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## In the Name of the Holy Spirit(s): Contested Baptisms between Catholics and Eastern Orthodox in Seventeenth-Century Northern Ottoman Europe

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### Introduction

In September 2021, the Croatian news portal *Index* reported that the Croatian singer and activist Severina allegedly bombarded with text messages the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Porfirije to remedy the injustice that she thought had been done to her son. Supposedly, the boy was first baptized in the Catholic Church, and then, an Orthodox priest, not accepting Catholic baptism, rebaptized the boy without the knowledge and consent of his mother.<sup>1</sup> Just a few months later, in February 2022, it made headlines in the *New York Times* that a Catholic pastor from Phoenix, Arizona resigned after an investigation revealed that he had incorrectly performed thousands of baptisms over more than 20 years over his parishes in Phoenix, Brazil and San Diego by changing one word in the administration of the sacrament.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Severinin sin je kršten u pravoslavnoj crkvi bez njezinog znanja?', *Index HR*, 13 Sept. 2021, <https://www.index.hr/magazin/clanak/severininog-sina-je-prvo-krstio-katolicki-a-potom-i-pravoslavni-svecenik/2303645.aspx> [accessed 15 Jan. 2023]. This research was funded by the European Research Council under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (ORTHPOL project; grant agreement no. 950287).

<sup>2</sup> Eduardo Medina, 'Pastor Resigns After Incorrectly Performing Thousands of Baptisms', *The New York Times* 14 February 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/14/us/catholic-priest-baptisms-phoenix.html> [accessed 15 Jan. 2023].

Although these two contemporary cases originate from two distinct parts of the world, they nevertheless capture interrelated and critical issues that have preoccupied the Catholic Church throughout its history. On the one hand, they reflect on the tensions that have permeated Catholic–Eastern Christian relations since the Middle Ages and up to the present day, and on the other hand, they point to the persisting diversity of baptismal rituals throughout the world.

Zooming in on seventeenth-century Ottoman Europe, the aim of this study is to examine the factors that informed the attitude of Catholic missionaries (mainly Jesuits and Bosnian Franciscans) towards the baptismal practices of the Serbian Orthodox clergy and their flocks and how, on their end, Orthodox clerics related to the baptism of Catholics in this region. The cases presented primarily involve the north, northeastern, and northwestern provinces of the Balkan lands under Ottoman rule. In the following analysis, I explore those Orthodox baptismal practices that Catholic missionaries found erroneous in terms of form and/or substance in these religiously, ethno-linguistically and socially diverse areas. I specifically address the contentious case of conditional baptism and rebaptism that Catholic missionaries and Orthodox priests alike resorted to in their attempts to vindicate the propriety of one rite over another as well as to (de)limit each other's area of jurisdiction. To this end, I primarily draw on Catholic missionary reports, decisions of the Holy Office and of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (hereafter, Propaganda Fide), and a smaller number of pertinent Orthodox Christian sources. In the broadest sense, the goal of my study is to show how various case studies from early modern Ottoman Europe can complement and complicate our understanding regarding the issue of confessional/inquisitorial control that one mostly tends to associate with a centralized Catholic Church. At the same time, this paper aspires to integrate Ottoman Europe better into the international scholarly debates on the various aspects that defined Catholic–Eastern Christian relations in the Early Modern Period.

## The Sacrament of Baptism at the Council of Trent (1545–63)

It has nearly become a trope in the previous scholarship on early modern Christianity that the post-Tridentine clergy perceived the sacraments as heightened articulations of Catholic religiosity and regarded the implementation of reformed sacramental practice as the main objective of their pastoral work. The debates and controversies about the sacraments, however, did not cease even after the decisions of the Council came into force. These developments were to a great extent informed by the expansion of Catholicism

through various missions globally and by the increasing awareness about the existence of a variety of non-Catholic liturgies, sacramental theologies and local adaptations of Catholic sacramental and devotional practices.<sup>3</sup>

The first of the seven sacraments, the door giving access to the other sacraments as well as to the Church, the rite of initiation into the Christian community, the way towards the liberation from sins and rebirth in Christ, and the road to salvation – these are some of the key connotations the sacrament of baptism has encapsulated in the Catholic tradition. The ideas of various theological experts, however, in terms of the elements and characteristics that circumscribed, validated or invalidated this sacrament have been far from unanimous in different periods. Accordingly, the development of Catholic baptismal theology has often been marred by divergent doctrinal opinions starting from the Patristic era throughout the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, and to some extent continuing even today.<sup>4</sup>

By the end of the fifth century, ecclesiastical authorities had formulated central points of dogma as well as liturgy in the theology of baptism, especially concerning its unrepeatable character.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the period from the sixth until the end of the eleventh century was foundational for the later development of the sacramental theology of baptism.<sup>6</sup> With the rise of scholastic theology and the concomitant development of the formal classifications of the sacraments between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries, the sacramental theology of baptism was also systematized.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, scholastic definitions of the sacraments in general and baptism in particular resulted in generic descriptions that were often unrelated to the liturgical text and practice.<sup>8</sup> Thanks to the teachings of Hugh of St Victor (d. 1141), Peter Lombard

<sup>3</sup> Trent Pomplun, 'Catholic Sacramental Theology in the Baroque Age', in Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller and Anthony G. Roeber (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600–1800* (New York, 2016), pp. 136–49.

<sup>4</sup> Bryan D. Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism. From the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Aldershot, 2006); *idem*, *Reformation and Modern Rituals and Theologies of Baptism. From Luther to Contemporary Practices* (Aldershot, 2006); Adriano Prosperi (ed.), *Salvezza delle anime disciplina dei corpi. Un seminario sulla storia del battesimo* (Pisa, 2006); Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation. Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN, 2007); Marcia L. Colish, *Faith, Fiction and Force in Medieval Baptismal Debates* (Washington, DC, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Burkhard Neunheuser, *Baptism and Confirmation* (Eugene, OR, 2018), pp. 107–35.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161–99.

<sup>7</sup> Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism*, p. 135.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

(d. 1160), Bonaventure (d. 1274), Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), and Duns Scotus (d. 1308), among other authors,<sup>9</sup> the main dogmas of Catholic baptism had been clarified by the time of the Council of Florence (1431–49), as is attested in the *Decree for the Armenians* (1439).<sup>10</sup>

Addressing medieval debates on different baptismal issues (such as baptism by desire) and responding to Protestant critiques on Catholic baptismal theology as well as rite,<sup>11</sup> the fathers of the Council of Trent reiterated the main tenets from the *Decree for the Armenians* and further refined the boundaries of the doctrines on baptism. Accordingly, the fourteen Tridentine canons (re) stated, among other points that the baptism of Christ had greater efficacy than the baptism of John, reaffirmed the necessity of true and natural water for baptism, condemned a mere metaphorical understanding of the sacrament, reinforced the commitment to the theological necessity of infant baptism<sup>12</sup> and outlawed rebaptism, and reasserted that if the proper matter and form (the Matthean formula) was used with the intention of doing what the Church does, even baptisms performed by ‘heretics’ should be considered valid. The *Catechism of the Council of Trent* (1566) also dealt with the rituals of baptism and divided them into three categories: 1. rituals performed before coming to the baptismal font (standing at the church door, catechetical instruction, exorcism, salt, sign of the cross, and saliva); 2. rituals enacted after coming to the font (renunciation of Satan, profession of faith and expression of the desire to be baptized, and baptism); 3. ceremonies after baptism (chrism, white garment, and lighted candle).<sup>13</sup> Even though the *Catechism* covered the baptismal ceremonial that was common in most Western diocesan rituals, it did not deal with the minute variations of formulae and exact sequence.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, ritual diversity kept prevailing in the Catholic world. Concerning more systematized attempts towards the standardization of baptismal liturgy (and the

<sup>9</sup> Neunheuser, *Baptism and Confirmation*, pp. 199–221.

<sup>10</sup> Norman P. Tanner SJ (ed.), *The Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (Washington, DC, 1990), pp. 534–59.

<sup>11</sup> See Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual. An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London, 1997), pp. 43–71. See, also Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ‘Baptism in the Reformed Confessions and Catechisms’, in Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross (eds), *Baptism, The New Testament and The Church* (Sheffield, 1999), pp. 402–19.

<sup>12</sup> On the commitment of the Catholic Church to infant baptism and its repercussions in moral theology, see Stefania Tutino, *Uncertainty in Post-Reformation Catholicism: A History of Probabilism* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 327–50.

<sup>13</sup> Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism*, p. 155.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

Roman liturgy in general), it was in 1614 when the first edition of the revised *Roman Ritual* was eventually issued.<sup>15</sup>

The expansion of Catholicism in different parts of the globe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the concomitant proliferation of missionary agents in different areas led to the rapid increase of various doubts regarding the correct administration of the sacraments, including baptism. The expressed uncertainties of the various missionaries in general touched upon both the formal and material aspects of baptism, including verbal errors in the enunciation of the ritual formula, use of liquids other than natural water, and the postponement of the time of baptism. It also became a matter of continuous debates whether Eastern Christian clerics could legitimately administer this sacrament to the Catholics, and whether such baptisms, once performed could be considered valid or not. In the case of 'questionable' baptisms, Catholic missionaries would usually administer them again *sub conditione* (meaning on the condition that the person in question was eligible to receive the sacrament). Conditional baptism in itself, however, could not become a 'default' solution to be applied to all the problems that kept reaching the Roman papacy from various parts of the world, including Ottoman Europe.

### (Re)baptizing Catholics and Orthodox in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Europe

The protracted Ottoman conquest of Southeast Europe entailed a concomitant process of settlement of Muslim groups from Anatolia and at the same time, it marked the onset of conversions of particular segments of the local non-Muslim population to Islam. However, the Ottoman imperial settlement policy as well as the spread of Islam across the empire in general and in the Southeast European provinces in particular were not uniform processes. There were vast regional differences in their dynamics, with areas experiencing them more intensely (like Albania and Bosnia) than others over an extended time period.<sup>16</sup> In several regions, particularly in the rural areas, the population

<sup>15</sup> The liturgical reform program of the post-Tridentine Catholic Church was a long-term process that started with the publication of the revised *Roman Breviary* in 1568. See Simon Ditchfield, 'Romanus and Catholicus: Counter-Reformation Rome as Caput Mundi', in Pamela M. Jones, Barbara Wisch, and Simon Ditchfield (eds), *A Companion to Early Modern Rome, 1492–1692* (Leiden-Boston, MA, 2019), pp. 131–48, at p. 134.

<sup>16</sup> See Gábor Ágoston, 'Muslim Cultural Enclaves in Hungary under Ottoman Rule', *Tomus*, 45:2–3 (1991), 181–204; Tijana Krstić, 'New Directions in the Study of Conversion to Islam in Ottoman Rumeli, 14th–17th Centuries – Reconsidering

remained mostly Christian throughout the period of Ottoman rule.<sup>17</sup> Although various ethno-linguistic Catholic groups (in parts of Bosnia, Hungary, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Bulgaria) and even a smaller number of Protestant ones (in parts of Slavonia, Hungary and the Banat) continued to live in distinct areas, the majority of local Christian groups were Eastern Orthodox.

Due to the gradual northward migration of the South-Slavic-speaking populations in the aftermath of the Ottoman conquest of the Balkan peninsula, the number of Orthodox Christians gradually increased in Bosnia, Herzegovina, South Croatia, and the southern territories of Ottoman Hungary.<sup>18</sup> In 1557, the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate of Peć (today Kosovo) was restored<sup>19</sup> and gained independence from the Patriarchate of Constantinople as well as the Archbishopric of Ohrid, and as such, it was integrated into the Ottoman administrative apparatus. The main agenda of the restored patriarchate was to organize new eparchies and strengthen monasticism by rebuilding and renewing destroyed or dilapidated monasteries, stimulating the cults of Serbian saints, and encouraging artistic activity in the monasteries.<sup>20</sup> The patriarchate became a rapidly expanding institution and the Serbian Orthodox clergy continuously tried to extend their jurisdiction over the local

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Methods, Theories, and Terminology', in Oliver Jens Schmitt (ed.), *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates* (Wien, 2016), pp. 165–87; Nikolay Antov, 'Emergence and Historical Development of Muslim Communities in the Ottoman Balkans: Historical and Historiographical Remarks', in Theodora Dragostinova and Yana Hashamova (eds), *Beyond Mosque, Church, and State. Alternative Narratives of the Nation in the Balkans* (Budapest–New York, 2016), pp. 31–57.

<sup>17</sup> Overall, the process of accommodating religious difference in the Ottoman Empire in the analyzed period included a large variety of non-Muslim religious groups, Christians as well as Jews of various denominations, and at the same time, it involved various groups of Muslims as well. The seminal work on the subject is Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society* (New York, 1982). For a novel perspective, see Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlu (eds), *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries* (Piscataway, NJ, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Antal Molnár, 'A szerb ortodox egyház és az uniós kísérletek a 17. Században', in Antal Molnár, *Elfelejtett végvidék* (Budapest, 2008), pp. 76–90, at pp. 79–80.

<sup>19</sup> The patriarchate of Peć had been first established in 1346 and then, abolished in 1459, after the conquest of the Serbian Despotate. Subsequently, most of its former eparchies were absorbed by the Bulgarian Orthodox Archbishopric of Ohrid.

<sup>20</sup> Olga Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri na području Pečke patrijaršije do 1683 godine* (Belgrade, 1984), pp. 29–31.

Catholics, collect various taxes from them, and if possible, also convert them to Orthodoxy.

The religiously, linguistically, and legally diverse territories of Ottoman Europe were on the horizon of the Roman papacy from the 1570s onwards.<sup>21</sup> And while between the end of the sixteenth and the end of the seventeenth century, the primary aim of Catholic missionary projects in these territories was to locate Catholic groups who were scattered in these parts of the empire and reinforce their Catholicism, missionaries frequently came in contact with various Orthodox Christian groups and their leaders and reported to Rome about these encounters. Regarding the territories under scrutiny, it was the Jesuits<sup>22</sup> and the Bosnian Franciscans<sup>23</sup> who provided the most detailed information about the local Orthodox, including their baptismal practices as well as the role of Orthodox priests in the performance of baptisms of Catholics. These reports give a unique, albeit rather idiosyncratic and mostly negative view about Eastern Orthodoxy in general and local Orthodox baptismal customs in particular. To get a fuller understanding of this apparently anti-Orthodox rhetoric, one also needs to look at the larger context of Eastern Christian attitudes towards Catholic baptismal practices.

<sup>21</sup> The most in-depth study on the organization of Catholic missions in the Balkan peninsula and Hungary in the early modern period is Antal Molnár, *Le Saint-Siège, Raguse et les missions Catholiques de la Hongrie Ottomane, 1572–1647* (Rome-Budapest, 2007). See, also István György Tóth, *Misszionáriusok a kora újkori Magyarországon* (Budapest, 2007); Ines Angeli Murzaku, *Returning Home to Rome. The Basilian Monks of Grottaferrata in Albania* (Grottaferrata, 2009); Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Europe, 1592–1648: Centre and Peripheries* (Oxford, 2015); Peter Bartl, *Die Albaner in der europäischen Geschichte: Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (London, 2016); Antal Molnár, *Confessionalization on the Frontier. The Balkan Catholics between Roman Reform and Ottoman Reality* (Rome, 2019).

<sup>22</sup> During the pontificate of Paul V (1605–1621) two separate Jesuit missions were launched in the analyzed territories, one in Pécs (today Hungary) and one in Belgrade (today Serbia) in 1612 and later, in 1613, the fathers also settled in Timișoara (today Romania). The fathers remained active in the mentioned regions until the middle of the seventeenth century.

<sup>23</sup> The Franciscans settled in Bosnia at the end of the thirteenth century and their presence was further consolidated in the second half of the fourteenth century. From 1369, the papacy granted a wide range of missionary authorizations to the Franciscans to safeguard and maintain Catholicism in Bosnia. After the Ottoman conquest of the Bosnian Kingdom in 1463, the Franciscans legally became Ottoman subjects and started to enjoy various sultanic prerogatives as well. For more details, see Antal Molnár, 'Bosnian Franciscans between Roman Centralization and Balkan Confessionalization', in Molnár, *Confessionalization on the Frontier*, pp. 17–31, at pp. 18–22 with further bibliographical references.

The position of the Orthodox Church towards the baptism of Catholics was expressed in distinct apostolic canons and the canons of the ecumenical councils that were incorporated into Orthodox canon law precepts.<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, Catholic baptism (and heterodox baptism in general) was not necessarily considered invalid but if a Catholic person wanted to convert to Orthodoxy, they had to first renounce their heresy by signing an appropriate confession of faith, after which they were usually received by chrismation into the Orthodox fold.<sup>25</sup> New converts were rebaptized in case their 'heterodox' baptism was found invalid based on deficient faith and/or practice. However, the exact criteria according to which Roman Catholic baptism could be deemed invalid was not clearly conceptualized.<sup>26</sup>

The baptism of the 'Latins' was already the subject of intense scrutiny at the time of the Schism of 1054, and Orthodox Church authorities condemned various Roman Catholic baptismal practices, such as the act of single immersion<sup>27</sup> and the use of salt. Some extant sources suggest that after 1054, the Orthodox kept denouncing the validity of Catholic baptism and if conditions allowed, rebaptized Catholic converts.<sup>28</sup> Accordingly, between the second half of the eleventh and the end of the fifteenth century, rebaptizing Latin converts in case of deficient baptism in terms of form (for instance, baptism by affusion or sprinkling) became a custom of the Eastern Churches. To somehow

<sup>24</sup> George Dragas, 'The Manner of Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church with Special Reference to the Decisions of the Synods of 1484 (Constantinople), 1755 (Constantinople) and 1667 (Moscow)', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 44 (1999), 235–71, at p. 235; David Heith-Stade, 'Receiving Converts in the Orthodox Church. A Historical-Analytical Study of Eighteenth-Century Greek Canon Law', *Ostkirchliche Studien*, 59 (2010), 99–110, at p. 103.

<sup>25</sup> Dragas, 'Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church', p. 235.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235–6.

<sup>27</sup> Based on the teachings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (lived around the late fifth/early sixth century), Eastern Orthodox theologians advocated triple immersion and emersion. In the Orthodox East Pseudo-Dionysius was regarded a saint who lived in the second century (before Augustine) and he became an authoritative writer in Orthodox sacramental theology. The authority of Pseudo-Dionysius became a point of contention between the Eastern and Western Churches, the Orthodox blaming the Latins for not recognizing the authority of Pseudo-Dionysius. See, Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>28</sup> Dragas, 'Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church', pp. 236–7.

regulate this practice, the pan-orthodox Synod of Constantinople of 1484, besides denouncing the Council of Florence, ruled that Latin converts to Orthodoxy should be admitted into the Orthodox fold only by chrismation and by signing a particular confession of faith that would include the renunciation of ‘Latin errors’.<sup>29</sup> These stipulations were also included in post-Byzantine canon law collections and were also expressed in different confessions of faith of Orthodox patriarchs, such as the one of Dositheus of Jerusalem (1672). Even though the Synod of Constantinople tacitly accepted Catholic baptism as valid by economy (*oikonomia*) and this order was not officially challenged until the middle of the eighteenth century,<sup>30</sup> the Orthodox clergy did not uniformly abandon the practice of rebaptizing Catholics – as several of the cases analyzed here will also illustrate.

Regarding the analyzed territories, Catholic missionaries would allege that on the occasion of Catholic–Orthodox marriages the Orthodox priest would demand the Catholic party (who were mostly women) to abjure their faith first and to get rebaptized according to the Greek rite. In a letter from 1617, concerning the mission of Belgrade (today Serbia) and Timișoara (today Romania), the Jesuit Marino de Bonis stated the following:

They have great hatred towards the Roman faith, just like towards any Catholic who passes to their rite, which often occurs on the occasion of [Catholic–Orthodox] marriages. When the [Orthodox] husband takes a wife from the Catholics, they make her abjure the Catholic faith and baptism first that had been administered to her by Catholic priests, and then she is rebaptized, because the Roman baptism is considered invalid.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> The English translation of the text of the Synod of 1484 concerning the reception of Catholic converts into the Orthodox Church is found in Dragas, ‘Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church’, pp. 238–41.

<sup>30</sup> In 1755, the Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril V (1748–51; 1752–7) promulgated a decree that rejected the validity of Western Christian baptism. For a critical edition and commentary, see Vassa Kontouma, ‘The so-called Synod of Constantinople 1755–1756. Decree of the Three Patriarchs on Rebaptism’, in Alberto Melloni (ed.), *The Great Councils of the Orthodox Churches, Decisions and Synodika. From Constantinople 861 to Moscow 2000* (Turnhout, 2016), pp. 345–59.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Portando grand odio alla fede romana; onde come alcun catolico passa al rito loro, come spesso occorre, con occasione delli matrimonii, quando il marito piglia la moglie dal catolico, la fanno abiurar la fede romana et il batesimo, che da preti catolici haveva preso, et poi lo ribatizzano, tenendo per invalido il batesimo alla Romana’. Mihály Balázs *et al.* (eds), *Erdélyi és hódoltsági jezsuita missziók I/2 (1609–1625)* (Szeged, 1990), p. 290 (hereinafter *EHJM*).

Similar accounts about the practices of various Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities (be that under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć or the Patriarchate of Constantinople) kept reaching Rome from other parts of Ottoman Europe as well throughout the seventeenth century. From the Greek lands through Serbia and up to Moldavia, Catholic missionaries, apostolic visitors and missionary bishops gave various testimonies about the hatred Orthodox clerics harboured towards the 'Latin' clerics and how Catholic–Orthodox mixed marriages and other contentious marital issues (such as divorces) could turn into perfect occasions to win people over to Orthodoxy. For instance, the bishop of Bacău in Moldavia appealed to the Holy Office and asked how he should proceed in the cases of those women who for the slightest discord with their husbands asked for a divorce. Since the Catholic bishop denied their request, these women went to the Orthodox bishop who ordered them to first get rebaptized, then he would dissolve the marriage and grant a license to marry again.<sup>32</sup> The Holy Office ordered (13 February 1624) the bishop to teach these men and women that divorce and remarriage were prohibited by divine law and being rebaptized was a sacrilege, since the sacrament of baptism could not be repeated.<sup>33</sup> In 1668, the bishop of Trebinje in Bosnia spoke in similar terms about the local Orthodox, underlining how they made Catholic women renounce the primacy of the Catholic church as well as Catholic baptism upon marriage.<sup>34</sup>

For their part, papal authorities but most of all missionaries on the ground tried to impose similar restrictive measures when it came to receiving the Orthodox into the Catholic fold. Concerning the Bosnian Franciscans, it was apparently common among certain friars to conditionally rebaptize the Orthodox. In this respect, it is important to note that since the territory of the Franciscan province of Bosna Argentina to a large extent overlapped with the area under the control of the Patriarchate of Peć (and it even extended into areas under the control of the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople), Serbian Orthodox priests (*pops*) and bishops (*vladikas*) became the greatest

<sup>32</sup> Vatican City, Archivio Storico della Congregazione 'de Propaganda Fide' (APF), *Decreta*, vol. 1, fol. 71v. Already in 1580, Pietro Cedulini (the apostolic visitor to the southern parts of the Balkan lands and Constantinople) informed the papacy about similar practices. He described that when the Catholics in the Silistra region (today Bulgaria) resort to the Orthodox priest for confession or administering a marriage, they are demanded to get rebaptized according to the Greek rite. APF, *Miscellaneae Varie*, vol. 1/a, fol. 173r.

<sup>33</sup> APF, *Decreta*, vol. 1, fol. 71v.

<sup>34</sup> APF, *Acta*, vol. 37, fol. 256v.

competitors of the Bosnian Franciscans.<sup>35</sup> From the middle of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century the Bosnian friars asked for and obtained several sultanic decrees (*firmans*) based on their complaints that the Orthodox clerics had been incessantly trying to collect taxes from them and the local Catholics.<sup>36</sup>

In 1627, the bishop of Mostar in Bosnia claimed that in his diocese the Bosnian Franciscans rebaptized those Orthodox girls who wanted to marry Catholic men and with this act, the friars caused a great scandal. The bishop proposed to the Propaganda as well as to the Holy Office the complete prohibition of Catholic–Orthodox marriages to avoid similar errors.<sup>37</sup> In 1640, a certain Matej Milatić in a letter to Francesco Leonardi archdeacon of Traù/Trogir in Croatia accused the Bosnian Franciscans of not admitting to communion and to the Catholic rite those Orthodox individuals who had abandoned the ‘schism’, unless they were first rebaptized *sub conditione*.<sup>38</sup> Milatić also urged the Propaganda to print in ‘Cyrillic letters’ the profession of faith that Orthodox converts to Catholicism were supposed to sign.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> The appearance of the Jesuits in the region only added an additional layer of complication to these confessional and jurisdictional disputes. For more details, see Emese Muntán, ‘Uneasy Agents of Tridentine Reforms: Catholic Missionaries in Southern Ottoman Hungary and Their Local Competitors in the Early Seventeenth Century’, *Journal of Early Modern Christianity*, 7/1 (2020), 151–75.

<sup>36</sup> For several pertaining documents, see Vančo Boškov, ‘Turski dokumenti o odnosu katoličke i pravoslavne crkve u Bosni, Hercegovini i Dalmaciji (XV–XVII vek)’, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti*, 131 (1992), 7–95.

<sup>37</sup> Marko Jačov, *Spisi Kongregacije za Propaganda Vere u Rimu o Srbima*, I, (1622–1644) (Belgrade, 1986), p. 91.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Da più persone degne di fede intendo che la maggior parte de frati Bosnesi non ammettono altrimenti alla comunione et al nostro Rito quelli che lasciano lo scisma, se prima nuovo non li battezano sub conditione’. APF, Scritture Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali (SOCG), vol. 299, fol. 90r. See Cesare Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie: communicatio in sacris, coesistenza e conflitti tra le comunità cristiane orientali (Levante e Impero ottomano, XVII–XVIII secolo)* (Rome, 2019), p. 382, detailing the case (1706) of certain Catholic Armenians who upon their return from Rome were preaching scandalous views. In their opinion, baptism according to the Armenian rite was not valid and new converts had to get rebaptized and rechrismated. The Holy Office condemned this excess of zeal and reaffirmed that baptism performed according to the Armenian rite was valid: Vatican City, Archivio del Dicastero per la Dottrina della Fede (ADDF), Sanctum Officium (SO), *Stanza Storica* (St. St.), QQ 2 f, fasc. 23 (XXV), fols. 318rv, 321v.

<sup>39</sup> Milatić most probably referred to the profession of faith issued by Pope Urban VIII (1623–44) in 1633 in Rome and entitled *Professio Orthodoxae Fidei ab Orientalibus Facienda*. See Santus’ chapter within this volume.

Upon this complaint, Propaganda Fide ordered the friars not to baptize those Orthodox who were baptized according to the *Euchologion* (one of the main liturgical books of the Eastern Orthodox churches) but admit them to the Catholic fold by only making an appropriate profession of faith.<sup>40</sup> It is important to mention that in 1641, the bishop of Sofia Petăr Bogdan held a diocesan synod in Čiprovci in Bulgaria, where he also warned the local clergy not to rebaptize the Orthodox but accept them to the Catholic fold by a profession of faith.<sup>41</sup> As a follow-up to the stipulation of the Propaganda, in 1641, the Franciscan provincial Martino di Rama wrote to the congregation that he was grateful that he finally received the permission from the Holy See to convert the Orthodox to Catholicism. He also promised that all those who were baptized according to the Greek rite and wanted to become Catholics would not be baptized again by the Franciscans, but they would only need to make a profession of faith. The provincial also emphasized that the friars resorted to rebaptism only in those instances when they were not sure whether particular Orthodox converts had been previously baptized or not.<sup>42</sup>

In a report from 1648, the Bosnian friar Ivan Dežmanić claimed that he converted many Orthodox Christians to Catholicism, including an entire village near Carașova (today Romania).<sup>43</sup> According to his record of baptisms that he composed between April 1641 and July 1647, he baptized around 103

<sup>40</sup> Jačov, *Spisi*, p. 446.

<sup>41</sup> Eusebius Fermendžin, *Acta Bulgariae ecclesiastica ab a. 1565 usque ad a. 1799.* (Zagreb, 1887) p. 124. Some years later, Bogdan reported to Rome that when he converted two schismatics he first had them make a profession of faith, then he confirmed them *sub conditione*. Fermendžin, *Acta Bulgariae*, p. 209. The differences in the administration of confirmation by the Orthodox clergy compared to the Latin tradition led some Catholic missionaries in the seventeenth century to confirm converts *sub conditione*. Later, the idea that the Orthodox sacrament of confirmation was valid and not to be repeated became prevalent, as the Eastern practice was tacitly approved by the Holy See. I thank Cesare Santus for having drawn my attention to these details.

<sup>42</sup> Jačov, *Spisi*, pp. 498–9.

<sup>43</sup> István György Tóth, *Relationes missionariorum de Hungaria et Transilvania (1627–1707)* (Rome–Budapest, 1994), pp. 82–3. In 1648, the city of Carașova and its surroundings were still part of the Banate of Lugos and Karánsebes, which was an administrative territorial entity of the Principality of Transylvania (itself, a tribute paying polity of the Ottoman Empire). Although the area was not under direct Ottoman rule before 1658, I am including the region in the discussion since both the Jesuit and Bosnian Franciscans missions extended to these territories.

adults, among whom there were several Orthodox.<sup>44</sup> Thus, in this case, the friar apparently decided to rebaptize these people, since it is rather unlikely that they had not been previously baptized according to the Orthodox rite. In the case of Orthodox children, on the other hand, it is more difficult to assess whether they had been also baptized by an Orthodox priest prior to their Catholic baptism.<sup>45</sup> In contrast to Dežmanić, the bishop of Belgrade, the Bosnian Franciscan Matej Benlič recounted that he confirmed both Orthodox and Protestants during his visitation in Slavonia-Srem between 1651 and 1658, without making reference to any instance when he would have rebaptized any non-Catholic person.<sup>46</sup> To the question of the bishop of Trebinje in Bosnia from 1671, on whether he had to allow Catholic women to marry Orthodox men, the Holy Office answered that the bishop should not allow these unions, unless the Orthodox party abjured their faith first or at least made a profession of faith before the marriage.<sup>47</sup> In 1676, the bishop of Bosnia Nikola Olovčić still asked the Propaganda whether Orthodox Christian converts to Catholicism should be rebaptized *sub conditione*, since it was certainly known that the local Orthodox priests were uneducated and ignorant, and barely knew how to properly baptize. The Propaganda sent the bishops' queries to the Holy Office, who responded that the bishop should properly inform about the form, matter and manner according to which these apparently questionable baptisms were performed.<sup>48</sup> Just a few years earlier, in 1671, to a question whether schismatic monks can baptize the children of Catholics in case there was no Catholic

<sup>44</sup> Krista Zach, *Die Bosnische Franziskanermission des 17. Jahrhunderts im Südöstlichen Niederungarn* (Munich, 1979), pp. 75–111.

<sup>45</sup> Due to the large number of South-Slavic- and Romanian-speaking Orthodox in the Caraşova-Caransebeş area, one can notice in Dežmanić's record that in most cases of infant baptism the sponsors of the children were Orthodox Christians. To a question of the bishop of Bosnia from 1676 concerning whether Orthodox Christians could be the sponsors of the children of their Catholic friends upon baptism or confirmation, the Holy Office gave a negative answer. ADDF, SO, *Dubia Varia* 1669–1707, fasc. XV, fol. 395v; *Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide*, vol. I (Rome, 1907), no. 211 (14 October 1676), p. 71.

<sup>46</sup> Iván Borsa and István György Tóth, 'Benlich Máté belgrádi püspök jelentése a török hódoltság katolikusairól 1651–1658', *Levéltári Közlemények*, 60 (1989), 83–142, at pp. 89–138.

<sup>47</sup> 'Ad primum dubium rescribendum Episcopo, quod non permittat coniugio inter Catholicos et Schismaticos, nisi praemissa abiuratione facienda a Schismaticis, vel saltem professionem fidei facienda ante matrimonium contrahendum juxta alius decisa per S. Congregationem die 20 julii 1628' (20 August 1671). ADDF, SO, *Dubia circa Matrimonium* 1603–1722, fasc. XV.

<sup>48</sup> ADDF, SO, *Dubia Varia* 1669–1707, fasc. XV, fol. 395v (5 November 1676).

priest, the Holy Office ruled that it was not allowed for schismatics to baptize the children of Catholics, unless in case of necessity, i.e., when there was no other Catholic person available.<sup>49</sup>

According to the available sources, both Catholics and Orthodox would be received into each other's fold by rebaptism/conditional baptism, despite attempts on both sides to admit new converts to Orthodoxy or to Catholicism by renouncing their current faith and by making an appropriate profession of faith. So, how would Catholic religious representatives contest the baptismal practices of the Orthodox? What were the elements that could validate or invalidate this sacrament?

The bishop of Prizren (today Kosovo) Petar Katić reported from the mission of Belgrade (today Serbia) in 1619 that several people were baptized *sub conditione*, because the baptisms performed by Protestant and Orthodox clerics were not valid. Instead of water, some of them baptized with wine, aqua-vitae or butter,<sup>50</sup> while others first said the baptismal formula, then sprinkled the water on the child, or the other way around.<sup>51</sup> In 1613, the Jesuit Bartol Kašić, wrote from the mission of Belgrade (today Serbia) and Timișoara (today Romania) that many Catholics took their children to the Orthodox priests for baptism either due to the absence or to the misconduct of the Catholic clergy, specifically of the Bosnian Franciscans.<sup>52</sup> The Jesuit asked these Orthodox priests about the words uttered during the pouring of the water so he would know whether these Catholics needed to be baptized

<sup>49</sup> 'Se, assente il parroco, possano i monaci scismatici battezzare i figli de' cattolici. R. Non permittat (Episcopus) schismaticis administrare Sacram. Baptismatis nisi in casu necessitates et deficient quacumque alia persona catholica' (20 August 1671). See *Collectanea*, no. 198, p. 69; ADDF, SO, *Dubia circa Matrimonium* 1603–1722, fasc. XV.

<sup>50</sup> In conformity with the canons of the Council, in 1602 the Holy Office stipulated that even in case of necessity rose water, sweat, tear, urine and spittle were not proper and valid baptismal matter. APF, *Risoluzioni e Biglietti del S.O. per l'Amministrazione dei Sacramenti (Risoluzioni)*, no fol.; see Giovanni Pizzorusso, 'I dubbi sui sacramenti dalle missioni "ad infideles": percorsi nelle burocrazie di Curia', *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Italie et Méditerranée*, 121:1 (2009), 39–61, at p. 50.

<sup>51</sup> Antal Molnár, 'Három hódoltsági levél a Római Inkvizíció levéltárából', *Lymbus*, 2 (2004), 51–59, at p. 53.

<sup>52</sup> The most common accusations the Jesuits made against the Bosnian friars were that they were uneducated, ignorant, disregarded the stipulations of the Council of Trent, did not administer some of the sacraments correctly, and did not accept the authority of Rome-appointed missionary bishops.

*sub conditione*.<sup>53</sup> The Jesuit did not specify what the priest had actually said as regards the baptismal formula they employed,<sup>54</sup> but he described that according to the Orthodox priests in question one could only be legitimately baptized by a priest (an Orthodox priest).<sup>55</sup> Another Jesuit report from the area justified in similar terms the necessity of conditional baptisms and also emphasized that the Orthodox priests claimed that the baptisms administered by the Catholic secular clergy were not valid.<sup>56</sup>

The above-mentioned Jesuit Bartol Kašić further inquired about the baptism of children in the face of death in case there was no priest. To this, an Orthodox priest replied that the godfather should lift the dead child and turn the body towards the east and three times utter the phrase ‘here is the faith’, then bury the child in the church, and finally, ask the priest to perform forty liturgies; through all these acts the child would be saved and considered baptized.<sup>57</sup> On the Catholic side, it was a frequently referred problem about the Orthodox communities throughout the Balkan lands that they tended to delay the time of baptism for a few months after the birth of the child, and even in case of necessity they maintained that only Orthodox priests could legitimately baptize.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *EHJM*, I/1, p. 72.

<sup>54</sup> Nonetheless, from a question addressed to the Holy Office by the archbishop of Ragusa in 1590 one knows that the Serbian Orthodox would use the following baptismal formula according to the Byzantine Rite: ‘[...] sia battezzato il servo di Christo in nomine Patris Amen, In nomine Filii Amen, et In Nomine Spiritus Sancti Amen’. The Holy Office recognized this as a valid formula for baptism. *APF Decreta*, vol. 1, fol. 80 r/v. See also Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, p. 294. It is an interesting addition that in 1621, the French envoy Louis Deshayes encountered (or heard of) people around the villages of Belgrade who claimed that they were Catholics, but they did not attend the mass nor received the sacraments, and they were baptized ‘only in the name of John the Baptist’. Louis Deshayes, *Voyage de Levant* (Paris, 1645), p. 56.

<sup>55</sup> *EHJM*, I/1, p. 72.

<sup>56</sup> *EHJM*, I/2, p. 290–1.

<sup>57</sup> ‘il patrino deve pigliar quel fanciullo morto et voltato verso l’oriente e tre volte dimandar adorando et chiandosi intona: ce la fede, ce la fede, ce la fede, et poi seperirlo sotto il tetto de qualche chiesa et facendone dir 40 liturgie, si salvarà quel putto et resterà battezzato’ (*EHJM*, I/2, p. 72). Curiously, in the western medieval baptismal rites the threefold immersion sometimes was performed in a way that the priest made the sign of the cross with the infant’s body, first directing the baby’s head to the east. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual*, p. 49.

<sup>58</sup> For instance, the missionary Paolo Pasquali in reference to the Serbian Orthodox from the diocese of Kotor (Cattaro, today Montenegro) described that, according

Already at the Council of Florence the Catholic Church admonished the Eastern Churches not to delay the time of baptism for 40 or 80 days or any other time period but baptize infants *quam primum* (as soon as possible).<sup>59</sup> The fate in the afterlife of unbaptized children was a widespread concern in various parts of the Catholic world during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period.<sup>60</sup> It was generally believed that infants who died without baptism (too young to have committed sins, but not having been freed from original sin) could not enter heaven or hell but would permanently stay in the state of *Limbo*.<sup>61</sup> Thus, it became especially pressing to baptize infants without delay and, in this way, save their souls from eternal damnation. Accordingly, the post-Reformation Catholic church instructed priests and even physicians and midwives to perform emergency baptisms in case newborns were in danger of dying. These baptisms were considered legitimate even if the body of the newborn was not completely out of the mother's body, as long as it was possible to touch the baptizand's head with holy water, in some cases, even inside the uterus.<sup>62</sup>

In terms of the fate of unbaptized children, the Orthodox Church in general has followed the teaching of the Cappadocian fathers, Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 390) and Gregory of Nyssa (d. 395). According to Gregory of Nazianzus, after death unbaptized infants would acquire a blissful state (although not eternal glory), since they did not have actual sin; and because their original

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to the custom of the Greek Church, they baptized infants only after a few months after their birth. And because they would not allow anyone but the priest to baptize, some children would die without baptism: APF, SOCG, vol. 299, fol. 56r. Basilian missionaries recorded similar practices in Himara, southern Albania: Ines Angeli Murzaku, 'The Basilian Monks and their Missions in 17th–18th Centuries to Chimara (Himara) Southern Albania', *The Downside Review*, 135 (2017), 21–34, at p. 28.

<sup>59</sup> Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, p. 258.

<sup>60</sup> Adriano Prosperi, 'Battesimo e identità cristiana nella prima età moderna', in Prosperi (ed.), *Salvezza delle anime disciplina dei corpi*, pp. 1–67, at pp. 27–39, with further bibliographical references.

<sup>61</sup> Although the *Limbo of Infants* never became an official doctrine of faith of the Catholic Church, it remained a widespread belief until the mid-twentieth century (and even beyond). [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti\\_documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20070419\\_un-baptised-infants\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070419_un-baptised-infants_en.html) [accessed 9 Feb. 2023].

<sup>62</sup> Tutino, *Uncertainty in Post-Reformation Catholicism*, pp. 326–51, at p. 335. On the controversies around intrauterine baptism, see also Anna Ohanjanyan, 'Jumping in and out of Confessions: The Armenian Catholic Yovhannēs of Mush and his Book *Key of Truth*', *Bulletin of Matenadaran*, 34 (2022), 131–65, at pp. 158–60.

sin was inherited, they would come to be deemed innocent and worthy of paradise.<sup>63</sup> On his end, Gregory of Nyssa believed that unbaptized infants would certainly attain eternal glory.<sup>64</sup> All these details explain why a number of Jesuits (and Catholic missionaries, in general) were more concerned than their Orthodox interlocutors about the baptism of children in the face of death and advocated the immediate baptism of newborns.

As the above-described examples demonstrate, several Jesuits and Bosnian Franciscans would often denounce to their Roman superiors the erroneous baptismal practices of the Orthodox. However, they usually tended to keep more silent about the way they themselves performed baptisms on the ground and the extent to which they could conform to the Tridentine precepts, especially in terms of ritual. These issues could become especially pressing in those cases when there was no church and/or baptismal font available (or the closest available church was in ruin) where missionaries could properly administer the sacraments – a complaint that so often figured in the reports of Catholic missionaries throughout sixteenth and seventeenth-century Ottoman Europe. For instance, at the end of the sixteenth century the Ragusan chaplain Vincenzo di Augustino said that there were many places in Ottoman Hungary where there were no churches and no baptismal fonts, and therefore, priests were forced to baptize people at private houses and on the road, also with non-blessed water. It also often occurred that due to the extreme cold, the churches were not reachable, or it was so cold that even the wine froze in the chalices. For such reasons, it was necessary to baptize wherever and as one could.<sup>65</sup> Two Ragusan Benedictines, upon their visit in Slavonia–Srem and the Banat in 1607, noted that most of the churches in the area did not have a roof, and there were no altars, bells, shrines or baptismal fonts. Therefore, the few local Bosnian Franciscans and lay priests baptized children in the fields or in private houses with the Sunday holy water, or the water they blessed on the spot.<sup>66</sup> The Jesuit

<sup>63</sup> I thank my colleague Anna Ohanjanyan for having discussed these important details with me. See Gregory of Nazianzus's *Oration 40 on Holy Baptism*. <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310240.htm> [accessed 1 Apr. 2021].

<sup>64</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Infants' Early Deaths*. <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2912.htm> [accessed 1 Apr. 2021].

<sup>65</sup> Antal Molnár, 'A Chaplain from Dubrovnik in Ottoman Buda: Vincenzo di Augustino and his Report to the Roman Inquisition about the Situation of the Balkan Catholicism', *Dubrovnik Annals*, 18 (2014), 95–121, at p. 217.

<sup>66</sup> István György Tóth, *Litterae missionariorum de Hungaria et Transilvania (1572–1717)* (5 vols, Rome-Budapest, 2002–8), vol. 1, p. 129. Baptisms in private houses with solemnities were also common among the Catholics of Constantinople. APF, *Acta*, vol. 26, fol. 81r.

missionaries of Slavonia-Srem and the Banat also frequently reported about the lack of proper churches and liturgical equipment. Therefore, they often had to set the altar at private houses and pray in open air.<sup>67</sup> Already in 1585, responding to the request of the Jesuit Tommaso Raggio from the mission in Albania and Serbia, the Holy Office instructed that in case of necessity (if churches were ruined, few, or too far), baptisms could be celebrated in private houses<sup>68</sup> – an order that the Holy Office would periodically reconfirm for different missionary territories.<sup>69</sup>

Overall, the variegated baptismal landscape of seventeenth-century northern Ottoman Europe was shaped by multiple factors, including local demography, geography, climate, the presence/lack and condition of churches, and the overlapping jurisdictions of different Christian authorities. Consequently, these circumstances also determined the ways in which Catholic and Orthodox religious representatives challenged each other's baptismal practices and tried to use baptism as a means of confessional as well as jurisdictional control.

## Conclusion

Formally, the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards Eastern Christians has been largely guided by a simultaneous respect of ritual plurality and a tireless protection of doctrinal uniformity.<sup>70</sup> In line with the *Decree for the Armenians* (1439) as well as the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545–63), in case of necessity potentially even baptisms performed by Orthodox clerics could be considered valid if the proper matter, form and intention were used. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of baptisms performed by the Eastern Christian clergy kept being a matter of continuous doubts and debates in the analyzed period. Accordingly, the involvement of the Orthodox clergy in the baptism of Catholics in seventeenth-century northern Ottoman Europe tended to cause several uncertainties and tensions to different missionaries on the ground.

Dozens of reports kept informing the Roman papacy that in most cases neither the matter, nor the form of baptisms conformed to the stipulations of the Catholic Church. And while it seems that the concern of the missionaries mostly involved elements of ritual, one also needs to consider the ecclesiology

<sup>67</sup> For representative examples, see for instance *EHJM*, I/1, p. 87 and 124; *EHJM*, I/2, p. 353.

<sup>68</sup> APF, *Miscellanea Varie*, vol. 1/a, fol. 37r.

<sup>69</sup> APF, *Risoluzioni*, fol. 93r.

<sup>70</sup> Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*, pp. 7–8.

and theology that underpinned particular ritual practices. By listing the various abuses and confusions they had to deal with, missionaries continuously tried to somehow make their case for the Roman congregations of the Holy Office and Propaganda Fide to review or reconsider their stance on baptisms performed by the Eastern Orthodox clergy. Despite the information Jesuits and Bosnian Franciscans provided, both the Propaganda Fide and the Holy Office appeared to be rather cautious when it came to the judgement of particular local cases. Missionaries on the other hand, often took matters into their own hands and in a way created their own ‘tribunals of faith’,<sup>71</sup> and used every means at their disposal to exercise some sort of confessional control over the local Orthodox, as the analyzed cases have illustrated.

Interestingly, I have only encountered a couple of documented cases in which the local bishop reported about the presence of different forms of *communicatio in sacris* with the Orthodox and asked the Roman congregations for advice.<sup>72</sup> While Catholic missionaries in the Levant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often accepted *communicatio in sacris*,<sup>73</sup> the Bosnian Franciscans and the Jesuits in the analyzed regions seem to have been much less lenient.<sup>74</sup> Catholic confessional control over Eastern Christians had its own guiding principles and dynamic in different local contexts, which can only be understood if one also examines the ways in which the Orthodox Church

<sup>71</sup> See Adriano Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, confessori, missionari* (Turin, 1996), pp. 551–684.

<sup>72</sup> For a case of *communicatio in sacris* presented by the bishop of Trebinje (Bosnia), see ADDF, SO, St. St., M 3 a, fasc. 5, fols. 23–28 (‘se sia bene di permettere nelle feste a quelli che si trovano vicini alli frati greci di sentir le messe loro questi nostri Cattolici, dubitando di qualche perversione, perché la familiarità induce molte cose etiam fuori del dovere, benché questi Rasciani vengono alle nostre messe, e sentono le nostre prediche volentieri da noi, benché con pochissimo o nessun frutto, ma li Calogeri, e frati Greci usano familiarità grande colli nostri, e li danno da mangiare, e bere, e con quest’occasione potrebbero tirare alcuni al loro rito’). On 3 December 1668, the consultors of the Congregation decided that local Catholics should not attend the masses of ‘schismatics’ under any circumstances.

<sup>73</sup> See Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie*.

<sup>74</sup> In contradistinction to the reports of the Jesuits in the Levant and the Greek islands about the amical and cordial relationship they fostered with the Eastern Orthodox clergy, in the case of northern Ottoman Europe, except for a very few, rather isolated cases, the Jesuits, just like the Bosnian Franciscans spoke in quite sombre terms about the Serbian Orthodox clergy, and described how they displayed a largely hostile attitude towards the fathers (and Catholic religious, in general). See Kallistos T. Ware, ‘Orthodox and Catholics in the seventeenth century: schism or intercommunion?’, in Derek Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 259–77.

attempted to exercise confessional control over Catholics. After all, when it comes to the various religious communities of the early modern Ottoman Empire in general, and to the Catholics and Orthodox of Ottoman Europe in particular, there was considerable cross-communal mimicry and appropriation of strategies between them.<sup>75</sup>

In our current global age, both the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches are facing a variety of internal and external challenges in terms of globalization, nationalization, ecumenicity, and scientific developments. Hence, it is becoming even more relevant and pressing to understand the historicity of such processes as rebaptism and local confessional control, and the way such acts could (re)articulate communal and confessional boundaries in a particular time and place.

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<sup>75</sup> See Tijana Krstić, ‘Introduction’, in Krstić and Terzioğlu (eds), *Entangled Confessionalizations?*, pp. 1–25.

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