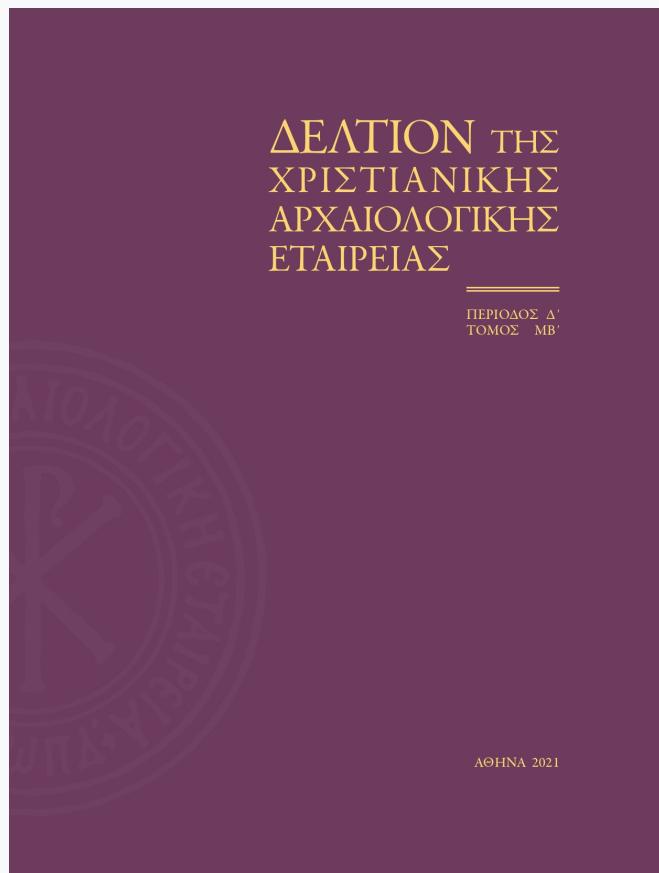


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Bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period, II: Bells

Alex Rodriguez SUAREZ

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Alex Rodriguez Suarez

BELL RINGING ON MOUNT ATHOS DURING THE OTTOMAN PERIOD, II: BELLS

Η μελέτη εξετάζει ένα σύνολο από σαράντα καμπάνες στη χερσόνησο του Άθω, που χρονολογούνται από τον 17ο έως τις αρχές του 20ού αιώνα. Η καμπάνα αποτελεί ένα από τα λιγότερο γνωστά εξαρτήματα της εκκλησιαστικής τελετουργίας, καθώς λίγες δημοσιεύσεις έχουν φωτίσει αυτήν την πτυχή του εκκλησιαστικού υλικού πολιτισμού. Εστιάζοντας στη διακόσμηση και στις επιγραφές τους, το άρθρο φυλοδοξεί να συνεισφέρει στην ιστορία της καμπάνας στο Άγιον Όρος κατά τους τρεις τελευταίους αιώνες της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας.

This study looks at forty bells found on Mount Athos and which are dated between the 17th and the early 20th century. Because most instruments are still employed by the Athonite community and are usually kept in belfries, these are not very well known artefacts. In fact, many have not been published before. The decoration and inscriptions of each bell are described and examined. Their analysis produces a history of bells on the Holy Mountain during the last three centuries of Ottoman rule.

Λέξεις κλειδιά

Οθωμανική περίοδος, εκκλησιαστικός υλικός πολιτισμός, καμπάνες, Άγιον Όρος.

Keywords

Ottoman period; religious material culture; church bells; Mount Athos.

This paper is the second and final part of a research project devoted to bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period. While the first part looks at written sources¹, the present one focuses on the actual objects, the bells currently employed by the Athonite community. A rough estimation of the number of bells found in the twenty monasteries, twelve sketes and churches (such as Protaton in Karyes) located on Mount Athos

suggests that on the Holy Mountain may be a few hundreds of bells. Most of these, perhaps about 80%, are cast in Russia and date from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. With one exception, this study is not going to deal with this material; it is far too extensive and would require a much longer study. Here is a selection of forty bells dated between the 17th and the early 20th century and which are distributed in fourteen monasteries, one

* Independent scholar, argyrus1028@hotmail.com

** This project would not have been possible without the financial support of The Mount Athos Foundation of America (Travel Scholarship) and The American School of Classical Studies at Athens (Cotsen Traveling Fellowship for Research in Greece). Their funding allowed me to undertake two field trips to Mount Athos in 2018 and 2019. After the second journey, I spent a month doing research at the Gennadius Library in Athens. I also want to thank all the monasteries that I visited during these trips; they provided hospitality and allowed me to study their bells. Also, I am very grateful to the Mount Athos Center of Thessaloniki; its

staff helped me to organize my first sojourn on the Holy Mountain. My second stay would not have been possible without the support of Father Symeon of Dionysiou. I would also like to thank Kriton Chryssochoides for his comments on a paper I presented at the Gennadius Library. Also, I am indebted to Aleksandar Savić, who helped me to transcribe and read the Slavonic inscriptions. Finally, I am thankful to Stavros Mamaloukos, who reviewed a first draft. Any mistakes present, however, are my own.

¹ A. Rodriguez Suarez, “Bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period, I: Written sources”, forthcoming.

skete (the Romanian skete of St John the Forerunner) and the Protaton church. The aim is to give an overview of the bells found across Mount Athos. These artefacts provide details that complement what we know about bell ringing on the Holy Mountain through written sources.

While churches, icons, silverware, textiles and manuscripts on Mount Athos have received attention from scholars, its bells have not been the focus of any significant study². Even though they are an important source of information, their inscriptions also seem to have gone mainly unnoticed³. Hence, this contribution presents

² G. Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, Karyes 1988, 668. P. Kouphopoulos – St. Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, Athens 1997, 32-33, 88, 109-110. Cl. Graber, “Les cloches du ‘Rossikon’ auf Mount Athos”, *Campanae Helveticae* 2 (1993), 48-52. Idem, “Les cloches du ‘Rossikon’ au Mont Athos [fin]”, *Campanae Helveticae* 3 (1994), 42-46. *Αγιον Όρος: Κευμήλια Πρωτάτου*, Thessaloniki 2006, 128 note 79.

³ G. Millet – J. Pargoire – L. Petit, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l’Athos*, I, Paris 1904, 12 note 37-38, 13 note 40. Smyrnakes, *To*

these frequently concealed artefacts, hoping that they will raise the curiosity of both academics and wider audience. The work is divided in two parts. The first and main one is the catalogue of bells. Each entry includes three attributes: Measurements, decoration and inscription. I was not always able to measure the instruments and so this piece of information is missing in some cases. Inscriptions are reported as they appear on bells, but, whenever is possible, abbreviations are presented complete. The artefacts are organised chronologically; this approach provides a better understanding of the evolution and changes that instruments underwent with the passing of time. The second part of the article discusses the information supplied by the bells and provides the conclusions of the research.

Αγιον Όρος, op.cit. (n. 2), 699-700. An exception is the work by Kouphopoulos and Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op. cit. (n. 2), 109-110.

CATALOGUE

1. Moldavian bell, 1614, Docheiariou Monastery (Fig. 1)⁴

It is found outside the exonarthex of the katholikon. It is cracked and the monks do not use it anymore.

Measurements: Height, 46 cm; diameter, 54 cm.

Decoration: None.

Inscription (in four lines): Written in Old Slavonic, it occupies a large part of the body of the bell. It reads +СЪ КИМВАЛ СЪТВОРИ СМ্...НЇЕ АРХЇЕП(И) СКОПЬ(Ъ?) АНАСТАС КРИМКОВИИ· / МИТРОПОЛИТ СОУЧАВСКИИ И ДАДЕ И ВЪ СТѢИ ГОРѢ

АΘΟ ... СΤѢИ МОНАС · / ТИРЬ ДОХИАР ИДЕЖИ ЕСТ(Ъ) ХРАМ АРХЇСТРАТИГА МИХАИЛА ГАВРИИЛА · / В ЛТО · ЗРКВ · МЦА ЮН КА (symbol to mark the end of the inscription)⁵.

The inscription informs us that the bell⁶ was donated to the monastery of Docheiariou on Mount Athos, where there is a church dedicated to the chief commanders Michael and Gabriel, by the humble Archbishop of Suceava, Anastasius Krimkovin, on 21st July, 7122. This is the only instance in the catalogue in which the year is counted since the creation of the world, that is, following the Byzantine tradition. At the moment this is the oldest

⁴ The only bibliographic reference I have found about this bell provides a Greek translation of its inscription, Θεοκτίστου Μοναχού Δοχειαρίου, «Συμπληρωματικά στοιχεία για τις σχέσεις της Ιεράς Μονής Δοχειαρίου με τις παραδοσιανέστερες περιοχές, βασισμένα σε εκτός του Ρουμανικού αρχείου ελληνικές πηγές», Fl. Marinescu, *Η Ιερά Μονή Δοχειαρίου στη Ρουμανία. Τί λένε τά έγγραφα*, Mount Athos 2009, 467.

⁵ Because of the location of the bell, between two walls, I was not able to see the whole inscription and so the original text is incomplete. There may be mistakes too.

⁶ The instrument is referred to as a cymbal (кимвали), one of the terms used for bell in Moldavia in the 16th and 17th century, E. Chiaburu, “Despre clopotele și clopotarii din Țara Moldovei (până la 1859)”, *Tyragetia* 9.2 (2015), 31, 33.



Fig. 1. Docheiariou Monastery, Moldavian bell cast in 1614 (Cat. no. 1).

bell on Mount Athos. It is a unique artefact since it may be the only Moldavian bell on the Holy Mountain. Moldavia was a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire and so it was allowed to use bell ringing. As a result, the production of bells in the principality was not interrupted. Suceava acted as the capital of the Principality of Moldavia until 1565. The fact that the name of the monastery and the dedication of its church are mentioned, indicates that the instrument was commissioned specifically for Docheiariou. The monastery received extensive patronage from the rulers of Moldavia, for instance artefacts, money and lands⁷. This bell shows that in this period Moldavian patronage was not reduced to the prince and his family and that among the artefacts gifted were also bells. The instrument is a significant addition to the number of Moldavian bells cast during this period and which are still found in Romania.

⁷ See for example the recent work by A. I. Sullivan, “The Athonite patronage of Stephen III of Moldavia, 1457-1504”, *Speculum* 94.1 (2019), 1-46. For a more general study about the relations between Mount Athos and the Romanian principalities, see N. Iorga, “Le Mont Athos et les Pays roumains”, *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Académie roumaine* (1914), 149-212.

2. Venetian bell, 1622, Pantokrator Monastery⁸

It is found in the belfry of the monastery, together with other eleven bells, among which are Cat. nos 25 and 35. The largest one is Russian; it was cast in Moscow in 1847.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is small.

Decoration: The top of the main body shows an ornamental band. The main body is decorated with four single representations, bust of the Virgin breastfeeding the Child (placed on top of the nameplate of the master); female figure prostrated (Virgin Mary?); crucifixion; standing male figure holding a cross (St John the Baptist?).

Inscription (around the top, below the ornamental band): *MDCXXII*, that is the year in which the bell was cast. The nameplate of the master (in a cartouche) reads *ZAN / BATTISTA / TON-F(ECIT)*.

The bell was cast by a master named Zan Battista Ton, who may have been from southern Istria and was based in Venice⁹. He was active between at least 1585 and 1623¹⁰. His bells have been reported in Venice, Istria, Dalmatia and Crete. This may be the older Venetian bell on Mount Athos.

3. Western bell, 1637, Iviron Monastery

It is found in the clock tower, a structure attached to the church, together with another bell (Cat. no. 5). Part of the decoration and inscription are not well preserved and are difficult to examine.

⁸ Ph. Chatziantoniou, “Το κωδωνοστάσιο της Μονής Παντοκράτορος”, *Περίβολος. Zbornik u čast Mirjane Živojinović*, II, Belgrade 2015, 343.

⁹ V. Avery, *Vulcan's forge in Venus' city: The story of bronze in Venice, 1350-1650*, Oxford 2011, 61.

¹⁰ A. Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken: Als ein Katalog der Kirchenglocken im österreichischen Küstenlande und in angrenzenden Gebieten mit Beiträgen zur Geschichte der Gußmeister*, Vienna 1917, 222-223. K. Dočkal, *Naša zvona i njihovi lijevaoci. Prilog Hrvatskoj Kampanologiji*, Zagreb 1942, 114-115. C. Someda de Marco, *Campane antiche della Venezia Giulia*, Udine 1961, 40-41. G. Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia all'amico delle belle arti*, I, Venice 1815, 13; II, 424-425. G. Gerola, *I monumenti veneti nell'isola di Creta*, II, Venice 1908, 373 notes 23 and 25.



Fig. 2. Gregoriou Monastery, half figure of the Virgin with Child on a Venetian bell cast in 1687 (Cat. no. 4, detail).

Measurements: Height, 42 cm; diameter, 36 cm.

Decoration: The top of the main body shows an ornamental band. Four single figures decorate the main body, Crucifixion; standing male figure (St John?), the Virgin (?); standing bishop, he wears a mitre and holds a pastoral staff (St Nicholas?).

Inscription (below the figures, it starts just under the image of the Crucifixion): *MDCXXXVII* (?), the year in which the bell was cast, probably 1637.

This bell is a Western product; it was probably cast in Venice. Its location in the clock tower, together with a larger bell (Cat. no. 5), indicates that these two instruments were struck by the clock mechanism to mark the hour (Cat. no 5) and the quarters (Cat. no 3). Written sources state that the clock had one large bell and four small ones¹¹. If we are to believe these accounts, the current

of the clock is not the original one. In fact, the different dates of the two bells could suggest that the two instruments were not originally cast for the clock.

4. Venetian bell, 1687, Gregoriou Monastery¹²

This is the oldest bell in the monastery, it is found in the bell tower together with other eight bells. Most are Russian.

Measurements: Height, 54 cm; diameter, 46 cm.

Decoration: The top of the main body shows a band decorated with floral motifs while the main body shows four single figures, Crucifixion; half figure of the Virgin with Child (Fig. 2); male saint (?) within a frame; a second figure within a frame.

Inscription (around the top, below the ornamental band): *OPVS IOSEPH DE POLIS MDCLXXXVII*.

The inscription informs that the bell was cast by a certain Joseph de Poli in 1687. He must have been a relative of Anthony and Bartholomew de Poli, bell masters based in Venice and known through both written sources and actual instruments¹³. One of Joseph's bells, dated to 1692, was reported on the island of Cres (Croatia)¹⁴. The bell at Gregoriou Monastery was probably cast in Venice.

5. Venetian bell, 1720, Iviron Monastery (Fig. 3)

It is found in the clock tower of the monastery, together with bell Cat. no. 3.

Measurements: Height, 73 cm; diameter, 71 cm.

Decoration: The handles of the crown, that is the part of the bell from which the instrument hangs, seem to show faces. The top of the main body has a band decorated with floral motifs. On the main body are four representations, Crucifixion with the Virgin and St

¹¹ Όρος 1725-1726, 1744-1745, Thessaloniki 2009, 331. I. Komnenos, *Προσκυνητάριον του Αγίου Όρους του Αθωνος*, Venice 1864, 46.

¹² Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 224.

¹³ Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken*, op.cit. (n. 10), 164, 220. Avery, *Vulcan's forge in Venus' city*, op.cit. (n. 9), 469 no. 314, 474 no. 320.

¹⁴ Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken*, op.cit. (n. 10), 220.

¹¹ Βασίλι Γκρηγορόβιτς Μπάρσον: *Τά ταξίδια του στό Αγιον*

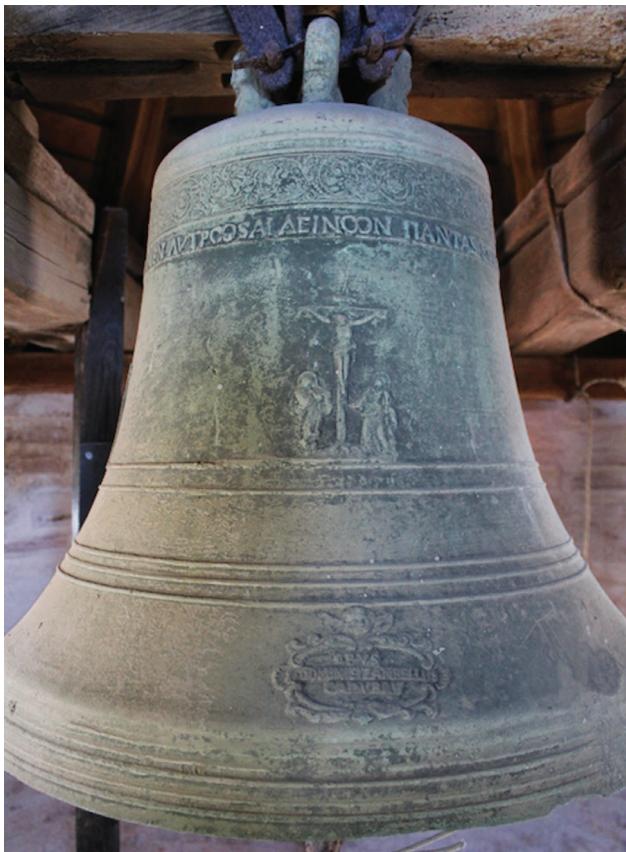


Fig. 3. Iviron Monastery, Venetian bell cast in 1720, Cat. no. 5.

John; icon of the Virgin (half figure) with Child, two angels crown her (labelled on the top, *MHP ΘV*; below, *H ΠΟΡΤΑΙΤΙΚΚΑ*); standing bishop with pastoral staff (St Nicholas?); St George killing the dragon.

Inscription (around the top, below the band decorated with floral motifs): *Ω M(HT)EP Θ(EO)Y ΘEP-ΜΩC CE ΔΥCΩΠΟΥMEN ΛYTPΩCAI ΔEINΩN ΠANTAC CYNΔPAMHKOTAC 1720*. The nameplate of the master (in a cartouche topped by the head of an angel), which is on the curve of the bell (the lower part of the instrument, just before the rim or lip), reads: *OPVS / DOMINICI ZAMBELLI / CADV- BRY.*

This bell was the work of Domenico Zambelli. He was probably a relative of Gregory and Anthony Zambelli, who cast bells at the end of the 17th century¹⁵. Another

bell by Domenico, dated to 1722, was reported at the church of St George, on Pag island, Croatia¹⁶. This and the bell at Iviron were cast in Cadore, in the mainland of the Venetian Republic. The latter is the earlier instance in the catalogue of a Venetian bell cast outside Venice itself. This is also the case of bell Cat. no. 13, which was cast in Udine. Also, the bell at Iviron is the first Venetian bell in the catalogue to have been commissioned. This is confirmed by the inclusion of a representation of the famous icon kept at the monastery, the Virgin Portaitissa, or 'Gate-Keeper'. The Greek inscription is a supplication; the monks petition the Virgin to protect them from any suffering. This detail could indicate that the bell was not originally employed to mark the hours. Moreover, the artefact is the earlier instance in the catalogue in which the year of the bell is given in Arabic numerals.

6. Bell cast in Oravița (Banat of Temeswar, Habsburg Monarchy, modern Romania), 1735, Docheiariou Monastery

It is found in the exonarthex of the katholikon, hanging from a window.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is a small.

Decoration: Single leaves pointing down are connected to the lower part of the band with the inscription. Only one image decorates the main body of the instrument, the Crucifixion.

Inscription (around the top of the main body): *THOMA KHENAVER IN OROVIZA 1735 GOSS MICH.*

The German inscription tells us that this bell was cast by Thomas Khenaver in 1735. He was probably a master who settled in Oravița after the Banat was conquered by the Habsburgs at the beginning of the 18th century. The same individual surely cast a bell for a church near Oravița in 1728¹⁷.

¹⁵ Fr. Bulić, "Zvona u Dalmaciji i njihovi lijevaoci", *Sveta Cecilija* 14 (1920), 32.

¹⁷ M. Jäger, *Der Wallfahrtsort "Maria Fels" in Deutsch-Tschiklowa im Banater Bergland*, Resita 2017, 25. It was melted down during the First World War.

¹⁵ Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken*, op.cit. (n. 10), 224.

7 and 8. Two Venetian bells, 1746, Philotheou Monastery

These two instruments are stored in a room with other bells. One is in good condition (no. 7), while the crown of the other broke at some point and was replaced (no. 8).

Measurements: Unknown, but both are small. Their size is very similar.

Decoration: Four single leaves pointing down decorate the shoulder (the top part of the bell, between the crown and the inscription) and curve of both instruments. Bell no. 7 shows a band decorated with floral motifs on the top of the main body. Four single figures decorate the main body of the two bells, Crucifixion; Virgin; angel holding a flower (this and the previous image create the Annunciation); standing saint (a different one on each bell), probably St Anthony of Padua on bell no. 7 and St Roch on bell no. 8.

Inscription (around the top of the main body, below the ornamental band on bell no. 7): *ANNO MDCCXLVI*, that is the year in which the two instruments were cast. Bell no. 8 is missing two letters (NO) of the word for year. The nameplate of the foundry (in a cartouche placed below the Crucifixion) reads *OPUS / CASTELLI* on both artefacts.

This bell was cast at the Castelli foundry, a Venetian establishment active in the 18th century and which was started by a certain Giovanni Andrea Castelli¹⁸. Originally from Pavia, he moved to Venice where he probably learnt the art of bellfounding. Bells cast by him are reported in churches in Venice (1741) and Murano (1745)¹⁹. He died in 1746, the year in which the two bells

from Philotheou were cast. From that date the foundry was managed by his two daughters, Catherine and Anna Castelli²⁰. Thus, these two bells may have been cast by the two sisters. That certain decorative motifs (leaves) and religious figures (the Annunciation) appear on both bells is the result of the two artefacts being produced by the same foundry. This decoration was applied with moulds that could be reused; hence, bells cast by the same foundry may be decorated with the same imagery.

9. Hungarian bell, 1747, Vatopedi Monastery²¹

This is the largest bell in Vatopedi; it is found in the belfry of the monastery, together with other sixteen bells, among which are nos 12, 20 and 36. A few are Russian.

Measurements: Diameter, 105 cm.

Decoration: The handles of the crown are decorated with faces (Fig. 4). The lower part of the shoulder, just above the German inscription, shows a vegetal frieze with human faces. Below the inscription is another vegetal frieze with human faces; this is larger than the one on the shoulder. The main body of the bell is decorated with two images; they are on opposite sides of the instrument. One shows Christ rising from the tomb guarded by soldiers (Fig. 5); the top of the image is labelled in Greek (*H ANACTACIC TOY XPICTOY*). The other one shows the Virgin and the Archangel Gabriel, that is, the Annunciation, to which the Vatopedi Monastery is dedicated. Below this image are the initials of the monastery.

Inscription: Three, one in German and two in Greek. The one on the top of the main body reads *ANTONI ZECHENTER IN OFFEN ANNO 1747 GOSS MICH.*

¹⁸ The foundry cast bells for churches in Venice, Istria and Dalmatia, Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken*, op.cit. (n. 10), 213. Dočkal, *Naša zvona i njihovi ljevaoci*, op.cit. (n. 10), 65-66. Someda de Marco, *Campane antiche della Venezia Giulia*, op.cit. (n. 10), 120, 122-123. Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia*, I, op.cit. (n. 10), 599. For a recent study focusing on the Castelli foundry, see V. Avery, “Due incomparabili donzelle”: Catarina and Anna Castelli, sister bell-makers in eighteenth-century Venice”, *Renaissance studies in honor of Joseph Connors*, M. Israëls – L. A. Waldman (eds), Cambridge MA 2013, I, 654-670.

¹⁹ Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia*, I, op.cit. (n. 10), 13; II, 425. On his bells his name appears as Joannes Andreas de Castellis.

²⁰ Someda de Marco, *Campane antiche della Venezia Giulia*, op.cit. (n. 10), 99-101. Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia*, I, op.cit. (n. 10), 569, 572; II, 158, 229, 267, 341, 433. G. Cenghiaro – P. G. Nonis (eds), *9 secoli di campane: Arte, cultura, storia, simbolo nella vita della gente*, Abano Terme 1986, 390. Avery, *Vulcan’s forge in Venus’ city*, op.cit. (n. 9), 42-43, 56. The two sisters were portrayed in an 18th-century work showing the clothes worn by the people of Venice, G. Grevembroch, *Gli abiti de veneziani di quasi ogni età con diligenza raccolti e dipinti nel secolo XVIII*, IV, Venice 1981, 108.

²¹ Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 110 and note 226.

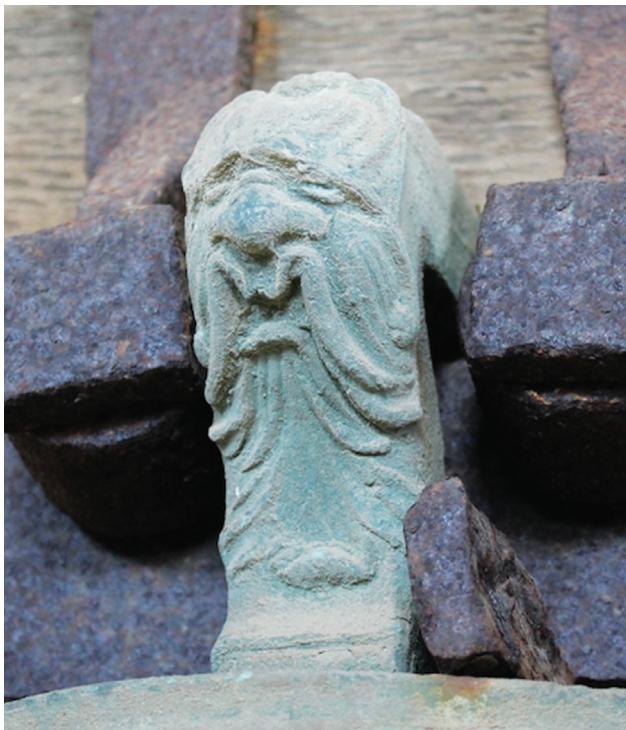


Fig. 4. Vatopedi Monastery, detail of the handle of a bell cast in Buda in 1747 (Cat. no. 9).



Fig. 5. Vatopedi Monastery, Resurrection of Jesus (Cat. no. 9, detail).

The second inscription, on the lower part of the main body, reads: *ΤΑΦΙΕΡΩΘΗ Η ΙΕΠΑ ΑΥΤΗ ΚΩΔΩΝ. ΤΗ ΣΕΒΑΚΜΙΑ Β(ΑΣΙΑΙΚΗ): ΚΑΙ Π(ΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΙΚΗ): Μ(ΟΝΗ): ΤΟΥ ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ, ΠΑΡΑ ΤΟΥ Τ(ΑΠΕΙΝΟΥ): ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΡΑΓΙΑΝΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ. ΕΚ ΚΟΖΕΝΗC. ΚΑΙ ΤΗC ΣΥΜΒΙΟΥ Κ(ΥΠΙΑC) ΧΙΟΝΟC*. The third inscription, on the curve of the bell, reads: *ΕΙC ΑΙΔΙΟΝΜΗΜΗ. ΑΥΤΟΥ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΓΟΝΕΩΝ ΣΤΑΝΚΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΡΗΝΗC. ΣΥΝΔΡΟΜΗΔΕ ΤΩΝ Π(ΑΤΕΡΩΝ) ΚΑΙ ΚΑΤΑ ΧΠΙCΤΟΝ ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ. ΜΕΑΕΤΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΡΗΤΟC ΚΑΙ ΙΩΑΣΑΦ ΠΑΠΙΟΥ. ΕΝ ΒΟΥΔΗΜΙΩ ΤΗC ΟΥΓΓΑΡΙΑC 1747*²².

The German inscription tells us that the instrument was cast by a certain Anthony Zechenter in Buda in 1747²³. This is the only bell in the catalogue to have been produced in the Hungarian city, which Austria conquered to the Ottomans in 1686. Anthony was a German-speaking master who probably settled in Buda at some point after the Habsburg conquest.²⁴ He was surely a relative of Frantz Zechenter, who cast bells in Vienna between the end of the 17th and the early 18th century.²⁵ The Greek inscriptions inform us that this holy bell was donated to the imperial and patriarchal monastery of Vatopedi by a certain George Karagiannopoulos from Kozani, in modern northern Greece, and his wife. He was probably a member of the Καραγιάννης family, a family of merchants from Kozani²⁶. We are also told that the bell was donated in his memory and that of his parents, Stankos and Irene. This is the first instance in the catalogue of

²² The two Greek inscriptions show accents.

²³ Zechenter may have cast two bells for Vatopedi; however, the second one is hanging too high and I was not able to look at it closely. Both bells seem to have the same relief showing the Annunciation of the Virgin.

²⁴ He was based in Buda since at least 1731, P. Pál, *Zempléni harangok*, Miskolc 2009, 116 note 211.

²⁵ For instance, he cast four bells for the church of St Othmar in Mödling, near Vienna, “Die Kirchenglocken von St. Othmar”, online article, <http://www.othmar.at/kirchen/glocken/glocken.html>.

²⁶ Another member of this family may have been George Karagiannis, who was born in 1743 and established himself in Vienna, P. K. Enepedikes, “Από τους Καραγιάννηδες της Κοζάνης στους Βούρανης της Βιέννης”, *Πνευματικοί άνδρες της Μακεδονίας κατά την Τουρκοκρατίαν*, Thessaloniki 1972, 14-22.

a bell donated by a lay person²⁷. However, we cannot exclude that this also was the case for some of the previous bells. Since the instruments were not commissioned we do not know who purchased them. Also, this is the only bell in the catalogue with inscriptions referring to women. The second Greek inscription also informs us that two monks of the monastery, Meletios the Cretan and Iosaf of Paros, provided assistance. The latter was the author of a manuscript found today in the library of Vatopedi and which was finished in Kozani in 1763²⁸. His works deal with chanting and so he had knowledge of music²⁹. The fact that he helped in the acquisition of the bell is thus very telling. Since their names appear on the instrument they may have written the Greek inscriptions. Perhaps they travelled to Budapest and liaised between bell master and donor.

10. Venetian bell, 1755, Xenophontos Monastery

This is the oldest bell in the monastery; it is in the bell tower together with other seven bells. Five are Russian.

Measurements: Diameter, 46,5 cm.

Decoration: On the top of the main body is a band decorated with flowers and leaves. The main body shows four single images, Crucifixion with the Virgin Mary and St John; seated male saint wearing a mitre

²⁷ The donation of bells by laymen may have been more common during this period. Visual evidence can provide further information regarding this practice. A chapel dedicated to Ivan Rilski was built at Hilandar Monastery in 1757 at the expense of Hadzi Valco of Bansko, in modern Bulgaria (M. Kiel, *Art and society of Bulgaria in the Turkish period*, Assen – Maastricht 1985, 139-140). The project also included monk cells and a tower. The latter can be seen in the model that the *ktitor* holds in a portrait that decorated one of the walls of the chapel. The representation includes three bells of different size hanging from the top level of the tower. Perhaps Valco also offered the instruments.

²⁸ S. Eustratiades – Arcadios Vatopedinos, *Katálogoς τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἱερᾷ Μονῇ Βατοπέδιον ἀποκειμένων κωδίκων*, Paris 1924, 229 note 1437. His name also appears in a manuscript dated to 1771 (Ιωάσαφ Βατοπαιδινοῦ τοῦ Παρίου), L. Polites, *Katálogoς χειρογράφων τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessaloniki 1991, 1.

²⁹ E. S. Giannopoulos, “Η συμβολή των αγιορειτών πατέρων στην φαλική τέχνη στα τέλη του 18ου και τις αρχές του 19ου αι.,” *Άγιον Όρος: πνευματικότητα και ορθοδοξία, τέχνη Β' Διεθνές Συμπόσιο, Θεσσαλονίκη 11-13 Νοεμβρίου 2005*, Thessaloniki 2006, 61.

and blessing with his right hand (St Nicholas?); Virgin (half figure) with Child; St George killing the dragon. While the monastery is dedicated to St George, the latter representation may just be a coincidence.

Inscription (on the top, below the band decorated with floral motifs): *ANNO MDCCLV*, that is the year when the bell was cast, 1755. Just below the Crucifixion is the nameplate of the foundry (inside a cartouche), which reads *OPVS / AEREDVM / DE POLIS*.

This bell was cast by a foundry named De Poli heirs (in Latin, aeredum). They probably were the descendants of one of the earlier De Poli bell masters, Anthony, Bartholomew or Joseph (the latter cast bell Cat. no. 4), who were active in the 17th century. From this period onwards bells cast by this foundry usually show a nameplate like the one on this bell; this also appears on bell Cat. no. 18.

11. Bell dated to 1757 (Zographou Monastery)

This is the oldest bell in the monastery. It is in the bell tower, together with other eight bells, among which is Cat. no. 31. The largest is Russian; it was cast in Moscow in 1857.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is not small.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder, just above the inscription, is decorated with palmettes. Below the inscription, on the top of the main body, is a scroll frieze.

Inscription (around the top of the main body): 1757, the year in which the bell was cast. On the opposite side it reads *ΙΟΚΟΥ*. I do not know what this means.

The provenance of this bell is currently unknown; it may have been cast somewhere to the north of the Danube, but this is just a hypothesis. In any case, it is an artefact of good quality. The lack of specific decoration and/or dedicatory inscription suggests that this instrument was not commissioned.

12. Bell cast in Timișoara (Banat of Temeswar, Habsburg Monarchy, modern Romania), 1760, Vatopedi Monastery (Fig. 6)

One of the older bells in the monastery, it is found in the belfry.



Fig. 6. Vatopedi Monastery, bell cast in Timișoara (Romania) in 1760 (Cat. no. 12).

Measurements: Unknown; but it is not large.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with vegetal motifs. Below the inscription, on the top of the main body, is a larger vegetal frieze. The main body of the bell shows at least two figures: Crucifixion and St George slaying the dragon.

Inscription: Two, the one around the top of the main body reads *IOHANN FRIETRICH BARTHEL IN TEMESWAR. ANNO 1760. GOSS. MICH.* The second inscription, which is on the curve of the bell, on one side, reads *GLORIA. IN EXCELSIS. DEO*³⁰. Below the large vegetal frieze, on one side, is another inscription that was probably incised later, in Cyrillic letters; it includes a date *AΩΙ3* (1887).

The German inscription informs that the bell was cast by Johann Friedrich Barthel in Timișoara in 1760. He was probably a bell master that descended from German-speaking settlers who moved to the Banat after the

³⁰ The same inscription is reported on a few bells from Hungary and dated to the 17th and 18th century, Pál, *Zempléni harangok*, op.cit. (n. 24), 41 note 115, 67 note 399, 78, 80, 87.

region was conquered by the Habsburgs. The Latin inscription means Glory to God in the highest. This is a verse of a homonymous hymn also known as the Hymn of the Angels.

13. Venetian bell, 1779, Iviron Monastery (Fig. 7)

The third oldest bell in the monastery; it is found in the belfry together with other nine bells, among which are Cat. nos 14, 23, 24 and 26.

Measurements: Height, 90 cm; diameter, 88 cm.

Decoration: The top part of the main body is decorated with a scroll frieze. The main body shows four representations: half figure of a male saint blessing and holding a book, he wears the *omophorion*, surely a depiction of St Nicholas; Dormition of the Virgin; half figure of St John the Baptist, he is depicted with wings, blessing and holding a cross; bust of the Virgin with Child; below the latter is the part of the inscription that mentions the Virgin as Portaitissa (Fig. 8). Below the images of St Nicholas, St John the Baptist and the Virgin, is a single leave pointing down.

Inscription (in one line, below the representations decorating the main body of the instrument): *† ΚΩΔΩΝ ΙΕΠΟΚΟΑΦΙΕΡΩΤΑΙ Η ΚΥΠΙΑ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΩ ΤΗ ΠΟΠΤΑΙΤΙΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΙΒΗΠΙΤΩΝ. ΕΤΕΙ ΑΨΟΘ. ΕΝΕΤΙΗCI.* On the lower part of the main body, below the Dormition of the Virgin, is the nameplate of the foundry (in a cartouche), which reads *OPVS / AEREDVM / DE POLIS / VEN.*

The inscription informs us that the bell was offered to the Mother of God Portaitissa. After bell no. 5 is the second artefact in the catalogue to refer to her. These instances indicate the significance of the icon for the community of Iviron. The bell is the first instrument in the catalogue to show the Dormition of the Virgin. This feast day is important in the Orthodox calendar; its representation appears frequently in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine art. The image was surely requested by the individuals that commissioned the bell, probably the monastic community itself. The bell was cast at the Venetian foundry De Poli, which also cast bells nos 10 and 18.



Fig. 7. Iviron Monastery, Venetian bell cast in 1779, (Cat. no. 13).



Fig. 8. Iviron Monastery, bust of the Virgin with Child on bell Cat. no. 13, detail.

14. Bell cast in Corfu, 1781, Iviron Monastery (Fig. 9)³¹

Like the previous bell, it is also found in the bell tower of the monastery.

Measurements: Height, 82 cm; diameter, 78 cm.

Decoration: The handles of the crown are decorated with faces. The top part of the main body shows a scroll frieze. Below this are single faces with wings. The middle part of the main body has several representations: Crucifixion with the Virgin and St John the Baptist; roundel with the Dormition of the Virgin (the dedication of the monastery); seated male saint holding a book, surely St Nicholas; seated Virgin with Child. Between these figures are vases with flowers. Faces with wings appear again between the two inscription bands. Finally, on the rim is a band with vegetal motifs.

Inscription: Three, the first one (below the representations decorating the middle part of the main body) reads ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΗΣ·ΜΙΚΕΛΕΤΗΣ·ΚΑΙΦΑΛΗΝΕΩΣ - 1781. The second inscription (on the curve of the bell) reads Ο ΙΕΠΟC·ΚΟΔ(Ω)N·ΟΥΤ(Ο)C T(H)C ΕΥ(Α)Γ(ΟΥ)C·Μ(Ο)Ν(Η)C·ΤΟΝ ΙΒΙ(ΡΩ)N·ΣΠ(ΟΥ)ΔΙC·ΔΑΠ(Α)ΝΙC·ΤΟΝ ΚΝΙΩΝ·Τ(ΩΝ) Π(ΑΤΕ)Ρ(Ω)N·ΕΝΕ-ΚΑ (ΕΝΕΚΑ?) Ψ(Υ)ΧΙΚ(Η)C·CΟΤΙΡ(Ι)AC·ΕΤ(Ο)C - 1781³². The third inscription (Fig. 10) is on the middle part of the bell, above the first inscription and between two vases with flowers, just below the roundel with the Dormition of the Virgin. It may have been a last minute addition, as it does not fit well into the space. It reads: ΠΑΝΤΕΣ ΑΓΝΗ ΤΗΝ ΔΕ ΚΟΙ ΧΑΦΗΝ ΦΕΡΟΥ/ΚΟΙ ΦΟΝΗΝ ΕΥΧΟΝ ΕΞ ΑΥΓΥΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΕΥΟΥ(Υ)C³³.

The first inscription tells us that this artefact was cast by Charalambis Mikeletis; he is currently the first Greek bell master known to us. He also cast the following bell, no. 15. Mikeletis was born in Kefalonia, an island that

³¹ Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 216.

³² I thank Father Symeon of Dionysiou for helping me to read this and the following inscription.

³³ The inscriptions show accents.



Fig. 9. Iviron Monastery, bell cast in Corfu in 1781 (Cat. no. 14).

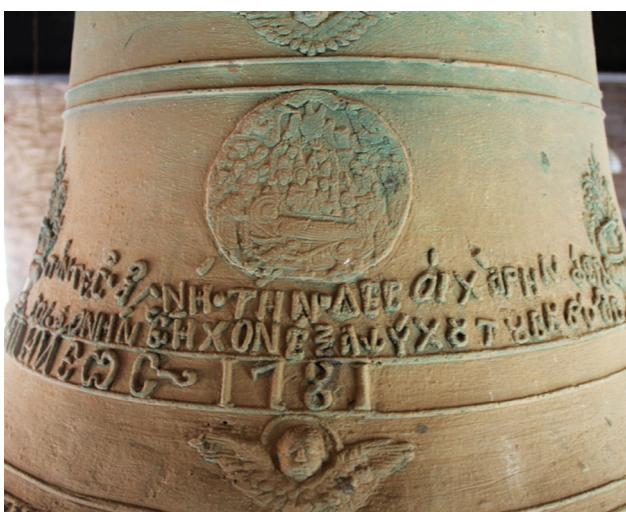


Fig. 10. Iviron Monastery, part of one of the inscriptions on bell Cat. no. 14, detail.

was under Venetian rule from 1500 until 1797. He was the son of a bell master named Zuanne, perhaps from Verona and who in 1731 moved to Kefalonia from Venice.³⁴ Later Mikeletis' family moved to Corfu, where they established a bell casting workshop.³⁵ Mikeletis cast more than two hundred bells currently found in churches all over Corfu. One is in the church of the Virgin Hodegetria in Avliotes; its inscription reads: ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΗ ΜΙΚΕΛΕΤΗΣ ΙΒΡΙΩΝ ΒΙΓΛΙΝΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΛΑΙΤΑΝΙΑ 1796. The second inscription informs us that the bell was paid by the monks of the monastery for the salvation of their soul in 1781. The third inscription is not common among texts found on the bells in the catalogue. It refers to the sound of the bell as the melodious voice of a soulless implement. Three of the four religious representations decorating the main body of the bell (the Dormition of the Virgin, St Nicholas and the Virgin with Child) are also depicted on the previous instrument. The latter, which is also found at Iviron, was cast two years before. This repetition indicates that the images were requested by the community and reveal their iconographic preferences.

15. Bell cast in Corfu, 1781, Protaton³⁶

The instrument is on display in Karyes, together with two other bells, a small one dated to 1840s and bell Cat. no. 26. They cracked in the fire that burnt the bell tower on 27th April 2004³⁷.

³⁴ Information provided by Gerasimos Dimoulas, who is researching the work of Mikeletis and whom I want to thank for sharing these details with me.

³⁵ Western rule over the island facilitated the production of bells. In fact, bell casting on the Ionian islands could have started with Mikeletis' father. He may have migrated to the Venetian territory because he knew that bells cast in Venice were exported there and realised that his own production would supply the local demand. However, the occasional production of bells in Corfu is indicated by the bell of the clock in the church of St Spyridon. I thank Gerasimos Dimoulas for sharing the pictures of this bell, which is found at the very top of the bell tower.

³⁶ Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, op.cit. (n. 2), 700. Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 215.

³⁷ The bell tower was built in 1781, K. Vlachos, *Η χερσόνησος του Αγίου Όρους Άθω*, Volos 1903 [repr. Thessaloniki 2005], 168. In 1902 there were six bells in the belfry, three of which were large, Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, op.cit. (n. 2), 699. Today there are

Measurements: Height, 93 cm; diameter, 83 cm.

Decoration: The handles of the crown are decorated with faces. The lower part of the shoulder shows three faces with wings. Below this, is a scroll frieze with leaves and vine. The middle part of the main body is divided into two registers. The top one contains thirteen single figures, some of which are holding books. One of them, Jesus Christ, is depicted seated. The other twelve are busts, probably those of the apostles. The register below shows the crucifixion with St John the Baptist and the Virgin, which is represented just below the figure of the seated Jesus Christ. The rest of the register is occupied by four vases and three seated figures that alternate. One is the Virgin with Child, while another is probably St Nicholas. Finally, four faces with wings decorate the space between the line with the year and that with the name of the master.

Inscription: Just below the crucifixion reads 1781, that is the year in which the bell was cast. Also, on the curve of the bell reads *ХАРАЛАМПИИС · МИКЕЛЕТИС · КАИФАЛАΩΝΙΤИС -*.

This and the previous bell were cast in the same year, in 1781. Thus, Mikeletis was ordered two bells. It has been proposed that, based on the large size of the Protaton bell, both bells were cast on Mount Athos³⁸. However, this should not necessarily be the case, since larger bells on Mount Athos were cast in Russia. While both instruments are similar, this one is slightly larger and shows more religious figures. The bell of Protaton does not show any specific inscription or depictions suggesting that it was commissioned. For instance, it does not include the representation of the Dormition of the Virgin, to which the church is dedicated.

16. Bell dated to 1783, Docheiariou Monastery

It is found in the bell tower together with other six bells.

seven; they were cast in Paramythia (Greece) in 2005. The oldest bell reported in Protaton was dated to 1612 (MDCXII), ibid., 700. In November 1984, P. Kouphopoulos and S. Mamaloukos noted MDCCXII. I want to thank S. Mamaloukos for having shared the notes of their expedition with me. This bell broke in 2004 and was recast with the original decoration and inscription.

³⁸ Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 214.

The largest, which is dated to 1875, was cast in Russia. Its inscription indicates that it was cast for the Russian monastery on Mount Athos, St Panteleemon.

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: None.

Inscription (on the top of the main body): *CKE. KY: IЕРМ:Δ: 1783.* It possibly reads *CKEYOΦΥΑΛΑΚОС KYPIOY IEPEMIOY MONHC ΔΟXEIAPIOY.*

This simple bell was apparently commissioned by Ieremias, the skeuophylax of the monastery, that is, the individual that administered the property of the community. A similar bell in the same monastery has an inscription that reads *M.Δ.* This is followed by the year, which cannot be read well. Both bells were probably cast by the same master or foundry. The Greek inscription and lack of master's name or nameplate could suggest that this instrument was produced in a foundry found somewhere near Mount Athos.

17. Venetian bell, 1785, Hilandar Monastery

It is in the bell tower of the monastery, together with other nine bells, among which are bells Cat nos 18, 20 and 38. The two largest ones are Russian. According to its inscription, one of them was cast for the cell of St John Chrysostom.

Measurements: Diameter, 98 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder shows a scroll frieze. Below this is the band with the inscription, under which is a decorative design made of what look like two medals of different size alternating. On the main body of the bell are three representations, which are framed by an upright leaf on each side: Crucifixion; St Sava and St Symeon (Fig. 11), the founders of the monastery (both labelled in Serbian Slavonic); the Virgin seated with the Child (both labelled in Greek, *ΜΡ ΘΥ / ΙC XC*).

Inscription (around the top of the main body): *†CIE ПРИЛОЖИ В М(А/О)Н(АСТИ)Р ХИЛА(НДАР): Г(ОСПОДИН): ГЕНЕРАЛ РАФАИЛ МАИНА ТРОУД. И НАСТОА(Н)ИЕ Г(ОСПОДИНА): ПРО(И)ГОУ-М(ЕНА) МИТРОФАНА БОГДАНОВИЧА 1785.* The nameplate of the masters (in a cartouche topped by a

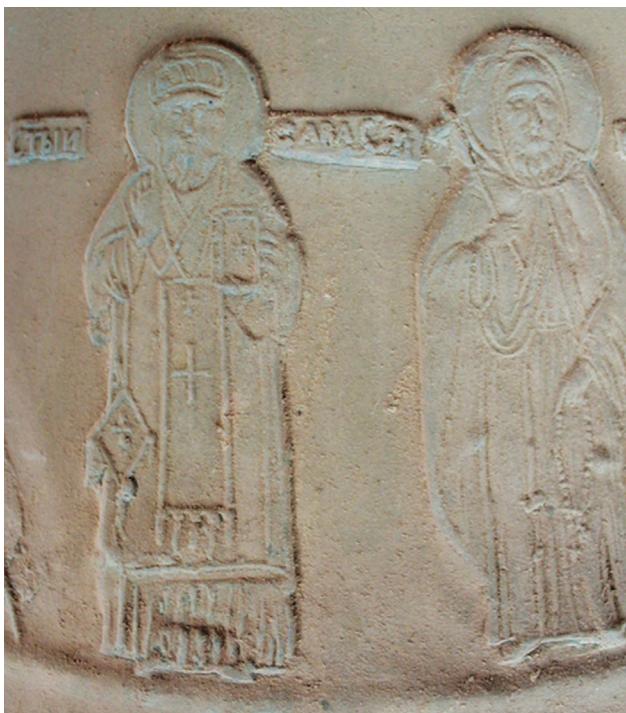


Fig. 11. Hilandar Monastery, portraits of St Sava and St Symeon, founders of Hilandar Monastery, on bell Cat. no. 17 (detail), cast in 1785.

helmet, also framed by an upright leaf on each side) reads: *OPUS / FRANCISCI / ET BERNARDINI / FRANCHI / UTINENSIS*.

This bell was cast by two masters, Francisco and Bernardino Franchi. The Franchi family produced bells since at least the 17th century³⁹. Originally from Udine, their production expanded to nearby locations such as Gorizia, Ljubljana and Zagreb. Their bells can be found in Friuli, Slovenia and Croatia. A bell reported in Slovenia was cast by Bernardino in 1742⁴⁰. Francisco was active at least between 1770 and 1804⁴¹. The bell at Hilandar

was produced in Udine, an important city of the Venetian Republic. The Serbian Slavonic inscription and the portraits of the founders of the monastery, St Sava and his father St Symeon, indicate that the artefact was commissioned specifically for the monastery. The instrument was donated by a certain general called Raphael Maina. The donation took place while Mitrofan Bogdanovich, who would later become the archimandrite of Hilandar, was the prohegoumenos of the monastery⁴².

18. Venetian bell, probably 18th century, Hilandar Monastery

Like the previous bell, it is found in the belfry of the monastery. It is cracked on one side.

Measurements: Height, 36 cm; diameter, 33 cm.

Decoration: The top of the main body is decorated with an ornamental band. The main body shows four figures: seated male saint wearing a mitre, he blesses with his right hand, while he has an open book in the left one, probably St Nicholas;⁴³ Crucifixion with the Virgin and St John; risen Christ; bust of the Virgin with Child.

Inscription: The nameplate of the foundry, on the curve of the bell, below the Crucifixion, reads *OPVS / AEREDVM / DE POLIS*.

This bell was cast by the De Poli foundry, which also produced bells Cat nos 10 and 13. While the date is not inscribed, the artefact was probably cast in the 18th century, when a number of undated De Poli bells showing the same nameplate were produced.⁴⁴ These bells, which in general are rather small, were surely cast for speculative sale, that is, they were not commissioned⁴⁵.

³⁹ D. Bogdanović – V. Djurić – D. Medaković, *Chilandar*, Belgrade 1978, 178.

⁴⁰ Bell Cat. no. 10, which was also cast by the De Poli foundry, shows the same figure. Another De Poli bell dated to the 18th century and today on the island of Sikinos (Greece), also shows the same saint, A. Frantz – H. A. Thompson – J. Travlos, “The ‘Temple of Apollo Pythios’ on Sikinos”, *American Journal of Archaeology* 73/4 (1969), pl. 107, fig. 54.

⁴¹ Gnirs, *Alte und neue Kirchenglocken*, op.cit. (n. 10), 220. Dočkal, *Naša zvona i njihovi lijevaoci*, op.cit. (n. 10), 97. Frantz, “The ‘Temple of Apollo Pythios’”, op.cit. (n. 43), 422.

⁴² Avery, *Vulcan’s forge in Venus’ city*, op.cit. (n. 9), 76.

19. Western bell dated to 1802, Kastamonitou Monastery

This is the oldest instrument of the monastery; it is found in the bell tower together with other eight bells. The two largest ones are Russian; they were cast in 1866 and 1872.

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: On the upper half of the main body is a representation of a man riding a horse. He holds a spear and wears a helmet.

Inscription (on the middle of the main body, below three lines): *ANNO 1802*, that is the year in which the bell was cast.

Because of the inscription it can be deduced that this bell was probably cast in a Western foundry.

20. Bell dated to 1805, Vatopedi Monastery

It hangs in the belfry, together with bells nos 9, 12 and 36.

Measurements: Diameter, 57 cm.

Decoration: None.

Inscription (on the top part of the main body): *1805*, the year in which the instrument was cast. There may be something else inscribed on it, but I was not able to look at it closely.

Through a series of letters we know that a clock and two bells were sent from Vienna to Vatopedi Monastery in 1805⁴⁶. While it is not clear if these artefacts reached the monastery, this instrument may well have been one of the two bells sent together with the clock to mark the hours. On the other hand, there are other bells on Mount Athos that are only inscribed with the year and show no decoration. Instances can be found at Gregoriou (1797), Pantokrator (1809) and Lavra (1818). These instruments only show simple lines; they may have been cast by the same bell master or foundry. Their lack of dedicatory inscriptions and iconography could suggest that this was not very experienced.

⁴⁶ Sp. Azzopardi, "Restoration of the eighteenth-century tower clock at Vatopedi", *Friends of Mount Athos Annual Report* (2015), 72-73.

21. Bell dated to 1832 (?), Hilandar Monastery

This is one of two similar, but not identical, bells cast by the same master.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is not large.

Decoration: The decoration looks crude, but this could be because of its state of preservation. The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with single figures that cannot be appreciated clearly, probably busts. Below this, is the line with the year, below which is a design that is difficult to recognise. The middle part of the main body shows, among others, a rider spearing a dragon, probably St George. The curve of the bell is decorated with an ornamental band.

Inscription: On the top of the main body is inscribed the year in which the bell was cast, *Г(ОДА) 1832* (?). However, the last two numbers are not very clear. Another inscription is inserted in the space occupied by the design, just below the year. It reads *МАНАСТИР / ХИЛЕНДАР / ХРАМ ВЪВЕДЕНИЕ ПРЕ... / БОГОРОДИ / ЦЫI*. On the lower part of the main body is the nameplate of the master, which is contained in a cartouche with the shape of a horizontal leaf. I could only read: *MACTOP...*

The Serbian inscription shows that this bell was commissioned for the monastery as it mentions the name of the foundation and its dedication, the Presentation of the Virgin in the temple. The bell may have been cast in the Principality of Serbia, which was established in the first half of the 19th century.

22. Bell dated to 1842, Lavra Monastery

It is found in the bell tower (a metallic structure built after the actual bell tower was demolished), together with other bells, among which are Cat. nos 32 and 33. The older dated instrument was cast in 1818.

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: The main body of the instrument is decorated with images of the Virgin Platytera and two angels; the latter seem to be playing instruments, probably a horn or some sort of trumpet.

Inscription: On the top of the main body, just above

the representation of the Virgin, is written 1842 (the last number is not clear), the year in which the bell was cast. On the lower part of the main body (on the left side of the Virgin), is written *NIKA*, while on the upper part are a few letters, possibly *IC XC*⁴⁷. The latter is the four letter abbreviation for Jesus. Thus, the inscription reads “Jesus Christ conquers”. This Greek formula, which was common in the Orthodox world, only appears on this instance in the catalogue.

The instrument may have been cast on Mount Athos, somewhere else in the Ottoman Empire or in Greece.⁴⁸ This is the first instance of a bell decorated with the image of the Virgin Platytera. The type was frequently represented in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine art. It was probably requested by the monastic community.

23. Wallachian bell, 1861, Iviron Monastery (Fig. 12)

It is found in the bell tower, together with bells Cat. nos 13, 14 and 24.

Measurements: Height, 58 cm; diameter, 56 cm.

Decoration: The handles of the crown seem to be decorated with faces. On the top of the main body is a frieze with leaves.

Inscription: Two, the one on the top reads *Г. БЛАНК. ФАБРИК: (unidentified symbol) БОУКОУРЕЦІ*⁴⁹. The second, on the middle part of the main body, reads *ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΑ ΓΕΡ(ОНТА): BENIAMIN / IBHPITOY EIC THN MONHN IBHPΩN. 1861.*⁵⁰

The top inscription provides the name of the individual that cast the instrument, a certain G. Blank. Moreover, we are told that it was produced in Bucharest. This is the first attested bell in the catalogue to have been cast in this city, which in 1862 was to become the capital

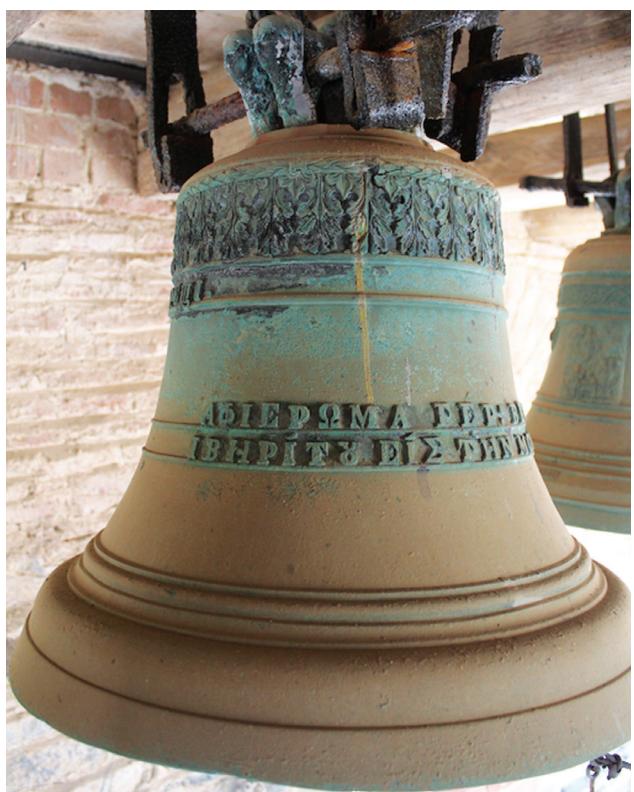


Fig. 12. Iviron Monastery, bell cast in Bucharest in 1861 (Cat. no. 23).

of the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Greek inscription informs us that the artefact was presented by a monk of the monastery, a certain Benjamin, in 1861. This is the earlier attested instance in the catalogue of a bell donated by a single member of the Athonite community⁵¹.

24. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1862, Iviron Monastery

Like the previous bell, it is found in the bell tower.

Measurements: Height, 57 cm; diameter, 51 cm.

Decoration: On the top of the main body is an ornamental band with floral motifs. The main body of the instrument is decorated with four images: Crucifixion with the

⁴⁷ As reported by P. Kouphopoulos and S. Mamaloukos, who visited the Lavra Monastery in November 1984.

⁴⁸ For a brief discussion on bell casting in the Ottoman Empire, see A. Rodriguez Suarez, “Two church bells from Antalya: Traces of the religious soundscape of the Late Ottoman period”, *Adalya* 23 (2020), 525-526.

⁴⁹ This Romanian inscription is written using Cyrillic letters. Romanians adopted the Latin alphabet at the end of the 19th century.

⁵⁰ The Greek inscription shows accents.

⁵¹ An earlier instance is that of bell Cat. no. 16, but in this case the ‘donor’ was the skeuophylax of the monastery, and so he may have paid the instrument with the funds of the monastic community.

Virgin and St John; half figure of the Virgin Platytera (labelled on one side of the halo, *ΠΛΑΤΥΤΕΠΑ*), Jesus is blessing and the Virgin is crowned, there are rays coming out from her back; Resurrection of Jesus Christ, he is depicted rising from the tomb and holding a flag, by the tomb are an angel and three figures (probably the three Maries); Christ the king, crowned and seated on a throne, he is blessing with his right hand while he holds an open book on the left one. Between each image is a head with three pairs of wings, that is, a seraph⁵².

Inscription (around the curve of the bell): *ΔΙ ΕΞΟΔΩΝ ΤΟΙC ΠΑΝΟCΙΩΤΑΤΟΙC ΑΓΙΟΙC ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΟΙC ΤΗC ΙΕPAC MONHC IBHPOY ΔΙA XEΙPOC ΔΕ NK ΑΓΙΟN OPOC AYTOYCTOY 14 ΙΩANNHC ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟY 1862.*

The inscription informs us that this bell was cast on 14th August 1862 and was paid by the holy committee of Iviron Monastery. It also provides the name of the bell founder, a certain Ιωάννης Νικολάου. This is the first bell in the catalogue to have been cast by this individual, who may have been based in Karyes⁵³. A couple of inscriptions inform us that he worked on the Holy Mountain. For instance, this instrument is inscribed with "Mount Athos" while the inscription on a bell at Lavra (Cat. no. 32) indicates that it was cast in the actual monastery. Ioannis cast at least five other bells (Cat. nos 25, 29, 32, 33 and 34). This one dates to 1862 while the last one (Cat. no. 34) was produced in 1888. Thus, Ioannis was active for more than twenty years. By establishing himself on the Holy Mountain, he may have tried to supply the demand for bells from Athonite monasteries. He could also have been invited to work there. It is unclear where he came from or where he learnt bell casting techniques. He might have been from Greece, but it cannot be excluded that he was an Ottoman citizen. Certain decorative details on his bells are similar to those found on Russian instruments on Athonite monasteries, which could suggest that he may have used instruments cast in Russia as models. The religious images decorating the bell at Iviron are taken from both Western (the Resurrection) and Orthodox art (Virgin Platytera and

Christ the king). That Ioannis worked on Mount Athos facilitated that his artefacts were decorated with images requested by the monasteries.

25. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1863, Pantokrator Monastery⁵⁴

It is in the bell tower, together with other bells among which are Cat. nos 2 and 35.

Measurements: Diameter, 58 cm.

Decoration: On the top part of the main body is an ornamental band with floral motifs, to which are attached the three images decorating the middle part: the Virgin Platytera, which seems to be exactly the same one as on the previous bell; a seated male figure, probably Jesus depicted as a priest or as a king (the state of preservation does not allow to say more); Crucifixion, a skull and two bones are at the bottom of the cross.

Inscription (around the top part of the curve, it starts below the Crucifixion): *ΙΩΑΝΝΗC ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟY 1863 ΑΓΙΟN OPOC AYTOYCTOY 14.*

Ioannis Nikolaou cast this bell on 14th August 1863, that is, exactly a year after he produced the previous artefact. One of the images decorating this bell, that of the Virgin Platytera, is also found on the previous bell, a detail that indicates that he used the same mould to decorate both instruments.

26. Russian bell, 1863, Iviron Monastery (Figs 13, 14)

This is the largest bell in the belfry of the monastery.

Measurements: Diameter, 150 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder shows seraphim. The main body of the bell is decorated with four framed images labelled in Greek (except in the case of one religious figure): Dormition of the Virgin (*H KOIMHCIC ΤΗC ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟY*); a bust of the Virgin with Child (*MHP ΘΟY*), the Hodegetria type (each figure is also labelled, *ΗΒΕΡΚΙΑ, IC XC*); half figure of Jesus blessing with his right hand and holding an open

⁵² ODB, III, 1870, s.v. "Seraphim" (A. Kahzdan – N. Patterson-Ševčenko).

⁵³ Koupopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 109 and note 219.



Fig. 13. Iviron Monastery, Russian bell cast in 1863 (Cat. no. 26).



Fig. 14. Iviron Monastery, figure of St Ilarion on bell Cat. no. 26, detail.

book with Slavic writings on the left one (*IHC XPC*); standing figure of St Ilarion (*ΙΛΑΡΙΩΝ Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ*), who is shown with his head covered by a hood and holding a scroll in one of his hands (Fig. 14). The space between the four images is occupied by a relief that includes leaves, vine and a face with two wings.

Inscriptions: Two, one in Russian, underneath the seraphim, reads *СЕИ КОЛОКОЛЬ ОТЛИТЬ ВЪ МОСКВѢ НА ЗАВОДѣ А: П: ФИНЛАНДСКОИ ОУРОЖД: БОГДАНОВОИ ВѢСОУ 101* (the number is

not in relief, it is incised) *ΠΟΥ(Δ) Φ(ΟΥΗΤ)*.⁵⁵ The other inscription, in Greek and on the lower part of the curve, reads *ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΑ ΑΡΧΗΜΑΝΔΙΤΟΥ ΙΛΑΡΙΩΝΟΣ. ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΑΣ. ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΙ ΜΟΝΗΝ ΤΩΝ* (the last two letters together create the letter Ν) *ΜΟΝΗΝ ΤΩΝ* (the N is not in relief, it is incised, surely an afterthought) *ΙΒΗΡΩΝ 1863 ΜΟΧΑ* (followed by a large dot with a flower inside).

Both inscriptions inform us that this bell was cast in Moscow. The Russian text tells us that it is the work of the Finliandskij foundry, which was established in 1774⁵⁶. Moreover, it reports the weight of the instrument. This detail is inscribed on many large Russian bells; however, such information was not included on the previous bells in the catalogue. The number was added after the bell was cast, as its weight could only be determined once the casting process was completed. This is not the only feature that is different from previous bells on Mount Athos. The relief between the images is very rich and stands out from the decoration found on bells employed on Mount Athos until the mid-19th century⁵⁷. While many Russian bells on Mount Athos are of the same high quality (a good number are even larger and include more decoration), this instance clearly shows that the arrival of the Russian production introduced very different artefacts on the Holy Mountain. Unlike most bells cast in Russia and found on Mount Athos, which only show inscriptions in Russian, this artefact also includes a Greek inscription. This informs us that the instrument was a gift of the Archimandrite Ilarion and his companions at Iviron Monastery in 1863. Ilarion was a Russian monk that purchased a cell of Iviron⁵⁸. He requested that one of the images to decorate the bell was that of the homonymous saint, the anchorite Hilarion the Great. Another one shows the Dormition of the Virgin, to which the monastery is dedicated. The icon showing the Virgin with Child is meant

⁵⁵ Pood or pud (пуд) and funt (фунт) were units to measure weight in Tsarist Russia, E. V. Williams, *The bells of Russia: History and technology*, Princeton 1985, xix.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 60.

⁵⁷ In fact, in an exhibition that took place in 1896 the decoration of the Finliandskij bells was considered to be the most beautiful among those on display, *ibid.*, 63.

⁵⁸ Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, op.cit. (n. 2), 474.



Fig. 15. Koutloumous Monastery, bell cast by Apostolos Bourgares in 1870 (Cat. no. 27).

to be a representation of the famous icon kept at Iviron, the Portaitissa. This is indicated by the Slavonic label of the Virgin, which translates as the Virgin of Iviron. The icon was also represented on bells Cat. nos 5 and 13.

27. Bell cast in 1870, Koutloumous Monastery (Fig. 15)⁵⁹

It is found in the bell tower of the monastery, where it hangs together with other instruments, among which are bells Cat. nos 28 and 34.

Measurements: Unknown, it is a medium-sized bell.

Decoration: The handles of the crown are decorated with horned heads; they probably represent devils. The shoulder of the bell shows single vases; below them is a band decorated with vegetal motifs. On the main body

of the instrument is a roundel with the Dormition of the Virgin. Around the rim is another ornamental band decorated with vegetal motifs.

Inscription (on the middle part of the body, between two vases): *ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ / ΒΟΥΡΓΑΡΗΣ / 1870.*

This bell was cast by a certain Apostolos Bourgares in 1870. He may have been a master based in Karyes. However, the bell could also have been cast somewhere else in the Ottoman Empire or in Greece.

28. Bell cast in 1871, Koutloumous Monastery⁶⁰

Like the previous bell, it is also found in the bell tower of the monastery.

Measurements: Unknown, it is a medium-sized bell.

Decoration: On the main body of the bell is a roundel with the Dormition of the Virgin. It is the same one decorating the previous bell.

Inscription (on the main body of the bell, part of it is below the roundel): *ΔΑΠΑΝΗΣ - ΤΙΜΟΘΕΟΥ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ ΜΟΝΗΣ Ι(?) ΚΟΥΤΛΟΥΜΟΥ ΚΙΟΥ.* Below the name of the monastery, on the curve of the bell, is the year in which the bell was cast, 1871.

This bell was paid by a monk of the monastery, a certain Timotheos. It has been suggested that, based on the type of the letters, the artefact was also cast by Apostolos Bourgares, the master of the previous bell⁶¹. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that both bells are decorated with the same roundel. In the same belfry is another bell cast in 1871; it is smaller and very simple. Its inscription informs us that it was paid by a certain Lazaros Nikolaou⁶². The type of the letters suggests that this bell was also cast by Apostolos Bourgares.

29. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1874, Protaton⁶³

It is displayed next to bell Cat. no. 15, in Karyes. It is cracked.

⁵⁹ Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 213 (inscription A).

⁶⁰ Ibid., 109 and note 213 (inscription B).

⁶¹ Ibid., 109.

⁶² It reads ΔΑΠΑΝΑΙ – ΛΑΖΑΡΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ 1871.

⁶³ Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, op.cit. (n. 2), 699-700. *Αγιον Όρος*.

Measurements: Height, 121 cm; diameter, 116 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with eight seraphim; below these are three empty bands. Below these is another band with leaves and flowers. Joint to this are triangles made of leaves and pointing down⁶⁴. Also joint to the band are two framed representations that occupy the middle zone of the main body, each one on opposite sides of the bell. One shows the Dormition of the Virgin; the other one shows a numerous group of Athonite saints (the label of some is inscribed on their halos, they carry different clothes and hats). This second representation is labelled, it reads *OΙ ΑΓΙΟΙ ΠΑΝΤΕC OΙ EN TΩ ΑΓΙΩ OΡΕΙ ACKHCANTEC*.

Inscription (around the curve of the bell, in two lines): (Symbol with leaves, it looks like a cross) *O ΚΩΔΩΝ TOYIEPOY NAOY TOY ΠΡΩΤΑΤΟΥ KATAKEY-ACΘΕΙC TH CYNΔPOMY THC TE KOINOTH-TOC KAI TΩN EN KAPYAIC ΠΑΤΕΡΟΝ* (symbol with leaves) *EN ETEI CΩΤΗΡΙΩ* (symbol with leaves) 1874 (symbol with leaves) / (flower) *EN MHNI ΙΟΥΛΙΟΥ 16 ΔΙΑ XEPOC ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ* (flower).

The inscription informs us that this bell was cast by Ioannis Nikolaou on 16th July 1874. We are also told that the artefact was ordered for the Protaton church and was paid with the assistance of the community and the monks of Karyes. Both images decorating the artefact are fitting. One is the dedication of the monastery where the bell was going to be employed, the Dormition of the Virgin. The second image depicts a group of saints from Mount Athos, who are referred to as ascetics. Its choice is very suitable as it shows individuals from all

Κειμήλια Πρωτάτου, op.cit. (n. 2), 128, no. 79. Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 218.

⁶⁴ These triangles are very similar to those decorating the bell on display at the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, which has presumably been dated to the 14th century, A. Rodriguez Suarez, “The fate of bells under Ottoman rule: Between destruction and negotiation”, *Cross-cultural interaction between Byzantium and the West: Whose Mediterranean is it anyway?*, ed. A. Lymberopoulos, London – New York 2018, 303, 304, fig. 16.1 This similar decoration suggests that this instrument was cast in the 19th century.

the Athonite community and the Protaton church was visited by monks from all the monasteries on the Holy Mountain.

30. Bell cast by Michael Ioannou, 1879, Dionysiou Monastery (Figs 16, 17)⁶⁵

It is in the belfry of the monastery, where it hangs together with other bells. The two largest ones were cast in Russia.

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder shows seraphim. The main body of the bell is decorated with four framed images, between each one are two triangles made with leaves and pointing down. The four icons, which are labelled, show a half figure of St Dionysios of Koresos (*ΑΓΙΟC / ΔΙΟΝΥCΙΟC / EN TΩ AΘΩ*)⁶⁶, the founder of the monastery, with a model of the church in his hands (Fig. 17); half figure of the Virgin Platyttera; half figure of Nephon II (*O ΑΓΙΟC NH/ ΦΩN*), patriarch of Constantinople and saint of the Orthodox Church; half figure of St John the Baptist (*O ΑΓΙΟC / IΩ O ΠΡΟΔΟΜΟC*), depicted with wings and holding a plate with the Christ Child.

Inscription: Three, the one around the top, below the seraphim, reads *EN ETEI CΩΤΗΡΙΩ 1879 ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ 23 ΔΙΑ XEPOC MIXAHΛΟΥ ΙΩΝ. ΧΑΛΚΟΠΟΙΟΥ*. The second, below the previous one, reads (flower) *OPOYC AΘΩΝ* (flower). The third, which is around the curve of the bell, reads *† O ΚΩΔΩΝ ΟΥΤΟC KATEKEYACΘΗ ΔΑΠΑΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ Ι(EPOY) KOINOBOΙΟΥ ΔΙΟΝΥCΙΟΥ ΕΙΙ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΘΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΥ Κ(YPIOY) KYPIAKΟΥ*.

The inscription informs us that this bell was cast by a certain Michael on 23rd March 1879. Because his family name is the abbreviated form of Ioannis, he may have been the son of Ioannis Nikolaou, who cast bells Cat. nos 24, 25, 29, 32 and 33. This kingship is supported by the fact that Michael employed decoration used by Ioannis; for instance, both seraphim and triangles are also

⁶⁵ Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 217.

⁶⁶ ODB, I, 630-631, s.v. “Dionysiou Monastery” (A.-M. Talbot – A. Cutler).



Fig. 16. Dionysiou Monastery, bell cast by Michael Ioannou in Mount Athos in 1879 (Cat. no. 30).



Fig. 17. Dionysiou Monastery, portrait of St Dionysios of Koresos, the founder of Dionysiou Monastery, on bell Cat. no. 30, detail.

found on the previous bell. Michael describes himself as a *χαλκοποιός*, that is metalworker. He is the first Greek bell master, that we know of, to use such a term. The

inscription also informs us that the instrument was paid by the monastery during the abbacy of Kyriakos. The selection of the images decorating the bell is related to the history of Dionysiou Monastery. One is the founder of the monastery, Dionysios of Koresos, and after whom the foundation is named. Another is St John the Baptist, to whom the monastery is dedicated. The last one is the patriarch of Constantinople Nephon II, who spent his last years at Dionysiou and where he died in 1508. He was recognised as a saint in 1517 and his relics are kept in a chapel of the monastery.

31. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou or his son Michael, 1886, Zographou Monastery

It is found in the bell tower together with bell Cat. no. 11.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is large.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder shows a band of upward triangles decorated with leaves. The main body of the bell is decorated with two framed icons; these are connected by a line of triangles made of leaves but pointing down. On the two icons are depicted the Virgin Platytera and St George; the latter is the saint to whom the monastery is dedicated.

Inscription (around the rim): *O ΚΩΔΩΝ ΟΥΤΟC ΚΑΤΕΚΕΥΑΘΗ ΔΑΠΑΝΗ ΤΗC ΑΥTHC Ι(E-PAC) ΜΟΝΗC ΤΟΥ ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ ΕΝ ΕΤΕΙ 1886 (or 5?) CΩTHPIΩ MHNI MAPTIOY 12.*

The inscription informs us that this bell was cast on 12th March 1886 at the expense of the Zographou Monastery. It does not report the name of the bell founder; however, its formula and the decoration of the bell, for instance, the triangles with leaves, indicate that this bell was cast by either Ioannis Nikolaou or his son Michael.

32. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1886, Lavra Monastery⁶⁷

It is in the bell tower, together with bells Cat. nos 22 and 33. This and a Russian bell are the largest bells in the monastery.

⁶⁷ Koupopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 220.

Measurements: Diameter, 104 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with seraphim. Further below is an ornamental band. The main body of the bell shows three framed icons, the top part of which is joint to the band. One of the icons shows Athanasios the Athonite, standing and labelled outside the frame (ΑΓ/ΑΘ); he was the founder of the monastery. The other two are the Crucifixion with the Virgin and St John within a mandorla surrounded by sunbursts and the Virgin Platytera.

Inscription (around the lower part of the curve): *O ΚΩΔΩΝ ΟΥΤΟC ΚΑΤΕΚΥΑCΘΗ EN TH EN ΑΓΙΩ ΟΡΕΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΘΩ. ΜΟΝΗ ΤΗC ΛΑΥΡΑC ΔΙΑ ΧΕΙΡΟC ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ ΤΗ 20 ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ 1886.*

The inscription tells us that the bell was cast by Ioannis Nikolaou on 20th March 1886. In May he produced a second bell for monastery, Cat. no. 33. While the other Athonite monasteries for which he and his son worked only seem to have received one bell, the community of Lavra ordered him two⁶⁸. The inscription also states that the bell was cast in the actual monastery; this is so far the only instance that we know of a bell founder working in a monastic setting on Mount Athos. Was this the case for the other bells he cast for Athonite monasteries? At this time it is not possible to say.

33. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1886, Lavra Monastery⁶⁹

It is in the bell tower of the monastery, together with bells Cat. nos 22 and 32.

Measurements: Diameter, 76 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with seraphim. The main body of the bell shows an ornamental band.

Inscription (around the lower part of the curve): *† TH 10 ΜΑΗΟΥ 1886 ΔΙΑ ΧΕΙΡΟC ΙΩΑΝΝΩ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ.*

⁶⁸ I did not visit the monasteries of Esphigmenou and Agiou Pavlou, where there could be other bells by Ioannis or Michael.

⁶⁹ Kouropoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 and note 220.

The inscription informs us that Ioannis Nikolaou cast this bell on 10th May 1886. Thus, this could be the third bell that he produced in a few months, making 1886 his most productive year on Mount Athos. His presence on the Holy Mountain surely encouraged monasteries to commission him instruments. These were probably cheaper than those that had to be imported from further away. Moreover, the size and the quality of his bells surpassed those of any bells cast by other individuals on Mount Athos. Unlike the other bells cast by Ioannis, the second bell for Lavra does not include icons as part of the decoration.

34. Bell cast by Ioannis Nikolaou, 1888, Koutloumous Monastery⁷⁰

It is in the belfry, together with bells Cat. nos 27 and 28. The bell, which is cracked, is the largest in the monastery.

Measurements: Diameter, 85 cm.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder is decorated with seraphim. On the top of the main body is a band of triangles made with leaves and pointing down. The main body of the bell is decorated with four images, two of which are framed. The latter depict the Transfiguration, to which the monastery is dedicated, and the Virgin Platytera. The other two images show the Crucifixion, with Adam's skull below the cross, and the risen Christ.

Inscription (around the lower part of the curve): *O ΚΩΔΩΝ ΟΥΤΟC ΚΑΤΕΚΥΑCΘΗ ΔΑΠΑΝΗ ΤΗC ΑΥΤΗC I.(EPAC) ΜΟΝΗC ΤΟΥ ΚΟΥΤΛΟΥΜΟΥ ΚΙΟΥ ΕΤΕΙ CΩΤΗΡΙΩ 1888 ΟΚΤΟΒΡΙΟΥ 10 ΕΡΓΟΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ.*

The inscription informs us that the bell was cast by Ioannis Nikolaou on 10th October 1888 at the expense of the monastery. This is the last artefact in the catalogue to have been produced by him.

35. Bell dated to 1892, Pantokrator Monastery (Fig. 18)

It is in the bell tower of the monastery, together with bells nos 2 and 25.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 109 and note 221.



Fig. 18. Pantokrator Monastery, bell cast in 1892 (Cat. no. 35).

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: The main body of the instrument shows unidentified male busts with haloes. A larger one probably depicts Jesus as a child. Among these are at least two triangles pointing down and surrounded by sunbursts. These symbolised the Christian Trinity. Within such a representation usually was the Eye of Providence; however, this is not included. This symbol also appears on an undated bell employed at Karakallou Monastery and where the triangle is pointing up. The symbol is found in other places of Mount Athos; for instance, it is painted on the pediment over the main entrance of the Vatopedi katholikon.

Inscription (around the top of the main body, incised): † ΔΑΜΙΑΝΟΥ. ΙΕΡΟΜ(ΟΝΑΧΟΥ) ΚΗΛΙΟΝ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΣ. 1892.

The inscription tells us that this bell was presented by Damianos, hieromonk at the cell of St Nicholas, in 1892. This detail seems to indicate that the bell was first used at the cell and was subsequently taken to the Pantokrator Monastery. The artefact may have been the product of a bell founder based in Karyes.

36. Austrian bell, 1892, Vatopedi Monastery

It is found in the bell tower, together with bells Cat. nos 9, 12 and 20.

Measurements: Diameter, 78 cm.

Decoration: The top of the main body shows two ornamental bands; the top one is decorated with angels and crosses while the bottom one shows leaves and flowers. On the main body of the bell, on one side, is a labelled (*EIC TIMHN TOY ΘΕΙΟΥ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ*) representation of the Annunciation, to which the monastery is dedicated. The archangel Gabriel is standing in front of the Virgin, who is reading a book. From a cloud above the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove comes down to her. On the lower part of the main body is a scroll frieze.

Inscription (around the curve): ΔΑΠΑΝΑΙΚ ΤΗC EN ΑΓΙΩΙΕΠΑΚ ΚΑΙ ΣΕΒΑΣΜΙΑΚ ΜΕΤΙΚΤΗC MONHC TOY BATΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΤΙΚΟC ΚΑΙ ΓΕΟΡΓΙΟC ΓΕΣΣΝΕP EN BIENNΗ 1892.⁷¹

The Greek inscription informs us that this bell was cast in Vienna, the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1892. Athonite monks served as clergymen in St George, one of the two churches of the Greek community in that city.⁷² They may have acted as middlemen between Vatopedi and the bell founders. This is the first instance of a bell cast in Western Europe that shows the name of the masters in Greek, in this case, Francis and George Gessner. Perhaps their name was translated by the individual(s) that requested the bell on behalf of the monastery, which paid for the instrument. This is the last bell produced in the Western Europe to feature in the catalogue.

37. Bell dated to 1893, Simonopetra Monastery

It is found in the bell tower of the monastery, together with other ten bells.

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: On each side of the main inscription are

⁷¹ Both label and inscription show accents.

⁷² S. Eustratiades, *Ο ἐν Βιέννη ναὸς τοῦ Ἅγιου Γεωργίου καὶ ἡ κοινότης τῶν Ἑλλήνων Ὀθωμανῶν ὑπηκόων*, Alexandria 1912, 110.



Fig. 19. Hilandar Monastery, bell cast by Stoian Rachkov in 1905 (Cat. no. 38).



Fig. 20. Skete of Hagios Prodromos, bell cast in Sighișoara (Romania) in 1906 (Cat. no. 39).

reliefs; however, their quality is not very good and they cannot be appreciated clearly.

Inscription: Two, one is incised around the top of the main body, it partly reads: ...ETO 1893 МАРТА... The second, in five lines, occupies part of the main body of the instrument, on one side. Its letters are in relief, but some have not been cast properly and so they are not readable: ...MATA TOY IEPOY / KOINOBOYO THC CIMONOC ПЕТРАС / ...MENON / META THN ПУРКАИА / ... 1893 ETOC.

The incomplete inscription indicates that the bell was commissioned for the monastery after a fire. This is probably the blaze that burnt down the monastery two years before, in 1891, and where previous bells may have been destroyed. This piece of information sheds light on one event that forced monasteries to acquire new bells. The badly cast inscription suggests that the bell was produced by a master who was not very skilled, perhaps based in Karyes.

38. Bell cast by Stoian M. Rachkov, 1905, Hilandar Monastery (Fig. 19)

It is found in the bell tower, along with bells Cat. nos 17, 18 and 21.

Measurements: Height, 55 cm; diameter, 52 cm.

Decoration: The top of the main body is decorated with a floral design.

Inscription: НАПРАВИСЕ ТОВА КАМБАНЧЕ ЗА МОНАСТИРЪ ХИЛИНДАРЪ. ВЪ 1905 Г.(ОДА) МАИСТОРЪ СТОЯНЪ М. РАЧКОВЪ ОТЪ СЕЛО Г.(ОРОХО) БРОДИ.

According to the Bulgarian inscription, the bell was cast for the monastery of Hilandar by a master (this is how he defines himself) named Stoian M. Rachkov in 1905. We are also told that he was from the village of Gorno Brodi (today Ano Vrontou, in northern Greece) and so he was an Ottoman subject. Stoian also cast two bells for the monastery of Zographou⁷³. That his artefacts are found at Hilandar and Zographou, two monasteries where Bulgarian monks were present, should not be seen as a coincidence. One of the very few bell masters from the Balkans known to have worked for the Athonite community, he cast the instruments on Athos⁷⁴.

39. Bell from Transylvania, 1906, Romanian Skete of Saint John the Forerunner (Fig. 20)

It is in the bell tower, together with other bells, among which is Cat. no. 40.

⁷³ A large one, which is decorated with religious figures, is dated to 1911. Thus, Stoian was active at least between 1905 and 1911.

⁷⁴ Part of the inscription on his second bell at Zographou monastery reads: ...СЕЛО ГОР БРОДИ ВЪ СВ ГОРА...

Measurements: Unknown.

Decoration: On the top of the main body is a band with couples of putti that seem to be placing fruits in a basket. Below the main inscription are garlands, in between them are roundels showing the Virgin with Child.

Inscription: Two (both in Romanian), the longer one is around the main body of the bell, in five lines, it reads *SPRE VICINICA POMENIRE SCHITULUI LACUMONT ATHOS MOSIA MANASTIRII SFT. / PAUL. PATRONUL SFT. MARTIR DIMITRIE ISVORITORUL DE MIR. DIN DARUL CRISTINILOR / ROM. ORT. DIN TINUTURILE ARDEALULUI PRIN COLLECTA SHIMONACHULUI SPIRIDON A LUI GURIE / CONFISCAT PRIN ERORI LUI. A DUORA COLECTAT IN N. AMERICA DE ZACHARIE SI TEOFIL GOGA DIN / DANOS.* 1906. The second inscription is around the lower part of the main body, it reads *PRE CEI VII II CHEM PRE CEI MORTI II PLANG. NORI II FRANG. TORNAT DE MICHAILE MANCHEN IN SIGHISIORA ARDEAL.* The beginning and the end of each line is marked by a flower.

The long inscription informs us that the bell was cast for the other Romanian skete on Mount Athos, Lakkou or Lakkoskiti, a domain of Agiou Pavlou (one of the twenty monasteries on Mount Athos) and dedicated to the martyr Demetrius, the Myrrh-Gusher or Myrrh-streamer (Μυροβλήτης in Greek). The bell was a gift from Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania, whose money was collected by a certain monk named Spyridon. Apparently the collection was lost through his mistakes and was once more collected in North America by Zacharias and Theophilus Goga from Daneş (also in Transylvania) in 1906. The bell was cast by a certain Michaile Manchen in Sighișoara, which is only a few kilometres away from Daneş. The foundry he managed had been founded in 1822; he was active until 1916⁷⁵. This is the first bell in the catalogue to show Romanian inscriptions written in Latin letters. Sighișoara, in Transylvania, was under the

rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918, when it became part of the Kingdom of Romania. The inscription underneath the garlands informs us of the function of the bell: "For those who are alive I call, for those who are dead I cry, the clouds I break." This type of message reminds of medieval bells, which had similar writings.⁷⁶

40. Bell from Bucharest, 1911, Romanian Skete of Saint John the Forerunner

It is located in the bell tower, together with bell Cat. no. 39.

Measurements: Unknown, but it is large.

Decoration: The lower part of the shoulder shows an ornamental band decorated with religious images; among them is the Dormition of the Virgin and several saints.

Inscription: Two, the longer one is on the main body of the bell, on one side, in five line, it reads *ACEST CLOPOT SA DARUIT DE DOMNUL / CANUTA IONESCU DIN COMUNA URLATI JUDETUL PRAHOVA / ROMANIA MONASTIREI ROMANESEI DIN SF. MUNTE ATHOS CU HRAMUL BOTEZUL DLUI ISUS XRISTOS / PENTRU VECINICA POMENIRE A LUI SIA NEAMULUI LUI IN ZILELE SUPERIORULUI ANTIPA ARHIMANDRITUL / LA ANUL MANTUIREI 1911.* The second inscription is on the lower part of the curve, it reads *FABRICANT ALECSANDRU SPIREANU BUCURESTI.*

The Romanian inscription informs us that the bell was offered to the Romanian monastery (officially a skete) of St John the Forerunner⁷⁷ on Mount Athos by Canuta Ionescu from Urlati. We are also told that the instrument was given for his everlasting remembrance and that of his nation in the days of the archimandrite Antipa in 1911, that is, a year before Ottoman rule over Mount

⁷⁵ M. Adonis, "Unele aspecte privind nivelul reclamei economice la Sighișoara în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea", *Revista Bistriței* 17 (2003), 224, 231, fig. 9. N. N. Tescula, "De la meșteșug la artă. Două obiecte ale breslei turnătorilor de clopote în colecția Muzeului de Istorie Sighișoara", *Revista Bistriței* 22 (2018), 113.

⁷⁶ P. Price, "Bell inscription of Western Europe", *The Dalhousie Review* 45/4 (1966), 423-424. However, such inscriptions also appear on 19th-century bells. For instance, in France, see A. Corbin, *Le cloches de la terre. Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle*, Paris 1994.

⁷⁷ For the skete, see C. Coman, "Moldavians, Wallachians, and Romanians on Mount Athos", *Mount Athos: Microcosm of the Christian East*, eds G. Speake – K. Ware, Oxford – Bern 2012, 119-121.

Athos came to an end. Canuta Ionescu was the major of Urlati, a town in the county of Prahova, to the north of Bucharest, the capital of the Kingdom of Romania. Antipa Dinescu was archimandrite of the skete of St John the Forerunner between 1900 and 1914. At the bottom we read that the instrument was cast by a certain Alexander Spireanu in Bucharest. In 1894 he cast two bells for the Orthodox church of Concesti, Romania⁷⁸. Together with Nicholas Spireanu, probably a relative of his, he cast the bells for the church of Băjești, also in Romania, in 1919⁷⁹. This instrument and the previous one show that the two Romanian sketes on Mount Athos turned to Orthodox Romanians to obtain bells, which were ordered to local bell founders.

Conclusions

The bells discussed above prove what we already know through written sources, that is, Athonite monasteries were allowed to use bell ringing during the Ottoman period. As a result of this privilege, the instruments cast before the mid-19th century and preserved on Mount Athos, probably make one of the largest groups of bells found anywhere in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. The number of bells presented is very small compared to the actual number of instruments found on the Holy Mountain. Nevertheless, the selection allows to put forward some ideas regarding the instruments employed by the Athonite community and their evolution throughout three centuries, from the early 17th century to the end of the Ottoman period. For instance, inscriptions inform us about the places from where the Athonite monasteries obtained their bells during the period of Ottoman rule. The provenance of the earlier bells in the catalogue indicates that bell casting did not exist near Mount Athos⁸⁰. The Christian use of bell ringing was not allowed in the Ottoman Empire and only very few locations, such as Mount Athos, had the freedom to

ring them. Therefore, any bell casting centres that may have existed before the Ottoman conquest vanished⁸¹. Nonetheless, the lack of bell casting workshops near Mount Athos did not stop the monasteries from using bells. The instruments they employed were imported from far away locations, a detail that indicates the significance of these artefacts to regulate the daily life of the Athonite community. Actually, the inscriptions on three bells that were commissioned (Cat. nos 9, 13 and 14) describe these instruments as holy. This adjective clearly shows how the artefacts were perceived by the monks; they were not simple instruments.

The earlier extant bell (Cat. no. 1) was cast in Moldavia. That no other Moldavian bell seems to have survived suggests that not many instruments from the principality were exported to Mount Athos. On the other hand, ten out of forty artefacts (Cat. nos 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 16 and 18), which are dated to the 17th and 18th century, were produced in Venice or its mainland territory. This number indicates that during these two centuries Venetian bell masters supplied Mount Athos with their instruments. However, a piece of evidence discussed in the first part of this study shows that Venetian bells were employed in Athonite monasteries since at least the 15th century⁸². Thus, we can conclude that the Venetian Republic was, together with Russia, one of the main providers of bells for the Holy Mountain during the Ottoman period. Seven (Cat. nos 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 18) out of these ten were probably produced for speculative sale, that is, they were not commissioned by the monasteries or ordered for a specific foundation. This is confirmed by the fact that their inscriptions do not tell us anything about the monasteries where they

⁷⁸ Online resource, <https://www.biserici.org/index.php?menu=bi&code=6887>.

⁷⁹ Gr. Constantinescu, *Biserica Băjești*, Pitești 1996, 6.

⁸⁰ The closer bell casting workshops were found in the Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, which were vassal states of the Ottoman Empire.

⁸¹ The scarce available evidence, however, does not allow to have a clear picture of bell casting in the region before the Ottoman conquest, A. Rodriguez Suarez, "Bells and bell ringing in medieval Serbia and Bulgaria", *Études balkaniques* (2021), forthcoming. The production of bells in the Ottoman Empire is indeed attested by a bell cast for the clock tower of Trikala in 1648. It had an Ottoman inscription and went missing during the Second World War (N. Κατσόγιαννος, *To Φρούριο, το φολόγι και το Βυζαντινό νδραγωγείο των Τρικάλων*, Trikala 2014, 67-70, 75). Nevertheless, this instance seems to have been an exception until the 19th century.

⁸² Rodriguez Suarez, "Bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period, I", op.cit. (n. 1).

are used. The other three (Cat. nos 5, 13 and 16) include inscriptions and decoration indicating that these artefacts were indeed commissioned; two of them (Cat. nos 13 and 16) are found in Iviron Monastery. This reveals the wealth of this foundation, since commissioning a bell was surely more expensive than purchasing one already cast. Four Venetian bells (Cat. nos 4, 11, 13 and 18) were cast by the De Poli family/foundry⁸³. The origins of this establishment, which still operates today⁸⁴, go back to the 17th century. Its long period of activity explains the number of artefacts found on Mount Athos. The presence of numerous bells cast in or nearby Venice is not surprising; the Venetian manufacture of bells provided instruments to other locations in the eastern Mediterranean for centuries⁸⁵. Moreover, the existence of an Orthodox community in Venice might have facilitated the purchase and request for bells to be employed at Athonite monasteries⁸⁶. Bells were not the only artefacts 'made in Venice' that were sent to the east, another instance was that of printed books in Greek⁸⁷.

In the 18th century bells cast in other locations started to appear on Mount Athos (Cat. nos 6, 9 and 12). Two of them (Cat. nos 6 and 12) were produced in the Banat of Temeswar. This region was under Ottoman rule until 1716, when Austria conquered it. The Habsburg Monarchy promoted the settlement of German-speaking artisans and farmers to colonise the area. Among them

⁸³ There was another one in the bell tower of Protaton, Smyrnakes, *To Αγιον Όρος*, op.cit. (n. 2), 700. Kouphopoulos – Mamaloukos, *Αγιορειτική μεταλλοτεχνία*, op.cit. (n. 2), 109 note 223. It was claimed that it was cast in Pula, in modern Croatia. The bell broke in the fire that damaged the bell tower in 2004, Rodriguez Suarez, "Bell ringing on Mount Athos during the Ottoman period, I", op.cit. (n. 1), note 17.

⁸⁴ Official website: <http://www.fonderiadepoli.it/index>.

⁸⁵ A. Rodriguez Suarez, "Casting bells for the East: An unknown aspect of the artistic and commercial history of Venice", *Studi veneziani*, forthcoming.

⁸⁶ For details about the Greek colony in Venice, see D. Jacoby, "I greci e altre comunità tra Venezia e oltremare", *I greci a Venezia. Atti del convegno internazionale di studio, Venezia, 5-7 novembre 1998*, eds M. F. Tiepolo – E. Tonetti, Venice 2002, 41-64.

⁸⁷ L. Vranoussis, "Les imprimeries vénitaines et les premiers livres grecs", *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV-XVI). Aspetti e problemi*, II, eds by H. G. Beck – M. Manoussacas – A. Pertusi, Florence 1977, 509-519.

was possibly Thomas Khenaver, who cast bell Cat. no. 6 in 1735. Bell Cat. no. 12 was cast by a certain Johann Friedrich Barthel, who probably descended from German settlers. These two bells were not commissioned; perhaps merchants purchased them and donated them to the monasteries. Bell Cat. no. 9, which was cast in Buda, is different since it was commissioned for Vatopedi Monastery. Like Iviron, this was one of the richer foundations on Mount Athos and its network of contacts surely facilitated the commission of the instrument. These three instances show that territorial changes had an impact on the instruments employed on Mount Athos. The Austrian expansion towards the Balkans reintroduced bell casting in regions from which the manufacture, if it had existed previously, had disappeared with the Ottoman conquest. By the end of the 18th century, however, bell casting was found much closer to Mount Athos. For instance, the bell master Charalambis Mikeletis, who cast two bells in 1781 (Cat. nos 14 and 15), was based in Corfu. These may be the earlier instruments on Mount Athos to have been cast in the territory of modern Greece.

Bell casting on Mount Athos is only reported in the second half of the 19th century⁸⁸. Nevertheless, bell founders were already based on the Holy Mountain before that date. The local production of bells is best represented by Ioannis Nikolaou and his son, who cast at least eight artefacts throughout a period of twenty-six years (Cat. nos 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34). A number of bells found in several monasteries (Cat. nos 21, 22, 27, 28, 35, 37), usually small and of low quality, may have been the product of other masters based in Karyes. However, it cannot be excluded that some of these were cast in Greece or Serbia (such as Cat. no. 21), which gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and where bell casting workshops were then established⁸⁹. A few bell founders were also based in

⁸⁸ The account of the Englishman Athelstan Riley, who visited Mount Athos in 1883, informs us of the presence of bell founders who were based in Karyes (*Athos, or the mountain of the monks*, London 1887, 77).

⁸⁹ Future research on bells found in Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria will provide further information about bell founders and bell casting in the 19th century. For bell founders active in Serbia in the early 19th century, see N. Bura, *Zvona kroz istoriju*, Belgrade 2005, 79-85.

the Ottoman Empire. The 19th century also witnessed the appearance on Mount Athos of bells produced in the Principality of Wallachia (Cat. no. 23) and Russia (Cat. no. 26). While the catalogue includes only one Russian instrument, from the mid-19th century onwards the arrival of bells cast in Russia changed the soundscape of the Holy Mountain. Larger and profusely decorated bells were shipped to monasteries and sketes; no such artefacts have been seen or heard previously on Mount Athos⁹⁰. The arrival of so many bells from Russia was the result of the presence of numerous Russian monks on the Holy Mountain. While some of these instruments were gifts, such as bell Cat. no. 26, many were actually sent to Russian foundations on Athos. The Russians were not the only nation to send bells to their monks on the Holy Mountain, the Romanians also did so. This is the case of the two bells in the Romanian skete of St John the Forerunner (Cat. nos 39 and 40). In any case, monasteries continued to commission bells to local masters such as Stoian Rachkov, who cast one for Hilandar (Cat. no. 38) and two for Zographou. Thus, while in earlier centuries bells employed by the Athonite monasteries were cast far away from Mount Athos (usually in Western/Catholic Europe), the end of Ottoman rule witnessed both production in situ and import from abroad (usually from Eastern/Orthodox Europe).

The decoration found on bells also changed throughout the period under study. The earlier instances, produced either in Venice or other Western centres, show designs and religious figures taken from Western art. Catholic saints not acknowledged by the Orthodox Church even decorate a few instruments; this is the case of bells Cat. nos 7 and 8, which show images of St Anthony of Padua and St Roch respectively. Only a few cases among the instruments that were commissioned include iconography taken from the Orthodox world. One such instance is the representation of the founders of Hilandar Monastery, St Sava and St Symeon, on bell Cat. no. 17. Later bells, those cast either in Russia (Cat. no. 26) or on Mount Athos (for instance, those by Ioannis Nikolaou and his son), show more Orthodox imagery. The fact that bell masters belonged to the

Orthodox world and/or were based on Mount Athos facilitated the production of instruments decorated in a more Post-Byzantine fashion. Monasteries could select specific images associated with their communities while other representations famous in the Orthodox world appear frequently, for instance, the Virgin Platytera (Cat. nos 22, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32 and 34) and the Dormition of the Virgin (Cat. nos 14, 15, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 40). Nonetheless, Western details and designs continued to appear, for example, the triangles surrounded by sunbursts on bell Cat. no. 35.

Inscriptions on bells also depended on the cultural background of masters and foundries that cast the instruments. The earlier ones produced in the West usually inform us of the name of the master and date of production (Cat. nos 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 18 and 20). However, bells cast in the West but specifically commissioned for Athonite monasteries also show supplications (Cat. no. 5), dedications (Cat. no. 13) and names of donors (Cat. nos 9 and 17). Later bells commissioned to foundries on or near Mount Athos provide different details, for instance, the name and status of the donor (Cat. nos 28 and 38), the name of the master (Cat. no. 27) or the name of both donor and master (Cat. no. 23). Those cast by Ioannis Nikolaou and his son Michael do not only include the year of production, but also the day and month. The only other instance for this is the bell cast in Moldavia (Cat. no. 1). The date would have indicated when the inscriptions were written and/or when the artefacts were actually cast. Another aspect of the bells that changed throughout time was the language of the inscriptions. Those on the earlier instruments, mainly cast in the West, were usually written in Latin (Cat. nos 2, 4, 7, 8 and 10) or German (Cat. nos 6, 9 and 12). Certainly, those that had been commissioned included inscriptions in Greek (Cat. nos 5, 9 and 13) or Serbian Slavonic (Cat. no. 17). Later bells include a wide range of languages such as Russian (Cat. no. 26), Greek (Cat. nos 23, 36 and 37), Romanian (Cat. nos 39 and 40), Serbian (Cat. no. 21) and Bulgarian (Cat. no. 37). These are the languages of the different Orthodox communities on Mount Athos. The inscriptions on some bells, those that were actually commissioned, provide details about the individuals or the party that donated the instruments. Of the forty bells in the catalogue, twenty-five were specifically cast for a monastery on Mount Athos. Five of

⁹⁰ During the Soviet period many bells in Russia were either melted down or destroyed, Williams, *The bells of Russia*, op.cit. (n. 55), 64-65. Hence, the instruments on Mount Athos are significant instances of nineteenth-century Russian bell casting.

these were paid by individual monks (Cat. nos 16, 23, 26, 28, 35) while one was given by the archbishop of Suceava (Cat. no. 1). Three bells were gifts from lay individuals (Cat. nos 9, 17 and 40) while one instrument (Cat. no. 39) was cast with donations from Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania and North America. The rest (Cat. nos 5, 13, 14, 21, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37 and 38) seem to have been commissioned by the monastic communities. Since the instruments that were not commissioned may also have been donated, it is not possible to draw definite conclusions; however, it seems clear that monks on Mount Athos, either individually or as a group, were the main sponsors for bells. This is not a surprise since the instruments regulated their daily life and religious calendar.

To conclude, bells are another instance of material culture on Mount Athos, one that so far has gone unnoticed and which deserves to be studied in depth. The

artefacts presented here and those that remain unpublished in both monasteries and sketes, can shed light on the history and everyday life of the Athonite community throughout the Ottoman period. I hope that this introductory study fills part of this gap and also encourages scholars to look at these instruments with more attention. Further research will complete any missing details in this study, such as the measurements of some instruments, and will also uncover more information about their history and production, for instance, their musical note. Moreover, many more bells await to be examined; this is the case of the Russian artefacts, which will show how Imperial Russia used bells to increase its power and influence over the Athonite community.

Illustration credits

All the pictures were taken by the author, with the permission of each monastery.

ΚΩΔΩΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΣΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΟΡΟΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗΝ ΟΘΩΜΑΝΙΚΗ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟ, Β: ΟΙ ΚΑΜΠΑΝΕΣ

Το παρόν άρθρο αποτελεί το δεύτερο και τελευταίο μέρος μιας ευρύτερης μελέτης αφιερωμένης στον κωδωνισμό στο Άγιον Όρος κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο. Το πρώτο μέρος εξέτασε τις γραπτές πηγές, ενώ το δεύτερο εστιάζει σε μια αντιπροσωπευτική επιλογή σαράντα καμπανών. Η σημασία τής εν λόγω μελέτης έγκειται στο ότι, σε αντίθεση με άλλα κειμήλια, όπως π.χ. εικόνες και χειρόγραφα, τα εξαρτήματα αυτά αποτελούν μια παραμελημένη από την επιστημονική έρευνα πτυχή του αγιορείτικου υλικού πολιτισμού.

Τα επιλεγμένα όργανα κωδωνισμού βρίσκονται σε δεκατέσσερα μοναστήρια, στη θρησκευτική σκήτη του Αγίου Ιωάννη του Προδρόμου και στον ναό του Πρωτάτου. Με εξαίρεση μία περίπτωση, αυτή η μελέτη δεν εξετάζει ρωσικές καμπάνες, οι οποίες κατά προσέγγιση αποτελούν το 80% αυτών που σώζονται στο Άγιον Όρος. Η επιλογή που παρουσιάζεται, καλύπτει χρονικά τους τρεις τελευταίους αιώνες της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας (τέσσερις χρονολογιούνται στον 17ο, δεκατέσσερις στον 18ο, δεκαεννέα στον 19ο και τρεις καμπάνες στον 20ό αιώνα), ανεξαρτήτως της καλλιτεχνικής ποιότητάς τους. Ο κατάλογος επίσης παρουσιάζει πολλά από τα εργαστήρια, όπου κατασκευάστηκαν οι καμπάνες που σήμαιναν στο Άγιον Όρος. Επιπρόσθετα, η διακόσμηση και οι επιγραφές κάθε καμπάνας καταγράφονται και σχολιάζονται. Οι επιγραφές παρέχουν συνήθως πληροφορίες σχετικά με την προέλευση και τη χρονολόγηση των τεχνουργημάτων αυτών.

Γενικά, η ανάλυση των καμπανών ρίχνει φως στην ιστορία ενός από τα δύο βασικά όργανα που χρησιμοποιούνταν οι Αγιορείτες για να ρυθμίζουν την καθημερινότητά τους: το άλλο είναι το παραδοσιακό σήμαντρο. Οι περισσότερες καμπάνες χρησιμοποιούνταν στο θρησκευτικό τελετουργικό, ενώ κάποιες συνδέθηκαν με μηχανικά ρολόγια για να σημαίνουν τις ώρες.

Τα ευρήματα του άρθρου επιβεβαιώνουν ότι η αθωνική κοινότητα είχε το δικαίωμα να χρησιμοποιεί καμπάνες κατά τη μακρόχρονη οθωμανική κυριαρχία,

γεγονός εξάλλου που αναφέρεται και στις πηγές. Αυτό ήταν ένα σημαντικό προνόμιο, καθώς η γενική χρήση των καμπανών για θρησκευτικούς σκοπούς επιτρέποταν στην Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία μόνο από τα μέσα του 19ου αιώνα και μετά. Ως αποτέλεσμα αυτής της απαγόρευσης, δεν υπήρξε εγχώρια παραγωγή καμπανών για πολλούς αιώνες. Παρ' όλα αυτά, τα αθωνικά μοναστήρια απέκτησαν, μέσω αγορών, ειδικών παραγγελιών καθώς και δωρεών, καμπάνες που κατασκευάστηκαν σε διάφορα εργαστήρια της δυτικής Ευρώπης και της Ρωσικής αυτοκρατορίας. Τα σωζόμενα δείγματα υποδεικνύουν τη Βενετία και τη Ρωσία ως τους κύριους τόπους κατασκευής. Τα βενετσιάνικα δείγματα χρονολογούνται στην πρώιμη περίοδο, μεχρι τα τέλη του 18ου αιώνα. Αντιθέτως, οι ρωσικές καμπάνες εμφανίζονται από τα μέσα του 19ου αιώνα και μετά, όταν η ρωσική παρουσία στο Άγιον Όρος ανέκανται σε τόσο μεγάλο βαθμό για πρώτη φορά. Οι περισσότερες πρώιμες καμπάνες δεν κατασκευάστηκαν κατόπιν παραγγελίας, επομένως δεν εμφανίζουν λεπτομέρειες, όπως θρησκευτικές μορφές ή επιγραφές, οι οποίες να σχετίζονται με τα μοναστήρια στα οποία κατέληξαν να χρησιμοποιούνται. Μόνο ένας μικρός αριθμός παρήχθη κατόπιν ειδικής παραγγελίας, το υψηλό κόστος της οποίας δικαιολογεί την παρουσία αυτών των καμπανών μόνο στα πλουσιότερα μοναστήρια, όπως για παράδειγμα στη μονή Ιβήρων.

Εκτός της Βενετίας και της Ρωσίας, οι αγιορείτικες καμπάνες παρήχθησαν και σε άλλες χώρες η παλαιότερη γνωστή καμπάνα του Αγίου Όρους κατασκευάστηκε το 1614 στο πριγκιπάτο της Μολδαβίας και ήταν δώρο του αρχιεπισκόπου της Σουτσεάβα (Εικ. 1). Κάποιες καμπάνες που κατασκευάστηκαν στα Βαλκάνια κατά τον 18ο αιώνα, μας πληροφορούν σχετικά με την εγκατάσταση χτιών σε περιοχές που πέρασαν από τα χέρια των Οθωμανών στους Αρβανίτες. Κατά τον 19ο αιώνα, ξεκινά και η τοπική παραγωγή καμπανών στο ίδιο το Άγιον Όρος. Είναι πιθανό ότι οι πρώτοι

χύτες καμπανών έφτασαν από το νεοϊδρυθέν ελληνικό κράτος. Ωστόσο, δεν μπορεί να αποκλειστεί η πιθανότητα ότι ορισμένοι προέρχονταν από περιοχές που τελούσαν ακόμη υπό οθωμανικό έλεγχο. Αυτήν την παραγωγή εκπροσωπούν κατεξοχήν ο Ιωάννης Νικολάου και ο γιος του, οι οποίοι κατασκεύασαν καμπάνες για πολλά μοναστήρια από το 1862 έως το 1888 (Κατάλ. αριθ. 24, 25). Οι καμπάνες τους είναι συνήθως διακοσμημένες με θρησκευτικές παραστάσεις που σχετίζονται με τα μοναστήρια τα οποία τις παρήγγειλαν. Κάθε αδελφότητα μπορούσε να ζητήσει συγκεκριμένες παραστάσεις, όπως για παράδειγμα τα πορτρέτα ακτητόρων και δωρητών που είχαν παίξει σημαντικό ρόλο στην ιστορία των μοναστηριών. Μία καμπάνα στη μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας και μία άλλη στη μονή Διονυσίου φέρουν τους ακτήτορες τους, τον Αθανάσιο τον Αθωνίτη και τον Διονύσιο του Κορέσου (Εικ. 17) αντίστοιχα.

Η ποιότητα των καμπανών του Ιωάννη Νικολάου και του γιου του είναι σχετικά υψηλή. Ωστόσο, η ποιότητα των άλλων τεχνουργημάτων που κατασκευάστηκαν στο Άγιον Όρος ή σε κοντινή απόσταση, πιθανώς στην Ελλάδα ή σε τουρκοκρατούμενες περιοχές, είναι χαμηλότερη από εκείνη των ευρωπαϊκών εισαγωγών. Ο τελευταίος γνωστός χύτης που δούλευε στο Άγιον Όρος κατά την οθωμανική εποχή, ήταν ο βιούλγαρος Στόιαν Μ. Ράτσκοφ, γνωστός για τις καμπάνες των μονών Χιλανδαρίου (Εικ. 19) και Ζωγράφου. Η τοπική παραγωγή, που πιθανώς ήταν λιγότερο κοστοβόρα, δεν σταμάτησε την εισαγωγή καμπανών από άλλες χώρες. Για παράδειγμα, δύο καμπάνες που κατασκευάστηκαν στο έδαφος της σημερινής Ρουμανίας, προορίζονταν

για τις δύο ρουμανικές σκήτες στο Άγιον Όρος. Είναι σαφές, λοιπόν, ότι οι εν λόγω αδελφότητες τύγχαναν υποστήριξης από τους ομοεθνείς τους.

Κλείνοντας, θα πρέπει να τονιστεί ότι οι καμπάνες αναπόφευκτα εξελίχθηκαν ανά τους αιώνες: τόσο το μέγεθος όσο και η διακόσμησή τους άλλαξαν. Με λίγες εξαιρέσεις, τα πρωτότερα δείγματα είναι συνήθως μικρότερα σε μέγεθος. Οι μεγαλύτερες αγιορείτικες καμπάνες κατασκευάστηκαν στη Ρωσία πολύ αργότερα, κατά το δεύτερο μισό του 19ου αιώνα. Επιπλέον, η θρησκευτική εικονογραφία στις πρώιμες καμπάνες ήταν συνήθως δυτικής προέλευσης. Αργότερα, ωστόσο, παρατηρείται η προτίμηση στην τέχνη των ορθόδοξων χωρών. Όπως είναι αναμενόμενο, τα εργαστήρια όπου κατασκευάστηκαν οι καμπάνες, έπαιξαν καθοριστικό ρόλο στη διακόσμησή και την εικονογραφία τους. Οι παραστάσεις στις καμπάνες που παρήχθησαν στη Δύση, π.χ. στη Βενετία, ακολουθούσαν συνήθως δυτικά πρότυπα. Από την άλλη πλευρά, η διακόσμηση στις καμπάνες που παρήχθησαν σε ορθόδοξες χώρες, είναι συνήθως προσκολλημένη σε μεταβυζαντινά πρότυπα. Περαιτέρω έρευνα μπορεί να αποκαλύψει περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με τις αγιορείτικες καμπάνες, όπως για παράδειγμα τον ήχο και τη μουσικότητά τους. Επίσης, οι καμπάνες ωστικής κατασκευής αξίζουν ξεχωριστής μελέτης, η οποία θα αποκαλύψει μια ακόμη πτυχή της ωστικής παρουσίας και πολιτιστικής επιρροής στο Άγιον Όρος κατά το δεύτερο μισό του 19ου αιώνα.

Ανεξάρτητος ερευνητής
argyrus1028@hotmail.com