

The Orthodox traditions and institutions transformed over time during the Ottoman period so as to adapt to the uneven administrative, economic, and demographic circumstances. In this sense, monastic exiles present an interesting and fitting case to analyse the Orthodox experience under the Ottomans, in terms of how an Orthodox tradition is practiced within the Ottoman legal framework, through an interaction of administrative and ecclesiastical actors. How did monastic confinement continue into the Ottoman period? What was the procedure and who were the actors? Which monasteries were used as loci of exile? How did the practice transform over time? The relevant documentation from the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries is abundant. For the earlier period of Ottoman rule though, our knowledge on the practice remains relatively limited. Evidently from the early Ottoman period onwards the major monasteries in Mount Athos, the Aegean and the Princes Islands continued to function as loci of retirement and banishment for the Orthodox high clergy. However, documentation on the function of monasteries as places of punishment and repentance until the first decade of the eighteenth century is relatively scarcer.

An entry found in a *mühimme* register gives a clue about the bureaucratic process of monastic confinement and the patriarch's position vis-à-vis the administration in 1577¹⁷. According to that document, Patriarch Ieremias II of Constantinople (c. 1536-1595) presented himself in front of the city's *kadı* court against Parthenios, the former metropolitan of Varna. Parthenios had been dismissed from his position due to an indecent behaviour and was exiled to Mount Athos. However, the former metropolitan somehow escaped and was back to the city. Ieremias II proved in the court that Parthenios continued his indecent acts, and he had this claim registered in the *kadı* records. According to the register in the *mühimme defteri*, an imperial edict was issued to send Parthenios to Simonopetra Monastery on Mount Athos and keep him within its confines¹⁸. For this period, it is important to note that it was necessary for the patriarch to prove his case in the *kadı* court and to register his claim, in order to exile the metropolitan. However, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the patriarch would have achieved a more prominent position in Ottoman society, a state of affairs also reflected on the cases of monastic confinement¹⁹. Our knowledge on the

17 A *mühimme defteri* is a register of the copies of sultanic edicts approved by the sultan on issues discussed in the imperial court. S. Faroqi, "Mühimme Defterleri", 470-472. Kütükoğlu, "Mühimme Defteri", 520-523.

18 The order addressed the *kadı* of Thessaloniki/Selanik. Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey, Department of Ottoman Archives (Hereafter BOA) A.DVNSMHH.d. 31/821, (H.985).

19 The increasing prominence of the Patriarchate of Constantinople by the eighteenth century coin-

process of monastic confinement in the period in-between is limited and there are no grounds to assume a steady passage from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

As already stated, from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards cases of monastic confinement of lay and ecclesiastical figures initiated by the patriarchs of Constantinople are well-documented. In Ottoman registers the term used for the practice of monastic confinement is *manastırbend*, formed by the Persian suffix - *bend* that means bound, captivated, confined, or detained²⁰. Other words formed in the same way are *kalebend* (confinement to a castle), *kulebend* (bondage in a tower), *cezirebend* (exile to an island), *zindanbend* (detention in a dungeon) or *prangabend* (bondage in fetters). The similarity is more than a linguistic one; they are all punishments of confinement in the Ottoman legal system, implemented by executive officers (*ehl-i örf*)²¹. Uriel Heyd notes that imprisonment was not a very common penalty for criminal offences in the earlier Ottoman period as it was in antiquity and medieval Europe, despite its occurrence in Islamic law and *fetvas* (legal opinions of *müftis*)²². In the eighteenth century though, banishment to castles increased, and ultimately became prevalent by the nineteenth century²³. Cases of confinements were recorded in a series of registers called *kalebend defterleri*²⁴. The earliest *kalebend* registers located in Istanbul's Ottoman state archive date back to 1680, and they abound in the eighteenth century to continue up to the 1840s²⁵. Apart from the direct *kalebend* registers, various other documents related to confinements are available in a variety of collections and registers in the same archive such as petitions, decisions of the *divan* or imperial orders, until the end of the nineteenth century. A typical *kalebend* register is a short entry copying the imperial order and addressing the involved executive officers and/or the *kadıs*, ordering the arrest of an individual

cides with the gradual transformation of the Ottoman finances and bureaucracy and the shift from a military to a bureaucratic state. For the context of the eighteenth-century transformation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople see Bayraktar Tellan, *The Patriarch and the Sultan*, 88-91.

20 Steingass, "بند", 201-202.

21 Erim, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda kalebentlik cezası", 79-88. İşbilir, "Kalebend", 5-7.

22 Heyd, *Studies in old Ottoman criminal law*, 301.

23 *Ibid.*, 303-304. İşbilir, "Kalebend", 5-7.

24 Uz, "Osmanlı Tarihi Çalışmalarında Kalebend Defterlerinin Rolü ve Önemi", 447-464.

25 A list of these registers and documents can be found in Türe and Kaynar, *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi*, 50-51, 164. At Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar University in Istanbul, Prof. İşbilir and Prof. Aycibin-Seyitkiran have been supervising a series of theses based on the *kalebend* registers in the Ottoman archive. The theses of the following researchers have contributed a great deal to my research (see bibliography): U. Koca, M. Alakuş, R. Uz, F. Şahin, Ş. Alemdaroğlu, V. Çeribaş, E. Daş, Z. Toku, H. Genç, M. C. Erdoğan, M. Kara, F. Algül.

and his detainment in a specified location (a castle, an island, a tower), with the instruction to be kept under strict control and not to be released without further imperial order. Most often, the release (*ıtlak*) orders were also recorded under the main entry of confinement. The exact period to be spent in detention was in general unspecified in the Ottoman penal paradigm. However, Heyd notes that a *fetva* would mention that a detainee remains in custody 'until the time of repentance and moral improvement' arrives²⁶. This was mostly expressed as 'until the time of self-redemption' (*ıslah-ı nefis*) in the *kalebend* registers. Studies on these registers have shown that the time spent in confinement is indefinite and variable each time, even for similar offences²⁷.

Despite the literature on the *kalebend* registers in Ottoman legal historiography, and the familiarity of the students of these registers with the term *manastırbend*, the practice of confinement to monasteries as an Orthodox practice within the Ottoman legal framework has so far been treated as a series of isolated cases of punishment implemented on Christians, occasionally appearing in the *kalebend* registers²⁸. Nevertheless, an overall evaluation of *manastırbend* cases as established procedures, rather than individual instances, in which the Orthodox actors and the Ottoman administration interact, can reveal the transformation of an Orthodox practice under Ottoman rule, illuminating a neglected phenomenon and providing a more complex narrative on the dynamic functions of monasteries during this period²⁹.

Evidence from the eighteenth century onwards reveals that monastic exiles were imposed on the Christians of the Ottoman Empire by the patriarchs who acted as the intermediaries³⁰. It is important to note that by this time the patriarchs of Constantinople had forged a more conventional relationship with the Ottoman bureaucracy, a dynamic that would culminate in the second half of the eighteenth century. Rather than presenting their case to the the *kadı* court, as it happened in 1577, the patriarchs penned petitions and presented their cases directly to the Ottoman administration and managed to procure the imperial

26 Heyd, *Studies in old Ottoman criminal law*, 302.

27 Erim, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda kalebentlik cezası", 82. İşbilir, "Kalebend", 5-7. Baytimur, *Osmanlı Devletinde hapis ve sürgün cezaları*, 59. In one study, the period between confinement and release in a *kalebend* register has been identified as varying from ten days to four years. Akşin, Baytimur, "25 Numaralı kalebend defterinin tanıtımı", 805-807.

28 Söylemez, "Kalebend Cezası Bağlamında", 135-156.

29 I was inspired by Hillner's approach in her studies on monastic confinement. See footnote 16.

30 The Armenian patriarchs also implemented monastic confinement on the clergy and subjects under their jurisdiction, but this study excludes the Armenian cases. Documents are available in the *kalebend* registers.

edicts they required, based on their rights defined in the patriarchal *berats*. The implementation of monastic confinement operated in this system with the patriarchs conveying their request through petitions stamped by their official seal.

Monastic exile was basically a punishment of exile (*nefy*) that sometimes also included banishment to a tower (*kulebend*). For the Greek Orthodox, the two most frequent places of exile from the eighteenth century on were the monasteries of Mount Athos and Meteora. Regarding Mount Athos, Great Lavra, Hilandar, Iveron, Vatopedi, Dionysiou, Simonopetra, Filotheou, Esfigmenou, Agiou Paulou, Koutloumousiou, Panteleimon and Karakallou are the monasteries I have encountered in the relevant Ottoman documentation³¹. The towers of Hilandar, Lavra, Iveron, Vatopedi, Panteleimon and Karakallou monasteries were used for imprisonment. Robert Curzon notes that three monks were being kept in exile at Xenophontos Monastery at the time of his visit in 1837³². Most probably the physical and geographical conditions of the monasteries in these regions facilitated control over the exiled people. In Meteora, Varlaam and the Great Meteoro (Monastery of the Transfiguration) were used for monastic exiles at least from the eighteenth century on³³. Under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Leimonos Monastery in Lesvos/Midilli, Bachkovo Monastery in Filippoupoli/Filibe/Plovdiv, Soumela Monastery in Trapezounta/Trabzon and Prodomos Monastery in Caesarea/Kayseri were also used as locations of exile for local clergymen in the nineteenth century³⁴. Christians were sent to castles too, not exclusively monasteries. Alternatively, they were sent to galleys as well. Records revealing the diversity of locations employed can be found in *kalebend* registers, *şikayet* registers and other related documentation.

31 See some examples in Bayraktar Tellan, "Osmanlı araştırmalarında yeni kaynakların tarihyazımına katkıları", 171-190. Many other examples exist in *kalebend* registers. See the *kalebend* theses in the bibliography, which are also available online.

32 Curzon, *Visit to the monasteries of the Levant*, 372-373.

33 Laiou presents cases of exiles from the Ottoman documents of Varlaam from 1796 to 1858 and refers to an earlier case of 1751. Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα*, 66-67, 271, 276-277, 279-280. Vapheides, *Η Μονή του Αγίου και Μεγάλου Μετεώρου*, 150-156. *Idem*, "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 33-40.

34 Papa Lykourgos from Smyrna/Izmir was exiled to Leimonos Monastery in Lesvos/Midilli in 1856. (BOA.HR.MKT.162/63, H.1272) Ioasef, the former metropolitan of Hersek was released from the Bachkovo monastery in Filippoupoli/Filibe/Plovdiv in 1855. (BOA HR.MKT.126/51). Papa Yani from Vidin was exiled to Bachkovo in Filippoupoli/Filibe/Plovdiv by the Patriarchate (BOA.HR.MKT.138/56, H.1272). Değirmencioğlu Papa Georgis from the Dikencik (?) village of Bafra was exiled to Soumela by the Patriarchate in 1859. (BOA.HR.MKT. 288/50, H.1275). In these cases, the local priests were sent to nearby monasteries. The metropolitan of Kyzikos/Kapıdağı and Artaki/Erdek Zacharia was sent to Prodomos Monastery in Kaisareia/Kayseri in October 1824. Daş, *37 numaralı kalebend defteri*, doc. 51/5.

Orthodox women as well were sentenced to monastic confinement by patriarchal petition. The most common locations of banishment for Orthodox women were the nunneries in Santorini, Lesvos, Kios/Gemlik, Samokov, Skopelos and Patmos in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries³⁵. In the Ottoman documents the names of nunneries are rarely stated, as they are mostly referred to as women's monasteries (*kadınlara / kızlara / nisvana mahsus manastırlar*). Unfortunately, we are not provided with much information about the procedure that was followed for women, except for the place and the reasons of banishment, and only in vague terms. Nevertheless, thanks to this documentation, Orthodox nunneries as well can gain more visibility in the context of Ottoman studies.

IV. METEORA AS LOCI OF MONASTIC CONFINEMENT

The process of monastic confinement during the Ottoman period can be traced in the numerous cases of exiles to Meteora monasteries during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The Ottoman documentation describes the procedure from the exile's detention up to his entrance to the monastery. Within the Ottoman legal framework, the related imperial orders were sent to the *kadı* or his substitute (*naib*) and the administrative officers of the area where the criminal/outlaw lived and acted, as well as to the Ottoman rulers where the monasteries were located. In the case the Meteora monasteries, one copy of the imperial orders was addressed the *kadı* of Trikala/Tırhala. Among the monasteries close to Kalambaka, it seems that, at least according to the Ottoman documentation, the overriding majority of exiles were sent to Varlaam Monastery. The Monastery of the Transfiguration (Great Meteoro) was also used, but probably less often. Sometimes, the name of the monastery was left unspecified and mentioned only generically as 'the monastery at Kalambaka'. The detainees included metropolitans, priests, monks and others who were not clergymen. The long list of detainees includes archbishops like Paisios of Kaisareia, who was

³⁵ BOA.HR.MKT. 62/72, H. 1269, BOA.HR.MKT. 261/89, H.1275, BOA.HR.MKT. 285/95, H.1275, BOA C.ADL.29/1724, H.1226, BOA HAT 774/36278, H.1235, BOA C.ZB 76/3765, H.1227, BOA AE.SMHD.II. 65/4641 H.1231, BOA C.ADL. 40/2396, H. 1245, BOA C.ADL 48/2858, H.1233. Many other documents of these monasteries as exile places for Christian women can be found in the *kalebend* registers. Other monasteries where women were exiled less often included the monasteries of Yanartaş in Kaisareia/Kayseri (Daş, *37 numaralı kalebend defteri*, doc. 121/2), Agia Anastasia in Sozopolis (Genç, *35 numaralı kalebend defteri*, doc. 57/1) and Kalofer in Filippoupoli/Filibe/Plovdiv (Toku, *34 numaralı kalebend defteri*, doc. 52/2).

confined at Great Meteoro in the 1760s³⁶, Athanasios of Athens³⁷, and Makarios of Çatalca, who were both confined at Varlaam in 1789 and 1800 respectively³⁸, and Parthenios of Prizren in 1855, who is mentioned to have been confined at 'Kalanbaka' monastery³⁹. Monks from Meteora or other monasteries located in the region of Trikala were sent to Athonite monasteries, possibly to be kept away from their neighbourhood⁴⁰. Exiles from Athonite monasteries have also been documented. For example, in 1857 the monks Vartholomeos and Bessarion from Filotheou Monastery, who had been exiled to the monasteries of Zograf/Zographou and Pantokratoros, were released by patriarchal petition⁴¹.

In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the procedure of exile initiates with the notification of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. In case a Christian individual poses a burden to society, his/her misdeeds are generally conveyed to the patriarch by the residents of the affected neighbourhood. In Ottoman society, one of the ways to transmit communal problems to the Ottoman administration was petition-writing⁴². However, the main actors of this procedure changed according to time and circumstances. In case of unrest, the residents of a village or a town, the priest, the bishop, or the archbishop could write a petition to the patriarch. The *kadı* was an alternative figure to pen the petition to the *divan*. During the eighteenth century, in most of known cases, the local Christians notified the patriarch with a letter written in Greek (*Rumi hat*), as referred to in consecutive documents. This brings us to the position of the patriarch of Constantinople in eighteenth-century Ottoman society. This was a time when the intermediary position of the patriarch between the Orthodox people and the Ottoman administration seems to have been in surge, at least when compared to the seventeenth century. Then, a *kadı* would more often convey these communal problems to the capital. Upon hearing the news of misconduct, the patriarchs would write a petition to the Sublime Porte. The patriarchal petitions to the Porte in general, and not only the requests for monastic confinement, would follow a standard pattern. After presenting the case quite briefly and in an undetailed manner, the patriarch would ask for the person to be transferred to a monastery that he specifies, and to be kept detained until a further

36 Vapheidiades, "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 34.

37 Uz, *24 Numaralı kalebend defteri*, docs. 82/2, 181/2.

38 BOA C.ADL. 57/3420 (H. 1215).

39 BOA HR.MKT. 126/69 (H. 1272).

40 BOA HR.MKT. 64 /28 (H. 1269), BOA HR.MKT. 223/ 67 (H. 1274), BOA HR.MKT. 293/ 33 (H. 1275).

41 BOA HR.MKT. 177/21 (H. 1273).

42 Ursinus, *Grievance administration*. Taş, "Osmanlı'da Şikayet Hakkının Kullanımı Üzerine Düşünceler", 186-204. İnalçık, "Şikayet Hakkı", 33-54.

petition sealed by himself or the Patriarchate was issued. He would conclude by asking for the related imperial orders to be sent to the involved parties. A major change in the standard pattern for patriarchal petitions happened only in 1763. From this time onwards, i.e., the office of Samuel Hantzeris, the petitions were not presented by the patriarch alone, but by 'the Patriarch of Constantinople and the resident metropolitans in the city' (*asitanede mukim cemaat-i metropolidan*). The patriarchal seal changed as well. Rather than the personal seal of the patriarch, the petitions that were presented to the Porte were sealed by one that was divided into four parts, which were shared among the metropolitans⁴³.

Despite the standard pattern of patriarchal petitions, the discourse of these apparently identical documents reveals a great deal about the means of interaction as well as the patriarchs' scope of jurisdiction. As mentioned above, the patriarchal petitions in most cases only vaguely mentioned the actions that made monastic exile necessary. For the *manastırbend* cases presented by patriarchal petitions, the most frequent reasons that justified exile in the documents were generic, e.g., 'misconduct', 'improper actions', 'interloping in others' business', 'daring to involve in brigandage and mischief', etc⁴⁴. No further details are provided as to what exact mischief was conducted. This is not different from the documents of Muslim exiles to castles or islands of the same period⁴⁵. What differs in the *manastırbend* documents is the term 'in contravention to their rite' (*ayınlerine mugayir*). But this does not necessarily mean that the mischief was related to a misconduct according to the Christian dogma. On the contrary, this term customarily appears not only in monastic confinement petitions, but also in many Ottoman documents which allege the patriarch's involvement. For example, in patriarchal *berats*, it is recurrently stated that '[...] the petitions of the patriarchs shall be observed, and whatever they petition regarding their rite shall be allowed⁴⁶. Many of the stipulations related to patriarchal rights and privileges are justified as being 'in accordance with their rite'⁴⁷. The patriarchs' jurisdiction is limited to the religious realm according to the discourse of the

43 For the historical context of this development see Bayraktar Tellan, "The Patriarchate of Constantinople and the "reform of the synod"", 7-22.

44 Among numerous examples, the following are illustrative: 'kendü halinde olmayub vazifesinden haric umura süluk ve ayinimize mugayir hareket-ı nahemvaraneye tasaddi idüb' (BOA C.ADL. 4/211, H.1215), 'ziyade müfsid ve yaramaz olub reaya beyninde ilka-i fitne ve tahrik-i fesad ve reaya fukarasını tecrim ve tağrim itdirmekle' (BOA AE.SMST.III 32/2184, H. 1174).

45 Erım, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda kalebentlik cezası", 82.

46 See the patriarchal *berats* published in Çolak, Bayraktar Tellan, *The Orthodox Church*, 225, 235, 243, 249, 256, 264, 269, 276, 285, 293.

47 *Ibid.*, *passim*.

Ottoman bureaucratic documentation only if you read documents at face value, and without further analysis⁴⁸. These cases however, which almost never give details of misconduct, apparently go beyond the religious realm. Not only clergymen, but many laymen and women as well are subjects of *manastirbend* documents that deal with penal law. The perpetrators need to be prevented from unsettling their neighbourhood, and the patriarch, who has become by that time the most prominent Orthodox figure not only in the eyes of his flock, but before the Ottoman administration as well, is the one to settle the affairs⁴⁹. Upon patriarchal notification, the relevant order is issued by the Porte and sent to local officers. Patriarchal *berats* are the legal basis for the approval of patriarchal petitions, according to which 'the petitions of the patriarchs shall be observed, and whatever they petition regarding their rite shall be allowed'⁵⁰. The imperial centre is the final authority to approve the exile or release of culprits, only after the procedure is commenced by the patriarch in cases of monastic exiles. Rather than a one-way imposition of imperial authority, the described process reflects more of an interplay between the Patriarchate and the Porte. For example, the utilization of imperial authority could sometimes prove useful to the patriarchs, as it enabled them to smoothly implement their decisions. Relevant to this argument is the fact that in patriarchal letters sent to monasteries about exiles, the patriarchs underlined that the culprits were exiled by the sultan's order, besides stressing their own religious authority⁵¹.

One of the functions of exile in early modern Ottoman society was to keep the culprit away from his habitat, preventing him/her from disturbing the order of local society. The responsibility of the community in maintaining order is apparent in the discourse of bureaucratic documents⁵². The physical conditions of monasteries were appropriate to facilitate this function of forced isolation from the society. On the other hand, keeping perpetrators in confinement served not only as a means of punishment. The time spent in detention was also considered an opportunity for repentance and self-improvement. The documents underline the necessity that confinement should continue until the accomplishment of self-repentance (*ıslah-ı nefis edinceye değin*). But how and by whom was 'correction of oneself' assessed? The measure and conditions of 'self-repentance' are

48 Cf. Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı millet sistemi*.

49 Bayraktar Tellan, *The Patriarch and the sultan*, 150-159.

50 Çolak, Bayraktar Tellan, *The Orthodox Church*, 225, 235 et passim.

51 Anastasiadis, *Αρχείο της Ι. Μ. Χιλανδαρίου*, 152-153, 165, 280-281.

52 For the common responsibility of Ottoman subjects in an Ottoman neighbourhood see Ergenç, *Şehir, toplum devlet*, 75-84.

not clearly stated, and most probably pressure from outside authorities to terminate incarceration must have played a role. The wording used is not specific to monasteries but extends to other locations of incarceration, like castles and towers. In the case of monasteries, the transformative power of their environment, especially in terms of the culprit's repentance, was also taken into consideration by the patriarchs. In 1785, Patriarch Gabriel of Constantinople wrote a letter to Hilandar about the situation of Anastasis from Imbros, who was kept by imperial order in the monastery's tower. The patriarch recommended that the culprit should have continuous contact with the spiritual fathers to correct himself, and if he repents, he may remain in the monastery for the salvation of his soul⁵³. In cases of release, the patriarch utilized the discourse of repentance and self-correction to terminate the exile of Christian subjects, which was once again fitting into the structural context of *kalebend* registers. In the release documents, the petitioners claim that the exiled person has repented and corrected himself, and thus may be released⁵⁴. As part of the significance of collective responsibility in early modern Ottoman society, sometimes warrantors (*kefil*) facilitated the procedure of release from bondage or exile. 'Trustworthy subjects of the sultan' or 'reliable people' acted as warrantors for their future deeds. For example, in June 1781 a monk called Daniel from Constantinople was exiled to Varlaam Monastery because of his misconducts. Two months later he was released on the condition that he would not go to the capital again, upon the testimony of 'reliable people' who warrantied (*tekeffül*) that he had corrected himself⁵⁵.

The imperial edicts, letters of Ottoman administrators and patriarchs strictly instructed the officials of the monasteries to keep the exiled people under control. In a letter published by Konstantinos Vapheïades, Veli Paşa warns the attendants of the monasteries of Kalambaka and Kastraki that the exiled people were sent in order to correct themselves, not to be pampered, reminding that they were not in any way allowed to go out, nor have visitors⁵⁶. Similarly, the patriarchs recited the phrases of imperial orders to prevent fugitives. A case from Hilandar might suggest a similar situation for Meteora; in 1780, Patriarch

53 Anastasiadis, *Αρχείο της Ι. Μ. Χιλανδαρίου*, 165.

54 Quite a few release documents survive in archives, e.g., BOA C.ADL. 4/229, H. 1211. BOA C.ADL. 66/3955, H. 1214. BOA AE.SMST.III 325/26135, H. 1171.

55 Alemdaroğlu, *20 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, docs. 94/3 and 119/1. (BOA A{DVNSKLB.d. 20) Daniel is referred to as a monk (*keşiş*) in the exile order and a priest (*rahib*) in the release order. This is not surprising: the Ottoman clerks were not consistent nor punctual in recording the terminology about Christian clergymen or places of worship.

56 Vapheïades, "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 34.

Sofronios II had warned the attendants of Hilandar to be careful about the former metropolitan of Tzerven, to lock him in a tower and prevent any attempt to escape⁵⁷. Some fugitives were successful, like Papa Filippos from Tulcea/Tulça who escaped from Hilandar back to Sulina/Sünne Strait in 1856. as informed by the metropolitan of Silistra/Silistire to the Patriarchate⁵⁸. Undoubtedly, escapes of the exiled people from monasteries put the monastic authorities in a difficult position. Probably not all exiles were treated equally, and exceptional visitors of higher rank were condoned occasionally. For example, Paisios, Archbishop of Caesarea/Kayseri, who had been in exile at the Great Meteoro for two years, left the monastery and went to Varlaam for the first time, and stayed for an hour of prayer on Christmas day in 1768⁵⁹.

To continue, Ottoman documentation reveals the actors of the implementation of monastic exile. The imperial orders and patriarchal letters were necessary to facilitate the safe travel of the outlaw from his residence to exile. In cases of monastic exiles to Meteora, the exiled were arrested and accompanied by *yasakçıs*, while the local rulers and officials were expected to aid them⁶⁰. In the later nineteenth-century documents, the official to accompany the outlaw was defined as 'an official appointed by the Patriarchate' rather than a *yasakçı*⁶¹. The Ottoman documents are silent as to what happens after the exiled person passes the monastery's entrance. Occasionally, we are fortunate to follow what happens afterwards thanks to monastic documents.

In 1781, Alexios was exiled to Hilandar Monastery, and his annual allowance of 50 *guruş* sent by the Patriarchate was handed over by the *yasakçı*, as we learn from Patriarch Gregorios V's letter to the monastery⁶². This piece of information is actually quite crucial, as it points at the insights that monastic archives can offer. One of the questions that studies in premodern incarceration deal with is the means of the imprisoned subjects' subsistence. In the Ottoman paradigm, the confined people's needs were maintained by themselves according to court registers, except for the impoverished ones, who benefited from philanthropes

57 Anastasiadis, *Αρχείο της Ι. Μ. Χιλανδαρίου*, 153.

58 BOA.HR.MKT. 157/54.

59 Vapheidas, "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 34. *Idem*, *Η Μονή του Αγίου και Μεγάλου Μετεώρου*, 152.

60 *Yasakçıs* were recruited among the *yeniçeris*, and they served to provide for security in the provinces, in the consulates, and the Patriarchates. Canatar, "Kavas", 66-68. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devleti teşkilatından kapıkulu ocakları, passim*. For the provincial duties of *yasakçıs* see Dinguç, "16. ve 17. yüzyıllarda taşrada yasakçılar", 129-143.

61 See for example BOA HR.SYS. 1771 /9 (1852). BOA HR.MKT. 214/60 (H. 1274). BOA HR.MKT. 214/97 (H. 1274).

62 Anastasiadis, *Αρχείο της Ι. Μ. Χιλανδαρίου*, 280-281.

and occasional charities⁶³. Nevertheless, in my view the Ottoman Christian experience may differ in this aspect and calls for further research. Moreover, the monastic documentation also reveals other actors inside the monasteries, such as the guardians responsible for the exiled⁶⁴.

The opacity of Ottoman documentation as to the exact description of misconduct and its standardized discourse reveals a lot about the Ottoman administrative mentality, the role of the Patriarchate in the regulation of communal affairs, and the communication between the local Christians and the imperial centre. The imperial expectation from the Patriarchate was to prevent and punish the Orthodox clergymen and subjects who ruined communal order, dared to go further than their limited realm, or impeded the collection of taxes. Monks who 'transgressed their realms' by 'being involved in inappropriate behaviours' ended up in exile at Meteora or Mount Athos. For example, Theodosios from the Athonite Karakallou Monastery, who had been sent to the Great Meteoro Monastery, was forgiven and released by the petition of Patriarch Anthimos in 1854⁶⁵. Papa Constantine from Korutsa/Göriçe/Korça was exiled to Varlaam in 1796⁶⁶, and the monk Ananias from the Monastery of Agia Anastasia in Thessaloniki/Selanik was exiled to Great Meteoro in 1805, on the grounds that he abandoned his religion and was inclined to debauchery⁶⁷. Sometimes the content of 'inappropriate behaviour' was more explicit. Neophytos, a priest (or a monk) from Krini/Çeşme, was exiled to Varlaam Monastery in 1858 because he had abandoned his rite by being involved in intercourse with a woman contrary to the rules of his religion⁶⁸.

A powerful reason for severe punishment was impeding the flow of state and Church income. In 1800, Makarios, the archbishop of Çatalca was faulted by the Patriarchate for his failure to fulfil his financial duties to the state and the Church. He did not pay the state tax (*mal-ı miri*) and the metropolitan tax to the Patriarchate (*zarar-ı kassabiye*). Even though he had been warned multiple times before, his failure to pay attention ended up in him being dismissed. As he then went missing, the Patriarchate filed a petition asking for him to be arrested and exiled to Varlaam Monastery⁶⁹. The petition was responded to, but to my knowledge, there is no further information on Makarios available in the Otto-

63 Yıldız, *Mapusâne*, 24-25.

64 On the interesting case of Kallinikos, see Anastasiadis, *Αρχαίο της Ι. Μ. Χιλανδαρίου*, 326-328.

65 BOA HR.MKT. 87/66 (H.1271).

66 BOA C.ADL. 4 /229 (H.1211).

67 BOA C.ADL. 15/966 (H.1220).

68 BOA HR.MKT. 244/81 (H.1274).

69 BOA C.ADL. 57/3420 (H.1215).

man documentation. Unless there is a further order of release, even an imperial edict (*ferman*) does not prove that the exile is successfully implemented. In this case and in similar cases of complaints, the discourse of 'having harmed the income of the Patriarchate and the state' constitutes a powerful cause presented by the Patriarchate. Without further documentation it is not possible to know to what extent the documents reflect the truth about the deeds of the culprit, or the real nature of the problem between the accuser and the accused. The petitions of the Patriarchate that are available to us in the Ottoman archive are the ones responded to positively by the Porte, and very rarely was further investigation conducted by the state. The personal conflicts of archbishops with patriarchs and their exiles or dismissals were obviously justified by equally strong causes.

A further cause that necessitated punishment was the 'transgression of one's boundaries'⁷⁰. As part of preserving order in society, individuals in the early modern Ottoman society were expected to stay within their boundaries, standardly defined as 'keeping an inoffensive attitude and not being involved in others' business'. What constituted a monk's, a priest's, or others' boundaries, infringement of which ended up in exile to a monastery? Local conflicts over power among the inhabitants of the provinces at the end of the eighteenth century are sometimes echoed in central records. One example is the conflict over the control of tax-farming and administration of the community in Kozani in the second half of the eighteenth century. As demonstrated by Dimitrios Lamprakis, Kozani was the scene of local strife among various groups including the local notables, bishops, and Ottoman officials in the period when local notables formed cross-confessional partnerships⁷¹. In the struggle over the control of finances and local authority in this area, the Patriarchate of Constantinople intervened as an intermediary, and in the course of the strife, 'offensive' figures were punished by imprisonment in monasteries on the grounds of their 'claim to be the *kocabaş*' of the area and their harassment of the local subjects⁷². In this context, prominent local figures including Georgios Avliotis, *protosyngkellos* Kallinikos, Dimo Toloğlu and others involved in the conflicts were exiled to Varlaam in 1780s⁷³. In another case, that of Papa Nikolas from Bor, which was in the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Ikonio/Konya, the Patriarchate filed a peti-

70 "kendü halinde olmayub vazifesinden hariç umura süluk [etmek]"

71 See Lamprakis, *The relationship between centre and periphery*.

72 Alemdaroğlu, *20 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, doc. 108/1.

73 BOA C.ADL.64/3868 (H.1194), Alemdaroğlu, *20 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, docs. 57/5 (H. 1195), 94/1 (H. 1195), 107/4 (H. 1195), 108/1 (H. 1195), 123/3 (H. 1195), 164/4 (H. 1196). I first encountered these documents in Alemdaroğlu's thesis. I checked the *kalebend defteri* (BOA A{DVNSKLB.d. 20) for the spelling of Greek names.

tion against him on the grounds that he 'had claims to *kocabaşılık*, harassed the population, and acted in many ways contrary to his religion'. Papa Nikolas had been first exiled to Karahisar and was released after a while; but the local population wrote a letter of complaint in Greek to the Patriarchate, informing that Papa Nikolas continued his old habits, that is harassing people in many ways. The Patriarchate requested him to be arrested and exiled to Varlaam Monastery⁷⁴. For this case no further work to my knowledge enlightens this local strife. In a similar case, Konomos (oikonomos?) Papa Yani (Giannis) from Akhisar was cited by his metropolitan for being involved in administrative matters and going beyond his realm. Upon a patriarchal petition presented to the Porte, he was exiled to Varlaam in 1828⁷⁵.

The Meteora monasteries occasionally hosted members of the Phanariot aristocracy as well, who held the highest positions in the Ottoman administration available and exclusive to the Orthodox Christians during the eighteenth century and up until the Greek Revolution⁷⁶. The posts of the imperial dragoman, the dragoman of the fleet, and the princes (*voynodas*) of Wallachia and Moldavia were the most prestigious, rewarding but at the same time fatal positions, which could end up in exile and confiscation, if not decapitation⁷⁷. During the tumultuous course of his career, a Phanariot *bey* could find himself in a difficult position vis-à-vis the Ottoman administration with the allegation of treason. The rivalry among Phanariot families or personal conflicts were additional burdens for a Phanariot *bey* that could end up in an unwanted situation like imprisonment in a monastery. Alexander Hantzeris was from a family that generated *voynodas*, dragomans and even an Ecumenical Patriarch, Samuel Hantzeris (in office 1763-68, 1773-74). Referred to as 'the son of the deceased *voynoda* Konstantin Hañçerlioğlu' and the former *hospodar* of Moldavia, 'Aleko' was ordered to be exiled to Varlaam Monastery upon the petition of the Patriarchate in 1813 due to his misbehaviour⁷⁸. He was released a short time later, but on the grounds for his persistent disobedience, it was ordered to exile him once more

74 BOA C.ADL. 36/2187 (H. 1193, 1195). Alemdaroğlu, *20 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, docs. 88/5 and 134/1.

75 BOA C.ADL. 47/2850 (H. 1243).

76 Phillou, "Communities on the Verge", 151-181. Janos, "Panaiotis Nicousios and Alexander Mavrocordatos", 177-196. Patrinelis, "Phanariots before 1821", 177-198. For the biographies of the grand dragomans see Stamatiadis, *Βιογραφίαι*. For the position of the dragoman of the fleet and the biographies of dragomans see Sphyroeras, *Οι Δραγομάνοι του Στόλου*.

77 Patrinelis notes that 'of the forty-six Phanariot princes appointed between 1709 and 1821, thirteen were beheaded, while many were imprisoned and had their property confiscated' (Patrinelis, "Phanariots before 1821", 188).

78 For the life of the Konstantinos Hantzeris as the grand dragoman of the fleet see Sphyroeras, *Οι Δραγομάνοι του Στόλου*, 131-136.

to Varlaam. The allegations against him included the abduction of a young girl and keeping her in the neighbourhood of Vathyrryax/Büyükdere⁷⁹. Exile orders alone could have raised doubts over the execution of the order, as the intervention of influential people might have cancelled it. However, the order of release addressing the *kadı* of Trikala/Tırhala confirms the implementation of the imperial order. In the case of the dismissed *voivoda* Alexander Hantzeris, the centre of complaint was the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The princes of Wallachia and Moldavia could also act as the ones to commence the exile process of 'outlaws' in their region. Local figures in the Principality of Wallachia who did not show loyalty to the Ottoman state during the Ottoman-Russian wars at the end of the 18th century, were exiled to Meteora. Three boyars, namely Pano Kalipko (?) and his sons *postelnik* Kostaki and *logothetis* Nikolaitse had been placed in the Monastery of Varlaam, as notified by the *kadı* of Trikala/Tırhala in 1788⁸⁰. Two years later they were transferred from the Meteora where they had been exiled by the Prince of Wallachia, to Tirnovo/Tırnova⁸¹. Ten years later, boyars from Wallachia were again accused of instigating the local population and creating turbulence. Three of them were sent to Varlaam, and the other three were sent to Soumela Monastery in Trapezounta/Trabzon. In this case the instigators were exiled through the *voivoda* of Wallachia, Konstantinzade Alexander⁸².

Apart from disobeying monks, clerics and outlaws, the fathers of Meteora also had to receive young Christian men who were reported as being detrimental to their families, relatives, and their community. They were sent by the patriarchs, and in the process notable figures like archbishops or community leaders acted as intermediaries. A prominent case is that of Dimitris, the son of Panagiotis Lagoudakis, a merchant from Smyrna/İzmir. According to the documents of the Great Meteoro Monastery published by Vapheiadēs, in 1858 Panagiotis Lagoudakis wanted his incorrigible son Dimitri to be exiled and kept at the monastery for life⁸³. This unusual request was supported by a patriarchal

79 Related orders are in Çeribaş, *33 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, docs. 77/1, 89/3, 90/2, 91/1, and 109/2. Alexander Hantzeris was transferred to Rhodes during his imprisonment and his *kapı kethüdası* was exiled to Ankara. Unfortunately, I could not check *kalebend defteri* no.33 to eliminate chronological inconsistencies, as only digitized documents from the archive were available during the pandemic of 2020.

80 BOA C.HR. 31/1549 (H.1202).

81 We cannot be sure if they were transferred from Varlaam to Great Meteora in the meantime or if it was a scribal mistake to record Varlaam as 'the Monastery of Meteora' instead of 'a monastery at Meteora'. BOA C.HR. 97/4812 (H. 1204).

82 BOA C.HR. 43/2149 (H. 1214).

83 Vapheiadēs, "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 33-40. *Idem*, *Η Μονή του Αγίου και Μεγάλου Μετεώρου*, 153-154, 439-442.

letter, and Dimitri was accompanied by a *çavuş* to the monastery. His father was ready to pay a monthly amount of 300 *guruş* for his son's expenses. The elders of the community of Smyrna/İzmir and the archbishop endorsed the father's decision, and Dimitris was received by the monastery. Fortunately, the Ottoman documentation of the case is available in the archive at Istanbul. According to the imperial orders sent to the local rulers of Smyrna/İzmir and Trikala/Tırhala, Dimitris the son of Panagiotis was involved in mischievous behaviour that was detrimental to his relatives, family, and the local community. Despite his father's attempts to discipline him, he persisted with his actions. Upon his father's notification, the Patriarch of Constantinople wrote a petition to provide for the necessary permissions and edicts to exile Dimitris to Meteora. Related documentation was produced to exile him to Meteora accompanied by an official appointed by the Patriarchate, and the local officials were notified⁸⁴. Similarly, Vasilis, son of the deceased carpenter Konstantinos from the neighbourhood of Tatavla in Constantinople was condemned by his relatives for his inappropriate and unbearable behaviour. The Patriarch of Constantinople was involved again, procuring the necessary orders to exile him to Meteora. Vasilis, defined as a vagabond in the Ottoman documentation, was ordered to be exiled to the Great Meteoro Monastery accompanied by an official of the Patriarchate, for penitence as well as to relieve his relatives⁸⁵. The cases of Vasilis and Dimitris were filed in the same collection with close dates. Probably it was the Patriarch of Constantinople Kyrillos VII or the officials at the Patriarchate who decided to deal with the two cases in a similar way, i.e., exiling both to the Great Meteoro. Vapheiadis presents similar cases of exiles to the Great Meteoro Monastery like Vasileios Fakas in 1846, and Panagiotis, the son of a notable in Ioannina/Yanya in 1875⁸⁶. As Vapheiadis notes, the Great Meteoro functioned not only as a place of imprisonment, but also as a place for the correction of behaviour and healing of souls⁸⁷.

Indeed, a further case confirms that the Great Meteoro was preferred for spiritual recovery. In 1815, the Patriarchate of Constantinople wanted a priest from Nicomedia/İznikmid, Papa Polihron to be exiled to Monastery of the Transfiguration (Great Meteoro). According to the petition signed by the Patri-

84 BOA HR.MKT. 214/60 (H. 1274). BOA HR.MKT. 264/81 (H. 1275). BOA HR.MKT. 272/4 (H. 1275). The documentation includes Panagiotis's letter to the patriarch written in Greek.

85 BOA HR.MKT. 214/97 (H.1274).

86 Vapheiadis "Τα μοναστήρια της Θεσσαλίας", 35-36. *Idem, Η Μονή του Αγίου και Μεγάλου Μετεώρου*, 153.

87 *Ibid.*, 150-156.

arch of Constantinople and the members of the Synod resident in the city, Papa Polihron had lost his mind, and thus acted contrary to his religion presenting inappropriate behaviour. They requested he was arrested by a *yasakçı* and kept inside the monastery until he corrected himself and his mind healed. The necessary orders to exile the priest were issued⁸⁸. On Mount Athos, Hilandar Monastery was similarly used as an asylum for the psychologically unbalanced people. For example, Prodromos son of Murat from Constantinople, who had lost his mind (*aklına hiffet tari olub*) was imprisoned by the Patriarchate in Hilandar Monastery in April 1816 and was released in February 1817 after his recovery⁸⁹. A few decades earlier, in 1789, Papa Lykourgos from Patmos had been sent to Hilandar for the same reason, that is for having lost his mind (*aklına hiffet tari ve mecnun olub*). The Patriarchate, notified by the locals of the priest's behaviour, requested an imperial edict so that he was arrested and incarcerated in the monastery's castle (*kalebend*)⁹⁰. We can probably identify Papa Lykourgos with monk Lykourgos from the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos, who had spent almost three months in exile at Varlaam Monastery in 1782. His exile was not due to a psychological disorder but inappropriate behaviour⁹¹. Obviously, the reasons for monastic exile were not always stated nor clearly defined. Probably having lost one's mind, posing harm to one's family and society, or being involved in inappropriate behaviour contrary to one's religion were equally adequate justifications. In the absence of further evidence, it is not possible to safely presume that the monasteries were systematically categorized according to the types of exiles they would receive. A sounder assumption would be to claim that the Great Meteoro and Hilandar might have customarily functioned as asylums for psychologically unbalanced outlaws.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Monastic exile as part of church tradition was imposed by the patriarchs of Constantinople on Orthodox people who posed a challenge to the state, the community, or the ecclesiastic authorities during the Ottoman period. Despite the scarcity of documentation on the earlier centuries as to the mechanism of implementation, there are enough clues to suggest that the practice was trans-

88 BOA C.ADL. 57/3423 (H. 1230).

89 BOA C.ADL. 60/3642 (H. 1232).

90 BOA C.ADL. 56/3358 (H. 1204).

91 Alemdaroğlu, *20 Numaralı Kalebend Defteri*, doc. 197/3, BOA A{DVNSKLB.d. 20.

formed in parallel to the position of the Patriarchate vis-à-vis the Ottoman administration and Orthodox community. By the eighteenth century, monastic exile was implemented within the Ottoman judicial and administrative system of exiles and bondages. The adaptation of this Christian tradition is documented mainly but not exclusively in the *kalebend* registers. While the Patriarchate played an important role in this practice, we must note that Orthodox subjects were not necessarily exiled by patriarchal petition. After the authorities' notification by the local *naib* and other subjects, and without any patriarchal intervention, Orthodox outlaws could also be incarcerated in the castles of Kavala, Rhodes, Ainos/İnöz, Cyprus/Kıbrıs, Tenedos/Bozcaada or other places, just like the other Muslim outlaws⁹².

By the eighteenth century, the patriarchs were the major actors to adapt the Orthodox practices and customs in the Ottoman context. As is well-known, former patriarchs of Constantinople customarily retreated to Athonite monasteries. Also, the Ottoman administration sometimes exiled dismissed patriarchs to the Princes Islands, Magosa, Rodos, Kioutacheia/Kütahya, Chalki/Heybeliada, Mount Sinai, etc., by the petition of current patriarchs. In the mid-eighteenth century, Kyrillos V of Constantinople was adept at using the Ottoman bureaucratic mechanism and discourse to manipulate decisions to his ends and distance his opponents. In 1755, he succeeded to have his rival, the former Patriarch Paisios II, transferred from Chalki/Heybeliada to Mount Athos/Aynoroz on the pretext that Paisios II was old, sick and in need of a physician⁹³. One could read the *kalebend* register at face value and conclude at the good intentions of Kyrillos towards the former patriarch, if only unaware of the rivalry between the two⁹⁴. Be that as it may, these cases reflect the tools a patriarch had at his disposal by this time when negotiating with the administration.

Among the Meteora monasteries, Varlaam and the Great Meteoro were frequently more used as loci of monastic exile at least from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards. Relevant earlier evidence on cases of confinement at the monasteries of Mount Athos may also suggest that Meteora were used for this practice even before the eighteenth century. The collaboration between the Patriarchate and the Ottoman administration in their quest for control over the outlaws of society is evident in the cases of monastic confinement. This reflects the interplay between the two institutions, as well as the Patriarchate's

92 BOA C.ADL. 33/1966 (H.1224/1809). BOA C.ADL.41/2509 (H.1230/1815). BOA C.ADL. 56/3395 (1798).

93 Algül, *11 Numaralı kalebend defteri*, doc. 247/5.

94 Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents*, 159-183.

prominent position in the specific context, both in the eyes of the empire's Orthodox subjects and of the Ottoman administration.

Clearly, the cases of monastic confinement functioned within the wider Ottoman judicial and administrative system, and they reflect how the position of the Patriarchate had shifted by the eighteenth century. The major bureaucratic and military reorganization of the empire is visible in nineteenth-century Ottoman documents of monastic confinement, e.g., the changing functions of state officials and the steps followed in bureaucratic procedures. On the other hand, even after the Greek Revolution of 1821 and the establishment of the Modern Greek State, monastic confinement was still imposed by the patriarchs of Constantinople over the Orthodox Christians of the empire without major changes. In this sense, the considerable continuity in imperial arrangements with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, even after the establishment of an Orthodox nation-state, is noteworthy. Still, future studies may reveal the precise effects of the emergence of the Modern Greek State on monastic confinement cases.

The figures exiled to the monasteries of Meteora in the cases presented so far were not simple outlaws. They were either formidable figures in society that posed a threat to authority, like archbishops in conflict with patriarchs, bishops who resisted payments, or outlaws who posed serious threat to the order of their community. What happened after their arrival in Meteora is curious. What were the physical conditions of their confinement? Were they indeed kept in a tower, locked in a room or were they free to walk around? How were they received by the monks? Who oversaw them, and how were they treated? Were they allowed to go out, maybe stay in a nearby village, or have visitors, despite the strict conditions of imperial edicts and patriarchal orders? Did any lay person decide to stay as a monk? The Ottoman documentation available provides no answers to these questions so far, but monastic documentation may offer more insights.

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ΟΙ ΜΟΝΕΣ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ
ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗΝ ΟΘΩΜΑΝΙΚΗ ΕΠΟΧΗ
ΚΑΙ Η ΧΡΗΣΗ ΑΥΤΩΝ
ΩΣ ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΙΔΡΥΜΑΤΩΝ

Elif Bayraktar Tellan

Η χρήση μονών ως σωφρονιστικών ιδρυμάτων ήταν πρακτική με μακρά ιστορία στο Βυζάντιο, η οποία, όπως μαρτυρούν τα ελληνικά και οθωμανικά αρχεία, εξακολούθησε να εφαρμόζεται και κατά την οθωμανική εποχή. Παρόλη τη σπανιότητα γραπτών πηγών κατά τους πρώτους αιώνες της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας, ικανοποιητικός αριθμός εγγράφων σώζεται από τον 18^ο και τον 19^ο αιώνα. Βάσει αυτών των εγγράφων, μπορεί να σκιαγραφηθεί η εφαρμογή της καθείρξεως σε μονή από τους Πατριάρχες της Κωνσταντινούπολης μέσα στο γενικότερο πλαίσιο του οθωμανικού ποινικού συστήματος. Εκτός από το Άγιον Όρος, το εν λόγω φαινόμενο εμφανίζεται και στα Άγια Μετέωρα, με τις μονές Αγίων Πάντων (Βαρλαάμ) και Μεταμορφώσεως του Σωτήρος (Μεγάλο Μετέωρο) να χρησιμοποιούνται ως τόποι ποινικού εγκλεισμού, τουλάχιστον από τον 18^ο αιώνα και έπειτα.

Οι οθωμανικές πηγές συνήθως περιγράφουν αναλυτικά τη διαδικασία της καθείρξεως σε μοναστήρι, από τη στιγμή της σύλληψης έως την είσοδο του παραβάτη στη μονή. Επιπλέον, πληροφορούμαστε από έγγραφα του 18^{ου} αιώνα ότι ήταν σύνηθες να υποβάλλουν οι Πατριάρχες επίσημα αιτήματα απευθείας στις οθωμανικές αρχές, επιχειρηματολογώντας υπέρ της κράτησης ενός χριστιανού υπηκόου. Η δε έκδοση του σχετικού αυτοκρατορικού διατάγματος βασιζόταν στα εκκλησιαστικά δικαιώματα που περιγράφονταν στα πατριαρχικά βεράτια. Οι Πατριάρχες όριζαν τον τόπο εγκλεισμού του παραβάτη, ζητώντας να διαρκέσει η τιμωρία του μέχρι νεωτέρας πατριαρχικής αίτησης, αναιρούσης το αρχικό αίτημα κράτησης. Στις αιτήσεις απελευθέρωσης αναφερόταν ότι ο κρατούμενος είχε μετανοήσει και σωφρονιστεί, και επομένως μπορούσε να αφεθεί ελεύθερος. Τα αυτοκρατορικά διατάγματα, καθώς και τα γράμματα Οθωμανών αξιωματούχων και Πατριαρχών, έδιναν αυστηρές οδηγίες στις μοναστηριακές αρχές σχετικά με τον έλεγχο των κρατουμένων. Ωστόσο, υπήρξαν και περιπτώσεις αποδράσεων. Οι οθωμανικές πηγές δεν αναφέρουν τίποτα πάνω στη ζωή των κρατουμένων μετά την είσοδό τους στη μονή. Αυτό το κενό το καλύπτουν μερικές φορές τα αρχεία των ίδιων των μονών.

Το πλήθος των κρατουμένων στις ιερές μονές των Μετεώρων συμπεριλάμβανε ανυπάκουους μοναχούς και κληρικούς με παραβατική συμπεριφορά, καθώς και νέους στην ηλικία χριστιανούς που έβλαπταν και παρενοχλούσαν τις οικογέ-

νειες και κοινότητες τους. Λιγότερο συνήθεις ήταν οι περιπτώσεις καθείρξεως μελών της φαναριώτικης αριστοκρατίας. Συνάμα, υπήρχαν και ορθόδοξες γυναίκες που τιμωρούνταν κατά πατριαρχική εντολή, και στέλνονταν σε γυναικείες μονές π.χ. των νησιών του Αιγαίου. Ωστόσο, για τις γυναίκες κρατούμενες δεν σώζονται πολλές πληροφορίες. Παράλληλα, είναι αξιοσημείωτο ότι τα μοναστήρια δεν χρσίσμευαν μόνο ως τόποι τιμωρίας και φυλακίσεως, αλλά και σωφρονισμού και θεραπείας ψυχών. Η μεταμορφωτική δύναμη του μοναστηριακού περιβάλλοντος και η μετάνοια που επιτυχανόταν σε αυτό ήταν, κατά πάσα πιθανότητα, ο κύριος λόγος για την προτίμηση αυτή. Παραδείγματος χάριν, υπάρχουν έγγραφα, τα οποία φωτίζουν τη χρήση των μονών Μεγάλου Μετεώρου και Χιλανδαρίου στο Άγιον Όρος ως άσυλα για ψυχικά διαταραγμένους παραβάτες.

Επιπρόσθετα, σχετικά έγγραφα αποκαλύπτουν ότι η οθωμανική διοίκηση προσδοκούσε από το Πατριαρχείο την τιμωρία των ορθοδόξων κληρικών και λαϊκών εκείνων, οι οποίοι υπονόμευαν την κοινωνική τάξη. Η συνεργασία του Πατριαρχείου με τη διοίκηση για τον έλεγχο των παραβατών είναι εμφανής στις υποθέσεις ποινικού εγκλεισμού σε μοναστήρι. Αυτή η συνέργεια αντικατοπτρίζει την υψηλή θέση που κατείχε το Πατριαρχείο κατά τον 18^ο αιώνα στα μάτια τόσο των χριστιανών όσο και της οθωμανικής γραφειοκρατίας. Κατά τον 19^ο αιώνα οι μεγάλες αλλαγές που επήλθαν στην οργάνωση της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας γίνονται εμφανείς και στα έγγραφα που σχετίζονται με τη διαδικασία καθείρξεως σε μοναστήρι. Ωστόσο, ακόμη και μετά την Ελληνική Επανάσταση του 1821 και την ίδρυση του νεοελληνικού κράτους, η εν λόγω πρακτική συνέχισε να εφαρμόζεται από το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο χωρίς σημαντικές αλλαγές.

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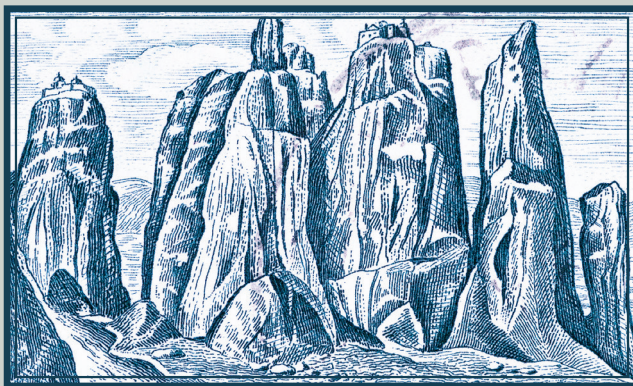
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