

Forgiveness (Please?)

Strategies and Practices of Absolution in Eastern Orthodoxy in the Early Modern and Modern Periods



ORTHPOL WORKSHOP

BUCHAREST, 9-10 OCTOBER 2025

CONVENORS: Nikolaos **CHRISSIDIS** / Ovidiu **OLAR** / Emanuela **TIMOTIN**

VENUE: “Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti” Institute of Linguistics
(Casa Academiei, Calea 13 Septembrie 13)

PARTICIPANTS

Nikolaos **CHRISSIDIS** / Stavros **GRIMANIS** / Bernard **HEYBERGER** / Milorad **KAPETANOVIĆ** /
Nadieszda **KIZENKO** / Illia **KOVALENKO** / Mirjam **MENCEJ** / Octavian-Adrian **NEGOIȚĂ** / Anna
OHANJANYAN / Ovidiu **OLAR** / Mihail **QARAMAH** / Laurent **TATARENKO** / Emanuela **TIMOTIN** /
Vera **TCHENTSOVA** / Stamatis **ZOCHIOS**

The workshop seeks to explore strategies and practices for securing absolution of sins in the Eastern Orthodox world during the early modern and modern periods. Our goal is to move beyond doctrinal and canonical precepts, in order to examine the actual ritual practices of the clergy, as well as the agency and strategies employed by believers. Rather than tracing the history of the rite of confession, we focus on case studies, emphasize praxis over doctrine, and aim to highlight the diverse ritual and strategic aspects of securing absolution.



Thursday October 9

09:30–10:00 Welcome and Introduction

10:00–13:15 First Panel (Chair: **Nikolaos Chrissidis, Ovidiu Olar**)

Stamatis Zochios

The Fate of Souls: Witnessing the Intermediate State and the Transformative Power of Prayer in Orthodox Visionary Narratives

Emanuela Timotin

Forgiveness through Reading Apocrypha in Orthodox Christianity (16th-18th Centuries).

11:30-11:45 Break

Nikolaos Chrissidis

Scenarios of Forgiveness: Synchorochartia in Eastern Orthodoxy

Octavian-Adrian Negoită

The Grand Theologian Georgios Koressios on Purgatory and Forgiveness of Sins

13:15-14:15 Lunch Break

14:15-16:45 Second Panel (Chair: **Emanuela Timotin**)

Anna Ohanjayan

Sin and Mercy: Simple Believers and Discourse over “Correct” Absolution in the Seventeenth-Century Armenian Constantinople

Illia Kovalenko

What if the Priest is out of Reach? Strategies of Absolution in Popular Religious Literature. The Case of Agapios Landos

15:45-16:00 Break

Stauros Grimanis

Preaching Practices and Techniques / Guidelines of Repentance: The Case of a Greek Orthodox Bishop in Venice, 16th–17th Century

16:45-17:00 Break

17:00-18:00 **Keynote Speech** (Introduction: **Nikolaos Chrissidis**)

Nadieszda Kizenko

“Let Me Count the Ways”: The Varieties of Absolution Across Orthodox Traditions

19:30 Dinner for Workshop Presenters



Friday October 10

09:30–12:45 **Third Panel** (Chair: **Milorad Kapetanović**)

Bernard Heyberger

Mimicry and Competition: Confession among the Rūms of Antioch before the Split of 1724

Vera Tchentsova

Appealing to the Dead: The Head and Hand of the First Known Metropolitan of Korçë as Instruments of Forgiveness

11:00–11:15 **Break**

Laurent Tatarenko

The Regime of Exception and Forgiveness: Absolutions and Dispensations for Clerics of the Greek Rite in Southern Italy during the post-Tridentine Period

Mirjam Mencej

Another Perspective: The Dead Seeking Forgiveness from the Living

12:45–14:00 **Lunch Break**

14:00–15:30 **Fourth Panel** (Chair: **Vera Tchentsova**)

Mihail Qaramah

Penitential Prayers and Rites in Romanian Euchologia (16th–18th Centuries): A Historical and Liturgical Analysis

Ovidiu Olar

A Robber's Road to Paradise: An Early Eighteenth-Century Tale of Redemption

15:30–16:00 **Break**

16:00–17:00 **Concluding Session** – All participants (Chair: **Bernard Heyberger**)

This event is jointly organized by:

- The “Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti” Institute of Linguistics, Bucharest, Romania
- The “ORTHPOL – *Orthodoxies and Politics: The Religious Reforms of Mid-17th Century in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*” project, funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement No. 950287)
- The Department of History, Southern Connecticut State University, USA

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