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Common Culture and Particular Identities: Christians, Jews and Muslims in the Ottoman Balkans

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In loving memory of Prof. Ivana Burđelez
a colleague, a friend, a *benadam*

Preface

This joint issue of *El Prezente – Studies in Sephardic Culture* and *Menorah – Collection of Papers* is yet another a fruit of the multifaceted academic cooperation between *Ben-Gurion University, Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Culture,* and the *Department of History of Art* at Belgrade University's Faculty of Philosophy. It is dedicated to the lesser treated subject of the shared and common culture of the Balkan peoples, regardless of their ethnic and/or confessional background.

During the centuries-long Ottoman rule, Ottoman culture, with all its heterogenic (Turkish and Byzantine, Arabic and Persian, Greek, Slavic and Albanian) elements, shaped the Balkan urban centers, adapting itself to specific geographical and human topography—and, no less importantly, adopting different cultural influences along the way. After the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain, in the year 1492, an additional component was added to the Balkan mosaic: the Sephardic Jews. In less than a century, the Iberian expellees adapted themselves to their new environment (changing their western outlook for a more acceptable oriental one); configuring, at the same time, the local Jewish context to their own ways and hispanizing the ancient Romaniote Jewish community almost totally. In these highly osmotic processes of cultural polylogue, a shared Balkan-Ottoman urban culture (vocabulary, clothing, food, music, pastime, etc.) was created, and over the centuries exported to the hinterland of the peninsula as well, with greater or lesser success. Within this common Balkan culture, particular ethnic and confessional group identities were preserved, created, and reconstructed, in constant dialogue with the common culture and with each other.

Most of the articles in this issue were originally presented at the international conference *Common Culture and Particular Identities: Christians, Jews and Muslims on the Ottoman Balkans,* organized in 2011, by our two institutions and held in Belgrade. Some of the participants of that conference, however, chose not to develop their papers into articles, or not to do it at this stage. At the same time, two authors

who did not participate in the conference, Krinka Vidaković-Petrov and Yaron Ben-Naeh, answered our call for papers and joined the public discussion embodied in this issue.

Owing to ideological reasons, the research of the cultural past of the Balkans tends to neglect the existence of shared identities, practices, and symbols. The question of the respective contributions of Balkan Christians, Jews, and Muslims to this shared Balkan-Ottoman culture, the ways in which their particular ethnic cultures were influenced by it, as well as the question of mutual influences of any of the ethno-religious cultures over the others, are usually not at the focus of the research. In this respect, both our conference and this issue are of a pioneer nature, as they focus on the shared culture and the ways in which the particular identities were strengthened and threatened by it, or by each other, rather than focusing on any of these respective cultures per se.

The issue contains fifteen articles, divided in four sections: History and Society, Linguistics, Literature, and Art History.

The **History & Society** section opens with the article "Jews in Serbian Medieval Written Sources", by **Dušan I. Sindik**, an independent researcher from Belgrade. The article enumerates the little-known medieval Serbian canonic provisions about the Jews. Some of these passages, taken from canonical codes or from archival documents, were originally written in Serbian-Slavic, while others were written in Latin and Greek. Most of them have never been presented before in English.

From pre-Ottoman Serbia of the previous entry, the article "Dangerous Liaisons in Castoria", by **Yaron Ben-Naeh** of *the Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, takes us straight to Ottoman times, to seventeenth-century Castoria. It tells the (hi)story of a Jewess by the name of Lidisya, wife of a wealthy man, Mosheh haCohen, who fornicated with Ottoman soldiers, poisoned her husband's second wife, wounded him, stole his property, and tried to arrange his murder. Her story serves as a platform to discuss some less-known aspects of traditional Jewish life, the question of the weakness of the community when challenged by a powerful person (here a woman), the question of the family, confessional and class boundaries and their transgression, as well as the question of deconstruction of gender categories and roles.

The third article in this section, "Multi-denominational Interaction in the Ottoman Balkans from a Legal Point of View: the Institution of *Kiambin*-marriages", by **Ioannis Zelepos** of *Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich*, focuses on the phenomenon of multi-denominational interaction in Ottoman society, from the perspective of institutionalized *kiambin*-marriages. Based on fragmentary, though meaningful, text evidence, issued by the Orthodox Church in the period from fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, it argues that such marriages were in common practice during this whole time, constituting an important integrative factor in Ottoman society. Just like so many other such factors, this one also seems to be marginalized in the nationalist narratives of conventional Balkan historiography.

The fourth article in this section, "A Sephardic Rabbi's View of his Bosnian Neighbors and Common Ottoman Culture as Reflected in His Writings", by **Katja Šmid** of the *University of Salamanca*, takes us to nineteenth-century Bosnia. The article analyzes Rabbi Eliezer ben Shem Tov Papo's Judeo-Spanish compendia of religious law and moral teachings, concentrating primarily on the author's linguistic policy when referring to Gentiles. Besides the expected "impersonal" Hebrew word for Gentile, *Goy*, Papo uses many other terms, especially when imagining real Muslim and Christian neighbors of his intended reading public. Especially revealing are his anecdotes describing some particular aspects concerning Gentiles and descriptions of some—by the rabbi praised or criticized—practices concerning Jewish-Gentile relations in communal as well as private life. The article also examines some influences of the common Ottoman culture on this Jewish rabbinical author, his mentality and weltanschauung.

The fifth article in this section, "'Good' Turks and 'Evil' Ones: Multiple Perspectives on the Turkish Community Reflected in Serbian Sources of the Early Nineteenth Century", by **Vladimir Jovanović** of the *Historical Institute* (Belgrade), examines the way in which early-nineteenth-century Serbian narrative perceives the Turks. The author argues that sources reveal a sharp distinction between two categories of Turks, *evil* or *good*, primarily on the basis of their personal acts and attitude toward the Serb community. In the black and white interpretation of Serbian authors, the champions of all *evil* Turks were surely the leaders of the bloodthirsty janissaries. In the few short years of their illegal reign, they had become transformed into the true whip of Christians and the incarnation of pure evil. In those same sources, common

Turks, however, having local connections with Serbs as friends and trade associates, were depicted as "good" and innocent people. Sharing the ill fate of their Christian neighbors, particularly in urban communities, they were first victims of war and plunder, worthy of pity. Deeds that led to the utter destruction of Turkish communities in Belgrade and many other cities were also recognized and memorialized, both in narrative sources and by the epic poets of the Serbian Uprising.

The closing article of this section, "'Jewish Women's Conversion to Islam in the End of the Ottoman Era (Salonica) "Mijor dezeo verte kortada la garganta ke azer insulto a tu ley santa", by **Gila Hadar** of *Haifa University*, returns to the question of communal and conceptual boundary-crossings. This time, however, in late-nineteenth– and early-twentieth-century Salonika. The article examines the phenomenon of conversion to Islam and Christianity among Jewish women in this multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural city. According to many scholars, the main reasons for conversions until the end of the nineteenth century throughout the Ottoman Empire was the desire of female converts to improve their immediate personal living conditions, to obtain a divorce from a violent husband or liberation from slavery or captivity, etc. The article examines the reasons behind modern conversions, on base of their echoes in the local Sephardic press, Sephardic *kansionero*¸ and relevant secondary sources written in Hebrew, Ladino, French, Greek, and English.

The **Linguistics Section** opens with the article, "From Early Middle to Late Middle Judezmo: The Ottoman Component as a Demarcating Factor", by **David Bunis** of *the Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, which examines the Ottoman elements in Judezmo. From the sixteenth century on, the intensive interaction between the Judezmo speakers of the Ottoman Empire and their Turkish-speaking neighbors led to a gradual deepening knowledge of Turkish on the part of the Jews. This knowledge was reflected in an increasingly significant Turkish component in Ottoman Judezmo, paralleling in many ways the Turkish component in other languages of the Balkans. During the transition between the Early and Late Middle Judezmo periods, the Turkish elements in the language grew in number and structural sophistication, as well as in the semantic domains to which they referred. Many of the developments in the language's Turkish component suggest that, at least with respect to that component, the Late Middle Judezmo period may already have begun in the second half of the seventeenth century, rather than the early eighteenth. In either case, the Ottoman

elements in Judezmo came to constitute an important, well-integrated component in the pre-modern language. Some constituents of the component survive in Judezmo to this day.

The second article in this section, "In Search of the Historical Linguistic Landscape of the Balkans: The Case of Judeo-Spanish in Belgrade", by **Ivana Vučina Simović** of the *University of Kragujevac*, argues for the need to place the study of the Belgrade Judeo-Spanish dialect in a broader Belgrade/Balkan context. The linguistic history of Belgrade, as well as of the most parts of the Balkans in general, consists of partial and sporadic accounts of the linguistic practices of different ethnic and religious groups (Tsintsars, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Serbs, Sephardic Jews, etc.), which coexisted in these territories for centuries. The author argues that the (socio)linguistic studies of the Balkans have failed, thus far, to provide a holistic and systematic reconstruction and analysis of its linguistic history and of the long-lasting multilingualism/bilingualism from the past and its consequences.

The third and last article in this section, "The Attitude Toward *Lĕshon haKodesh* and *Lĕshon Laᶜaz* in Two Works of Sephardi *Musar* Literature: *Meᶜam Loᶜez* (1730) and *Pele Yoᶜeş* (1824; 1870)", by **Alisa Meyuhas Ginio** of *Tel Aviv University*, examines the linguistic policy of two prominent Sephardic rabbis: the Jerusalem born Rabbi Yaᶜakov Khuli (c. 1689-1732) and the Sarajevo born Rabbi Eliezer ben Yiṣḥak Papo (c.1786-1827). Rabbi Khulí wrote two introductions to his work *Meᶜam Loᶜez*: one in Hebrew and the other in Ladino. In both of them he felt compelled to explain his choice of language. Since his contemporary *Sepharadim* could no longer understand Hebrew; the rabbi argues, there was a need to convey to them the message of Judaism and Jewish ethics: the Holy Scripture, the Talmudic tradition and the rabbinical learning in their everyday common language: Jewish-Spanish, Judeo-Espanyol, nowadays commonly referred to as: Ladino. About ninety years after the demise of Rabbi Yaᶜakov Khuli, Rabbi Eliezer ben Yiṣḥak Papo (c.1786-1827) published, in Istanbul, his work *Pele Yoᶜeş*, a book on Jewish ethics (including short essays, alphabetically arranged, and referring to all aspects of Jewish life). In his essay regarding *Laᶜaz*—a foreign language—Rabbi Eliezer Papo explained that he would have wished for his own work to be written in Ladino, a language comprehensible to all the *Sepharadim*, but since *lĕshon sĕfaradi* is not useful for *Ashkenazim* and *Italiani*, he decided to write his work in *lĕshon ha-kodesh* – Hebrew, a sacred language common to all the Jews.

The *Pele Yoᶜeş* was translated into Ladino, by Rabbi Eliezer's son, Rabbi Yehudah Papo. The first volume of this translation of the *Pele Yoᶜeş* was published in Vienna in 1870, and the second volume of the same work was published there in the year 1872.

The **Literature Section,** contains only one article: "Some Balkan Specifics of Sephardic Folksongs", by **Krinka Vidaković-Petrov** of the *Institute of Literature and Art* (Belgrade), which researches the contact of Sephardic oral tradition, specifically lyrical folksongs, with the Balkan cultural environment. Among the types of influences considered are the overall Oriental (Turkish) influence on all Balkan cultures (including Sephardic), the elaboration of elements (themes, motifs, and especially metaphors) transferred into Sephardic folksongs from Greek sources, and the influence of the *sevdalinka* on Sephardic lyrical folksongs in Bosnia at the turn of the century.

The **Art History Section**, opens with the article, "Islamic Influence on Illumination of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Serbian Manuscripts", by **Zoran Rakić** of *University of Belgrade*. The author argues that the influence of Islamic art on pictorial ornamentation of Serbian manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was limited to adopting decorative details. This influence is present to the greatest extent in the manuscripts written and decorated by the famous sixteenth-century amanuensis, John of Kratovo (Jovan iz Kratova), his immediate successors, and several other scribes from the seventeenth century. Particular attention has been devoted to *The Four Gospels of Karan* (Karansko četvorojevanđelje), a manuscript illuminated with the largest number of elements adopted from Islamic art.

The second article in this section, "Between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic – The Bay of Kotor and the Montenegrin Coast in Early Modern and Modern Times", by **Sasa Brajović** of the *University of Belgrade*, examines the multiculturaluity of the city of Kotor and its extended area. The Bay of Kotor and the Adriatic coast of present day Montenegro were divided between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic from the beginning of fifteenth to the close of eighteenth century. The area was populated by people of various religious confessions, who lived under extremely complex circumstances. In the Bay of Kotor, an area under the rule of the Venetian Republic which lay deep in Turkish territory, Catholics were the majority, followed by the Orthodox. The Turks, who had conquered the southern part of the coast and almost

the entire territory of Montenegro, were the majority in the city of Bar, the see of the ancient Archbishopric of Bar, as well as in the cities of Risan and Herceg-Novi, in the northern part of the Bay of Kotor. Under Ottoman government a Jewish community thrived in those cities. Boundaries between them had an ambiguous character, which in those circumstances promoted social and cultural interaction that is documented in municipal and ecclesiastical archives.

The third article in this section, "The Trade Zone as Cross-Cultural Space: Belgrade Çarşi", by **Nenad Makuljević** of the *University of Belgrade*, deals with one of the main characteristics of the Ottoman Balkan cities: the central market area—çarşi. Çarşi was the place of trade and cultural exchange and intercultural space, where contact was enabled between different religious and ethnic groups. Therefore, the market area was the main space for the crossing of cultures and creating the common culture of the Ottoman Balkans. An example of the trade zone as a cross-cultural space is the Belgrade çarşi, called Zerek. During the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries, trade and crafts in Belgrade were carried out by Vlachs/Tzintzars, Greeks, Serbs, Jews, and Ottomans. A multiethnic and multireligious trade society was a social frame for cross-cultural communication and for the creation of the unique urban culture. The example of Belgrade çarşi shows the importance of trading zones in creating common cultural identity in the Ottoman Balkans. The world of trade was an open place for members of different religious and ethnic communities, so trade of various goods also enabled a cultural transfer and crossing of different cultures. At the same time, prominent trading towns, like Belgrade, were not only of local importance but were also significant points in the cultural network of the Ottoman Balkans.

The fourth article in this section, "Imagining the Forbidden: Representations of the Harem and Serbian Orientalism", by **Irena Ćirović** of the *Institute of History* (Belgrade), deals with the harem theme in the repertoire of Serbian painters and writers. This theme begins to appear towards the end of the nineteenth century, and it is articulated in typical European orientalist formulas. It was an occurrence which must be considered not as mere reproduction of the popular Western genre, but as an essential embracement of its entire orientalist logic. The complexity stems from the fact that its occurrence was situated basically within the alleged "Orient" itself. For a long time, Serbia had been also a subject of the European ideological constructions of "otherness", especially during the nineteenth-century decay of the Ottoman

Empire and the emergence of Balkan nation-states. The cultural region burdened by this heritage nevertheless was an equally fertile ground for the development of the orientalist discourse. In the ideology of an emerging nation, it represented an important complement in the construction of self-identity, at the same time widening the distance from its Ottoman heritage. Exactly in these processes, the representations of the harems as orientalized "otherness" were incorporated in Serbian thought. As ideologically potent cultural descriptions, they contributed a great deal to Serbia's own cultural identity and to the ideology of an emerging nation.

The fifth and last article of this section, "Influence of the Ottoman Architecture on the Aesthetics of Folklorism in Serbian Architecture", by **Vladana Putnik** of the *University of Belgrade,* analyzes the way in which the elements of Ottoman architecture were applied and reinterpreted in the work of Branislav Kojić, Aleksandar Deroko, and Momir Korunović, during the interwar period. Folklorism represented a unique step in search of an authentic architectural expression in the Serbian interwar architecture. It presumed a connection between architectural heritage and contemporary tendencies, as well as a search for common architectural language. Nineteenth-century Balkan profane architecture has been singled out as a main model for achieving that connection. There were, however, some earlier attempts to revive folk art and use its motifs in a contemporary way, especially in the work of Branko Tanazević and Dragutin Inkiostri Medenjak. Branislav Kojić did make real progress in that field of research. There were tendencies in folklorism to apply architectural elements from Ottoman architecture to a contemporary one in a romantic but also a rational manner. Since Balkan profane architecture was nationally and religiously undefined, it has been very suitable for political purposes in showing territorial unity of the multiconfessional as well as multiethnic Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Therefore, it became for a brief moment a part of political propaganda during the reign of King Aleksandar I Karađorđević.

During the course of preparation of this joint issue, we were informed of the passing of Prof. Ivana Burđelez, the mythological director of the Dubrovnik-based *Centre for Mediterranean Studies* of the *University of Zagreb*, with whom we have collaborated for almost a decade, organizing international conferences, editing their proceedings, and fighting to introduce Sephardic Studies into the curriculum of Balkan and Israeli universities. We all knew Ivana was combating a serious disease, but eternally

enchanted by her inexhaustible energy and strength, we were somehow convinced that she would finally win. Just like she always did. Unfortunately, this time our prayers were left unanswered. With Prof. Burđelez's death, Sephardic Studies have lost a pioneering researcher, a relentless fighter, and a visionary; we all have lost a colleague and a friend; and the world has lost a *benadam*, an unbelievable personality. Lamenting her early departure, we decided to honor her memory by dedicating this issue to her. *Tehi nafša ṣerura biṣror haḥayyim!*

We wish to express our appreciation, first and foremost, to the peer reviewers, who devoted their time to an in-depth meticulous reading of the articles received by the editorial board. Without their commitment, collegiality, and volunteerism we could not maintain the high academic standards of our two journals.

Special thanks are owed to the three members of the Editorial Council of *Menorah,* to Prof. Jelena Erdeljan, Svetlana Smolčić Makuljević and Vuk Dautović, without whose enthusiasm, zeal, and dedication this joint issue would never see the light of the world.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to our "technical team": to our language editor, **Fern Seckbach**, without whose skills this issue would not be as comprehensive as it is, as well as to our designer, **Sefi Sinay**, who provided a pleasing appearance to this joint issue.

Last but not least, we would like to thank to **Tzahi Aknin**, the new Administrative Coordinator of *Gaon Center*, who coordinated the work of the editorial board, learning along the way the real meaning of the word coordination: pulling all the strings all the time.

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Between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic – The Bay of Kotor and the Montenegrin Coast in Early Modern and Modern Times

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The Bay of Kotor (Bocca di Cattaro, Boka Kotorska), a thirty-kilometer-long fjord lined by steep monutain slopes and consisting of four interconnected basins in the Republic of Montenegro, was divided between the Venetian Republic and the Ottoman Empire from 1482 to 1687. The north coast of the Bay, with the cities of Herceg Novi and Risan, was occupied by the Turks, while the southern part remained within the Venetian Republic, which conquered this area in the late fourteenth century. Delineation of Venetian and Turkish property in the Bay has been established along the sea line in mid-aquatorium of the Bay.

This distinction marked both the collective and the individual sense of identity of the inhabitants. That identity is shaped by violence, forms of differentiation, negative generalizations, but also by the integration demanded by the life in a multi-cultural and multi-religious reality. Based on the experiences of actual protagonists, this text represents, in short, the history, perception, and self-perception of inhabitants of the Bay of Kotor and the Montenegrian coast in the early modern period.

The Catholics developed a strong feeling of belonging to the Venetian Republic. Marian piety, which shaped the sacred topography of the terrain, provided the ideal network of protection from conflict of any nature.[1] Orthodox population from the hinterland, who came to escape from the Turks and was drawn by the economic

1 S. Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu. Bogorodica i Boka Kotorska – barokna pobožnost zapadnog hrišćanstva*, Plato i Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Beograd 2006, pp. 206-211, 274.

prosperity of coastal towns, strove to maintain its integrity. At first highly reserved toward the "infidels", in time Venice changed its treatment of the Orthodox population and gradually introduced full freedom to them in the Bay.[2] Christians were partly united by "fear of the Turks", a phenomenon that spread through a large part of Europe as one of the most significant factors of identity of the Bay of Kotor.[3]

Yet, the presence of the Turks gave rise not only to fear of assault but also to naval competition, especially in pirating, and thus also to the development of maritime economy. Boundaries between Christians and Muslims had an ambiguous character, which under those circumstances promoted social and cultural interaction that is documented in municipal and ecclesiastical archives.[4] Traces of economic, social, and cultural intertwining are found in all the cities of the Bay of Kotor.

Herceg Novi, which was founded by the Bosnian king Tvrtko I Kotromanić in 1382, was an important port situated between the competing Kotor and Dubrovnik. The city was conquered by the Turks in 1482. The Spanish fleet, led by the admiral Andrea Doria, took the city in 1538, but after only nine months the Turkish admiral Hajrudin Barbarossa put an end to Spanish possession of Herceg Novi.[5]

In the time of the Turks, the city was a military base and a nest of Turkish pirates. In 1664, Herceg Novi has visited by Evlija Chelebi, an educated efendi, chronicler, and writer. In the fifth book of his travelogue he writes about his stay in Herceg Novi. He says that most of the inhabitants of the city are the heroes who wear tight clothing like Algerians and walk around bare shinned, and all, both big and small, carry guns and handle weapons. "They board their frigates instantly and charge against the Montenegrins and rob the Apulian coast and Sicily".[6]

Despite this description of the inhabitants of Herceg Novi as a kind of savages (this type of description is similar to those recorded by Venetians about inhabitants of Catholic Perast, which is a typical form of the image of the Other – even when that other is of the same religion)—documents and material remains testify about huge

2 P. Butorac, *Kulturna povijest grada Perasta*, Perast 1999, pp. 223, 239.

3 V. Gligo, *Govori protiv Turaka*, Split 1983.

4 M. Milošević, *Pomorski trgovci, ratnici i mecene. Studije o Boki Kotorskoj XV-XIX stoljeća*, V. Đokić (ed.), Beograd-Podgorica 2003, pp. 71-94.

5 P. D. Šerović, "Borbe s Turcima oko Hercegnovog do njegovog konačnog oslobođenja g. 1687", *Godišnjak Pomorskog muzeja u Kotoru* 4 (1956), pp. 8-10.

6 E. Čelebi, *Putopis. Odlomci o jugoslavenskim zemljama*, H. Šabanović ed., Sarajevo 1967, 428-434

cultural and, especially, architectural activities of the Turks from Herceg Novi. The most impressive among the buildings is Spanjola fortress, on the extremely important strategic position covering the entrance to the Bay. It was built by the Spaniards and hence its popular name (in the documents it appears as *fortezza superiore* as we can see it on the Coronelli and Mortier maps). But, it was expanded by the Turks, as its inscription testifies—the fortress was built by the sultan's orders by Suleiman, the son of the great emir Sulejman Han.[7]

In scholarship, until recently, there was almost a kind of amnesia about the mosques of Herceg Novi and Risan. But in the territory of the northern part of the Bay there were nine mosques. We do not know the exact locations of most of them as well as those of medressas, tekis, bezistans, and shedrvans which, according to the documents, existed.[8]

Muslim Herceg Novi experienced a kind of urbicide in the Morean war at the end of the seventeenth century. Girolamo Corner, admiral of the Venetian republic, took the city after weeks of siege and battle. The siege of the city is partly visible as part of the votive image of Girolamo Corner and on old maps.[9] The Venetian Republic organized a kind of *damnatio memoriae* of the Turks in the city. The archbishop of Bar, Andrija Zmajević, as the spiritual leader of Boka's warriors served Mass and gave a sermon in the largest mosque of Herceg Novi. So, the mosque became the church of Saint Jerome.[10] Later, because of landslides the church had to be demolished, and a new church was built in 1856. The foundation of the mosque can be seen only as a ground plan between the tower and the present church. Other mosques were destroyed or rearranged on the same occasion. The Turks were expelled, and their land was occupied by citizens of Perast and hajduks, as irregular Venetian troops.

7 On Spanjola, see T. Поповић, *Херцег Нови*, Дубровник 1924, pp. 29-31. Coronelli and Mortier's maps can be seen in *12 vjekova Bokeljske mornarice*, Beograd 1972, pp. 40, 117, 124, 133, 150-151.

8 B. Agović, *Džamije u Crnoj Gori*, Podgorica 2001, 239-253.

9 On the votive image, see N. Luković, *Zvijezda mora. Štovanje Majke Božje u kotorskoj biskupiji sa historijskim podacima*, Perast 2000 (Kotor 1931), p.17.

10 P. Butorac, *Zmajevići*, Zagreb 1928, pp. 3-4; М. Пантић, *Књижевност на тлу Црне Горе и Боке Которске од XVI до XVIII века*, Београд 1990, p. 141; S. Brajović, "Andrija Zmajević, barski nadbiskup i pokrovitelj umjetnosti", in *Umjetnost i naručitelji*, J. Gudelj ed., Institut za povijest umjetnosti i odsjek za povijest umjetnosti Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb 2010, pp. 127-148; B. Agović, *Džamije u Crnoj Gori*, 244.

It was the same in the city of Risan. The traces of Turkish culture remained, but there are no signs of the mosques, gunpowder storage, and han. Risan, as a border location, flourished during Ottoman rule. According to the documents, Orthodox people freely traded in the city.[11]

Documents record that the most active traders in Risan and Herceg Novi were Jews.[12] Grain trade was almost entirely in their hands. It is known that only during the time of Dželal Hasan pasha in 1602 did they suffer, because the ruler of Herceg Novi was prone to violence. Soon the Porta reacted and condemned the offender to death after his negotiations with Venice on the sale of Herceg Novi.

That the Sephardic community was significant and substantial is attested to by the fact that in the city of Herceg Novi was a Jewish cemetery.[13] The cemetery was marked on the map as *Sepoltura de Ebrei*, near the sea coast. The cemetery sank into the sea during the big earthquake in 1667. The available documents do not mention the existence of a synagogue, but it can be assumed that it existed.

In 1599, buried in that cemetery was Isaiah Cohen, a Sephardi from Portugal, physician, doctor and poet, known as Flavius Eborensis (Didacus Pirus). He wrote a book of poems *De exilio suo* on his exhile from Portugal, Constantinople, Italy, Dubrovnik, and Herceg Novi.[14]

Documents verifying the existence of Jews in the medieval city of Kotor are known,[15] but their fate from the Renaissance and Baroque periods remains unknown. We can assume that they did participate in the rich commercial and cultural life of the ancient city. We can also conclude that, like their compatriots in other areas of the

11 On trade in Turkish Herceg Novi, see M. Milošević, *Pomorski trgovci, ratnici i mecene*, pp. 71-95.

12 S. Ljubić, "Commissiones et relationes Venetae II", *JAZU MSHSM* 6, 8, Zagreb 1876/77, p. 244; P. Butorac, *Kulturna povijest grada Perasta*, p. 29.

13 Т. Поповић, *Херцег Нови*, pp. 43-44.

14 Đ. Körbler, "Život i rad humanista Didaka Pira Portugalca, napose u Dubrovniku", *Rad JAZU*, Zagreb 1917, pp. 1-169; B. Vodnik, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti* I, Zagreb 1913, p. 181; D. Novaković, "Didacus Pyrrhus as *lusor amorum:* unpublished love-elegies from the manuscript *D. a. 29* in the Historical Institute of Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Dubrovnik", *Euphrosyne* XXVI (1998), pp. 399-408.

15 D. Sindik, "Jevreji u srednjovekovnom Kotoru", *Zbornik* JIM, knj. 7, Beograd 1997.

Venice commonwealth, they lived according to prescribed rules, which were often violated in practice.[16]

The city of Kotor lay deep in Turkish territory—the area between Kotor and Venetian city of Budva, called Grbalj, was the part of the Ottoman Empire—in the "jaws of the lion" as old documents say. Both Venice and Turkey were well aware of the fact that whoever controlled the Bay also had possession of a safe haven for his fleet, bountiful food, and human resources for the army. So, the Turks orchestrated occasional assaults on the city, and Venice occasionally invested into building city walls. Kotor was populated by people of various religious confessions: Catholics were the majority, then the Orthodox, while a number of Protestants were to be found among the guardians of its walls.[17]

The city of Perast has enjoyed the status of heroic guardian of the Venetian part of the Bay of Kotor. Baroque historiographers celebrated this area as the crucial segment of the circle of European civilization where Christianity was defended from Islam, a veritable *regnum Mariae*. Perast was a center for the gathering of hajduks, piracy, and the selling of slaves.[18] The city benefited from grain trade with Albania. Many documents prove intensive communication between Perast and both Risan and Herceg Novi, not only conflicts. They exchanged goods as well as mutual bribes in order not to attack ships. Relations between the Turkish cities and Perast varied, depending upon the political and economic situation. Sometimes they relied on personal relationships.

Municipal documents testify to one affair that largely determined the destiny of Perast. Vicko Bujović, who in the name merits earned in war won the title of *conte* and a palace from Venice, kidnapped a Turkish girl from Captain Krsto Zmajević. Zmajević had bought the girl as a slave, baptized her, and named her Jelena (from the documents we know that Turkish girls commanded a high price on the market). There are documents, however, that testify that Jelena had fled willingly with Vicko Bujović to Dubrovnik. They married in Bujović's house in Perast 1703, before witnesses (one

16 My research into Jewish culture in modern times in the Bay of Kotor has recently begun. I shall devote more attention to this subject in the future, so I hope that I shall be able to write more about Jewish life and culture in this area.

17 About Kotor in early modern times, see M. Milošević, *Pomorski trgovci, ratnici i mecene*, pp. 135-291.

18 Г. Станојевић, "Грађа за историју Пераста", *Споменик САН* CV, Београд 1956, pp. 53-66.

of them was Tripo Kokolja, the painter of the church of Our Lady of the Reef).[19] There is a legend that Jelena's face was the model for Shulamite from Song of songs. Seemingly because of the "abduction", but actually because of the Bujović's economic power, he was killed. The leader of the conspiracy against Bujović was the brother of the Archbishop of Bar, Matija Zmajević, later a famous admiral in the Russian fleet, and the direct trigger was the judge Štukanović. Representatives of these noble and rich families had to leave the town, sparking a major crisis in the city.

The economic crisis deepened extensively in mid-eighteenth century, again because of a 'personal' affair. The wife of a certain captain from Perast was hijacked by pirates from the city of Ulcinj. Despite the ban of Venice, which did not want the affair to become a *casus belli* with Turkey, Perast attacked Ulcinj to free the woman from the harem. As a punishment, the Republic took away its privileges from Perast.[20] The rise of economic growth of Prčanj and Dobrota occurred because trade concessions with the Albanian coast moved from Perast into their hands.

The most intense intertwining of cultures, but also a tragic erasing of the memory of the Other, is found in the city of Bar, on the south of the Montenegrian coast. Bar, the center of the bishopric from the eighth and the archbishopric from the eleventh century, was a strong economic and cultural center of the medieval state of Zeta and the Serbian Nemanjić'e state, a link between the hinterland and overseas elements. In 1443 Bar was conquered by the Venetians and in 1571 by the Turks.[21] After the Congress of Berlin in 1878, at which time it attained the status of a state, Montenegro won the city. Then the city was nearly destroyed in an explosion of gunpowder caused by the Montenegrin army (see below).

Old Bar, surrounded by walls, had a vast number of churches. Most prominent among them was the cathedral of St. George, a thirteenth-century three-aisled basilica,

19 M. Milošević, *Pomorski trgovci, ratnici i mecene*, pp. 313-346.

20 P. Butorac, "Grilova afera 1747", u: *Kotor i Boka Kotorska*, prelistak iz *Nove Evrope*, Zagreb 1934.

21 M. Šufflay, *Städte und Burgen Albaniens hauptsächlich während des Mittelalters*, Wien und Leipzig 1924; Г. Станојевић, "Услови примања млетачке власти града Бара 1443", *Историјски часопис* 76 (1956), pp. 207-213; И. Божић, *Немирно Поморје XV века*, Beograd 1979; S. Ćirković, B. Hrabak, N. Damjanović, Đ. Vujović, L. Živković, *Bar. Grad pod Rumijom*, Bar 1984; T. Bošković, *Bar pod mletačkom vlašću (1443-1571)*, Bijelo Polje 2004.

built on the foundations of a ninth-century church.[22] Holy places attract population with their energy and memory. So, the Turks converted that church into Ahmed beg's mosque (called Londža). The Montenegrin army turned the mosque into a gunpowder storage site, which was completely destroyed in the explosion of 1881. It was the same with the church of St. Nicholas, which was raised in 1288 by Queen Jelena, wife of the Serbian king Uroš I. The church, which belonged to the Franciscan order, was converted into a mosque. The mosque was demolished in an explosion of gunpowder. The same fate befell the church of Saint Mark, adapted into the mosque of Sultan Murat III, which was destroyed in an explosion. The war of liberation ruined many mosques in Bar: Sultan Selim's (built in 1571-74), Derviš Hasan (built in 1714), Škanjevića mosque (built in mid-eighteenth century) with its minaret restored in 2006, Pazarska mosque, and more. The only one preserved is Omer-bašića mosque, with a fountain and the turbe of the Šejh Hasa, built in 1612, on site of the grave of one of the most famous Muslim missionaries in the area, which was a sacred place of great power.[23]

In Bar we can see how the Turks were great builders and city planners. In the seventeenth century they built a large bath (*amam*) using water coming from the Rumija Mountain through a viaduct on the north side of town. The aqueduct, a great architectural undertaking, was destroyed by an earthquake in 1979, but has been renovated and continues to serve its primary purpose. The Turks built the tower clock, gunpowder storage, and the bazar—the trade zone and cross-cultural heart of the city, with its ambiental physiognomy shaped by centuries.

Very intense intertwining of cultures is also found in the port of Ulcinj, which was part of the Ottoman Empire from 1571 until the 1878. The most famous resident of the city was Sabbatai Zevi, Sephardi rabbi and kabbalist, who claimed to be the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. Historians seem to agree that in 1673 he was exiled by the Turkish sultan from Constantinople to Ulcinj, where he died, according to some accounts, on September 17, 1676. The tomb of Sabbatai Zevi may be there, although another theory that claims that he died in Berat, Albania.[24]

22 Ђ. Бошковић, *Стари Бар*, Београд 1962; П. Мијовић, *Вирпазар – Бар – Улцињ*, Цетиње – Београд 1979, pp. 11-57.

23 About mosques in Bar, see B. Agović, *Džamije u Crnoj Gori*, pp. 191-224.

24 Gershom Gerhard Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626-1676*, Princeton 1973, p. 921; Paul Fenton, "The tomb of the Messiah of Ishmael" [in Hebrew], *Pe'amim* 25 (1985), pp. 13-39.

In Ulcinj, a living legend relates that Miguel Cervantes lived there as a prisoner for five years. Apparently, the name of Don Quixote's love, Dulcinea, is inspired by the name of the city, Dulcinjo. According to legend, after the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, the famous writer had somehow passed into the hands of an Ulcinj pirate, Unuč Halija. Scholars claim that Cervantes served in the Spanish fleet, was wounded at the Battle of Lepanto, and captured by Algerian pirates. However, Ulcinj's legend was created as the manifestation of a cross spinning of stories about Ulcinj and Algerian pirates, often allies in fighting and looting. Its construction is common and attests to the interfusion of the Mediterranean world, regardless of religion.

Over centuries, popular piety united people of different religions. Orthodox, Catholics and Muslims from that region, where olives are grown, made a pilgrimage to the Church of Saint Nicholas in the nearby village of Zupci, because of the miracle-working figure of St. Nicholas, made out of olive wood, which probably dates to the sixteenth century. The neighboring monastery of Ratac, built in the eleventh century by the Benedictines, became the most prominent focus of pilgrimage in the wider area thanks to its miracle-working icon of the Virgin and its famous fair which united Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims.[25]

In this paper I wanted to point out one possible way of studying, understanding, and arranging the problems related to different cultures, confessions, faith, and their intertwining on the Montenegrin Adriatic coast. The great effort needed to uncover and determine the facts about the life, identity, culture, and visual culture of non-Christians awaits the historians, art historians, and archaeologists.

25 M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi. Njihova simbioza u srednjem vijeku*, Sarajevo 1990 (Beograd 1925), p. 103.