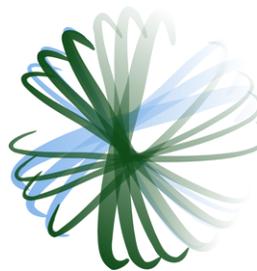

Thursday, 23.2.2023

19:00 CET / 1:00 PM EST

ROBERT M. HAYDEN

University of Pittsburgh



THE WORKING GROUP
ON LIVED RELIGION
IN EASTERN EUROPE
AND EURASIA

The Fluid Dynamics of Viscous Identities: Sedimentations of Time in Five Late-Ottoman Refugee Towns in Bosnia since 1863

With commentary by David Henig from Utrecht University.

This presentation expands the concept of the “fluidity” of ethnic or national identities to argue that group identities may be viscous, changing slowly and maintaining much continuity through time. I also develop Reinhart Koselleck’s concept of “sediments of time” processually, as sedimentation and erosion of the social and physical indicators of the presence of Self- and Other-identifying communities through time. Using this model I analyze developments in five towns newly founded by the Ottoman empire in 1862/63 on the northern border of Bosnia, to house Muslims expelled from Serbia and reinforce the border with the Habsburgs in places where few Muslims were then living. Over 150 years, the populations within the towns have overwhelmingly self-distinguished between Muslims (Bosniaks), Roman Catholics (Croats), and Orthodox Christians (Serbs). By 2013, only one settlement was still majority Muslim (now Bosniak), one was majority Croat, two majority Serb, and one nearly equal in Serb and Bosniak populations. To explain the flow of social interactions through time in these towns we develop a model drawn from fluid dynamics, of the differences between the laminar flows of liquids that seem smooth but are composed of layers of differing composition that do not much intermix, and turbulence, when such laminar flows meet an obstruction. Interactions between members of ethno-religious communities may also flow with apparent smoothness, yet in a laminar fashion. By paying attention to the varying ways in which physical and social indicators of such communities have developed through time in these five contrasting locations, we gain a better understanding of wider historical processes that continue to be in play.

Meeting Link [Here](#)

No pre registration necessary. All are welcome!
