

RESEARCH PROGRAMME

2013-2014



The Turkish Cypriots from the Ottoman era to the British colonial system (1856-1931): from a Muslim-Ottoman to a Turkish Cypriot community

The research project will be focusing on the Turkish Cypriots from 1856 to 1931, trying to illustrate the process through which, during these crucial years for the history of Cyprus, the island's Muslim-Ottoman community is shaped into a Turkish Cypriot community. Research will be conducted along four main axes: 1. The 19th century "Ottoman modernity". Its manifestation in Cyprus through the Tanzimat reforms, and its consequences (social, economic and political) for the Muslim-Ottoman community. The transition from an Ottoman power group to a "religious community"; 2. The first period of the implementation in Cyprus of "British modernity" (1878-1914) and the deep transformations (both social and political) that it causes to the "Muslim-Ottoman community". The two tendencies that develop within the community: on the one hand the *Evkaf*, as a carrier of a British-Ottoman modernization, and on the other hand a religious tendency, carrier of an Ottoman-Turkish modernization, with Istanbul as its centre of reference; 3. The second period of "British modernity" (1914-1925) and the social, political and demographic transformations that take place within the Muslim community. The gradual formation of a Turkish group within the community and the organization network developed by this group within the community. From an Ottoman-Turkish to a Turkish community; 4. Cyprus as a British colony (1925-1931). The radicalization of social and political forces within the community: a. the reorganization of the *Evkaf*; b. the development of new political and social forces within the community; c. Kemalism as the new ground for negotiation. Ankara as the centre of reference for the Turkish community of Cyprus.

All through this period (1856-1931), developments within the Muslim-Ottoman community will be studied in interaction with developments within the Greek-Orthodox community. The following will be taken into consideration: 1. The channels of dialogue between the communities on a social level. The acquiring of a social consciousness by certain groups within the Muslim-Ottoman community in the context of common action (demonstrations, social mobilization, organization networks) with the Greek-Orthodox community; 2. The radicalization of certain groups within the Turkish community as a reflection of the radicalization of the Greek community; 3. The gradual adoption of a new ideological, social and political vocabulary by the élite of the Turkish community, in imitation of the Greek community. The Evkaf as an example: the effort to create a “Turko-Muslim Ethnarchy”.

It is expected that this research project will constitute a major contribution to the study of the history of Cyprus during the complicated period of transition from the Ottoman framework to the British colonial system, since it will be based on previously unknown and unpublished archival material (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* (BOA) –Istanbul, *Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi* -Ankara, *Historical Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece (IAYE)* - Athens, *The National Archives (TNA)* - London and *Cyprus State Archives (KAK)* - Nicosia). It will also be based on other primary sources that have not been systematically studied, such as the Turkish Cypriot Press. The final product of the research project is expected to be an extensive volume on the Turkish Cypriot community from the middle of the 19th century until 1931.

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