

## *Activities - Summaries*

### **Europe and the Ottoman Empire in mid 19th Century**

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The parallels between the globalisation of the nineteenth century and that of the present period are intriguing. The principal difference is that, hundred and fifty years ago, the Ottoman Empire was undertaking reforms toward modern statehood. A 'modern state' would necessarily seek to govern a territory and establish uniform rule over it. The forces of economic integration, however, worked in the direction of differentiation. The heterogeneity of empire engendered centrifugal tendencies based on unequal development, often correlating with ethnicity. The degree to which these tendencies could be contained within the framework of a modernising state determined the cohesion and allegiance of various groups in the Empire to the project, and the eventual success of the effort.

The dialectic between the forces of economic integration and those of political modernisation can not be reduced to an external-internal tension. Both internal and external actors entertained various scenarios, thus projecting the struggle to the European arena. This paper will describe the possible alternative trajectories determined by the field of forces and will seek to point to the crucial moments of decision when some of the options became unavailable.