

GREAT LAKES OTTOMANIST WORKSHOP  
(GLOW)  
TENTATIVE PROGRAM 2013

**FRIDAY MARCH 29:** Check-In for out-of-town-ers at hotel and transportation to Renée Worringer's residence



Welcome to Woolagon Farm

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**5:00 ~ 6:30pm**

Orientalizing Ottomans for Western Eyes

Presentation 1: **Vassiliki Tsitsopoulou**, University of Indiana Bloomington. Independent Scholar.

**“The Ottomans of Silent Cinema”**

**Abstract:** On January 31, 1928 a French judge of the Seine Civil Tribunal heard arguments on a lawsuit brought by the children of the sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918) against the production company *Société des Cinéromans* for unauthorized and defamatory use of the name and physical likeness of their father in the film *Jalma la double*. The artistic director of the company, Louis Nalpas, and the film's director, Roger Goupillières, were also named in the suit. Although the French civil code and legal precedent were fully on their side, the sultan's children lost their case. In this presentation I relate the rupture in the application of the law in the case of *Jalma la double* to the film's particular approach to representing the erosion of Ottoman sovereignty under the international treaty regime and to parallel developments in the early cinematic and para-cinematic depiction of East-West contact. The figure of the Levantine is an important element in the allegorization of Euro-Ottoman relations in *Jalma* and the numerous films like it produced in Europe and the US. On-screen, the Levantine (male or female) is the semiotype of treachery or indeterminacy threatening the self-evidence of Western righteousness. Off-screen, Levantines like the film producer and studio head Louis Nalpas, a former Ottoman subject of mixed French-Greek parentage, shaped the geocultural language of cinema. They brokered the assimilation of pre-cinematic orientalist exoticism into silent cinema's figural repertory of colonial Euro-Ottoman relations.

The presentation will be accompanied by clips and stills from *Jalma* and several other films of the same period (1920s-1930s) and similar interest (within the narrow limits of archival availability), including: Louis Mercanton's *Phroso* (1922), Rex Ingram's *The Magician* (1926), Joe May's *Dagfin* (1926), and Georg Wilhelm Pabst's *Mademoiselle Docteur* a.k.a *Salonique, nid d'espions* (1937).

Presentation 2: **Justin Dell**, PhD Student, U of Toronto History (and UG undergrad, WLU MA Alum!)

### **“Christian Missionaries to the Ottoman Empire”**

**Abstract:** Missionaries working for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) began to evangelize in Syria in the 1820s, part of a millenarian initiative by American Protestants to subvert the Ottoman Empire from within by converting large segments of its population to Evangelical Christianity. It did not take the missionaries long, however, to learn that aggressive proselytism engendered stiff opposition from a diversity of Ottoman religious sects in Syria and resulted in few converts. As a means to sidestep this resistance, American Protestants turned to education as a less pugnacious, surreptitious means of evangelizing the Syrian populace. However, what began as an adroit tactical move designed to procure converts to Protestantism in Ottoman Syria transformed into a policy of acculturation. This policy was pursued by American missionaries stationed in Beirut in direct violation of orders issued by ABCFM headquarters in Boston, which stipulated that missionary schools were to be used strictly for spreading the Gospel, not for ‘civilizing’ the pupils. “Christianization before civilization,” had been the Board’s policy. The rift between American missionaries in Syria and their superiors in America continued to widen over this issue throughout the nineteenth century.

This paper will argue that the schism that developed between Boston and Beirut was more than simply a fracture between evangelicalism and secularism, or simply an accidental byproduct of the mission’s adroit transition from preaching to education in order to secure an audience with potential converts; rather, missionaries in the Levantine mission field increasingly identified with European imperialism in the region and exchanged spirituality for a more corporeal understanding of their faith as representative of Anglo-Saxon civilization and its inexorable destiny to vanquish rival Arab Islamic civilization.

7 pm ~ Welcome Reception

**Transportation back to hotel in Guelph.**

**SATURDAY MARCH 30:** 9:00-9:30 Breakfast at hotel or home

All Roundtable Sessions on University of Guelph campus in **Rozanski Hall, Rm 105**

**9:30 ~ 1130am Roundtable Session I :  
Living Ottoman History: New Perspectives**

A Discussion of Kate Fleet and Ebru Boyar's *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (2010) and Fariba Zarinebaf's *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul 1700-1800* (2011).

Discussants:

Dr Dana Sajdi (Boston College), editor of *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyles in the Eighteenth Century* (2008)

Dr Ariel Salzmann (Queen's University), author of *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (2004)

**1130am ~ 1:00pm Lunch on U of Guelph Campus, at University Centre**

**1:00 ~ 1:45pm "Time and Narrative in Ottoman Maps"**  
Dr Gottfried Hagen, University of Michigan

**2:00 ~ 4:00pm Roundtable Session II :  
New Directions in Ottoman History: Environmental Studies**

"The Ottoman Empire and Environmental History"

Dr Alan Mikhail (Yale University), author of *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (2011).

"Climate and Crisis in the Ottoman Empire"

Dr Sam White (Oberlin College), author of *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (2011)

**4:30 ~ 5:30pm Social Hour in Guelph (Venue TBA)  
5:30pm ~ Dinner in Guelph @ TBA**

**SUNDAY MARCH 31**

930 ~ 10:00am

Breakfast at hotel or at home

**10:00 ~11:15am**

**Religious Identity and Ottoman Flexibility at the Periphery**

Presentation 1: **Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer**, PhD Student OSU

**“ ‘Başına tac aldı çıktı ol pelid  
İtdi bi-idraki etrak-i mürid:’  
Safavid Propaganda for Conversion in Anatolia and Ottoman Reaction,  
1481-1629”**

Abstract: The Twelver Shi‘ite Safavid empire, which took over Iran in 1501, started out as a Sufi, or mystical, order (the Safaviyya) in northwestern Iran that gradually embraced Shi‘ism and began recruiting converts in eastern Anatolia. At this early stage, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, they were not a clear threat to the Ottomans. Therefore, the coercive measures that the Ottomans took against the growing number of Safavid supporters in Anatolia -- known as Kızılbaş, during this period did not follow a straightforward path. Instead, the tolerance level of the Ottoman central authority for its Kızılbaş subjects fluctuated based on the relationships between Istanbul and the Safavid capital, Ardabil (later Tabriz) in northwestern Iran, in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Specifically, while the level of tolerance and support shown to the Safaviyya Sufi order and its followers in the Ottoman territories was quite high until the last quarter of the fifteenth century, a policy of close surveillance, suppression, and persecution replaced this more casual attitude, except for the period from 1555 to 1574, when a peace treaty (The Peace of Amasya) determined the nature of the relationship between the two empires.

I am, therefore, studying different forms of religious propaganda disseminated by the Safavid religious and political leaders in different Anatolian towns, as well as the drastically varying policies of the Ottoman central authority, from financial support for the order to execution of its followers, with reference to specific examples from primary sources. With this project, I envision exploring changing social and religious dynamics in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Anatolia, as well as cultural conceptions of religious identity, state of belonging, and obedience with regard to the population of early modern Ottoman Anatolia. A study of conversion from Sunni to Shi‘ite Islam will also provide insight into the multi-layered and often ambivalent religious identities developed by both the Ottomans and the Safavids in response to the shifting dynamics of Anatolia during the given period.

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Presentation 2: **Sanja Kadrić**, PhD Student, OSU

**“The Devşirme and the Laws of the Janissaries: Muslims in the Bosnian Eyalet”**

Abstract: This paper explores Bosnian Muslims in the Ottoman *devşirme*, a levy of young men trained and educated as elite military and bureaucratic slaves. I contextualize this institution within Ottoman history and build on the historiography posited by Ottoman historians studying the Islamization of Bosnia and the *devşirme* as an Ottoman institution. While I accept some of the hypotheses posited by these historians regarding the Bosnian province and the legality and origins of the *devşirme*, I approach both through a new lens: Illegal according to Islamic law in its own right, this uniquely-Ottoman institution was extended to include Bosnian Muslims, a double illegality. Following Benjamin Braude’s approach to origin tales in “Foundation Myths of the Millet System,” I explore the foundation myth that justified this deviation. Found in a 1606 Ottoman reform manual written for Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-17), *The Laws of the Janissaries*, the myth may have served as justification for the already-established presence of Bosnian Muslims in the *devşirme*. We have proof of this in contracts between recently-converted Bosnian Muslim parents and the Ottoman state, yet these have never been situated within this foundation myth. My paper attempts to rectify this gap and posit reasons as to why Bosnian Muslims may have been preferred for the *devşirme*. This discrepancy warrants further study as it may have important implications for many other provinces of the empire and for the *devşirme* as a whole which was so critical to the empire’s functioning.

**11:30 ~ 12:45pm                      Roundtable Session III : The Margins or Forefront?**

A discussion of Christine Philliou’s *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (2010)

Discussant:

Dr Janet Klein (University of Akron), Author of *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (2011)

**12:45 pm~?                              Planning for GLOW 2014? When and Where? What?**

The problem with sources? New primary source projects?  
Teaching history using literature?  
Ottoman history in literature?

Irfan Orga, *Portrait of a Turkish Family*  
Louis de Bernieres, *Birds Without Wings*  
Orhan Pamuk’s *Istanbul*

**Transportation back to Toronto airport from Hotel for any travelers.**