Veruschka Wagner / Fırat Yaşa (eds.)

# Positions and Possessions

## Belonging in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

Bonn University Press

Belong (bėlŏng′), *v. n.* : (۱) مالی اولمق : متملكاتندن اولمق
(۲) حقی اولمق : (۳) تماتندن اولمق : مشتملاتندن اولمق : متفرعاتندن
اولمق : متعلقاتندن اولمق : (۴) باقمق : كلمك : دوشمك : راجع اولمق :
عائد اولمق : (۵) مخصوص اولمق : منسوب اولمق : مربوط اولمق : منوط
اولمق : (٦) اوصافندن اولمق : خواصندن اولمق : (۷) سكنه‌سندن
اولمق : اهالیسندن اولمق : (۸) باشی باغلو اولمق : منتسب اولمق :
Where do you belong to ? (۱) سن نره‌لو سن : سنك مملكتك
نره‌سی اولیور: (۲) سنك باشك نره‌یه باغلو در:
Belonging (bėlŏng′ĭng), *s.* : عائد و راجع اولقلق
Belonging (bėlŏng′ĭng), *adj.* : عائد و راجع اولان

V&R unipress

unipress

Ottoman Studies / Osmanistische Studien

Band 12

Herausgegeben von
Stephan Conermann, Sevgi Ağcagül und Gül Şen

Die Bände dieser Reihe sind peer-reviewed.

Veruschka Wagner / Fırat Yaşa (eds.)

# Positions and Possessions

## Belonging in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

V&R unipress

Bonn University Press

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über https://dnb.de abrufbar.

**Veröffentlichungen der Bonn University Press erscheinen bei V&R unipress.**

© 2026 Brill | V&R unipress, Robert-Bosch-Breite 10, D-37079 Göttingen, info@v-r.de, ein Imprint der Brill-Gruppe
(Koninklijke Brill BV, Leiden, Niederlande; Brill USA Inc., Boston MA, USA; Brill Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore; Brill Deutschland GmbH, Paderborn, Deutschland; Brill Österreich GmbH, Wien, Österreich)
Koninklijke Brill BV umfasst die Imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Brill Wageningen Academic, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau und V&R unipress.
Alle Rechte vorbehalten. Das Werk und seine Teile sind urheberrechtlich geschützt.
Jede Verwertung in anderen als den gesetzlich zugelassenen Fällen bedarf der vorherigen schriftlichen Einwilligung des Verlages.

Umschlagabbildung: A lexicon, English and Turkish by James Redhouse (1884)
Druck und Bindung: CPI books GmbH, Birkstraße 10, D-25917 Leck
Printed in the EU.

**Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage | www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com**

ISSN 2366-3677 (print) | ISSN 2366-3685 (digital)
ISBN 978-3-8471-1986-9 (print)
ISBN 978-3-8470-1986-2 (digital) | 978-3-7370-1986-6 (eLibrary)

## Contents

Suraiya Faroqhi / Veruschka Wagner / Fırat Yaşa
Introduction . . . . . . . . . . 7

Boğaç Ergene
Friends with Benefits: Material Obligations of Companionship among Premodern Ottoman Elite . . . . . . . . . . 27

Işık Tamdoğan
Being a *Rum* Subject in Ottoman Society: On dwellers of Üsküdar and Cilicia (18th century and beginning of the 20th century) . . . . . . . . . . 45

Nurcan Abacı
Households with Double Qibla and the Hedgehog Dilemma of Converts . . . . . . . . . . 73

Turan Açık
The *Celestialisation* of Space and Belonging in the Ottoman Empire . . . . . . . . 87

Zeynep Dörtok Abacı / Fırat Yaşa
'The Nose Never Makes a Mistake': Smell and Belonging in Early Modern Ottoman Society . . . . . . . . . . 109

Nilüfer Alkan Günay
In Pursuit of Missing Family Members: Loyalty to the Family in Ottoman Society in the Second Half of the 16th Century . . . . . . . . . . 129

N. İpek Hüner
Hanging Out and Helping Out: Women of the Ottoman Daily Life . . . . . . . . . 153

Günhan Börekçi
The Rise of Grand Vizier Nasuh Pasha (d. 1614): A Study on Premodern
Ottoman Elite Formation and Intra-Elite Relations . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 167

Suraiya Faroqhi / Veruschka Wagner / Fırat Yaşa

# Introduction[1]

## A Theoretical Framework

The concept of belonging is central to understanding the human experience across diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts. As demonstrated in Eva Youkhana's text on the early modern Ottoman Empire, belonging is not a singular, monolithic phenomenon but rather a complex, multifaceted construct that operates across numerous dimensions. Indeed, as Youkhana observes, belonging has been described as 'still a rather new theoretical term', precisely because it is fluid in nature, shaped by internal emotions and various contextual factors, and too spread-out to be confined within a single form.[2]

Theoretical perspectives on concepts of belonging transcend specific temporal and geographical boundaries, such as Nira Yuval-Davis's politics of belonging and intersectionality, Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary's psychological need to belong, Giorgio Agamben's concept of *homo sacer* and exclusion, and Floya Anthias's translocational positionality. Each of these perspectives offers unique insights into different aspects of belonging, and together they provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for understanding this multifaceted phenomenon whose fluid nature allows it to flow across and between different forms of human experience.

Nira Yuval-Davis's work on the politics of belonging provides a critical foundation for understanding how belonging is constructed, contested, and negotiated within power structures. According to this scholar, belonging encompasses three analytical levels: social locations, identifications and emotional attachments, and

1 This edited volume is the outcome of a workshop on Loyalty, Belonging, and Dependency in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire, held at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), Universität Bonn, on 5–6 May 2022. We would like to thank the BCDSS for supporting us.

2 Eva Youkhana, 'A conceptual shift in studies of belonging and the politics of belonging', *Social Inclusion* 3/4 (2015): 12.

ethical and political values.[3] These levels interact in complex ways, shaped by intersecting social divisions such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, and religion. Yuval-Davis emphasises that belonging is not merely a personal feeling but is deeply embedded in political processes. She argues that the politics of belonging comprises specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to collectives that are themselves, at the same time, being constructed by these projects in very particular ways.[4] This perspective highlights how belonging is actively constructed through political projects that define the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, demonstrating that belonging's fluid nature allows it to be constantly reshaped through political contestation and internal emotional responses to these processes.

Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary's work on the need to belong offers a psychological perspective that complements Yuval-Davis's sociopolitical approach. They argue that the need to belong is a fundamental human motivation and that human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships.[5] This perspective emphasises the universal psychological dimensions of belonging, suggesting that the desire for social connection is innate and essential to human well-being.[6] Baumeister and Leary identify two key criteria for satisfying the need to belong: 'First, people need frequent personal contacts or interactions with the other person… Second, people need to perceive that there is an interpersonal bond or relationship marked by stability, affective concern, and continuation into the foreseeable future.'[7] This framework helps us understand the psychological mechanisms underlying the formation and maintenance of social bonds, as well as the adverse effects of social exclusion and isolation. The psychological perspective on belonging highlights the emotional dimensions of social connection and disconnection.

Giorgio Agamben's concept of *homo sacer* provides a philosophical framework for understanding the relationship between belonging, exclusion, and power. Agamben describes *homo sacer* as a figure who is excluded from the political community yet remains connected to it through this very exclusion – one who

3 Nira Yuval-Davis, *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations* (London: Sage, 2011), pp. 10–18.

4 Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Belonging and the politics of belonging', *Patterns of Prejudice* 40/3 (2006): 199.

5 Roy F. Baumeister and Mark R. Leary, 'The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation', *Psychological Bulletin* 117/3 (1995): 497.

6 However, as Maslow earlier noted in his hierarchy of needs, the need for love and belonging operates differently across individuals and contexts, influenced by internal emotional states and external circumstances that make belonging a deeply personal and variable experience. Abraham H. Maslow, 'A theory of human motivation', *Psychological Review* 50/4 (1943): 380–383.

7 Baumeister and Leary, 'The need to belong': 500–501.

'may be killed and yet not sacrificed'.[8] This paradoxical status illuminates how exclusion operates not as a complete separation but as a constitutive element of the social order, demonstrating that even exclusion from belonging takes multiple, fluid forms that shift according to political circumstances and individual emotional responses.

Agamben's analysis of sovereign power and bare life offers insights into how political systems define themselves through the creation of exceptions. The concept of *homo sacer* is therefore particularly relevant for analysing the experiences of those who occupy liminal positions within social hierarchies. This theoretical lens illuminates how certain individuals or groups can be simultaneously part of society and excluded from full participation in it, existing in a state of what might be termed 'inclusive exclusion'.

Floya Anthias's concept of translocational positionality offers a sociological framework for understanding the complex, shifting nature of belonging across different social contexts. Anthias defines translocational positionality as the complex nature of positionality faced by those who are at the interplay of a range of locations and dislocations in relation to gender, ethnicity, and class.[9] This approach emphasises how belonging is not fixed but contextual, relational, and subject to ongoing negotiation influenced by both external circumstances and internal emotional responses. Anthias argues that 'belonging and identity are not really about questions that relate to "who am I" or "where do I belong" but are better framed in terms of 'what are the social places constructed by such identifications and belongings.'[10] This perspective shifts the focus from individual identity to the social locations and power relations that shape experiences of belonging and exclusion. It highlights how belonging is not merely a subjective feeling but is embedded in concrete social structures and practices, while simultaneously being fluid and responsive to various factors that make it too expansive to be contained within rigid categories.

The concept of translocational positionality is particularly valuable for understanding how individuals navigate multiple, sometimes contradictory, forms of belonging. Anthias notes that the concept of 'translocational positionality' addresses issues of identity in terms of locations that are not fixed but are related to context, meaning, and time and which therefore involve shifts and contradic-

8 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 8.

9 Floya Anthias, 'Thinking through the lens of translocational positionality: An intersectionality frame for understanding identity and belonging', *Translocations: Migration and Social Change* 4/1 (2008): 5.

10 Floya Anthias, 'Where do I belong? Narrating collective identity and translocational positionality', *Ethnicities* 2/4 (2002): 491.

tions.[11] This framework explains how individuals develop complex, multifaceted identities as they move across different social, cultural, and geographical contexts. This theoretical insight is further supported by research on 'place-belonging', which demonstrates that belonging is not defined by location alone but by affective, cultural, and relational practices that are sedimented over time through daily rituals that structure social relations. Such reflexive, everyday practices operate as social mechanisms that shape the quality of relationships and give meaning, value, identity, and a sense of belonging to individuals across different contexts.[12] This aligns with Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst's findings that belonging to place involves complex negotiations between biography, trajectory, and locality that flow and adapt according to changing circumstances and internal emotional states.[13]

Taken together, all theories and models support a multidimensional framework in which belonging operates across multiple levels simultaneously – psychological, social, political, spatial, and temporal – and that these dimensions interact in complex, context-dependent ways influenced by various factors including internal emotions, social circumstances, and temporal changes. Rather than seeking a unified theory of belonging, this framework embraces the 'fluid' and extensive nature of belonging experiences while providing analytical tools for understanding their operation. As the various perspectives outlined here demonstrate, belonging is best understood not as a fixed state or singular concept but as a dynamic, relational process that flows between different forms according to various factors and is too expansive to be contained within rigid definitional boundaries. This fluid quality of belonging – its capacity to shift, adapt, and transform in response to internal emotions and external circumstances – is precisely what makes it such a powerful and enduring aspect of human experience across diverse contexts and historical periods.

## Forms and Facets of Belonging

The multifaceted concept of belonging cannot be captured by a single example or a dictionary entry, as the concept extends across a wide array of dimensions. At its core, belonging involves both how individuals perceive their own identities and the ways others perceive them. These self-perceptions and external judgements combine to shape an individual's sense of belonging in different social contexts.

---

11 Anthias, 'Thinking through the lens of translocational positionality': 8.

12 Emma Charlton et al. 'Incidental moments: The paradox of belonging in educational spaces', in *Interrogating Belonging for Young People in Schools*, ed. Christine Halse (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 41–42.

13 Mike Savage et al., *Globalization and Belonging* (London: Sage, 2005), pp. 207–208.

Belonging is also tied to various forms of affiliation and connection. These ties can be either professional, where individuals identify with a specific occupation or career; religious, where faith and spiritual practices create shared bonds; familial, grounded in kinship and ancestral ties; ideological, shaped by political or philosophical beliefs; or emotional, tied to personal feelings and attachments to people or places. Each of these connections can take on a variety of forms, ranging from flexible and adaptable affiliations to those that are deeply rooted and enduring, often providing a sense of stability and permanence in a person's life. Moreover, the significance and strength of these connections can fluctuate over time. While some ties may shift or evolve due to changing circumstances, others remain deeply ingrained in one's sense of identity and community. The complexity of belonging thus reflects the dynamic interaction between personal identity, social expectations, and the diverse relationships that individuals maintain throughout their lives.[14]

Belonging may be acquired or imposed, formed voluntarily or through coercion. A variety of reasons may induce an individual to seek membership in another group, community, institution, or the like, and these can be based on different causes. In the Ottoman Empire, one notable example is the phenomenon of religious conversion. There were various reasons for integrating into the dominant religious community if this option was available. Certain professions were reserved only for Muslims, so conversion to Islam was an option that could open new doors. Religious conversion was also an incentive for renegades whose conversion to Islam facilitated their assimilation into Ottoman imperial structures. Slaves, for example, were attracted by conversion to Islam because it offered them integration into society and the possibility of faster release or a change of owner if their owners were non-Muslims.[15]

Belonging itself does not explicitly have a positive or negative value, as its character can change depending on the individual's circumstances. Furthermore, today as in the early modern period, belonging to a group could bring advantages or disadvantages, depending on the situation. Coming from certain regions and belonging to certain ethnic groups could serve as an advantage for advancement in the Ottoman state apparatus. The large number of grand viziers of Albanian

14 For a recently published study on questions of identity and belonging in a contemporary multicultural context, see Khadija Boualam and Abdelghanie Ennam, 'Identity and belonging in multicultural contexts: Navigating complex dynamics', *International Journal of Cultural and Religious Studies* 4/2 (2024): 28–40.

15 Veruschka Wagner et al. 'Rethinking Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire through Religious Conversion Practices', *BCDSS Working Paper* 2024(4) (https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/images/pdf-files/working-papers/wp_14_ottoman-slavery-wg.pdf).

descent in the Ottoman Empire indicates that belonging to networks could benefit a personal career.[16]

We can conceptualise different types of belonging as partially isolated entities that exist independently, yet they may also intersect or overlap in meaningful ways. The interpretation of belonging is highly subjective and can differ widely between individuals. It may be something that can be actively supplied or sought after, and it can exist independently or emerge through social interactions and relationships. Individuals can express belonging towards others in different ways, through attitude, support, presence, or affection, as well as in negative ways, through rejection, distancing, or moving away. Furthermore, external markers such as appearance, clothing, behaviour, or language can variously determine belonging or exclusion.[17]

## Approaching Belonging in Ottoman Contexts

The early modern Ottoman Empire serves as an excellent example for examining the complexities of belonging. As a complex state, stretching over a vast territory and home to many different ethnic, religious, and social groups, the Ottoman context reveals how belonging operates simultaneously across religious, spatial, social, cultural, professional, and emotional dimensions. The central government sought to create a harmonious society where diverse groups would align with a common vision and play clear roles. For instance, the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims applied to the formation of neighbourhoods. Before cities became more diverse, groups like Greeks, Armenians, and Jews typically lived in neighbourhoods separate from those of Muslims. Over time, individuals who converted to Islam – finding the 'straight path', a definition that was shaped by a state-centric approach – broke away from their former cultural milieu and moved to Muslim neighbourhoods, either of their own free will or under social pressure.[18] Ottoman residential neighbourhoods, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, were communities centred around a place of worship, where people knew each other and took respon-

16 See Günhan Börekçi's contribution in this volume and for the later times, see Abdulhamit Kırmızı, 'Experiencing the Ottoman Empire as a life course', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 40/1 (2014): 42–66.

17 Floya Anthias, 'Thinking through the lens of translocational positionality: An intersectionality frame for understanding identity and belonging', *Translocations: Migration and Social Change* 4/1 (2008).

18 Özer Ergenç, 'Osmanlı şehrindeki mahalle'nin işlev ve nitelikleri üzerine', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 4 (1984): 69; Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap İlyas Mahalle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), p. 4; Turan Açık, 'Mahalle ve camii: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda mahalle tipleri hakkında Trabzon üzerinden bir değerlendirme', *OTAM* 35 (2014): 1–39.

sibility for one another's behaviour. It was also common for individuals wishing to settle in a Muslim neighbourhood to secure the endorsement of a respected local authority who would vouch for their behaviour and moral integrity.[19] Harmony and stability were prioritised over diversity, reflecting a system that sought to maintain balance and coherence. However, despite this idealised vision, it was inevitable that certain individuals or groups would diverge from the imagined norm, developing differences over time that were perceived as disruptive to the surrounding order. The crucial question, then, is whether the distinct characteristics of these 'others', those who differed from the majority, legitimised their exclusion from their environment. Was their marginalisation by the state apparatus justified by their divergence, or was this determination shaped by the majority itself, the state seeking to preserve an idealised social order, or even the individual's own perceptions of alienation? Both the ruling authorities and the broader population recognise that there will always be those who deviate from the norm – individuals who challenge expectations or make choices that differ from what is conventionally accepted. These individuals, despite attempts to regulate or control their presence, cannot be entirely erased from the social landscape.

Beyond merely posing a threat to the established order, these 'others' possess distinct identities that emerge from the very context in which they are marginalised. These identities, though different, are valid expressions of belonging in their own right. Each contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between individuals, society, and the spaces they inhabit. The presence of the marginalised exposes the intricate layers of social relations, revealing the multifaceted nature of the social structure. An example of this can be seen in the clothing worn by different religious and social groups. The colours and styles of attire were not just practical but symbolic, reflecting the identities of non-Muslims, free men, and slaves, and highlighting their distinctions within the broader society. The social fabric was thus visually marked by these markers of identity, which played an important role in signalling the position of a given person within the hierarchy. Furthermore, the prohibition that barred non-Muslims from acquiring certain goods reserved exclusively for Muslims further reinforced these distinctions, solidifying the social boundaries that delineated the 'other' from the rest of society.[20]

---

19 Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order* (Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2014), pp. 110–117; Zeynep Dörtok Abacı, 'Ahde Vefâ: Kamu düzenini sağlama aracı olarak Bursa'da nefse kefalet uygulaması (II. Selim Dönemi)', in *Sultan II. Selim Dönemi ve Bursa*, ed. Fırat Yaşa (Bursa: Gaye Kitapevi, 2020), p. 504; Fariba Zarinebaf, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul, 1700–1800* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010), pp. 132–133.

20 Betül İpşirli Argıt, 'Clothing habits, regulations and non-muslims in the Ottoman Empire', *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 24 (2005): 79–96; Nejla Doğan, 'Limits of tolerance: Legal

Forms of belonging – whether conventional, distinctive, or otherwise – serve as the foundation for identity-focused inquiries conducted by scholars of early modern Ottoman history. Dichotomies within the social structure, such as *askeri-reaya*, Muslim–non-Muslim, male–female, free–slave, and majority–minority, have generally occupied a significant place in Ottoman historical literature. However, in recent years, scholars have begun to approach these identities from more conceptual and theoretical perspectives. Kafadar, for example, illustrates how the meaning attributed to the term 'Rumi' – in the context of spatial belonging and the specific domains it encompasses – has evolved over time. He analyses the practices of othering as reflected in documentary language through a comparative examination of Muslims and non-Muslims. By addressing not only the spatial and experiential dimensions of belonging but also its discursive aspects, Kafadar highlights how these discourses are shaped by the rhetoric found in archival documents.[21] On the other hand, Barkey's *Empire of Differences* emphasises the multifaceted nature of belonging. Barkey contends that individuals within the Ottoman Empire developed various forms of belonging shaped by factors such as ethnicity, religion, and occupation. By leveraging this diversity as a resource, the Ottoman administration effectively balanced the needs and interests of different groups. This approach was part of a broader strategy aimed at achieving continuity and stability through what the author terms social cohesion.[22] Thus, the critical role of belonging in social relations and the formation of Ottoman identity becomes increasingly evident. In a related vein, Özbaran examines Rumi forms of belonging and the images associated with them in the period between the 14th and 17th centuries. He focuses on debates surrounding the 'myth of religious homogeneity' and 'mythologised historical personalities' within nationalist historiography, questioning how these narratives shape perceptions of identity.[23] Another significant work in this field is *Disliking Others*, edited by Karateke, Çıpa, and Anetshofer. This

relations between early Ottoman Jews and the central authorities (15th–18th Centuries)', *Middle Eastern Studies* 13(3) (2021): 447–463; Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Female costumes in the late fifteenth-century Bursa,' in *Ottoman Costumes from Textile to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 2004): pp. 81–91; eadem, 'Captured in Üsküdar during the 1550s: Fugitive slaves and their clothing', in *Surviving Istanbul: Struggles, Feasts and Calamities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Istanbul: Koç University Press, 2023), pp. 323–334; Madeline Zilfi, 'Women, minorities and the changing politics of dress in the Ottoman Empire, 1650–1830', in *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019): pp. 393–415.

21 Cemal Kafadar, 'A Rome of one's own: Reflections on cultural geography and identity in the lands of Rum', *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 7–25.

22 Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

23 Salih Özbaran, *Bir Osmanlı Kimliği: 14.–17. Yüzyıllarda Rum/Rumi Aidiyet ve İmgeleri* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2017).

work examines the processes of belonging, identity patterns, and the otherness of individuals from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds – such as Jews, Christians, Circassians, Arabs, Turks, Greeks, and Gypsies – through their integration into the majority.[24] The works discussed here point to a shift in focus towards understanding how the subjects of the sultan viewed categories that historians once considered exclusively imposed by the state. The uncertainty about whether these categories originated from the state or from the lived experiences of individuals raises questions that we still cannot answer in a satisfactory manner.

Breaking away from established patterns of religious, linguistic, and cultural belonging is often a difficult choice. As part of the cultural framework of the society into which one is born, individuals communicate with their environment through the mother tongue they learn as very young children, shaping their understanding of the world within this context. In early modern Ottoman society, abandoning one's religious affiliation for a new faith and adapting to the lifestyle considered appropriate for that faith was a complex process. In this regard, Krstić's study of the experiences of converts and the transformation of belonging during this process is noteworthy. She examines the conversion of Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire to Islam and argues that we should view conversion not merely as an individual choice but also resulting from interactions with broader social and cultural contexts.[25] Indeed, for many converts, their social and economic position, family relations, and social norms may significantly influence their sense of belonging during the conversion process, often leading to a feeling of 'in-betweenness'. These individuals might find themselves unable to fully integrate into the Muslim majority while simultaneously being unable to completely return to their previous affiliations. However, it is also possible that some converts experienced a more definitive break from their former identity and thus did not feel the same kind of ambiguity.[26]

The transformation of individuals' sense of belonging and the feeling of 'in-betweenness' they experience during this process extends beyond mere integration and acceptance; it also fosters a long-term internalisation and assimilation. Differences in accent or in the physical characteristics of individuals who later integrate into the dominant society complicate an individual's ability to separate from their blood relatives and fully immerse themselves in a different cultural context. Moreover, a recently converted Muslim (or a person whom the sultan

---

24 Hakan T. Karateke et al. (ed.), *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

25 Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011).

26 On the dissolution of former ties for minors, see Eyal Ginio, 'Childhood, mental capacity and conversion to Islam in the Ottoman State', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 25 (2001): 94–95.

has resettled in a different town or region) may be dissatisfied with his/her location and feel intense longing for the past.[27]

These situations profoundly impact one's sense of belonging, contributing to a persistent feeling of in-betweenness. We can better understand this inbetweenness if we use Agamben's concept of *homo sacer*, which refers to individuals excluded from the majority that defines social norms but who, despite this exclusion, remain deeply connected to the social ties that they had once possessed.[28] This concept suggests that when an individual's sense of belonging is weakened or lost, the person at issue experiences a dual existence, being excluded from society while still maintaining a presence in it. However, it is worth considering what happens when this group of 'others' becomes large enough to form its own community. In such a case, the boundaries of belonging may shift, and the state's approach to these individuals may change, as it becomes difficult to dismiss them as outsiders as they may influence the social order in different ways. Thus, while the state and the majority may tolerate the 'other' and take precautions to manage potential disruptions, the dynamic may evolve when the excluded group gains strength and cohesion.

## Belonging in Focus: Mapping the Chapters

Historical sources provide us with a glimpse of how things were perceived or how they were expected to be – what was considered ideal, acceptable, or desirable. However, when it comes to understanding the term 'belonging' in its emotional or subjective dimensions, these sources often pose challenges for historians. Emotional ties and personal relationships are not always explicitly recorded, leaving gaps that may be difficult to interpret depending on the type of sources available. Despite these challenges, the chapters in this volume demonstrate that it is still possible to identify certain nuances. Primary sources, especially court records, offer a wealth of information that sheds light on how the people of a particular time or place understood and practised the concept of belonging.

It bears repeating that at every turn of the way, a collection of studies on poorly documented attitudes including belonging has to confront the limits of our sources. We keep asking questions that the latter are unable to answer and are left with Bertolt Brecht's remark about the dismay felt when the curtain closes at the end of a performance and the questions posed all remain open. In such situations, we

27 For an study on how former ties were maintained, see Tobias P. Graf, "On half-lies and double-lives: 'Renegades' in the Ottoman Empire and their pre-conversion ties, ca. 1580–1610," in *Well-Connected Domains*, ed. Pascal Firges et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 131–149.

28 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 71.

often use sources that are far from ideal for the purposes that we have in mind. While such procedures are inevitable, it remains important to make the limits between the hypothesis and the data as clear as possible; and this precaution is especially important when we deal with a combination of sources written down for purposes that might differ from or even be incompatible with one another.

With this in mind, the historian's role extends beyond merely gathering data. It involves interpreting these records and breathing life into them by asking the right questions. Viewing seemingly ordinary events through the lens of a particular concept – such as belonging – opens the door to uncovering new narratives, identities, and interpretations. Our goal here is not to create multiple versions of history from a single source, although this remains a possibility. Rather, we aim to demonstrate how a single concept, when analysed across different contexts – whether temporal, geographical, or social – can transcend its initial meaning. It can evolve into something far more complex and nuanced, revealing layers of meaning that were not immediately apparent.

As for the individual contributions in this volume, they show the wide range of sources, people, life stories, spaces, and circumstances in which relationships of attachment, obligation, and positional identity emerge, transform, and dissolve. Some of the contributions examine how loyalties can express and shape a sense of belonging. Loyalty may foster acceptance, solidarity, or a shared identity within a group, by reinforcing bonds among its members whether friends, family, or members of an organization. Controversy, a lack of loyalty can undermine these connections and in turn, lead to exclusion or diminished sense of belonging.

**Boğaç Ergene's** (University of Vermont) contribution to the present volume looks at personal relationships from a perspective that places their material dimensions at the centre of the analysis. To this end, he addresses the question of the material and economic foundations of propriety and moral behaviour toward relatives, friends, and long-term associates, and considers how such obligations informed contemporary understandings of conduct in public office.

Ergene examines discourses in the premodern Ottoman context that linked the obligation to favour and materially support one's kin and companions with moral responsibility. While Islamic jurisprudential writings, *kanunnames,* and political advice literature articulated concerns about bribery, merit, and the protection of the *reaya,* other contemporary voices regarded the promotion of relatives and associates as a legitimate expression of benevolence *(himmet)*, provided that it did not entirely disregard considerations of competence or the expectations of other officeholders. Thus, patronage was not inherently perceived as corrupt; rather, criticism arose when established norms of balance and reciprocity were violated.

Drawing on scholarship on *guanxi* in modern China, Ergene situates these practices within a broader analytical framework that highlights the reciprocal, hierarchical, and stylised nature of gift exchange in long-term personal relationships. This literature demonstrates that such relationships may be simultaneously instrumental and affective, and that the form and performance of material exchange are crucial in distinguishing legitimate expressions of loyalty and solidarity from acts perceived as bribery. These insights are particularly relevant for understanding the Ottoman context, where political and legal institutions could be unstable and personal networks often functioned as mechanisms of protection and support.

The chapter's central example is the relationship between Evliya Çelebi and Melek Ahmed Paşa as described in the *Seyahatname*. Their bond illustrates how companionship among members of the Ottoman elite entailed mutual expectations of loyalty, assistance, and material support. Gifts of money, furs, property, and offices appear not as concealed transactions but as visible affirmations of personal attachment and shared destiny, particularly in moments of political vulnerability. The boundaries between official service and personal friendship, as well as between compensation and affective reward, remain fluid.

Ergene's focus is on the material functions that close personal bonds were expected to fulfil in 17th-century Ottoman society. He suggests that materially caring for one's own was widely regarded as a moral responsibility and formed part of broader discourses on proper conduct in public life. By foregrounding the materiality of companionship, the chapter highlights a dimension of Ottoman political and social relations that has received comparatively little attention in existing scholarship.

**Işık Tamdoğan** (CNRS Paris) examins the Greek Orthodox population of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century and the sense of belonging typical of its members. Tamdoğan focuses on the memories of Anatolian Greeks, often called *Rum*, who until the population exchange of 1923 had lived in early 20th-century Adana and Tarsus. In so doing, she aims to improve our understanding of community formation among the Greeks of 18th-century Istanbul, a time and place for which we have far less evidence.

Tamdoğan uses the interviews archived in the Institute of Asia Minor Studies in Athens to shed light on the lives of *Rum* artisans and workers documented in 18th-century lists of Orthodox taxpayers residing in Istanbul. Two documents compiled in the 1790s even allow us to compute the total number of *Rum* living in that city: 52,461 individuals were on record, a figure that probably did not include the women. In her quest for the identity formation of these people, Tamdoğan asks two questions: 'Who lived where and with whom?' and 'What can be said about their family ties and marriages?' Just as significantly, she has located whatever information is available on social relations in the workplace.

The backgrounds of the Orthodox communities in 18th-century Istanbul and early 20th-century Adana and Tarsus differed substantially; for the former inhabitants of Southern Anatolia, being Greek was often more an issue of being Orthodox Christians than of speaking Greek. For while people with some schooling had learned Greek in class, most of the people interviewed about their childhoods in Southern Anatolia were not selfconscious about the fact that their native language was Turkish. Tamdoğan has found that (unsurprisingly) in Adana (or Tarsus) and Istanbul, the *Rum* cohabited and worked with other *Rum*. If possible, they rented living spaces from other *Rum* as well and thus formed a cohesive community beyond common attendance at church. We do not know very much about the language(s) of everyday communication among the *Rum* of 18th-century Istanbul. Was the use of Turkish as widespread in the Ottoman capital as it was to be in Tarsus and Adana in about 1900?

In her comparative approach, Tamdoğan tackles different aspects of belonging, which might involve religious, ethnic, and local identities. She shows that the Greek Orthodox population was diverse and developed different interpretations of the local sense of belonging that could exist simultaneously.

In a different vein, **Nurcan Abacı** (Bursa Uludağ University) addresses conflicts of religious and social belonging experienced by converts in early Ottoman society, by particularly focusing on a single case from Bursa Ottoman court records of the late 16th century. Abacı studies a particular variety of 'going off on one's own', namely the conversion of a Christian or Jew to Islam – in the case he studies the convert had once been a Jew. Abacı builds on the considerable literature on conversion to Islam that has appeared over the last twenty to thirty years, but he approaches the issue in a novel manner. Most historians dealing with the distribution of urban space simply state that apart from a few exceptions (Ankara among them), Muslims and non-Muslims lived in separate town quarters and a convert to Islam would establish a new household in a Muslim quarter. By contrast, Abacı dwells on the personal conflicts and perhaps the psychological tensions that such a move might involve. The author is able to enter this *terra incognita* thanks to a court case involving a Muslim with Jewish antecedents, probably a recent convert, now named Mehmed, who continued to live in the house of his mother, who had not converted. When challenged, the convert explained that his mother was caring for his freedwoman, who was sick. Abacı considers, rightly in our opinion, that this story was a pretext, because for unknown reasons, the convert did not want to leave his mother's house. Perhaps he hoped that his mother would convert as well, or perhaps a house that he could afford in his new quarter would not be not as comfortable as that of his mother. Moreover, there is the story of the sick freedwoman Kamer: What was the tie that bound her and Mehmed? It must have been a strong one, as the authorities allowed Mehmed to enter the Jewish quarter exlusively to monitor how his mother was caring for her. It is

comforting to see that Ottoman subjects might have personal reasons for their behaviour and that they were not the automata as which archival documents often present them.

In the case of Mehmed, his Jewish mother, and his freedwoman, we can see the convert as subject to two different hierarchies and their pressures. While the qadi represented the superior and official Muslim hierarchy, the case included a representative of the lower, non-Muslim variety as well, namely a senior Jewish personage, who did not want to see the convert spending time in the Jewish quarter. Likely, the qadi hoped that Kamer would either recover or die and therefore sanctioned an 'irregular' arrangement, which might only last for a few weeks. If so, the qadi was acting in a way that would – or so he hoped – minimise neighborhood strife.

The case examined by Abacı reveals that, in practice, the reasons for a conversion and the resulting impact could offer different and layered forms of belonging. Although the protagonist in his contribution officially loses his affiliation with the Jewish community through his conversion to Islam, as Abacı shows, his family ties remain intact.

In his contribution, **Turan Açık** (Aksaray University) examines belonging to places in both the concrete and abstract sense. He is the one person in this volume who tackles the question of belonging from a religious *cum* legal point of view. If an Ottoman townsman 'belonged' to a certain town, when walking outward from the urban centre, he needed to know where he would encounter the city limits, which might be a significant distance away from the Friday mosque and market around which the townspeople revolved. Determining these limits had practical consequences, for once the traveler had overstepped them he enjoyed the privileges that religious scholars conceded to a traveller. Thus, if he could not find a Friday mosque nearby, he was free to continue on his way and committed no sin when failing to participate in communal prayers. On a more profound level, a town, with its Friday mosque, its market, and its town walls or citadel, was a protected entity, and while the sultan certainly 'produced' this protection, the Deity was the ultimate protector. For this reason, Ottoman documents called important cities of the realm and especially the sultan's capital, the 'protected one' or *mahrûse*, and having a place in this protected site was the spiritual aspect of 'belonging.'

Açık's study thus reveals that spaces and places can be seen as parameters for marking different types of belonging. The analysis of how legal concepts were intertwined with physical spaces emphasises that belonging is not only about where one lives but also about the legal and social frameworks that determine who has access to or authority over these spaces. Through this lens, belonging is both a physical and cultural concept, intricately linked to the laws, practices, and social hierarchies of the time.

**Zeynep Dörtok Abacı** (Bursa Uludağ University) and **Fırat Yaşa** (University of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart) have devoted themselves to a hitherto practically unstudied topic. In their contribution, Dörtok Abacı and Yaşa have taken on the meanings that Ottoman subjects of the early modern period attached to smells both heavenly and horrible. Their paper shows that Ottoman social historians have been mistaken in neglecting this issue, for narrative sources including the all-knowing Evliya Çelebi have left comments not merely on odours and the ways in which people used them, but in addition, on the religious or emotional meanings that subjects of the sultan attached to these smells. People even developed beliefs concerning the different flowers, whose smells supposedly characterised individual saints dwelling in paradise. On a more worldly level, archival documents deal with the complaints of urban dwellers about nuisances giving off evil smells, and they allow us to follow the tanneries, abhorred for the stench that they produced, as these workshops moved outward when a city expanded. In these records, we sometimes find town quarters named 'the old tanneries' turned into living spaces after the tanners had found other locales for their businesses.

Furthermore, Dörtok Abacı and Yaşa show how evil smells guided townspeople toward the decaying corpses of murdered people and, in a less dramatic manner, confounded men who denied that they had been consuming alcohol. The two scholars end their study with a plea for greater willingness to view Ottoman subjects as three-dimensional individuals, who certainly learned much of what they knew by listening but who also used their eyes and noses, with the added advantage that the latter never erred. Using individual examples from qadi court records, *mühimme* records, and other narratives, they illustrate the significance of the sense of smell for the individual and groups within a society, and they examine the connection between smell and the sense of belonging.

**Nilüfer Alkan Günay**'s (Bursa Uludağ University) study concentrates on relationships of belonging within 16th-century Ottoman families. Alkan Günay has focused on the family, another environment in which hierarchy and the concomitant asymmetrical loyalties might develop. The author discusses the family members of people who had disappeared from their homes, either due to abduction or, especially in the case of young males, because they had left at least partly because they wished to do so. As for the people searching for missing relatives, they might be senior or junior to the people they were trying to find; after all, as Leslie Peirce has shown, in families as at royal courts, hierarchies based on age intersected with the subordination of women to men. Moreover, the cases analysed by Alkan Günay show that women had very little independent value as human beings: in early modern contexts all over the world, including the Ottomans, a rape victim became 'soiled goods' and the family might prefer to not retrieve her from wherever she had ended up and, if possible, forget about her.

As for young men who had gone off, perhaps of their own volition, the family members searching for them might well be their mothers, for the latter often depended on their sons for their livelihoods. While senior to their sons in terms of age, as women they were of lower status. A mother's need for her adult son being greater than that of an adult son's for his mother, the sons were likely in an advantageous position. For this reason, we cannot separate the affective side of family relations from the hierarchies that determined the functioning of these fundamental human groups. Moreover, Alkan Günay shows that a person's physical absence could also lead to the dissolution of personal ties. A woman's status as belonging to a household or a family – and for 16th-century women, this meant belonging to a man – could make her susceptible to victimisation.

However, women's networks counted for something as well. In her study, **N. İpek Hüner** (Boğaziçi University) focuses on loyalties and disloyalties between women. She draws on various sources from different eras to look for moments and spaces of interaction where women came together. Hüner focuses on women meeting in the public baths, in somebody's home, or at some other convenient location; the females concerned might well be of the same social rank.

On the other hand, the situation changes when we move to the stories about 'tricky women' that Hüner also discusses, for most of the narrators/inventors of these tales are men, and they sympathise with the male heroes. It does not make much difference that the men at issue in these stories may act in ways that are dubious or even outright dishonourable. At the same time, trickery is a 'weapon of the weak', and the women using that weapon may not derive any long-term advantage from doing so. The issues treated by Hüner are particularly difficult to grasp, as the authorities rarely considered all-female socialising as threatening, and for this reason, commands issued in the sultan's name or even entries in the qadi registers do not discuss these kinds of socialising very often. As for the stories about tricky women, the historian needs to figure out to what extent the narrators referred to real-life occurrences and to what extent they reproduced older models, of little relevance to the society in which they lived. After all, the narrators knew that many men were willing to believe even unlikely stories about the unreliability of their women-folk.

Thus, Hüner concludes that gender determined the way in which individuals perceived their options of agency. On occasion, moments of support, help, and solidarity occurred in spaces marked by women's presence and their encounters with other females; we need further research on this aspect of the female condition, which is at present all but unknown.

In his contribution, **Günhan Börekçi** (Ibn Haldun University Istanbul) looks at the networks and individuals that surrounded Nasuh Pasha (executed 1614) during his career. Börekçi has reconstructed the career of this high dignitary, focusing on the special status of a 'royal favourite' that he held during the last

years of his career, until Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) had him executed. While Börekçi uses the concept of loyalty to describe these relationships, his analysis points to questions of belonging, inclusion, and positional vulnerability within the Ottoman political hierarchy.

The case of Nasuh Pasha – a royal favourite whose behaviour alienated many at court and eventually cost him his life – illustrates how patterns of loyalty could reflect precarious forms of belonging rather than stable, reciprocal commitments. In contrast, the later case of Sultan Mustafa II's unwavering attachment to Şeyhülislam Feyzullah (d. 1703) suggests a different model of belonging: one shaped by educational and religious bonds rather than political expediency.

While it seems that about a century later, Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703) was willing to risk his throne rather than show disloyalty toward his mentor Şeyhülislam Feyzullah (d. 1703), Ahmed I likely did not consider that he owed loyalty to a man whom he had interposed between himself and the governing apparatus.[29] Most of the time, though not in every case, people of high status did not reciprocate the loyalty that people on the lower rungs of the governmental hierarchy owed to them as their superiors. Perhaps Mustafa II's unusual behaviour had something to do with the fact that, being a religious scholar, Feyzullah was not a *kul* of the sultan, while Nasuh Paşa was from a non-Muslim background. Thus, this vizier's profile matched that of İbrahim Paşa (d. 1536) or Gazanfer Ağa (d. 1603), both of whom were powerful figures until they were killed on the orders of their respective monarchs. Moreover, an educated Muslim needed to be loyal to his teachers, and Feyzullah owed his position of *şeyhülislam* to his former role as the teacher of Prince Mustafa before the latter acceded to the throne. Mustafa II may have acted as an educated Ottoman gentleman rather than as a sultan in this regard.

After reading the contributions to this volume, we can see that apart from the theoretically prescribed affiliations through legal classifications and social norms, aspects such as spatial proximity, individual decisions and careers, dependencies, and so on are essential markers for belonging. Above all, the texts included in this volume show the different nuances of this essential human relationship. In so doing, they show how existential and decisive and, at the same time, how fragile and volatile belonging could be for individuals and groups in the early modern Ottoman Empire.

Belonging, while inherently a deeply personal and emotional experience, took on more fluid and adaptable forms within the intricate social hierarchies that characterised Ottoman society. In this context, it was not simply an individual's sense of identity, but something connected to his/her position within broader

29 Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te İstanbul, 1984).

social networks and structures – in this context, a person's possessions and his/her family might play a decisive role. Statuses ascribed at birth – whether free or enslaved, Muslim, Christian, or Jewish, male or female – were far more than personal characteristics. They were crucial factors that determined not only a person's social rank but their material circumstances as well. These inherited traits thus served as both possessions and markers of one's position within the broader social order of the Ottoman Empire.

Unfortunately, we tend to focus on the majority rather than on the shifts that occur when birth status or acquired positions change. When such shifts take place, the fractures in the social structure take on new meanings. In the empire's diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multilingual communities, proximity between individuals played a significant role in forming strong bonds of solidarity, while simultaneously shaping the way people understood their place within the larger social hierarchy. The shifting nature of belonging, often reflected through changes in legal or social status, reveals the fluidity of identity within these complex layers of hierarchy, an aspect that deserves greater attention in future research.

## Bibliography

Abou-El-Haj, Rifa'at, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te İstanbul, 1984).

Açık, Turan, 'Mahalle ve camii: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda mahalle tipleri hakkında Trabzon üzerinden bir değerlendirme', *OTAM* 35 (2014): pp. 1–39.

Agamben, Giorgio, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (transl. Daniel Heller-Roazen; Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998).

Anthias, Floya, 'Thinking through the lens of translocational positionality: An intersectionality frame for understanding identity and belonging', *Translocations: Migration and Social Change* 4/1 (2008): pp. 5–19.

Anthias, Floya, 'Where do I belong? Narrating collective identity and translocational positionality', *Ethnicities* 2/4 (2002): pp. 491–514.

Barkey, Karen, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Başaran, Betül, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order* (Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2014).

Baumeister Roy F., and Leary, Mark R., 'The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation', *Psychological Bulletin* 117/3 (1995): pp. 497–529.

Behar, Cem, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap İlyas Mahalle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

Charlton, Emma, et al. 'Incidental moments: The paradox of belonging in educational spaces', in *Interrogating Belonging for Young People in Schools*, ed. Christine Halse (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 31–50.

Doğan, Nejla, 'Limits of tolerance: Legal relations between early Ottoman Jews and the central authorities (15th–18th Centuries)', *Middle Eastern Studies* 13(3) (2021): pp. 447–463.

Dörtok Abacı, Zeynep, 'Ahde Vefâ: Kamu düzenini sağlama aracı olarak Bursa'da nefse kefalet uygulaması (II. Selim Dönemi)', in *Sultan II. Selim Dönemi ve Bursa*, ed. Fırat Yaşa (Bursa: Gaye Kitapevi, 2020), pp. 498–516.

Ergenç, Özer, 'Osmanlı şehrindeki mahalle'nin işlev ve nitelikleri üzerine', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 4 (1984): 69–78.

Faroqhi, Suraiya, 'Captured in Üsküdar during the 1550s: Fugitive slaves and their clothing', in *Surviving Istanbul: Struggles, Feasts and Calamities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Istanbul: Koç University Press, 2023), pp. 323–334.

Faroqhi, Suraiya, 'Female costumes in the late fifteenth-century Bursa,' in *Ottoman Costumes from Textile to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Eren Yayınevi, 2004): pp. 81–91.

Ginio, Eyal, 'Childhood, mental capacity and conversion to Islam in the Ottoman State', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 25 (2001): pp. 94–95.

Graf, Tobias P., "On half-lies and double-lives: 'Renegades' in the Ottoman Empire and their pre-conversion ties, ca. 1580–1610," in *Well-Connected Domains*, ed. Pascal Firges et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 131–149.

Halse, Christine, 'Theories and theorising of belonging', in *Interrogating Belonging for Young People in Schools*, ed. Christine Halse (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 1–28.

İpşirli Argıt, Betül, 'Clothing habits, regulations and non-muslims in the Ottoman Empire', *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 24 (2005): 79–96.

Kafadar, Cemal, 'A Rome of one's own: Reflections on cultural geography and identity in the lands of Rum', *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 7–25.

Karateke, Hakan T. et al. (ed.), *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

Khadija Boualam and Abdelghanie Ennam, 'Identity and belonging in multicultural contexts: Navigating complex dynamics', *International Journal of Cultural and Religious Studies* 4/2 (2024): pp. 28–40.

Kırmızı, Abdulhamit, 'Experiencing the Ottoman Empire as a life course', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 40/1 (2014): pp. 42–66.

Krstić, Tijana, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011).

Maslow, Abraham H., 'A theory of human motivation', *Psychological Review* 50/4 (1943): 370–396.

Özbaran, Salih, *Bir Osmanlı Kimliği: 14.–17. Yüzyıllarda Rum/Rumi Aidiyet ve İmgeleri* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2017).

Savage, Mike, et al. *Globalization and Belonging* (London: Sage, 2005).

Wagner, Veruschka et al. 'Rethinking Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire through Religious Conversion Practices', *BCDSS Working Paper* 2024(4) (https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/images/pdf-files/working-papers/wp_14_ottoman-slavery-wg.pdf).

Youkhana, Eva, 'A Conceptual shift in studies of belonging and the politics of belonging', *Social Inclusion* 3/4 (2015): pp. 10–24.