contemporary contexts, making it a key feature of this age of confessional polarization.

Of course, a Europeanist familiar with the confessionalization debate would inevitably wonder how this Sunni-Hanafi orthodoxy could be enforced given the absence of print in the Ottoman Muslim context? Without doubt, the absence of print, as well as limited resources of an empire the size of Ottoman, with its vast rural regions and low literacy rates, precluded the standardization of confessional texts or concerted enforcement of their teachings comparable to what went on in the urban

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[206] Burak, 'Faith, Law and Empire'; Krstić, '*You Must Know Your Faith in Detail*'.
[207] Krstić, '*You Must Know Your Faith in Detail*'.
[208] Ibid.
[209] On this issue see Krstić, 'From *Shahāda* to *'Aqīda*'.

centers of Catholic, Lutheran or Calvinist Reformation. However, we should not exaggerate the separation between print and oral culture before the eighteenth century, and underestimate the importance of the manuscripts and the performative nature of reading for transmission of knowledge and religious instruction.[210] It would amount to an act of methodological abdication if we did not explore how confession-building process could work in a manuscript culture, rather than simply assume that it could not. After all, hundreds upon hundreds of manuscripts of key Ottoman catechisms, especially by Birgivi Mehmed (d. 1573), Ahmed Rumi Akhisari (d. c. 1632), Kadızade Mehmed (d. 1635) as well as a host of anonymous texts survive from the Ottoman period in collections from Hungary to Cairo, copied by people who ranged from functionally literate to educated court and mosque personnel. These texts were both read individually and aloud in family or community, thus reaching a much wider audience and playing a role in the formation of textual and aural communities around confessional literature. In recent years, manuscript studies have become central to reimagining histories of the book and reading in the context of Muslim Eurasia. For instance, Nir Shafir has shed light on the fierce long-distance polemics over issues related to creed, ritual, and other community-defining issues that spanned Ottoman domains from Egypt to the Balkans in the absence of print, thus pointing to the fact that modern historians' obsession with print technology as the only means of building imagined communities is limiting, to say the least.[211] While print overrides the process of 'natural' selection, manuscripts of Ottoman catechisms allow us to trace the process by which certain texts became popular, gradually became connected to others, and came to constitute the canon (of sorts) of the Ottoman Rumi Sunni confessional ecosystem.[212] It would be possible, thus, to speak of a Rumi Sunni confessional culture—with a variety of catechetical texts that sustained it—along the lines proposed by Thomas Kaufmann for the Lutheran case.[213]

Recent research by Ottomanists suggests that this Sunni confessional culture had different registers and that the building of a Sunni Hanafi *madhhab* consciousness did not go hand in hand with the persecution and extermination of difference at all cost. As Vefa Erginbaş has shown, various forms of ambiguity—in particular various degrees of Alid loyalty and devotion to the House of the Prophet (known as 'ahl al-baytism')—that also characterized late medieval Muslim landscape in Eurasia, persisted in this age of confessional polarization.[214] However, as Terzioğlu demonstrates in her contribution to this volume, the new conditions for belief—namely, the confessional turn informed by intra- and inter-imperial dynamics—made these forms of ambiguity a contested ground and prevent us from conceiving of them as indicators

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[210] See Chartier, 'Texts, Printing, Readings'.

[211] Shafir, 'The Road from Damascus.' For a manuscript-centered approach see also Quinn, *Books and Their Readers*. On the importance of manuscript culture for the reinforcement of confessional belonging among Eastern Christians see Girard ed, *Livres et confessions.*

[212] I hope to elaborate on this phenomenon in my forthcoming book. On Ottoman catechetical canon see Tezcan, 'The Canon of Disenchantment'; Krstić, 'State and Religion'.

[213] Kaufmann, 'What is Lutheran Confessional Culture?'.

[214] Erginbaş, 'Problematizing Ottoman Sunnism'; Erginbaş, 'Reading Ottoman Sunnism'.

of an undisturbed continuity with the pre-1500s.[215] Thus, both ʿAli ibn Abi Talib and the Twelve Imams could be appropriated and accommodated in early modern Ottoman Sunnism, typically as long as they were disconnected from the idea of the last imam's return from occultation to assume the rule on earth, the belief that constituted the basis of the Safavid Shi'i political claim.[216] Terzioğlu reminds us that Ottoman Sunnism cannot be equated to what we imagine under the label of Sunnism today but rather has to be thought of as an outcome of engagements with the tradition and sources in a particular historical and political context. Furthermore, like Shahab Ahmed and Nenad Filipović,[217] Terzioğlu emphasizes that the policies of Sunnitization played out in a particular spatial and rhetorical context: it was the public manifestations of belief and ritual practice that were visible to and entailed the participation of common believers that were increasingly circumscribed by law and monitored for deviations; private and especially elite pursuits of the Truth were left unchecked.[218] This was not only true for Sufis threading a fine line in their devotion to *ahl al-bayt* but also for Ottoman literati interested in what Harun Küçük calls 'practical naturalism' (rather than 'science'), who by and large were left to their own devices as long as they did not flaunt what could be perceived as blasphemous views in public.[219]

As these papers and other recent studies suggest, public, outward compliance with the sharia, whose implementation and enforcement were the basis of Ottoman political legitimacy, along with the acceptance of the sultan's rule and imperial ulema's authority, constituted the ultimate boundary of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire. This dichotomy between the monitored, Sunnitized public and unsupervised 'private' space left considerable room for groups and individuals to maintain different forms of beliefs and practices away from the public eye, thus encouraging the formation of double or crypto-confessional identities. Communities that did not adhere to normative Sunni Hanafi interpretations of law underwent various forms of assimilation or engaged in varying degrees of dissimulation. For instance, by the mid sixteenth century various non-sharia abiding Sufi groups, like Abdals of Rum, discussed in this volume by Nikolay Antov, were progressively assimilated into formally sharia-abiding Sufi orders, like

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[215] Terzioğlu engages, in particular, with Thomas Bauer's argument that ambiguity was an essential feature of Islam until the nineteenth century when Islam was 'theologized' and 'disambiguated'. See Bauer, *Die Kultur*.

[216] In some cases, like that of the famous Ottoman bureaucrat and intellectual Mustafa ʿAli, even that requirement was ignored, but in this respect ʿAli's views seem to represent a minority within the Ottoman Sunni spectrum, elite or commoner, Sufi or non. On ʿAli see Erginbaş, 'Reading Ottoman Sunnism'.

[217] Ahmed, *What is Islam?*; see also the conclusion to Filipović's essay in this volume.

[218] For a related point see also Krstić, 'State and Religion'.

[219] See Küçük, *Science without Leisure*. Accusations of blasphemy could be well founded or slanderous, as in the case of Patburnuzade, a sharp-tongued clerk in the imperial financial bureaucracy, who ruffled too many of his colleagues' feathers and offended religious scholars only to be executed for blasphemy in 1681. See Menekşe, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklık*.

the Bektashi order, which had already undergone a Sunnitizing intervention by Ottoman authorities in the early sixteenth century, or they blended into emerging Kizilbash-Alevi communities. Other non-conformist groups embraced various dissimulative practices, such as maintaining a Sunni Hanafi identity in public while privately adhering to a completely different, secret credo and legal system, like the Sabbateans; adopting a low public profile, showing respect for the sultanic rule by paying relevant taxes, and concealing their beliefs and rituals from non-members of the community, like the Kizilbash-Alevis; or simulating being Sunnis by claiming to follow the Shafi'i school of law, like some Shi'ites of Mt. Lebanon.

As Maurus Reinkowski reminds us, there was much that was situational in the circumstances that informed day-to-day strategies of such groups, some of which indeed developed a lasting and stable system of beliefs and practices that qualify as a 'crypto-religion'—like the Sabbateans—while in the case of others it is more methodologically justifiable to speak of 'crypto-religious strategies', either conscious or not, that could arise from various circumstances in a particular context and be of a limited duration.[220] As recent studies by Michael E. Meeker, Yorgos Tzedopoulos, Zeynep Türkyilmaz, Selim Deringil, and others have shown, the phenomenon of crypto-Christianity became a particular headache for the Ottoman authorities in the nineteenth century, following the Tanzimat reform edicts of 1839 and 1856. By these edicts Ottoman sultans, under the pressure of rival imperial powers, granted freedom of religion to their subjects, prompting a wave of requests by various crypto-Christian communities that had up to this point publicly observed Islam, to return to their 'true' beliefs.[221] In most cases, however, it is unclear how far back these communities' Christian affiliation and awareness of 'true' vs. 'false' practices dated, and to what extent this wave of declarations of Christian allegiances had to do with ethno-confessional continuity from the late medieval/early modern period, prior to conversions to Islam in the Ottoman Empire, as opposed to peculiar local contexts and dynamics of the nineteenth century.[222] As a rule, Ottoman authors did not report on such phenomena, while they regularly featured in the accounts of missionaries and travelers who had their own reasons to 'spot' crypto-Christians in the Ottoman landscape, making this phenomenon a particularly challenging methodological problem, particularly for the early modern period when the sources are more scarce.

However, it appears that already during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Ottoman authorities, while being fully aware of various communities' non-conformity to Sunni creedal and ritual norms, nevertheless willingly treated them as Sunni Muslims at times of peace. This allowed the authorities to maintain the dynastic state's legitimacy without disrupting public life and unnecessarily exerting violence or expanding precious resources. For instance, while Ottoman punitive actions against the Kizilbash populations were part and parcel of the Ottoman-Safavid wars

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[220] Reinkowski, 'Keine Kryptoreligion.'

[221] Meeker, *A Nation of* Empire; Tzedopulos, 'Public Secrets'; Türkyılmaz, *Anxieties of Conversion* (especially ch. 2); Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy* (especially ch. 3); Malcolm, 'Crypto-Christianity', pp. 65–66.

[222] On this point see especially Türkyılmaz, *Anxieties of Conversion*.

that punctuated the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries up to 1639, research by Stefan Winter and Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer has demonstrated that in times of peace or in places far away from the theaters of war the decision of the Ottoman authorities whether to persecute known Kizilbash and/or Shi'i population or individuals depended on the latter's readiness to acknowledge the sultan's sovereignty, typically by paying requisite taxes, and not disturb public order or flaunt their religious views.[223] These kinds of strategies were not uncommon in confessional-era Europe, where in daily life local and imperial authorities had incentives to privilege coexistence in the interest of stability of rule.[224] However, it is clear that the tolerance for ambiguity, dissimulation, and 'don't ask, don't tell' approach was much higher in the Ottoman context.

That being said, despite the fact that Ottoman authorities did not pursue a policy of constant persecution of non-conformist Sufis, Kizilbash-Alevis and Shi'ites in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and that after the end of the wars with the Safavids in 1639 Rumi Muslims began to be more focused on perceived deviations from tradition within the Sunni community itself, pressure on non-conformist groups did not disappear but rather became conventionalized. While during times of peace Ottoman authorities may have approached these groups as (Sunni) Muslims, the moment the latter undermined this pretense in any way or reasons for scapegoating appeared in local contexts, the language of heresy and deviance resurfaced in the sources as the basis for punitive action. As Ayfer Karakaya-Stump and Cengiz Şişman have shown in their respective books, and Rıza Yıldırım in this volume, over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this external pressure backed by Ottoman legal discourse, which articulated what these communities were not (that is, Sunnis), was coupled with an internal pressure within the same communities to articulate what they were. Despite these communities' predominantly oral culture, they appear to have undergone processes of communal, ritual, and creedal articulation akin to those envisioned by the phenomenon of confessionalization.

The importance of the context, documentary genre, and rhetorical register in mapping the full spectrum of confessional attitudes in the Ottoman context is also highlighted by Selim Güngörürler's research, which explores diplomatic correspondence between the Ottomans and Safavids in the period following the cessation of wars between the two empires, from the Treaty of Zuhab in 1639 up to the 1720s. He shows that while the Ottoman ulema of this period continued to pronounce fatwas against the *Rafizi*s and treat the Safavids as heretics, Ottoman bureaucrats who authored letters to the Safavid leadership completely suspended references to heresy and adopted the language enriched with Quranic quotations and metaphors that allowed them to stress solidarity and unity in religion between the two polities, as long as the Safavid shah recognized Ottoman claims to the 'greater caliphate' and contented himself with being a 'lesser caliph'. However, as soon as this more-or-less

[223] Winter, *The Shiites*; Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, 'The Formation of Kızılbaş Communities' and Baltacıoğlu-Brammer, 'Neither Victim nor Accomplice'.

[224] See, for instance, essays in Dixon, Freist, and Greengrass eds, *Living with Religious Diversity*; Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*; Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*.

explicit consensus about Ottoman superiority was in any way undermined, the pretense of brotherhood between the two Muslim dynasties would quickly evaporate and references to heresy would resurface in diplomatic correspondence.[225]

The unstable nature of diplomatic relations between the Ottomans and their Iranian neighbors, both up to the fall of the Safavid dynasty in 1736 and upon Nader Shah's (d. 1747) establishment of the Afsharid dynasty (1736–1796), continued until the mid-eighteenth century, with initiatives to 'deconfessionalize' the relations playing an important role in the attempt to achieve a lasting peace. Nader Shah himself attempted to provide a solution to this problem by reconceptualizing Twelver Shi'ism as the 'Ja'fari madhhab' and proposing that the Ottomans recognize it as the fifth Sunni school of law and allow for the Ja'fari representation in Mecca. He in effect planned to prohibit all explicitly anti-Sunni aspects of ritual worship (such as the rejection of the first three caliphs' legitimacy and their public cursing) and emphasize pilgrimage to the tombs of the Imams, which was in tune with Sunni Alid sensibilities.[226] As M. Sait Özervarlı shows, the request generated considerable polemics and resistance among the ulema in Istanbul, which accounts for the eventual rejection of Nader Shah's request.[227] However, a fascinating record survives by a Sunni Iraqi scholar named al-Suwaydi (d. 1760) who participated as the Ottoman representative in the debate between Sunni and Shi'i scholars at Najaf, organized by Nader Shah in 1743. As Özervarlı argues, al-Suwaydi's account demonstrates openness of the Ottomans towards a dialogue with their Iranian neighbors at the time but also the depth and intensity of mistrust towards them, which points to the success of Sunnitization. At one point in his narrative, al-Suwaydi, who was extremely wary about the possibility of openly discussing theological differences with his Shi'i interlocutors, suggests that a Christian or a Jew should arbitrate in the debate in order to ensure impartiality.[228] It is indicative of al-Suwaydi's perception of his own role in this dialogue and the importance of the task before him that he viewed it as the third most difficult challenge that the Muslim community faced in its entire history, after the civil wars following the death of Muhammad and the so-called Inquisition (*miḥna*) period of the ninth century.[229] In the final countdown, for al-Suwaydi, as for most of his scholarly colleagues in Istanbul, nothing short of full conversion to Sunnism would have led to the acceptance of Nader Shah's request for the Iranian ruler's representation at Mecca and appointment of an Iranian hajj guide. While the Ottomans did not eventually concede to the request, the dialogue appears to have played a role in the peace treaty they signed with Nader Shah in 1746, which lasted for nearly half a century.[230]

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[225] Güngörürler, 'Islamic Discourse' and his essay in this volume.

[226] On Nader Shah's initiative see Tucker, 'Nadir Shah'; Tucker, *Nadir Shah's Quest*; Özervarlı, 'Between Tension and Rapprochement', pp. 533–542.

[227] Özervarlı, 'Between Tension and Rapprochement', p. 534.

[228] Ibid., p. 537.

[229] Ibid., p. 538.

[230] Shaw, 'Iranian Relations'.

The mid-eighteenth century thus seems to represent the end of an 'early modern' phase in Sunni-Shi'i relations that can be treated on its own and whose features and dynamics stand in contrast to the Tanzimat era (1839–1876) and later sectarian dynamics between the Sunni Ottoman authorities and various non-Sunni groups, including Shi'ites, Alevis, and Yezidis. The nineteenth century, especially the reign of ʿAbdülhamid II (1876–1909), ushered in what could be qualified as confessionalization in the strong sense, epitomized by the concerted attempts of the Sunni Ottoman state to 'correct the beliefs' of non-conformist groups and enforce religious uniformity within the Muslim community, ultimately unsuccessfully.[231] For this reason, Derin Terzioğlu has suggested that we might view confessionalization in the Ottoman case as a process that lasts until the very end of the empire, with ebbs and flows in intensity, rather than seeking to arbitrarily pinpoint its end.[232] This is certainly a productive way to approach the issue, especially if one is interested in understanding the genealogy of modern Turkish Islam. It is also true that during the nineteenth century Ottoman literati who were interested in the polemics against non-Sunni Muslims found the early modern Ottoman polemical treatises to be useful templates for discussing religious alterity, and that the printing of these texts as well as early modern catechisms starting in the 1830s finalized the process of canonization of the textual corpus promoted by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century agents of Sunnitization.[233] At the same time, however, these polemical discussions and initiatives were transpiring in a very different legal and political environment informed by the changed equations of power, with the Ottomans gradually losing ground to their imperial rivals. The new post-Tanzimat legal framework did away with the legal inequality between Muslims and non-Muslims, which meant that conversion of a Muslim to Christianity was not considered a crime of apostasy anymore, and that the term 'apostate' (Tr. *mürted*) as well as 'unbeliever' (Tr. *kafir*) seized to be used in the official Ottoman parlance from the mid nineteenth century onwards.[234] However, this brought diversity within the Muslim community into a sharper focus of the Ottoman authorities, and groups like Yezidis, Alevis, and Shi'ites, rather than being tacitly treated as Sunni Muslims as before, were now reconceptualized as 'heretics' (Tr. *fırak-ı dalle*) whose beliefs should be corrected through instruction and 'civilizing mission', inspired by the discourse and strategies of the much-hated Christian missionaries.[235]

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[231] On these policies and the role of the state see Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, pp. 68–84; Gölbaşı, 'Turning the "Heretics"'; Alkan, 'The Ottoman Policy of "Correction of Belief(s)"'.
[232] Terzioğlu, 'How to Conceptualize', p. 324.
[233] On the printing of the polemical literature see Rank, *Disputing Religion, Empire, and Modernity*; on catechisms and other genres see Tek Başaran, *The Ottoman Printing Enterprise*.
[234] Gölbaşı, 'Turning the "Heretics"', p. 4.
[235] Ibid.; Alkan, 'The Ottoman Policy of "Correction of Belief(s)"'.

IN SEARCH OF ALTERNATIVE VOCABULARY

It has been suggested in the opening pages of this essay that the notion of 'confessionalization' and related concepts such as 'confession-building', 'confessionalism' and 'confessional polarization' are intended here as heuristic devices to interrogate the relationship between religious and political authorities in different communal contexts across the early modern Ottoman Empire, and possibly facilitate the discussion of commensurability of different past experiences. After engaging in this heuristic exercise and examining other scholars' conclusions on its utility, it is time to re-evaluate both terminology and the broader processes that have been highlighted through this exercise.

Many scholars whose contributions were discussed in this overview have remarked that there is something fundamentally relevant in the concept of confessionalization for a variety of communal contexts across early modern Eurasia—specifically, that religion begins to play a new community-building function, which could overlap with state-building—but that the term 'confession' (and consequently 'confession-building' and 'confessionalization') fails to universally capture the focus and basis of this community- and/or state-building process. Scholars working on Judaism, various forms of Eastern Christianity, and Islam have pointed out that in these traditions it is ritual rather than belief that has historically constituted the primary focus of regulation and community-building, and that this continues to be the case in the early modern era. That is not to say that the questions of belief were irrelevant for these communities. On the contrary, a number of recent articles considered above and contributions in this volume suggest that as a consequence of the rise of the early modern empires, mobility, increased global interactions and comparisons that they entailed, communities across Eurasia were prompted to define more precisely, often in genres and formats that were previously unfamiliar to them, what they did or did not believe in. In this respect, the concept of confessionalization in its 'weaker' sense—as emergence of a new sensitivity to the notion of correct belief, which in turn could serve as the basis for differentiation within or between communities—is certainly relevant. It has also been demonstrated that this phenomenon did not arise solely as a consequence of the Reformation; rather, the Reformation was one local manifestation of a more global dynamic of confessional polarization that parts of Eurasia witnessed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as an outcome of the new dialectic between spiritual and political authority.

Nevertheless, an exclusive focus on belief—epitomized by the notion of confession in the sense of a pithy formulation of key tenets of faith—leaves out important new early modern developments in the domain of ritual practice and legal discourse that regulated it, especially in the cases of Judaism and Islam. The question thus arises of what alternative concepts could serve as a better basis for the discussion of these community-building dynamics and their relationship to the political imagination that is peculiar to the early modern period, even though it certainly drew on late medieval developments. As stated in the beginning, ideally such a terminology should be less tradition-specific. While speaking about 'Sunnitization' or 'maddhabization' may capture the particular phenotype of the phenomenon in the early modern

Islamic context and is certainly not Euro- and (Latin) Christiano-centric, it does not help us with the analysis of the global nature of the dynamics.

One term that captures the underlying process in a tradition-neutral way is 'normative centering'. It was suggested by the German scholar of theology Berndt Hamm for the analysis of religious dynamics in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as an alternative to various epoch-defining labels such as 'Renaissance' and 'Reformation' as well as 'Confessionalization'.[236] Hamm has argued that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries one sees the 'alignment of both religion and society towards a standardizing, authoritative, regulating and legitimizing focal point'.[237] This process was both multidimensional and relational, in the sense that initiatives towards normative centering fed off of each other across the social spectrum. Hamm postulated that this impulse, which can also be expressed in terms of standardization, consolidation, and reduction of complexity, stemmed from striving for 'a new certainty and legitimacy, a fresh clarity and order with respect to one's life in this world and the next. It thereby provided an answer to what many contemporaries saw as unsettling patterns of differentiation, multiplicity, individualization, and concern for (and attention to) the things of this world.'[238] He argued that those beliefs and practices that were considered central, necessary and helpful, 'were held up as the core and key for the shaping, measuring, and determining of individual life and of social, political and economic relations'.[239] In the sphere of theology, he identified the emergence of what he called a 'theology of piety'—a simplified set of key concepts easily understandable for laity, formulated in pithy texts, such as catechisms, religious hymns, and saints' lives. In the sphere of rule, emphasis on new demarcations and the proper ordering of public life through new legislation on public propriety, market regulation, sumptuary laws, marriage, and burial, contained an in-built religious component directed towards both the wellbeing of the earthly state and the salvation of the community in the hereafter through the observation of divine laws.

While Hamm's own framework and analysis were informed by the Latin Christian context, the notion of 'normative centering' as well as his description of what it entailed in various discursive registers and social contexts appears highly useful for the discussion at hand. Indeed, as we have seen repeatedly in the discussion above, early modern Muslim, Jewish, and Eastern Christian religious authorities in the Ottoman Empire (as well as in the Safavid and Russian Empires) conceived of several ambitious and unprecedented projects of normative centering, whether we are talking about Joseph Caro's attempt to formulate a universal code of law that would serve as a norm for all the Jews, the Ottomans' singling out of the Hanafi school of law as the state school of law, the attempts of Ottoman catechists to define the characteristics of the Sunni community and belief in a pithy and simplified manner, or the Russian Patriarch Nikon's attempt to reform liturgy in accordance with 'true'

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[236] See Hamm, 'Reformation als normative Zentrierung'; Hamm, 'Normative Zentrierung'. The latter essay was translated into English. See Hamm, 'Normative Centering'.
[237] Hamm, 'Normative Centering', p. 3.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid., p. 5.

Greek Orthodox tradition. That does not mean that these initiatives did not have rivalling normative projects or that they did not face resistance. Like the notion of confessionalization, 'normative centering' does not have a paradigmatic value and can be only one tool in our conceptual toolbox for working on the early modern period, but perhaps one that has a wider relevance than the concept put forward by Schilling and Reinhard. This wider relevance arises from the fact that it can capture different initiatives of re-ordering and definition of norms, whether legal, ritual, or creedal, rather than only the latter.

'Normative centering' was essentially an epistemic process but one arising not solely from ignorance, as Zwierlein has suggested. While competition between rivalling normative projects certainly involved obtaining specific knowledge about the other—often indeed out of lack of information—'normative centering' primarily entailed creating a consensus around the necessary knowledge (of practice or belief) that defines one's own community.[240] When it comes to large-scale initiatives for community-building, especially on the level of top religious and state authorities, this notion of normative centering seems to effectively capture the key epistemic process informing early modern religio-political imagination. Even beyond the Sunni, Shi'i, Jewish, and various Christian denominations negotiating their own normative projects, we see the drift towards normative centering in the context of crypto communities such as the Sabbateans or non-sharia minded communities such as the Kizilbash, who at this time strove to define ritual and creedal norms along with spiritual hierarchy as the basis of building community and resisting other rival communities' normative projects. As was highlighted in the historiographical overview above, in the Ottoman Empire these discourses of normative centering ebbed and flowed at different pace in different communities. Sometimes they were in direct dialogue with each other while at other times they ran parallel only to interweave again later on, creating staggered communal chronologies that seemingly converge in the early eighteenth century, at least for a while.

These entangled projects of normative centering were firmly embedded in the mechanics of building and maintaining the Ottoman Empire as well as enabled by it. For instance, they often had a spatial expression, and the geographical and infrastructural framework of the Ottoman Empire facilitated this phenomenon for all its major communities. For the Sunni Muslims and the Ottoman dynasty, one can detect the process of normative centering not only in the sphere of law and theology but also in the growing inter-relatedness of piety focused on Prophet Muhammad (and his family), the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and the legitimacy of the Ottoman sultans. Over the sixteenth century we see a progressive 'imperialization' of the celebration of the Prophet's birth (*Mevlid*) in the Ottoman Empire, and by the early

[240] For a similar attempt to come up with an analytical vocabulary that obviates cultural and religious differences in historical analysis see the special issue of the *Zeitschrift für historische Forschungen* on 'Normenkonkurrenz in historischer Perspektive', edited by A. Karsten and H. von Thiessen. However, the essays in this volume still focus mostly on intra-European and intra-Christian competition in standards or norms. I thank Jan Hennings for bringing it to my attention.

seventeenth century a new emphasis on the legitimization of the dynasty through the patronage of the hajj and the holy sites in Mecca and Medina, with resources from all around the empire, as far as Hungary and Transylvania, tied to their upkeep.[241] In spatial terms, as Nir Shafir recently demonstrated, the need to symbolically tie Istanbul (and its European provinces) with the Hijaz also meant the building of the infrastructure such as roads and transit stations that facilitated this initiative, with Damascus (in addition to Cairo) becoming a crucial pilgrimage hub. This, in turn, facilitated the simultaneous process of Eastern Christian normative centering on Jerusalem, since for the Christians from Egypt and Syria Damascus was also a crucial pilgrimage hub on route to Jerusalem.[242] As Felicita Tramontana has shown, starting in the seventeenth century, an increasing number of Catholic Christians from Palestine and elsewhere went to Jerusalem not only on pilgrimage but also to be married or to baptize their children rather than taking these sacraments in their local congregations, thus underscoring both Jerusalem's gravitational pull and mobility towards it facilitated by the imperial network.[243] In the Jewish case, Jacob Berab (d. 1546) and his students like Joseph Caro, and later in the seventeenth century other rabbis, also sought to establish Jerusalem as the center of Jewish rabbinical authority, which was another initiative towards normative centering enabled by the Ottoman imperial system. In the meantime, engaged in its own project of normative centering, Russian Empire was styling Moscow as a New Jerusalem.[244] Deprived of access to Mecca and Medina until later in the seventeenth century, the Safavids had to create an alternative holy geography centering on the tombs of Imams.[245] They became physical centers of Safavid Shi'ism, which was itself undergoing a process of normativization.

One could, then, argue that in large parts of early modern Eurasia, including the Ottoman Empire, we can identify entangled and dialogic processes of creedal and/or ritual normativization that became bases for community- (and in some cases state-) building. However, as the discussion in this essay has demonstrated, while the initiatives to define creedal and ritual norms—along with the impulse to define and persecute non-conformity—certainly informed the policies of Ottoman authorities as well as of various non-Muslim religious elites, these authorities had limited 'infrastructural power' or indeed incentives to enforce such policies in all corners of the empire at all times. It is true that in the Ottoman Empire, as in other early modern states, technologies of rule were becoming more formalized, with the growth in record keeping and archival consciousness as well as in initiatives to classify subjects,

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[241] On the Ottoman 'imperialization' of the *Mevlid* see Terzioğlu, '*Bid'at*, Custom and the Mutability of Legal Judgments'; on the growing importance of the hajj in imperial legitimation see Börekçi, *Factions and Favorites*, pp. 229–230; 245–246; Hathaway, *The Chief Eunuch*; on the imperial resources devoted to the hajj see Kynn, *Encounters of Islam and Empire*.

[242] Shafir, 'In an Ottoman Holy Land'.

[243] Tramontana, 'Geographical Mobility and Community-Building'.

[244] See Kain, '"New Jerusalem" in Seventeenth-Century Russia'; Kain, 'Conceptualizing New Jerusalem'.

[245] See Farhat, 'Shi'i Piety and Dynastic Legitimacy'.

survey lands, account for revenues, and define the functions and prerogatives of various office holders.[246] Nevertheless, the sheer vastness of the Ottoman domains, their overwhelmingly rural character, absence of landed nobility *stricto sensu*, and legal pluralism that governed its various communities meant that a desire for imposition of order and norms would always remain unfulfilled. This was more so the case here than in contemporary European states with their numerous urban centers that were either politically autonomous or controlled by major landed nobility who had the incentives and resources to enforce confessional discipline within their own sphere of interest, either in their own or the king's/emperor's name.[247] Although a broad consensus emerged in the Ottoman lands of Rum by the mid sixteenth century among the sultans, religious scholars, various middling religious functionaries, preachers, Sufis as well as urban non-elite Muslim population that Sunni Islam was the only publicly admissible form of Islam, attempts to formalize this policy and classify people accordingly, which are reflected in the prescriptive sources, also underscored the persistent informality of practices and arrangements.[248] As discussed above, in many places and social contexts various forms of ambiguity in confessional matters and inter-communal relations prevailed unless grounds for conflict emerged.

This reminds us that, similarly to any form of authority, including imperial, the discourses of normative centering constituted claims that constantly had to be recreated, reconfirmed, and re-enacted in particular contexts.[249] They were typically articulated in dense intellectual and social clusters and disseminated through networks that were not continuous or empire-wide.[250] Whether we speak of the Ottoman Rumi ulema whose views were contested by the ulema in the Ottoman Arab provinces, Catholic missionaries who had presence only in particular locations scattered across Ottoman territories, high-level Orthodox clergy who were split into multiple cliques

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[246] See, for instance, Ferguson, *The Proper Order of Things,* and Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire.*

[247] Although Ottoman sultans awarded land grants (timar) to the cavalrymen serving in the Ottoman army, which could be passed on from father to son provided that the latter serves in the same military capacity, the land ultimately belonged to the sultan and there was, generally speaking, no hereditary landed aristocracy in the Ottoman context that could be compared to the European nobility. That being said, in certain times and places Ottoman administrative elites could and did mobilize their own resources as well as networks of patronage and influence to implement confessional policies that supported the imperial goal of Sunni community-building and cohesion. See, for instance, Boykov, '*Abdāl*-affiliated Convents'.

[248] For an interesting discussion of early modern formalization and its dialectic with informality see Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Die Frühe Neuzeit'.

[249] Ann Laura Stoler has suggested that empires were also a form of authority that had to be constantly re-enacted in a given context and thus should be thought of less as fixed macropolitical entities and more as 'states of becoming' that produced various gradations of sovereignty. See Stoler, 'Considerations on Imperial Comparisons', pp. 35, 40. Tyler Kynn also underscores this point when he suggests in his discussion of the Ottoman hajj patronage that from the perspective of Mecca and Medina the Ottoman imperial power was 'seasonal'. See Kynn, 'Encounters of Islam and Empire'.

[250] On sociology of networks see King, 'The Odd Couple', p. 258.

across the empire, or a circle of rabbis from Safed who sought to make Jerusalem the center of rabbinical authority and ordination but were resisted by other rabbis both in Jerusalem and beyond the Ottoman Empire, we are talking about social clusters and networks. The importance of clusters, networks, and specific contexts highlights an important methodological issue. It suggests that it is less productive to think of the discourses of normative centering and power relations that informed them exclusively in a 'vertical perspective', which envisions a conflict between a pre-determined 'structure' (typically the 'state' or 'state authorities') on the one hand, and the 'agency' of individuals and communities trying to resist it on the other.[251] Certainly, it was of crucial importance who in a particular context claimed the power of definition of confessional affiliation—either one's own or others'—and who was able to enforce the relevant distinctions, how, and why. Nevertheless, sources suggest that we should also approach the issue of power that informed the processes of normative centering from a 'horizontal perspective', whereby 'multiple participants negotiated as they interacted with, co-operated or struggled with each other'.[252] This is reflected in the essays in this volume, which take into consideration both vertical and horizontal power dynamics and examine how they interfaced to produce specific local outcomes, highlighting the fact that denominational affiliation and communal politics were always dependent on a particular context and situation.[253]

In light of these terminological and methodological caveats, can we and should we refer to the early modern Eurasian dynamics under study here as 'entangled confessionalizations' for the sake of expediency and in order to facilitate further comparative endeavors? This may be possible if we take a step further in the process of releasing the term 'confessionalization' from its original formulation in light of the forty years of research on related dynamics both within and beyond Europe. Building on—but going beyond—Philip Benedict's reformulation of the term that still privileges the Reformation (see Part I), we should understand 'entangled confessionalizations' as spatially uneven (more visible in cities), socially clustered, and chronologically staggered yet rivalling projects of creedal and/or ritual normativization that increasingly served as basis for community- (and in some cases state-) building across large parts of Eurasia but coexisted with ambiguity, resistance, and indifference towards them in a dynamic and dialogic relationship that ebbed and flowed. Such entangled normative discourses came to the fore in polities where Christians, Jews and Muslims constituted key populations to which the rulers had to legitimate themselves, and where beginning in the early sixteenth century we see a growing 'conflict between universal religions and universalizing empires'[254] exacerbated by an expectation of the end of the world and the final victory of the 'true' religion. While they

[251] This is also in line with recent studies that approach power of early modern states in terms of their capacity to negotiate with and coordinate different networks of power rather than as Weberian all-powerful static entities juxtaposed to the rest of the society. See, for instance, MacHardy, *War, Religion and Court Patronage*; Mathee, *Persia in Crisis*.

[252] King, 'The Odd Couple', p. 259.

[253] On this point see also Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Einleitung', pp. 24–26.

[254] Fleischer, 'A Mediterranean Apocalypse', p. 19.

were competitive and mimetic, the specific circumstances of the emergence of these normative discourses, their particular manifestation, greater or lesser focus on ritual and/or creed, and disciplinary effect differed depending on the nature of the particular state, community, tradition, and the overall equations of power in a given context.

Whether an integration of the discourses of correct belief and practice—what Lieberman refers to as 'disciplinary revolutions'—and state formation can be identified also in parts of East and Southeast Asia as he suggests, and whether they are entangled with the ones discussed here or need a different analytical framework that would require us to further tweak our vocabulary, remains to be seen.[255] It is possible that the 'entangled confessionalizations' analyzed in this essay constitute a subtype of an even broader early modern trend in which rulers in cooperation with the elites sought to consolidate their rule by bringing the population 'to participate more fully in religious practices and beliefs common to the whole territory' through expansion of 'literacy, schooling and doctrinal understanding'.[256] Further research on other parts of Eurasia and other religious traditions, with a focus on the changing conditions of belief, practice, and configurations of political power between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries will show which lines of inquiry are productive and which not, and whether we should at that point abandon the concept of 'confessionalization' as a term of analysis. Whatever turns out to be the case, as this discussion has hopefully demonstrated, the heuristic potential of the concept as a vehicle for rethinking the nature of global early modernity has not yet been entirely exhausted. If used reflexively as a tool to interrogate the ways in which forms of belief and devotional practice became embedded into social and political contexts across large parts of early modern Eurasia it may yet prove to have enough mileage to deliver us closer to the desired destination before we cast it aside.

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[255] I am in direct dialogue here with Alan Strathern who raises this question in his essay on 'global early modernity'. See Strathern, 'Global Early Modernity', p. 342.
[256] Strathern, 'Featured Review', p. 136.

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