



Centre for Asia Minor Studies

Founders:

Melpo & Octave Merlier

*From Brothers to Enemies:  
Young Turks and Ottoman Greeks  
(1908-1918)*



International One-Day Conference

5 OCTOBER 2018

A.G. Leventis Room  
Centre for Asia Minor Studies  
11 Kydathinaion Str. Plaka

## PROGRAMME

10.15-10.30

### Welcome:

**Paschalis M. Kitromilides** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

10.30-11.30

### Keynote lecture:

**Erik Jan Zürcher** | Leiden University

*The Committee and the Rum: A Self-fulfilling Prophecy of Disloyalty*

### Discussion

### *Coffee Break*

12.00-14.00

### Panel I

### *From Brothers...*

**Chair: Dimitris Kamouzis** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

**Sotirios Dimitriadis** | University of Macedonia

*Young Turks, Old Greeks:  
The 1908 Revolution and the Greek Party in Thessaloniki*

**Kalliopi Amygdalou** | Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy

*Urban Space and Architectural Style in Izmir of the Young Turk Period*

**Ioannis Kyriakantonakis** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

*The Greek Philological Society of Constantinople as a National Agent:  
Ideological Background and Closing Years*

### Discussion

14.00-16.00

***Lunch Break***

16.00-18.00

**Panel II**

***... to Enemies***

**Chair: Stavros Anestidis** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

**Doğan Çetinkaya** | Istanbul University

*From Brothers to Internal Enemies: A Social and Political Analysis  
of the Greek-Muslim Relations in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914*

**Emre Erol** | Sabancı University

*Ottoman Christians in Dr. Resid's Balıkesir Notes:  
Towards the Radicalization of the Unionist Demographic Policies*

**Evangelia Achladi** | Sismanogleio Megaro (Greek Consulate, Istanbul)

*Ottoman Greeks during World War I:  
Enemies of the Allies or Enemies of the State?*

**Dimitris Kamouzis** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

*Loyalist Greeks and the Wartime Humanitarian Crisis:  
The Committee for Destitute Rum (Istanbul, 1917-1918)*

**Discussion**

***Coffee Break***

18.30-19.30

**Concluding remarks:**

**Erik Jan Zürcher** | Leiden University

**Paschalis M. Kitromilides** | Centre for Asia Minor Studies

# ABSTRACTS

## KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Erik Jan Zürcher** | Full Professor, Chair of Turkish Studies, University of Leiden & Academic Director, Leiden Institute of Area Studies

### Abstract:

*The Committee and the Rum: A Self-fulfilling Prophecy of Disloyalty*

In this lecture I would like to further develop the idea of conditionality - that the offer of equal citizenship to the Greek Orthodox by the Young Turks was always implicitly or explicitly conditional on their loyalty to a Turkish-dominated state; in other words: that there was no gradual evolution from Ottomanism to Turkism, but that the two were always two sides of a coin, at least where the Committee of Union and Progress was concerned. In the lecture I will look specifically at the period 1912-1922, but of course the fundamentals did not change in the republic after 1923.

## PANEL I

**Sotirios Dimitriadis** | Post-doctoral Researcher, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki.

### Abstract:

*Young Turks, Old Greeks:*

*The 1908 Revolution and the Greek Party in Thessaloniki*

In 1908, the Greek community in Thessaloniki operated in a state of siege, organizing the armed band that fought a brutal war of counter-insurgency against Bulgarian partisans in the countryside, and defending its commercial interests in a context of severe economic crisis. After the revolutionary events of July of that year, the situation radically and rapidly changed. The Young Turks promised brotherhood of all peoples' of the empire under constitutional rule, and the spontaneous demobilization of thousands of pro-Greek or Bulgarian *komitacis* led to a swift end of the Macedonian conflict. At the same time, the introduction of mass politics in the form of parliamentary and local elections, and the emergence of popular movements in Thessaloniki and other cities, meant that the elite consensual politics of the Hamidian period became very quickly obsolete.

In the years that followed, like elsewhere in the empire, the elites of Thessaloniki that had constituted the "Greek Party" in the city (lay and clergy, Ottoman or Hellenic subjects) had to redefine their traditional privileges in the idiom of individual and constitutional rights, rearticulate their relationship to Istanbul and Athens, learn to operate within a novel political context, and withstand the challenge of mass political movements, from the Committee of Union and Progress to the militant guild of porters

and lightermen. My paper will cover these developments between 1908 and 1912, based on Greek, European and Ottoman documents, and focusing on certain key moments: the Revolution itself and the months that followed; the election cycles of 1908 and 1912; and the anti-Greek boycott of 1910-1911. I hope my contribution will supplement existing scholarship on both the history of Ottoman Greeks and of the 1908 Revolution.

**Kalliopi Amygdalou** | Post-doctoral Researcher, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Athens

Abstract:

*Urban Space and Architectural Style in Izmir of the Young Turk Period*

This presentation will explore the spatial (urban and architectural) dimension of the Young Turk era in Izmir. Izmir has been considered one of the most important port cities of the late Ottoman Empire, combining a massive presence of private capital, the dominance of non-Muslim communities and extraordinary wealth. These characteristics made Izmir critically important for the Young Turk government, who wanted to increase its control and presence in the city. While the Ottoman state had already started making itself more visible in the city through public buildings such as the military barracks, hospital and prison, such projects seem to acquire a further importance in the Young Turk period and extend to areas of education and entertainment.

How did state-led urban interventions leave their mark, and to what needs did they respond? What were the reactions of other stakeholders? And how did the architectural styles of the time reflect the rising national sentiments of different groups? Through a series of case studies including an adventurous boulevard project aiming to connect Basmane station with the port, and the new plans for Konak Square, this presentation will explore the intersections of ideology, identity formation and architecture in a period of transition from the imperial to the national context.

**Ioannis Kyriakantonakis** | Researcher, Centre for Asia Minor Studies

Abstract:

*The Greek Philological Society of Constantinople as a National Agent: Ideological Background and Closing Years*

According to articles A and B of the initial statute of the Greek Philological Association of Constantinople (*Philologikos Syllogos*, founded in 1861 in Pera) “all political conversations are banned” and the Syllogos’ objective was “the publishing or public announcement of philological subjects”. Despite the fact that the ban of political and religious conversations was never revoked, it is inarguable that since its foundation the Syllogos played a pivotal role in the collective life of the Greeks of Constantinople. The paper mainly focuses on the complexity of historical reality of the Syllogos, as the ideologies of Hellenism, Ottomanism, Conservatism and that of the (belated)

Enlightenment converged, contradicted or coexisted in the affairs and the dramatis personae of the Syllogos. One should not expect an explicit expression of political positions by its prominent members who stressed the superiority of Greek culture while being loyal to the regime of the Sultan. But many of the Syllogos' initiatives and activities were inspired by national causes, such as those of education, literary production, or scientific progress.

Therefore, an indirect, latent national discourse and agency came to exist in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Constantinople. Given the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire after the Balkan wars and the First World War, nationalism finally prevailed and was able to overflow the Syllogos' conservatism. Some opposing voices, echoing nostalgia for the millet system and Ottomanism, were raised, but one thing was certain: the Syllogos was founded in a world which differed radically from that of its closing years. The latter part of this paper will present the few published sources of the history of the Syllogos' final period, which-as we now know- was the prelude of its end in 1922.

## **PANEL II**

**Doğan Çetinkaya** | Assistant Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, Istanbul University

### Abstract:

*From Brothers to Internal Enemies: A Social and Political Analysis of the Greek-Muslim Relations in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914.*

This paper will start with the revolutionary atmosphere of the 1908 Revolution and the social, political and economical tensions in between different religious communities of the empire. The change in mass politics that was brought in by the 1908 Revolution will be highlighted as a crucial dynamic in the Ottoman Empire. The demonization and the stigmatization of the Ottoman Greeks in the political and social campaigns of Muslim/Turks will constitute the second part of the paper. The analysis will basically focus on the elections, boycotts and the atrocity propaganda discourse after the Balkan Wars and how it paved the way for the demographic destruction of the non-Muslim communities and particularly the Greek Orthodox population.

**Emre Erol** | Assistant Professor, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University

### Abstract:

*Ottoman Christians in Dr. Resid's Balıkesir Notes: Towards the Radicalization of the Unionist Demographic Policies*

Soon after his appointment as a governor (*mutasarrıf*) to Karesi (in Northwestern Anatolia) in 1913 following the Unionist seizure of power with the *Bâb-ı Âlî* coup earlier in the same year, a prominent Young Turk, Dr. Mehmed Reşid Şahingiray embarks on a fact-finding mission in the region.

His aim was to collect information and make assessments for the central committee of the Committee of Union and Progress. His fact-finding mission was one of the few others conducted again by important Unionists during the same time period. These fact-finding missions seem to have aimed at collecting all sorts of information about the peoples, physical structures and natural resources of the regions. Dr. Reşid's travel notes named as *Balıkesir Notları* (Balıkesir Notes) constitute an important example of such documents. The year 1913, at which Dr. Reşid's notes were written, was a crucial turning point for the Ottoman Empire and the Unionists. The former entered into an almost constant period of warfare that would essentially end in 1922 and the latter were radicalized, brought to almost absolute power and reshaped the entire Ottoman society during their tenure.

Dr. Reşid's notes present a vista into the mindset of a Unionist who would soon play a very central role in the formulation and execution of demographic engineering policies against the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire. Although Dr. Reşid is mostly known for his role in the atrocities against Ottoman Armenians during the Great War this particular travel notes talk about a region where a considerable amount of the population were Ottoman Orthodox Christians, or *Rum*. Dr. Reşad's perception of these Ottoman Orthodox Christians, and Greeks in general, provide us with a snapshot of the Unionist mindset that will soon affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ottoman Christians in the ousting of 1914. This presentation contextualizes this primary source and critically studies it in order to demonstrate the radicalization of the Unionist mindset against the Ottoman Christians (particularly the Orthodox communities and Greeks) following the rather turbulent period after the Balkan Wars.

**Evangelia Achladi** | Curator of the "Sakkulidis Book Collection", Sismanogleio Megaro (Greek Consulate, Istanbul)

#### Abstract:

*Ottoman Greeks during World War I: Enemies of the Allies or Enemies of the State?*

The aim of this paper is to present the impact of the war and of the Ottoman Government policies towards the Ottoman-Greek population in different regions of the empire (Smyrna-Makri-Mersin) during World War I. The Ottoman Greeks as Ottoman subjects participated in the war campaign (*seferberlik*) sharing with their Muslim compatriots the extraordinary conditions of the war at the battlefield and in their home towns while at the same time the Ottoman government considered them "interior enemies" and as such subjected them to special measures ranging from physical violence to forced displacement and ethnic cleansing. This paper aims at a) presenting some of the paradoxical situations Ottoman Greeks found themselves in during the war years (complexities of being defined as the enemy by both sides) and b) analyzing the character and interpreting the consequences of the internal policies of the Young Turk Governments during the war years. The study is based on material from the British Foreign Office Archives,

Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and secondary sources in Greek and Turkish.

**Dimitris Kamouzis** | Researcher, Centre for Asia Minor Studies

*Loyalist Greeks and the Wartime Humanitarian Crisis:  
The Committee for Destitute Rum (Istanbul, 1917-1918)*

After the Young Turk revolution of 1908 two antagonistic lay/clerical leadership groups emerged within the Greek Orthodox community of Istanbul, one with ethnocentric political orientations - the self-proclaimed *ethnikofrones* (nationally-minded, *εθνικόφρονες*) - and a more conservative, accommodating and loyalist one whose policy of cooperation with the Committee of Union and Progress would make them unpopular among many Greeks and attach to them the derogatory name "Anti-nationals" (*Αντεθνικοί*). In ecclesiastical terms the former supported Patriarch Ioakim III, whereas the latter belonged mostly to the anti-Ioakimist camp. The Anti-nationals/anti-Ioakimists became the lay and religious leadership of the community after the Balkan Wars (October 1912 - August 1913) and retained their power until the end of World War I.

My paper will focus on this conservative leadership group in an attempt to draw attention to the political role of the people who in a sense constituted the exception to the rule by remaining loyal to the vision of Ottoman "brotherhood" even after a policy of physical and structural violence was methodically applied by the Committee of Union and Progress against the non-Muslims of the empire. Whether being on good terms with the Unionist regime and assuming a rather compliant political stance was a conscious and calculated course of action in order to gain control over communal affairs and deal with the opposition within the community - as the *ethnikofrones* were claiming - or it gradually became a strategic choice in an effort to protect the Greek Orthodox population of Istanbul during the adverse war period remains largely unexplored. In order to respond to this question the paper will initially present in brief the passive attitude of Patriarch Germanos V and his supporters in relation to the violent nation-building policies of the CUP. Afterwards it will examine as a case study the activities of the Committee for Destitute Rum (*Επιτροπή Απόρων Ρωμιών*), a charity organization composed of loyalist Greeks who tried to actively address the severe problem of orphan children, homeless people and impoverished families in Istanbul during the last years of the Great War.