Anglo-Turkish Society online lecture, 8 July 2021, 6.00 pm

Speaker: Christine Philliou

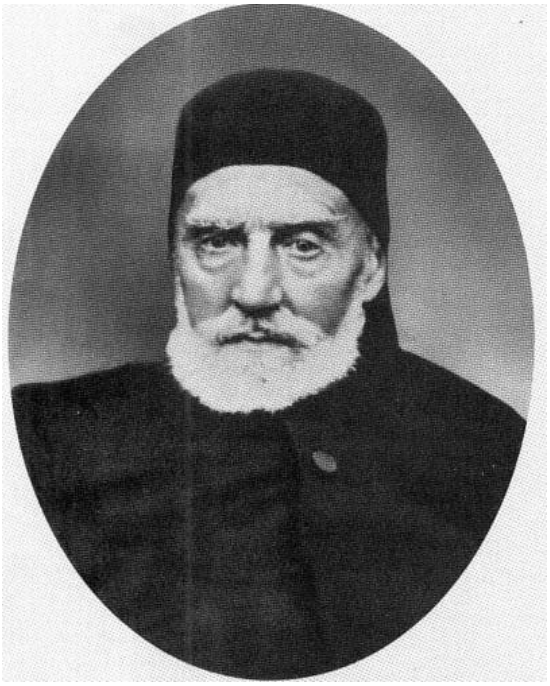
Platform: Zoom with link provided to those who register

Title: 'Phanariots, Ottoman governance, and the Greek Revolution: New perspectives on life before the Tanzimat reforms'

Phanariots were a group of elite Orthodox Christian, Greek-speaking functionaries whose ascendancy was made possible by the circumstances of Ottoman governance in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In an era when many of the operations of governance were improvised, Phanariots, whose power was based in the Istanbul quarter of Phanar, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate was also based, achieved the curious position of brokers, power-holders, and agents of governance in a system that was not designed to accommodate them. In this talk, I will explore this ascendancy of Greek Orthodox Christians, focusing on one particular case, that of Stephanos Vogorides, who chose to remain loyal to the Sultan and the empire through the crisis and transformation precipitated by the Greek Revolution (1821-1828) and the establishment of the independent Kingdom of Greece (1832). This "prehistory" of the Tanzimat sheds light on the ways Ottoman governance operated before the centralizing, "Westernizing" reforms, and on the void that was left by Phanariots in the wake of the Greek Revolution; a void that was filled by a new generation of Muslim bureaucrats, statesmen, and liberal reformers that would put the empire on a new course for the final decades of its existence.

Booking essential: https://Christine-philliou-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk

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Prince Nicolae Vogoride



Christine Philliou is Professor of History at University of California, Berkeley. Her talk focuses on her first book, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (2010), which told the story of Phanariots, and the larger crisis and transformation precipitated by the Greek Revolution, from the perspective of Phanariots. Her more recent book, *Turkey: A Past Against History* (2021), turns to the question of *muhalefet*, or opposition and dissent, in the Second Constitutional era and the transition to the Republic of Turkey, from the point of view of writer, satirist and perennial dissident Refik Halid Karay (1888-1965). In it, she argues that, in the absence of a sanctioned, sustained opposition party between 1908 and 1950, the word and concept of *muhalefet* operated as a surrogate for an actual opposition party; she then explores the life and literary works of Karay in that context, offering a new vantage point on the political and cultural changes of the twentieth century in Turkey. In addition to her two books, she has published several articles in journals such as Comparative Studies of Society and History, Middle Eastern Studies, and Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. She has been the recipient of the Sabanci International Research Award for her essay, "The Paradox of Perceptions: Interpreting the Ottoman Past in the National Present," and of fellowships such as the Burkhardt Fellowship of the American Council of Learned Societies, the Stanford Humanities Center, and the Townsend Center for the Humanities at UC Berkeley. She directs the Program in Turkish and Ottoman Studies at the Center for Middle East Studies and the Modern Greek and Hellenic Studies Program at the Institute for European Studies at Berkeley, and teaches classes on Ottoman, Middle East, Modern Turkish, and Modern Greek and Balkan History.